

2017

An Exploratory Study on the Improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process

Jason F. Tate
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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Jason Tate

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Walden University

2017

Abstract

An Exploratory Study on the Improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process

by

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MS, Webster University, 2002

MA, University of Oklahoma, 2000

BS, Tougaloo College, 1998

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

May 2017

Abstract

Since 2001, the Army has spent billions of dollars to develop, test, and procure equipment through the Army Rapid Acquisition Process (ARAP), a process at times used in place of the traditional Army Acquisition Process (AAP) when immediacy and customization are a priority. The ARAP was implemented to increase efficiency in delivering adequate equipment to soldiers. The ARAP has been criticized in the literature for its lack of efficiency and effectiveness in the field. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to examine ARAP deficiencies through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The research questions addressed key problems and factors of the ARAP's performance and its alignment with the ARAP, bureaucracy, and post bureaucracy. The conceptual foundation of this study included the theories of *bureaucracy* and *post bureaucracy*. Principles of bureaucracy are hierarchical structure and management by strict rules. Principles of post bureaucracy are flat management structures and increased autonomy. Data were collected through semistructured interviews from a cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals ($N = 19$). Data analysis consisted of coding participant responses, which resulted in the emergence of themes and categories. Findings revealed the need for improvements to sustain, transition, and fund equipment and the need for improvements in developing equipment requirements and increasing direct soldier involvement when using the ARAP. This research provides lessons that may inform current and future ARAP initiatives and contributes to social change through procuring the best equipment for soldiers to defend against threats to national security.

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Dedication

To my wife (Dr. Kandie S. Tate) and my three sons (Noah, Nathan, and Nicholas Tate), thank you for your ever enduring love, support, and motivation that helped me complete this lifetime achievement. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:7. Thank you God.

Acknowledgments

This doctoral study is a shared accomplishment with everyone that offered words of encouragement and assisted along the way in the journey. I thank my Chair, Dr. Donna Brown, who always offered sage counsel through the entire process. I really enjoyed having you serve as my Chair. Dr. McCollum, thank you for your laser focus and pushing me to the limits at times to get through the process. I appreciate your project management approach and inviting me to join the Cohort. Thanks also to Dr. James Stewart and Dr. Branford McAllister for their efforts supporting me through the process.

To my family, thank you for your unwavering support. I thank my wife (Dr. Kandie S.Tate) for your love and support. Thank you for being the rock of the family during my military deployments. I thank my parents (Brenda and Joseph Tate) for their love. Growing up, you both provided the best examples of love, faith, family, and marriage. I love you both.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Background	2
Problem Statement	5
Purpose of the Study	6
Research Questions	7
Theoretical Foundation	8
Conceptual Framework	9
Nature of the Study	11
Definitions	12
Assumptions	18
Scope and Delimitations	19
Limitations	19
Significance of the Study	21
Significance to Theory and Practice	21
Significance to Social Change	22
Summary and Transition	22
Chapter 2: Literature Review	24
Literature Search Strategy	25
Theoretical Foundations	27

Bureaucracy	27
Postbureaucracy	28
Bureaucracy Theory	29
Postbureaucracy Theory.....	34
Rationale for Selection of Bureaucracy and Postbureaucracy Theories	37
Other Management Theorists.....	39
Conceptual Framework.....	41
Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution.....	42
Joint Capability Integration and Development System	44
Defense Acquisition System	45
Army Rapid Acquisition Process: Postbureaucracy Efforts	47
Studies Relevant to the Army Rapid Acquisition Process	50
Literature Review of Key Variables	52
Criticisms of Postbureaucracy	55
Movement to Replace Bureaucracy	58
The Spread of Postbureaucracy Initiatives	59
Bureaucracy and Postbureaucracy Hybrid Initiatives.....	61
Financial Database Incompatibility	62
Gap in the Literature	64
Summary and Conclusion.....	64
Chapter 3: Research Methodology.....	67
Research Design and Rationale	67

Research Questions	67
Research Central Phenomena	68
Research Tradition and Rationale for Selection of Tradition	70
Role of the Researcher	72
Methodology	73
Participant Selection Logic	73
Sampling Description.....	77
Instrumentation	78
Procedures for Field Test	80
Procedures for Participant Recruitment, Participation, and Selection	80
Data Collection	81
Member Checking.....	82
Data Analysis Plan	83
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	84
Credibility	84
Transferability.....	85
Dependability	85
Confirmability.....	86
Ethical Procedures	86
Summary	87
Chapter 4: Results	88
Field Test	88

Research Setting.....	89
Demographics	89
Data Collection	91
Data Analysis	92
Discrepant Cases.....	94
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	94
Credibility	94
Transferability.....	95
Dependability.....	95
Confirmability.....	95
Study Results	95
Research Question 1	96
Research Question 2	100
Research Question 3	104
Other Key Themes	107
Themes by Acquisition Functional Areas.....	110
Summary.....	111
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	113
Purpose and Nature of the Study	113
Interpretations of the Findings	114
Research Question 1	114
Research Question 2	116

Research Question 3	119
Limitations of the Study.....	121
Recommendations.....	121
Recommendation for Action.....	121
Recommendation 1: Logistical and Sustainment Support for ARAP	
Equipment.....	122
Recommendation 2: Maintain Regular Contact With Soldiers Requesting	
ARAP Equipment	122
Recommendation 3: Allocate Proper Funding for ARAP Program	
Managers.....	123
Recommendation 4: Institutionalize ARAP Training at DAU	124
Recommendations for Further Research.....	124
Implications.....	126
Significance to Social Change	126
Significance to Practice.....	126
Conclusion	127
References.....	128
Appendix A: Interview Questions	148
Appendix B: E-mail Solicitation Letter for Potential Study Participants	151
Appendix C: Study Participant Letter of Consent	152
Appendix D: Interview Question Review Protocol	154
Appendix E: Solicitation Letter for Field Study Participants	157

List of Tables

Table 1. Study Participant Demographic Overview (N = 19)	90
Table 2. Coding and Themes	93
Table 3. Themes From Interviews and Data Aligned With Research Questions	96
Table 4. Theme Alignment of Acquisition Functional Areas	111

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1.</i> Conceptual framework diagram.....	10
<i>Figure 2.</i> Three systems supporting the Army acquisition system.....	42
<i>Figure 3.</i> Defense Acquisition System diagram.	43
<i>Figure 4.</i> Defense Acquisition System diagram.	45
<i>Figure 5.</i> Step-by-step methodology overview.	68

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Army Rapid Acquisition Process (ARAP) has been active since the early 2000s and has resulted in the successful delivery of equipment to thousands of soldiers around the world. As the size of the Army begins to decrease, capturing the lessons learned from ARAP use may help to improve the ARAP for the future. The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The ARAP has resulted in the successful delivery of equipment under extreme conditions to some of the world's most remote locations, but there remains room for improvement. Improvements may result in developing higher quality equipment, delivering equipment in a timelier manner, and procuring equipment more cost effectively.

This study involved examining the ARAP process, and the results include recommendations to improve the ARAP's effectiveness and efficiency. The most likely social change that may result from this study is improving the national defense of the United States through better equipping soldiers to defend against threats to national security with improved processes. Improved processes may lead to lower equipment costs and enhanced equipment quality. Improved processes may also assist in delivering equipment to soldiers in a timelier manner, which will ultimately assist in the defense of the United States and will protect the lives of soldiers.

This chapter includes an introduction to bureaucracy theory, postbureaucracy theory, the Army Acquisition Process (AAP), and the ARAP. Also discussed are the

study's problem statement, purpose, and three main research questions, as well as a brief introduction to the study methodology. Additional topics discussed are assumptions, scope, limitations, and delimitations of the study.

Background

The AAP is the standard method by which Army Acquisition Professionals within the U.S. Army procure and develop equipment for U.S. soldiers. The equipment procured under these methods is unique and not available through normal commercial resources. Acquisition professionals within the U.S. Army must develop, test, manufacture, and procure this type of military equipment in large quantities with money allocated by the U.S. Congress (U.S. Department of Defense [DoD], 2013b). This process is slow, structured, hierarchal, and inefficient. The AAP performs in a manner akin to the characteristics of bureaucracy. The AAP is inefficient and is frequently too slow to be responsive to the urgent materiel needs of soldiers.

The United States has participated in two recent wars: the Iraq War, which began in 2003, and the Afghanistan War, which began in 2001. During this time frame, the AAP has been ineffective (Whaley & Stewart, 2014), in part due to the inability to deliver equipment to soldiers before conditions on the battlefield evolved (Block, 2012). By the time the Army developed, tested, and procured a piece of equipment, the equipment was no longer effective because the enemy had changed the manner in which it operated.

The AAP is a complex, methodical approach created to outfit soldiers with the best available equipment to maintain military superiority over enemies of the United States. The current AAP has proven not suitable during peacetime due to the extended

time required to deliver equipment to soldiers; thus, there has been a need for ARAP to develop and procure equipment for soldiers (Lopez, 2013). According to a 2013 U.S. Government Accountability Office report, the average acquisition program in 2012 was more than 24 months behind schedule, and 39% of the programs were at least 25% over the initial cost per piece of equipment. An example that demonstrates the AAP's inefficiencies and inadequacies is the Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS; Block, 2012). Acquisition professionals within the Army spent 15 years on this program with the intent of developing a universal radio for use in all U.S. armed services (Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines) to communicate while jointly conducting operations. The predicted initial cost of the JTRS was \$2 million, but before officials finally discontinued the effort, costs exceeded \$6 billion. After 15 years of research and development, as well as the production of numerous prototypes, the Army managed to procure a few different improved radio systems, but not the desired universal radio. The AAP failed to produce an adequate radio in a timely manner.

Inadequacies and inefficiencies of the AAP include failing to deliver quality equipment to soldiers in a timely manner, as noted with the JTRS. Another inadequacy of the AAP is lack of stable equipment performance requirements, due to rapid changes in tactics on the battlefield (Rosen, 2013). The requirements are unstable because the U.S. Army's adversaries adapt to the manner in which the U.S. Army operates. In an effort to keep up with these changes, the AAP equipment performance requirements undergo alterations. The continuous change in requirements often extends the timeline for delivering equipment to soldiers.

Due to the deficiencies and inefficiencies of the AAP, Army leadership instituted the ARAP. The ARAP represents an attempt to fill the gap created by the AAP by quickly meeting current equipment acquisition needs through a more streamlined process. Commanders often make urgent equipment requests through the ARAP. However, much of the equipment delivered is prototype equipment that is immature and presents logistical issues (Whitson, 2012; Williams, Drezner, McKernan, Shontz, & Sollinger, 2014). Immature equipment is not generally repairable within the Army's logistical system, and Army commanders must often purchase the same equipment again (Whaley & Stewart, 2014). Alternatively, contractor service support companies may maintain or service some equipment, but they often charge high rates.

The method for managing the inadequacies and inefficiencies of the AAP within the Army is to procure equipment through the ARAP, which is an alternative approach. The ARAP is an umbrella term that encompasses four methods for the rapid procurement of equipment in the U.S. Army. The four methods are the Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC; DoD, 2012), Rapid Equipping Force (REF; U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command [TRADOC], 2013), Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI; Department of the Army, 2009), and Capabilities Development for Rapid Transition (CDRT; TRADOC, 2013). The four rapid fielding processes generally produce equipment quickly for soldiers, but their shortfalls include immaturity of equipment, which often presents logistical issues (Whitson, 2012). Like the postbureaucratic theoretical approach, the process is nimble, the organizational structure is flatter, there is less competition, and managers and supervisors have increased flexibility.

The present research was necessary to determine ways in which the ARAP can lead to the effective and efficient delivery of quality equipment to soldiers. The study may benefit soldiers because, as a result of a better understanding of the system's shortfalls and the implementation of improvements, they may receive equipment that is better than the equipment they currently receive. Additionally, the study could benefit taxpayers through improved efficiencies in the ARAP and the AAP. The study is also necessary because as the number of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan decreases, it is important to capture the lessons learned for the next conflict that U.S. soldiers may encounter to improve future ARAP acquisitions.

Problem Statement

Acquisition professionals within the U.S. Army expended over \$76 billion using the ARAP from 2005 through 2010 in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars to develop, test, and deliver equipment to soldiers, but they failed to document adequately the issues and lessons learned from the ARAP during the wars (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2011a). If adequately documented, the lessons learned could be applicable to the Army's next war. Pernin et al. (2014), Rasch (2011), Riposo, McKernan, and Duran (2014), Solis (2011), Whaley and Stewart (2014), and Williams et al. (2014) conducted research within the Army acquisition community that documented problems associated with the ARAP from the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

The general management problem is that ARAP needs improvement and could increase its efficiency in delivering adequate equipment to soldiers. In relation to this general problem, a gap in ARAP research exists in various Army acquisition functional

areas. Studying the ARAP across all functions as a system, using professionals who have dealt with the ARAP daily and for at least 6 years, could provide new insights. The specific management problem is the gap in knowledge and understanding about the ARAP. Only an evaluation of the ARAP by a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals can narrow this gap. This study differs from and expands upon other published studies because its scope is broader and it includes data from subject matter experts across the various acquisition functional areas that play critical roles in the approval process for developing and delivering equipment to soldiers under the ARAP. This research improves knowledge and understanding of the ARAP by validating, invalidating, or adding to the current body of published research on the ARAP.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. Although there has been some research on ARAP, the research conducted to date has failed to use the expertise and competencies of the various acquisition functional areas. Previous research included a narrow range of acquisition expertise, mostly from a program management perspective, and relied primarily on personal opinion rather than scholarly analysis of original documents and experiences. There is a need to expand ARAP research and to consider the views of acquisition professionals from a wider range of functional specialties and expertise. The

acquisition functional areas considered for this study were program management, contracting, test and evaluation, science and technology, and systems engineering.

I used purposive and snowball sampling to find 19 Army acquisition professionals to interview in the Mid-Atlantic Region who were Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level III certified in an acquisition functional area. The focus of this study was exploring the perceptions of Army acquisition professionals on ARAP issues and deficiencies. The results from this study include recommendations that may assist in developing and procuring improved equipment more efficiently, more effectively, and in a shorter time. This study has potential to contribute to positive social change by supporting improvement to the national defense of the United States through better equipping soldiers to defend against threats to national security.

Research Questions

The questions for the qualitative study were as follows:

RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?

RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?

RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

Theoretical Foundation

I grounded this study in the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. De Gourmay first used the term *bureaucracy* in 1765. Bureaucracy is typically a set of hierarchical rules established by a governing body that define authority and relationships (Hull, 2012). Weber (2012) described management with a heavy reliance on rules as one of the six characteristics of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is also the process by which organizational leaders in government and many other large organizations plan and conduct their operations (Augustine & Agu, 2013). Postbureaucracy was the other main theory applied within this study.

In contrast to bureaucracy, postbureaucracy is a theory of management whose proponents aim to increase efficiencies within workplaces subject to bureaucracy. Postbureaucracy is a response to some of the inefficiencies associated with bureaucracy (Bezes et al., 2012; Handel, 2013; Zafra-Gómez, Prior, Díaz, & López-Hernández, 2013). Within postbureaucracy, new public management (NPM) is the practical implementation of certain management techniques. Postbureaucracy is the theoretical aspect of management, whereas NPM is the practical aspect of management implementation (Pollitt & Dan, 2013). New public management has also been a response to environmental conditions that resulted from expanding the Internet and using new information technology tools (Aykaç & Metin, 2012).

I demonstrate in Chapter 2 how the two theories in this research project are analogous to the two different acquisition processes and relate closely to this study because of their parallel relationship. The AAP is comparable to bureaucracy because it

operates in a slow, methodical manner with minimal consideration for time constraints when completing tasks. The ARAP, in comparison, includes some of the postbureaucracy principles such as nimbleness and the ability to adjust to rapidly evolving requirements from soldiers. The ARAP can be unstable at times and focused on short-term goals with little regard for the future or long-term impacts of decisions.

Conceptual Framework

The theory of postbureaucracy is viewable through the theoretical lens of the self-organizing principle. The *self-organizing principle* from a management perspective refers to groups or individuals who internally manage their tasks while operating together to achieve an overall goal (Hoda, Noble, & Marshall, 2012). Self-organization is a key characteristic of organizations that successfully respond to change. Self-organization also occurs in the management of organizations.

Under the self-organization principle, groups or individuals within organizations will continue to strive and achieve overall goals, even if there are obstacles hindering goal achievement. Raelin (2012) noted the importance of institutions self-organizing in an effort to achieve optimal productivity while operating under the ideology of postbureaucracy theory. The methods for achieving such goals are not always conventional, and the approach to achieving such goals is somewhat unconventional. The conceptual framework for this study appears in Figure 1, which includes the addition of self-organizing principles, aligns bureaucracy with AAP, and aligns postbureaucracy with the ARAP.

According to Whaley and Stewart (2014), AAP lacks the ability to rapidly resource soldiers with essential equipment in a timely manner. In an effort to respond to the need for more rapid acquisition of equipment, individuals within the Army self-organized and established the ARAP to achieve the goal of rapidly equipping soldiers. The ARAP represented a means to circumvent the normal process and self-organize to achieve the goal of rapidly equipping soldiers. A discussion of the REF and other organizations that use the ARAP appears in Chapter 2. These organizations serve as examples of how the leaders of institutions can self-organize to meet urgent needs.

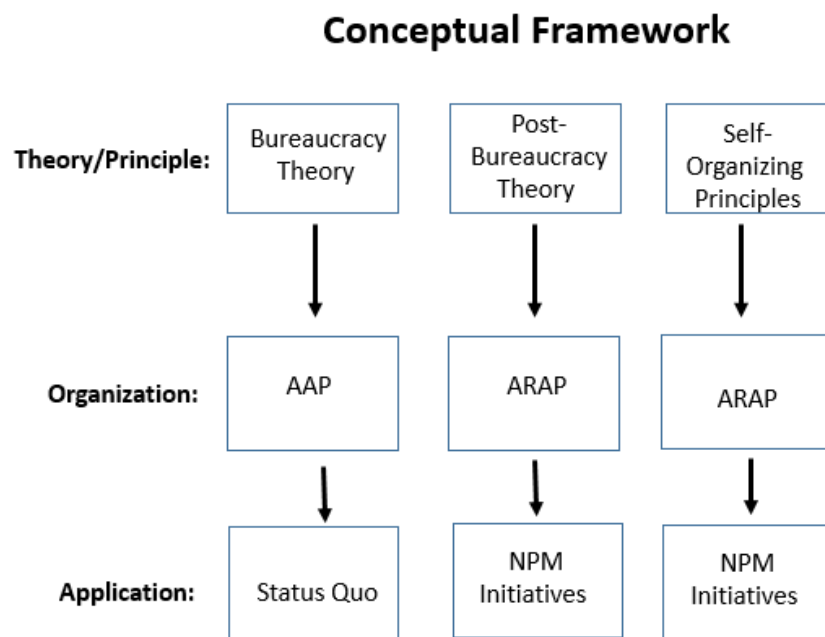


Figure 1. Conceptual framework diagram.

Four research phenomena underwent analysis in this study. The four phenomena were workplace production inefficiencies, lack of cognitive rationale, dynamism, and lack of long-term forethought. Workplace production inefficiencies and lack of cognitive

rationale correlate to bureaucracy theory. Dynamism and a lack of long-term forethought correlate to postbureaucracy theory. The four phenomena undergo a detailed analysis in Chapter 2.

The phenomena and self-organization principles connected to the research questions. The answers to the research questions provide additional insight into dynamism and lack of long-term forethought as this research study related to postbureaucracy and NPM initiatives. The four research phenomena and self-organization principles were topics discussed during interviews with study participants.

Nature of the Study

This exploratory qualitative case study involved interviewing Army acquisition professionals who had experience working with the ARAP. I selected the case study methodology because Stake (1995) and Yin (2014) indicated that researchers can better accommodate complex issues in case studies. The complexity of the ARAP extends beyond developing, procuring, testing, and fielding equipment to soldiers. Other factors contribute to the complexity of the ARAP, such as budget cycles, congressional reductions in funding, requirement changes from the user community, technical issues in developing equipment, safety concerns discovered while testing equipment, manufacturing and production issues, congressional investigations, and other unforeseen issues that can derail a program. A structured set of interview questions or a survey would not have been suitable for exploring these factors. Instead, I employed open-ended questions, and the participants discussed these issues freely and identified factors not already researched in the scholarly literature.

Within this study, I captured themes that emerged that explained the inability of ARAP to deliver equipment to soldiers in a timely, efficient, and effective manner. This study also involved searching for patterns in the data and using direct interpretation to make assertions about the inability to deliver quality equipment to soldiers within an acceptable timeline. Baškarada (2013) noted that the pattern approach and direct interpretation are two common techniques for case study analysis. The qualitative approach was suitable because the nature of the problem required in-depth, open-ended interviews and analysis of written documents.

The methodology included purposive and snowball sampling techniques for 19 Army acquisition professionals who had worked in the Army acquisition community for a minimum of 6 years and were DAWIA Level III certified in a functional area. First, I created interview questions and conducted a field test with subject matter experts from the Army acquisition field. After the field study was complete, I sampled the population through semistructured interviews. Finally, I transcribed, coded, and analyzed the data with NVivo 11 qualitative analysis software.

Definitions

Acquisition: The conceptualization, initiation, design, development, testing, contracting, production, deployment, logistics support, modification, and disposal of weapons and other systems, supplies, or services, including construction, to satisfy DoD needs and intended for use in, or in support of, military missions (Department of the Army, 2011).

Army Acquisition Process or Army Acquisition Procedures (AAP): The formal process guided by the Defense Acquisition System (DAS) that guides development, procurement, testing, and contractual management for all major equipment procured for all of the armed services (Department of the Army, 2014).

Army Rapid Acquisition Process (ARAP): An umbrella term that covers four methods used to procure equipment rapidly to meet the needs of soldiers supporting combat operations. These four methods are the JRAC (DoD, 2012), REF (TRADOC, 2013), RFI (Department of the Army, 2009), and CDRT (TRADOC, 2013). In their management, the four rapid-fielding processes occur independently of each other and under various, largely separate, regulations.

Bureaucracy: A set of rules established by a governing body with the aim of creating hierarchical structures, defining both authority and relationships, and instituting a standard methodology for conducting business within the organization. Bureaucracy is the process by which organizational leaders plan and conduct their daily operations and make plans for the future of the organization (Adler, 2012). Bureaucracy includes the following six characteristics: hierarchical structure, management focused on rules, organization by functional specialty, higher mission focus or internal mission focus, remaining impersonal, and employment based on technical qualifications (Weber, 2012).

Capabilities Development for Rapid Transition (CDRT): A semiannual Army process that involves identifying the best nonstandard materiel and nonmateriel solutions. Leaders of TRADOC's Army Capabilities Integration Center's Asymmetric Warfare Division manage the CDRT process in partnership with Headquarters, Department of the

Army G-3/5/7 Capability Integration Division. The goal for CDRT is to reduce significantly the time it takes to field selected systems or capabilities to the operational force. The CDRT process also involves recommending disposition for those capabilities not selected as enduring, either for retention (e.g., sustain) within the operational theaters or for termination of all Army support. Operational Army unit survey responses provide the basis for recommendations. The CDRT process is one of the four ARAP processes that aim to provide equipment to soldiers more efficiently and effectively (TRADOC, 2013).

Defense Acquisition System (DAS): The higher process that guides the development and delivery of equipment in the AAP and ARAP. The DoD Instruction 5000.02 directive manages the DAS (DoD, 2015). All four armed services acquire major equipment using the general guidance of the DAS.

Joint Capability Integration and Development System (JCIDS): The Joint Capability Integration and Development System (JCIDS) process generates three different requirement documents that support the DAS: the initial capability document, the capability development document, and the capability production document. All three are necessary for developing and procuring equipment for the Army in the AAP. Requirement writers often reference JCIDS documents when developing requirement documents for the ARAP. JCIDS documents contain analytical data on potential materiel solutions for equipment requested by soldiers (Joint Requirements Oversight Council, 2012).

Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC): An organization established by the deputy secretary of defense that serves as a collaborative body for all the armed services. The organizational leaders prioritize numerous requirement requests, determine solutions, and find and allocate funding for the new equipment. The JRAC reports directly to the undersecretary of defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) and oversees (with the Joint Staff J-8) the implementation of joint urgent operational needs and joint emergent operational needs. Joint urgent operational needs and joint emergent operational needs are requirement documents or requests that the Army submits to the JRAC in the ARAP. JRAC produces requirement documents for the ARAP (DoD, 2012).

New public management (NPM): The practical aspect of management implementation (Aykac & Metin, 2012; Pollitt & Dan, 2013) and the response to new work environments under postbureaucratic initiatives. New public management is a management tool that measures performance with metrics (Buschor, 2013; Speklé & Verbeeten, 2014).

Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE): A calendar-driven event designed to provide commanders in the field with the best mix of soldiers, equipment, and support within reason based on financial constraints across fiscal years. PPBE supports the AAP. The ARAP lacks such a system for planning and programming funding for equipment (DoD, 2013b).

Postbureaucracy: A management approach to modernizing the public sector through the use of business and market-oriented processes that have a heavy focus on performance metrics and results. Postbureaucracy is a response to some of the

inefficiencies associated with bureaucracy (Bezes et al., 2012; Handel, 2013; Zafra-Gómez et al., 2013).

Rapid Equipping Force (REF): One of the four ARAP methods, the U.S. Army REF rapidly provides urgent capabilities to U.S. Army forces employed globally by harnessing current and emerging technologies to improve operational effectiveness. The REF is a capability provider empowered to act quickly on behalf of the Department of the Army G-3, also known as the Army's main operation center located in the Pentagon, to provide soldiers and commanders with important capabilities that increase lethality, improve force protection, and enhance their survivability against highly adaptive enemies (U.S. Army, 2014).

Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI): One of the four ARAP methods, the RFI is an organization created to leverage current procurement programs; commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) technology; and lessons learned from operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other combat zones promptly to enhance the survivability, lethality, and mobility of soldiers deployed in support of overseas contingency operations. To maintain its currency and relevance, TRADOC personnel update, and Department of the Army personnel approve, the list of RFI equipment fielded to soldiers regularly. The RFI personnel distribute mission-essential equipment of the highest capability to each deploying soldier. Every soldier, regardless of unit type, undergoes assessment as a system and receives the equipment necessary to execute a specific mission (Department of the Army, 2009).

Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering: Known in abbreviated form as *systems engineering*, this interdisciplinary approach encompasses the

entire technical effort to evolve and verify an integrated and total life-cycle-balanced set of system, people, and process solutions that satisfy defense customer needs. Systems engineering is the integrating mechanism across technical efforts related to development, manufacturing, verification, deployment, operations, support, disposal, and user training for systems and their life cycle processes. Systems engineering develops technical information to support the program management decision-making process. The REF and other government agencies with system engineers rapidly develop prototype equipment for soldiers using the ARAP (Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for System Engineering, 2014).

Test and evaluation: A process by which the Army Test and Evaluation Command exercises a system or components of a system and analyzes results to gather performance-related information. The information has many uses, including risk identification and risk mitigation, and involves empirical data to validate models and simulations. Test and evaluation enable an assessment of the attainment of technical performance, specifications, and system maturity to determine whether systems are operationally effective, suitable, and survivable for their intended use. Various types of test and evaluation defined in statutes or regulations include developmental test and evaluation, operational test and evaluation, live-fire test and evaluation, and interoperability certification. Test and evaluation are necessary for equipment developed under the ARAP. Test and evaluation are often abbreviated, but this step is necessary to ensure that equipment is operationally effective (DoD, 2013a).

Assumptions

This study included two main assumptions regarding the DAS, the AAP, and the ARAP. The first assumption was that a higher DAS, as a process, would remain largely stable. The second assumption was that acquisition professionals within the Army would have permission to improve the ARAP within the DAS and AAP. These assumptions were necessary to this study because they demonstrated the practical application of the study, which helped to support the relevancy of the study.

The assumptions were relevant to this study because the ARAP is necessary, given that the AAP suffers from many issues, including high rates of inefficiency and an inability to change the culture of the Army to meet the current requirements of soldiers quickly. Many researchers have conducted studies and provided reasonable recommendations, yet leaders have ultimately ignored recommendations on how to improve both the AAP and the ARAP (Eide & Allen, 2012; Rasch, 2011). Only limited change has occurred as a result of the numerous studies conducted on the AAP and the ARAP. Army acquisition leaders have been unwilling to implement and heed the recommendations from the studies. This study differs because it consists of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals who play critical roles in the approval process for developing and delivering equipment to soldiers under the ARAP. Other studies and articles generally include one acquisition functional area, primarily program management.

Scope and Delimitations

The focus of this study was on the ARAP and not the standard AAP. The ARAP is narrow enough for gathering data and allowing a researcher to make reasonable, bounded conclusions. The study's focus also included experiences and lessons learned during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

The population selected for this study came from a pool of acquisition professionals from the Army Acquisition Corps with ARAP experience. Most of this population pool had DoD acquisition certifications that qualified them as experts in their acquisition functional area. Individuals in the general population did not qualify to participate in this study because they would lack expertise in the ARAP. The results of this study may be transferable to other practitioners within the Army acquisition workforce. Leaders in the acquisition workforce may be able to apply some of the recommendations made for the ARAP to standard acquisitions.

Limitations

Selecting inappropriate study participants is a threat to quality and was a possible limitation to the study. To mitigate this limitation, I ensured that at least 80% of study participants were DAWIA Level III certified. This certification ensures that individuals are familiar with ARAP and Army acquisition processes supporting the ARAP. Study participants also had at least 6 years of Army acquisition work experience with projects that entailed close collaboration with Army acquisition program offices. Study participants also had at least 2 years of workforce experience within the required 6 years supporting Army acquisition programs through the ARAP.

The purposive sampling method was a limitation for this study. Purposive sampling is nonprobability-based sampling that is not necessarily reflective of the population (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2015). Researchers design purposive sampling for specific populations and research topics. The purposive sampling method served as a limitation because it affected the universality and generalizability of the research results in comparison to random sampling.

Limitations for this study included selecting study participants to interview who may have had a bias toward using the AAP. It could also have been a challenge to keep the study participants focused on the topic of the ARAP versus the AAP. When answering interview questions, there could have been a tendency for study participants to answer the questions in the terms of the AAP. To mitigate this, I focused the questions specifically on ARAP and refrained from AAP discussions.

Another limitation or focal area that may have limited the results of the study involved the U.S.-led war efforts that began in 2001 and that provided large amounts of money directed toward purchasing equipment through the ARAP. The amount of money spent on DoD initiatives is declining and will continue to decline for the foreseeable future, given the budget constraints within the U.S. government (Hagel, 2015; Zakheim, 2014). It may be challenging to convince study participants to give credence to the near-term future of the ARAP given current and future funding cuts.

There may have been a perception that this research would not address users of the equipment. Though this study did not include a participant category defined as users of the equipment, the study did include users of the equipment, because many of the

study participants were retired military personnel who were former users of military equipment with experience using the ARAP. Some of the personnel interviewed were still serving in the military as U.S. Army Acquisition Corps officers. The officers were former users of the equipment, and they had experience with the ARAP. Many of the officers had combat experience in the Afghanistan War, the Iraq War, or both.

Significance of the Study

The focus of this study was increasing knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. In this study, I identified problems that hinder the quick development, procurement, and delivery of quality equipment to soldiers through ARAP. This study filled a gap in the knowledge and understanding about ARAP's deficiencies using data collected from a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional areas. Though some research on ARAP exists, the research does not reflect the expertise and competencies of the various acquisition functional areas. Existing research is from a narrow range of acquisition professionals, mostly program managers, supported primarily by personal opinion rather than scholarly analysis of original documents and experiences. Because of the narrow focus of previous research, there is a need to expand ARAP research and consider the views of acquisition professionals from a wider range of functional specialties and expertise.

Significance to Theory and Practice

This study may add value to the Army because it includes recommendations to improve the ARAP. It was important to capture the ARAP lessons learned during the two

recent wars. The captured lessons learned from this study may assist in preparing U.S. Army leaders to improve the ARAP in future major conflicts. Recommendations from this study could benefit soldiers who receive improved equipment in a timelier manner to counter current threats more quickly and to fill capability gaps. This study may lead acquisition professionals to a better understanding of ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP. This study is also valuable because it includes insight on bureaucracy and postbureaucracy theories as practiced within the Army.

Significance to Social Change

This study may contribute to efforts to strengthen the national defense of the United States by better equipping soldiers to defend against threats to national security through improved processes. The study may also provide recommendations for cost savings from reduced Army acquisition timelines or the timely delivery of suitable equipment to soldiers. These improvements may ultimately save soldiers' lives and reduce the procurement of nonstandard equipment that increases long-term maintenance costs.

Summary and Transition

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an overview of the various elements of this study. This chapter included the background, purpose, and three main research questions for this study. This chapter also included a brief review of the theoretical nature of this study, addressing the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. The chapter included a brief introduction and discussion of the two theories; an overview of the study methodology; and the assumptions, scope, limitations,

and delimitations of this study. The chapter concluded with a statement of the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 includes the literature review, for which I searched numerous research databases using iterative terms related to bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. The chapter includes a review and synthesis of recent literature with a primary focus on the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. Current themes from the two theories undergo further analysis as the theoretical foundation of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The general management problem was that the ARAP requires improvement and is inefficient in delivering adequate equipment to soldiers. There was a gap in ARAP research from various Army acquisition functional areas. The specific management problem was this gap in knowledge and understanding about the ARAP. Only an evaluation of the ARAP by a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals could narrow this gap.

The standard AAP is a complex methodical approach with the aim to outfit soldiers with the best available equipment to maintain military superiority. Questions regarding the suitability of the AAP during times of war have existed for some time (Whaley & Stewart, 2014). Two major prolonged wars have revealed the ineffectiveness of the AAP in meeting soldiers' equipment needs in a timely manner (Whaley & Stewart, 2014). According to a 2013 U.S. Government Accountability Office report, research demonstrated that from 2008 to 2012, the average major acquisition program schedule increased from 22 to 27 months, and costs grew during this same time frame from \$323 billion to \$411 billion (Schultz, 2014). This scheduled increase demonstrates the inefficiencies of the AAP.

As a result of AAP inefficiencies, four distinct rapid acquisition processes comprise what is collectively known as the ARAP. The ARAP now exists to fill the gap in meeting material acquisition needs quickly. The four processes are JRAC (DoD,

2012), REF (TRADOC, 2013), RFI (Department of the Army, 2009), and the CDRT (TRADOC, 2013). Commanders often make urgent equipment requests through one of the four rapid material acquisition processes. Much of the equipment delivered is prototype equipment that is immature (Solis, 2011; Whitson, 2012) and presents logistical issues (Rasch, 2011; Whitson, 2012).

This chapter consists of six sections: Introduction, Literature Search Strategy, Theoretical Foundations, Conceptual Framework, Literature Review of Key Variables, and Summary and Conclusion. An analysis of Weber's bureaucracy theory includes themes related to legitimacy, rationalization, authority, ideal bureaucracy, and the iron cage. Postbureaucracy, with an emphasis on NPM, undergoes analysis as a modern form of government for both established and developing nations. Also analyzed is the existence of hybrid forms of government that embrace both bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. The methodology chapter follows this chapter.

Literature Search Strategy

During the literature review, I searched numerous databases to gain insight on current literature on the topic of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy theorists. The databases available from the Walden Library were Sage, EBSCOhost, Blackwell, Elsevier, Google Scholar, and Emerald. I also searched the Defense Technical Information Center in depth for information specifically related to DoD acquisition studies. Using numerous search terms led to current trends within the literature. The iterative terms used to explore the literature were as follows: *traditional bureaucracy*, *bureaucracy*, *bureaucratic theory*, *postbureaucracy*, *adaptive organizations*, *complex*

leadership theory, complex adaptive theories, change management theories, change management drivers, new public management, network enterprise, postmodern organizations, flexible organizations, public choice theory, flexible firms, governance networks, public sector collaboration innovation, and hierarchy theory. The theorists investigated in the databases were Max Weber, Henri Fayol, and Frederick Taylor.

I also researched other theorists as part of the literature review. Those theorists included Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Anthony Downs, and Mary Parker Follett. Hegel was not a main theorist of interest for this study because the focus of much of his work on bureaucracy was on the social aspects of bureaucracy, but Weber focused on rational and legal authority, which aligned better with this study. Downs was also not a primary theorist for this study because Weber's works served as the basis of many of his works. Follett was a management theorist who published management studies with practical application, but Follett often did not include bureaucracy as a central theme in studies.

The search started broadly with an investigation into several terms related to bureaucracy. The search included many of the iterative terms listed above and eventually narrowed to bureaucracy and postbureaucracy as the two main theories. Postbureaucracy is a broad management term found throughout the literature. In this study, NPM underwent analysis as an application of the postbureaucracy theory in government organizations, specifically the U.S. Army. Sage, Science Direct, and Emerald were the most germane databases in researching bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. These three databases provided the most relevant information on the two theories and on

postbureaucracy initiatives such as NPM. The three databases provided sources containing in-depth analysis on issues associated with bureaucracy.

Theoretical Foundations

Bureaucracy

The foundation for this study was the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. De Gourmay coined the term *bureaucracy* in 1765. The meaning of the term at its origin was not positive, and the negative connotations have continued. Since its inception, people have associated the term with inefficiency, routines, and inhibited actions for personnel (Hull, 2012). Although this term was first coined in 1765, ruling empires have been adhering to the principles of bureaucracy for the past 12,000 years (Diefenbach & By, 2012). The amount of time that leaders of nations have been effectively using bureaucracy lends credibility to bureaucracy as a legitimate tool.

In the 21st century, *bureaucracy* refers to a set of rules established by a governing body with the aims of creating hierarchical structures, defining both authority and relationships, and instituting a standard methodology or rules for conducting business within the organization (Augustine & Agu, 2013; Diefenbach & By, 2012). Kanninen and Piiparinen (2014) and Tholen (2015) noted that the key benefits of bureaucracy are its ability to manage administrative tasks efficiently with an additional benefit of having access to people with expertise in various fields. Kanninen and Piiparinen (2014) and Tholen (2015) further noted that bureaucracy provides discipline, stability, and reliability with regard to managing administrative tasks. The U.S. founding fathers established a government based on the principles of bureaucracy.

The leaders of many Western countries, specifically the United States, embraced bureaucracy in the late 19th century during an era in which the United States led the world in the industrial revolution (Parker & Ritson, 2011). After the U.S. victory in World War II, bureaucracy gained legitimacy as a management tool for the world's newest and strongest superpower. Bureaucracy continued to serve as the most effective management tool through the industrial revolution, World War II, and the end of the Cold War. The type of bureaucracy defined by Weber is structured, slow, and hierarchical and was appropriate for that period (Kanninen & Piiparinen, 2014). The age of the Internet challenged the effectiveness of Weber's bureaucracy, supported the need for postbureaucracy, and sparked debate on a modern form of bureaucracy known as *postbureaucracy*.

Postbureaucracy

After the Cold War, globalization transformed the world into a more dynamic environment. The fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of the Internet created a new world marketplace that leveled the playing field for many nations, individuals, and organizations (Major, 2012). The level playing field increased competition in the marketplace because information flowed more freely, and merchandise and services were available to a wider customer audience. The bureaucratic system demonstrated signs of weakness in this new marketplace, as it was inflexible and lacked the nimbleness and creativity required to operate effectively in modern global markets (Bond & O'Byrne, 2014; Haque, 2013; Kanninen & Piiparinen, 2014). Some scholars and managers called for the implementation of postbureaucratic systems (Colon & Guerin-Schneider, 2015;

Haque, 2013; Lee, 2012). These scholars recognized that the changing dynamics within the management field required a postbureaucratic approach.

Supporters of postbureaucracy strive to modernize bureaucratic systems with businesslike and result-oriented processes. Postbureaucracy is also defined as a set of corporate, businesslike management practices that focus on performance and results (Clegg, 2012). The aim of postbureaucracy is to transition organizations into results-oriented corporations that focus on cost, schedule, and performance (Diefenbach, 2009). Advocates of postbureaucracy note that its benefits include improved competitiveness, decentralization, performance accountability, an increase in manager and worker autonomy, flexibility, and nimbleness (Haque, 2013; Wihantoro, Lowe, Cooper, & Manochin, 2015). These advocates see a need to turn away from bureaucracy and embrace postbureaucracy efforts to keep pace with the modern digital age. Postbureaucracy advocates see Weber's bureaucracy theory as outdated and ineffective.

Bureaucracy Theory

The major theoretical propositions for bureaucracy theory originated from Weber, who is the premier and most influential social theorist on the topic of bureaucracy. Weber has a wide breadth of well-known work on the theory of bureaucracy. Weber noted that bureaucracy is necessary and the most efficient tool to organize governments (Weber, 2012). Al-Habil (2011) furthered the theoretical proposition by contending that although Weber recognized that bureaucracy is not a perfect tool, it serves as the most rational, efficient, and proven system invented to date.

Weber was a sociologist by profession and wrote a great deal on the topic of bureaucracy. Weber (2012) wrote about many sociological topics, but for this study, the focus was on his works related to bureaucracy. Weber analyzed the theory of bureaucracy under the following four areas: legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and ideal bureaucracy. The four concepts surface on a regular basis in much of the recent literature. Many of the recent works on legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and ideal bureaucracy within the literature trace back to Weber and his theory of bureaucracy.

Misinterpretation of the theory has resulted in some scholars calling Weber's theory of bureaucracy obsolete due to the complex global environment in which the world now operates. Managers and scholars have used Weber's theory of the ideal bureaucracy to recommend radical paradigm shifts that could change organizations (Bartels, 2009). A new radical shift involves reorganizing organizations to reflect horizontal structures as opposed to traditional vertical hierarchical organizations. The structure would enable organizations to be more agile and have the ability to react to dynamic global markets. Scholars seeking a radical shift prefer flattened organizations that are different from the stovepipe and vertical hierarchical organizational structures. Scholars and practitioners supporting the radical structure change make it known that the efficiency of bureaucracy can drastically improve through such changes.

Weber's ideal bureaucracy is an example of how bureaucracy can work in a perfect world. Ideal bureaucracy is a goal. According to Bartels's (2009) and Jørgensen's (2012) assessment, Weber admitted in his writings that ideal bureaucracy did not exist and would not exist in the real world. Bartels noted that many scholars in the

management field dismissed Weber's theory of the ideal bureaucracy due to a misinterpretation of the theory.

Bartels (2009) contended that Weber's ideal bureaucracy can help both scholars and practitioners advance the understanding of the bureaucratic rationale of civil servants. Good bureaucratic rationale involves using mental cognitive skills to make decisions as opposed to simply following rules. For example, civil servant bureaucrats who receive guidance that they deem unjust may confer with their boss before executing the guidance. Clarifying the guidance demonstrates good judgment. If bosses justify why they want the guidance executed, civil servants should execute tasks as requested, unless the tasks are illegal.

Weber (2012) also noted that civil servants should abide by the concept of "substantive rationality" (p. 185). In other words, civil servant bureaucrats should exercise good ethics as part of their work responsibility and realize that their actions may have consequences. Bartels (2009) noted that many critics of Weber's theory of the ideal bureaucracy have cited the degradation of personal freedom as one of the issues with Weber's views on bureaucracy. The critics' concern has been that civil servant bureaucrats under the ideal bureaucracy concept must find a balance in following the prescribed rules and applying appropriate judgment.

Bureaucracy theory has six main characteristics, as first explained by Weber. The six characteristics of bureaucracy are organizations managed by hierarchical structure, organizations with a heavy focus on management by rules, organizations whose leaders manage by functional specialty, organizations whose leaders focus on meeting their

organization's higher mission or internal mission, organizations that are highly impersonal, and organizations whose leaders base employment on technical qualifications (Weber, 2012). Weber's six characteristics of bureaucracy appear throughout the literature and serve as the theoretical foundation for research studies (Gargalianos, Asimakopoulos, Chelladurai, & Toohey, 2015; Mahmood, Basharat, & Bashir, 2012; Nhema, 2015). Weber's six characteristics of bureaucracy are complementary to three other concepts he used when explaining bureaucracy: legitimacy, authority, and rationalization.

Researchers have debated these three concepts of interest in recent literature on bureaucracy. Weber discussed legitimacy, authority, and rationalization extensively in his original works (Weber, 2012). De Vries and Nemec (2013) noted that the basis of legitimacy is the rule of law and constitutional principles. Kabbesa-Abramzon (2012) asserted that legitimate power is equal to authority. Al-Habil (2011) and Weber (2012) noted that the three types of authority are traditional, legal or rational, and charismatic. *Traditional authority* is the result of power handed down from generation to generation. *Rationalization* refers to reasonable or sensible actions accepted by the governing law (Weber, 2012) and is one of Weber's main concepts that serve as the basis of an effectively operating bureaucracy.

Discussions about all three concepts—legitimacy, authority, and rationalization—appear in detail in the literature and apply to current management practices. Labolo (2013) questioned the legitimacy of bureaucracy since the end of World War II. Other scholars such as Torsteinsen (2012), Al-Habil (2011), and Diefenbach and By (2012)

have contended that bureaucracy is just as legitimate in the 21st century as it has been since its inception. Al-Habil highlighted three types of authority: traditional, charismatic, and legal rational. Modern society's bureaucracy is built upon the foundation of the legal rational authority approach. Those in leadership positions have achieved their status through normative rules and in a legitimate process. Hull (2012) cited authority as one of the defining qualities of bureaucracy. Aronovitch (2012) further analyzed and defined Weber's four types of rationalization as rationalization to achieve an end, rationalization that requires no justification such as a traditional approach, rationalization based on emotions such as anger, and rationalization based on simply following automated customs. Taneja, Pryor, and Toombs (2011) echoed similar descriptions of Weber's analysis on rationality. Parker and Ritson (2011) also noted that a large part of Frederick Taylor's success was his ability to link much of his work to Weber's theme of rationality. A great deal of Taylor's work is traceable to Weber's theme of rationality.

The three concepts are the foundation for modern society and in many ways are the basis of laws practiced in many industrial and civilized societies. Laws in general have shifted away from a traditional familial approach to a rationalized approach (Alfasi, 2014). In general, judges are rational, and at times they have to apply rational judgment when the rules are not clear (Broulík, 2014). Judges use rationale and do not make a decision simply because a rule does not address a situation. Bureaucrats may follow the rules or not take an action on a required task because the rules are unclear or ambiguous. The iron cage can sometimes trap bureaucrats.

The iron cage is a subtheory that originated with Weber and is the result of a system of inefficient rules, such as a bureaucracy, that traps people. Because bureaucrats are eager to follow rules, they lose sight of rational approaches, which is one of the fears about which Weber cautioned other scholars. Weber believed that it would be easy to lose control of large organizations in which people did not apply rationale when implementing rules (Spicer, 2015). Following the rules when implementing management procedures is often necessary, but managers and bureaucrats must realize that following rules without adequate rationale may not always be in the best interest of an organization.

Such examples include a news article on how school administrators used policy to dictate all their actions without using cognitive rationale (Roberts, 2012). According to Roberts (2012), teachers refused to allow two grade-school sisters to put on sunscreen because it violated school policy. The two girls subsequently received severe sunburns. Cognitive rationale would have indicated that the teachers or administrators remove the sisters from the sun, even if this violated school policy. Fayol, a management theorist, indicated such flexibility may be necessary and noted that his 14 management principles were ideals, and people should apply them only to situations where it makes cognitive rational sense (Schimmoeller, 2012). Fayol's emphasis on flexibility could serve as a precursor of the postbureaucracy theory.

Postbureaucracy Theory

Scholars' consensus on the effectiveness of postbureaucracy varies (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015; Kanninen & Piiparinen, 2014; Mukokoma & van Dijk, 2013; Pollitt & Dan, 2013; Siltala, 2013; Verbeeten & Spekle, 2015). Some scholars support

implementing postbureaucracy initiatives (Bartels, 2009; Johnson, Wood, Brewster, & Brookes, 2009), while other scholars consider postbureaucracy to be a trend not fully proven and accepted within the community (Handel, 2013). Scholars opposing postbureaucracy contended that it could not compare to the effectiveness that bureaucracy has provided over several centuries. As a result of the ongoing debate occurring within the literature, researchers have conducted studies on postbureaucracy.

Various scholars have analyzed postbureaucratic movements since the 1970s. Johnson et al. (2009) defined the theory of bureaucracy, cited examples of why many scholars support the concept of postbureaucracy, and noted the faults of bureaucracy. Johnson et al. noted that there is a general movement away from bureaucracy and toward implementing postbureaucracy initiatives. According to Johnson et al. and Diefenbach (2009), bureaucracy is not flexible enough to keep up with the current demands of the new global dynamic work environment. Postbureaucracy provides the nimbleness required to thrive in modern dynamic work environments. Postbureaucracy includes business- and market-oriented processes with a focus on metrics to develop results (Handel, 2013). Postbureaucracy initiatives take place through various applications.

New public management is an application of postbureaucracy theory. In many government organizations, NPM is a practical application of postbureaucracy. This study includes an analysis of the literature of NPM implementation efforts across public organizations. The major theoretical propositions for the NPM, the postbureaucratic initiative, originated in the 1970s (Aykaç & Metin, 2012). Christopher Hood first used the term NPM in the early 1990s (Christensen, 2012; Eckerd & Snider, 2017; Hansen,

Steen, & de Jong, 2013) and educated scholars about NPM as a management tool (Buschor, 2013; Handel, 2013). Although Hood used the term in the 1990s, the United Kingdom under the leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher led the way in implementing NPM in the early 1980s with the reform of the British National Health Service system (Pollitt & Dan, 2013). Many researchers documented the implementation of NPM initiatives within the British National Health Service system.

The reform of the British National Health Service system became the symbol of NPM implementation under Thatcher (Bezes et al., 2012). During this era, government leaders seeking results-based management methods established NPM in response to the inability of leaders of large governments to respond to the needs of their people and keep pace with other organizations that could potentially provide the same services. As information became more available to people through technology and the Internet, competition increased, and the time to complete bureaucratic management tasks significantly decreased.

Organizations' hierarchical structures flattened under NPM implementation in an effort to improve the ability to respond in global market environments (Williamson & Snow, 2013). Other theoretical propositions include the need to increase profits mostly on the corporate side and the merging of hybrid organizations, which includes government and corporate organizations working together to meet the demands of government organizations. Some scholars referred to this as government or private–public partnerships.

Rationale for Selection of Bureaucracy and Postbureaucracy Theories

Bureaucracy. Bureaucracy was one of two theories selected for this study. Government and U.S. Army leaders use bureaucracy as a tool to manage and control people and processes. The AAP has many similarities to bureaucracy. The AAP is frequently too slow, too structured, and ineffective in the globalized world.

Postbureaucracy. Postbureaucracy is the second theory selected for this study. Postbureaucracy has similar characteristics as the ARAP. Due to rapidly changing management environments, many scholars have asserted that bureaucracy is out of date and no longer an effective way to manage (Bartels, 2009). Many of these scholars have supported the implementation of postbureaucracy and cited examples of implementations of postbureaucracy (Bartels, 2009; Cai & Wang, 2012; Swirska, 2014; Zia & Khan, 2013). Others allege both can coexist, complement each other, and serve as an effective management tool (Emery & Giaque, 2014; Kletz et al., 2014; Lee, 2012; Santos Curto & Dias, 2014; Sturdy, Wright, & Wylie, 2014; Wiesel & Modell, 2014). Army leaders' method for dealing with the inefficiencies of the AAP is to procure equipment through the ARAP.

Army leaders using the ARAP procure items through the JRAC (DoD, 2012), REF (TRADOC, 2013), RFI (Department of the Army, 2009), or CDRT (TRADOC, 2013). The four rapid fielding processes produce equipment quickly for soldiers, although there are many shortfalls. Like the postbureaucratic approach, the process is nimble, organizational structure is flatter, competition is better, and more flexibility is available to managers and supervisors. Drawbacks to the ARAP include producing

inferior equipment and failing to integrate the equipment fully into the Army's overall equipment system, which further translates into the Army's inability to support the equipment logistically via the ARAP.

This study involved building upon existing theory and providing recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP. Park and Joaquin (2012) demonstrated that bureaucracy and postbureaucracy could coexist. The coexistence of the two theories indicates that managers can use both to organize their organization more efficiently to respond quickly to the constantly evolving requirements of soldiers (Park & Joaquin, 2012).

This research linked postbureaucracy theory and the ARAP because postbureaucracy and the ARAP have many of the same characteristics. The ARAP requires responsiveness not available in the standard acquisition process. The acquisition process rarely meets the needs of soldiers within a reasonable time. The JTRS was one of many examples why Army leaders should consider embracing elements of postbureaucracy theory in the ARAP.

The study also had close links to bureaucracy theory because bureaucracy and the AAP have similar characteristics. The results demonstrate that scholars and practitioners cannot completely disregard bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is necessary more for the AAP, which is a process that can take a long time to develop equipment. The equipment must meet the needs of harsh environments and remains in the inventory for decades. This equipment generally does not exist in the commercial market and takes a long time to develop in the technology maturation and risk reduction phases. For such equipment, the

bureaucracy approach is acceptable, and given the amount of money spent on such a program, bureaucracy is the right approach to ensure the proper development of the equipment.

Other Management Theorists

Henri Fayol. This study consisted of two theorists with complementary theories: Henri Fayol and Frederick Taylor. Fayol and Taylor were management theorists whose work complemented Weber's. Fayol served as both a theorist and a practitioner because he documented both effective and ineffective management strategies over the course of his career while serving in various management positions (Peaucelle & Guthrie, 2012). Fayol's works date back to the latter part of the 19th century.

Fayol supported the concept of cognitive rationale, and he elaborated on 14 administrative principles in his original work (Poudyal, 2013; Shakir, 2014). Before listing the key points of the 14 administrative principles, Fayol noted the principles were general guidelines and adjustable as needed by the managers implementing the principles (Schimmoeller, 2012). Managers who do not follow established rules or policies without sound rationale serve as an example of management theorists lacking cognitive rationale.

Some critics referred to Fayol as inflexible (Schimmoeller, 2012). Fayol accounted for management flexibility in his preferences before explaining his 14 administrative principles. Fayol was an appropriate choice for a management theorist in this study because his 14 administrative principles have stood the test of time. Fayol provided managers with advice for implementing the administrative principles so they

could use sound cognitive rationale and good judgment in the implementation of his 14 administrative principles.

Fayol believed in the concept of general management (Taneja et al., 2011). The general management approach supports the idea that a good manager can effectively manage any organization. Frederick Taylor supported the notion of technical management as a prerequisite to managing an organization effectively. According to Taylor, technical managers are better than general managers are because they know their occupation and can more effectively manage the organization. Master in business administration students once focused on principles of general management, but a more recent trend includes a shift toward management specialization.

Frederick Taylor. Frederick Taylor was a popular theorist during his era and even more popular than Fayol in Fayol's native France (Parker & Ritson, 2011). Taylor was the first major American management theorist, and he gained acceptance largely due to the United States excelling as a world superpower at the turn of the 20th century (Parker & Ritson, 2011). Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) was his most notable work. In *Principles of Scientific Management*, Taylor provided recommendations for measuring, timing, and recording, which are essential to establishing a baseline for efficiencies. Taylor believed in achieving efficiencies in the workplace. Taylor worked as a machinist and achieved most of his workplace efficiencies through standardization. Taylor built his works on the concept of standardization, much like the Roman Empire. Leaders of the Roman Empire relied on standardization to

manage their vast empire successfully and effectively (Hellman & Liu, 2013). Taylor and the Roman Empire relied heavily on standardization as an effective management tool.

Taylor was an appropriate theorist for this study because governmental bureaucrats can still learn a great deal from Taylor's original works on scientific management. Taylor focused on management efficiencies, which is a characteristic that governments lack in many areas. Part of Taylor's success in the application of his works was his ability to link much of his work to the theme of rationality (Parker & Ritson, 2011). This was also one of the cornerstones in Weber's work. Much of Taylor's work links to the theme of accepted rationality.

Managers and scholars have applied the phenomena of management inefficiencies, lack of cognitive rationale, instability, and lack of long-term forethought to government and corporate management. Clegg (2012) conducted studies in education and noted the driving factor for interest in this phenomenon is the desire to reduce costs and expenses. Corporate managers must maintain competitive profits for stakeholders continuously, and managers in government must find ways to accomplish the same tasks with less funding due to reductions in government budgets. This study benefited from current research in the literature because reduced government budgets and increased efficiencies will be necessary to acquire equipment under the AAP.

Conceptual Framework

The following information serves as background on the AAP and helps to describe how the three systems depicted in Figure 2 support the AAP. Under the AAP, three separate processes must come together and work to acquire equipment for soldiers:

PPBE (DoD, 2013b), JCIDS (Joint Requirements Oversight Council, 2012), and DAS (DoD, 2015). Figure 2 shows how the three systems should work. These three processes support the characteristics of bureaucracy theory.

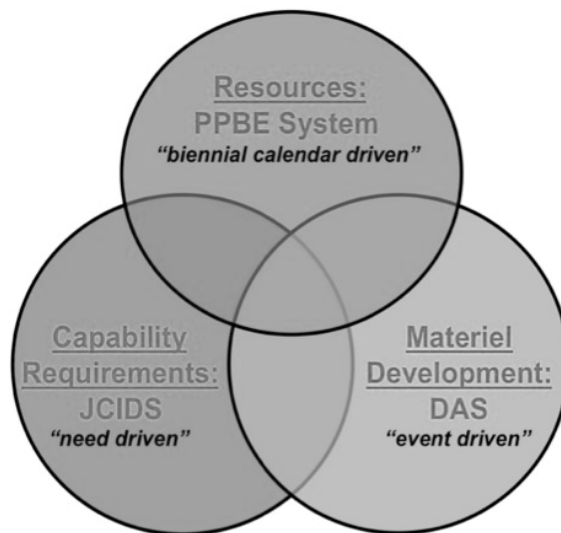


Figure 2. Three systems supporting the Army acquisition system. From *The Defense Acquisition Guidebook* (p. 6), by U.S. Department of Defense, 2013, retrieved from <http://at.dod.mil/docs/DefenseAcquisitionGuidebook.pdf>. Figure is in the public domain.

Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution

Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution is a calendar-driven event designed to provide commanders in the field with the best mix of soldiers, equipment, and support within reason based on financial constraints across fiscal years (DoD, 2013b). Figure 3 depicts PPBE. The planning phase indicates the capabilities needed to deter and defeat threats. The planning aspect involves considering the National Defense Strategy, policies, and other guidance for resources and capabilities to allow the U.S. Armed Forces to maintain its competitive edge.

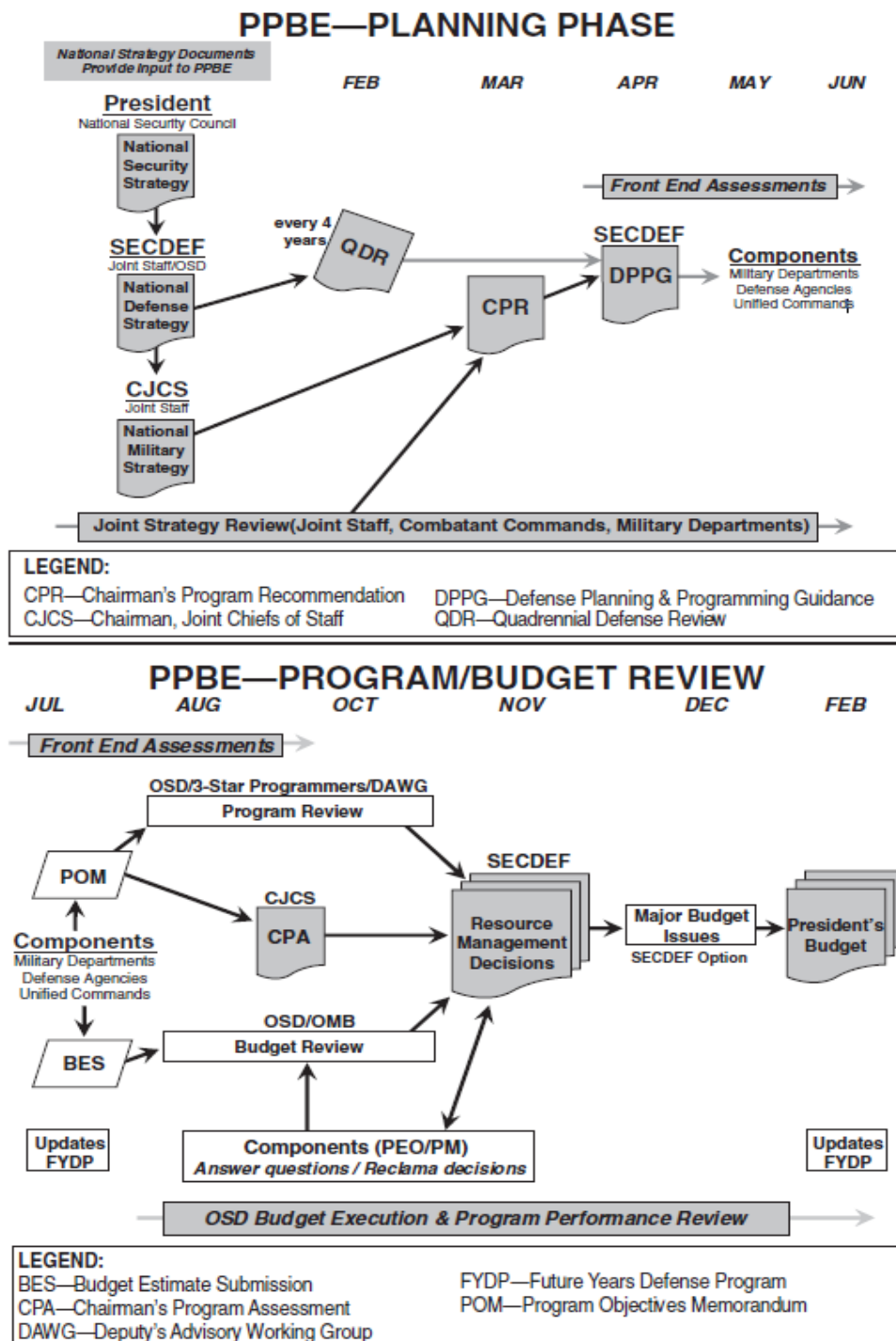


Figure 3. Defense Acquisition System diagram. From *Defense Acquisition University (DAU) program managers tool kit* (p. 20), by W. Parker, 2011, retrieved from <http://www.dau.mil/pubscats/pages/tool%20kit.aspx>. Figure is in the public domain.

The programming phase consists of aligning resources and transforming guidance to resource requirements such as force structure and money required to fund various efforts. Budgeting consists of developing a detailed financial plan, which results in leaders within the Office of Management and Budget issuing program budget decisions. Execution is the final phase and occurs simultaneously with the program and budget reviews. The execution phase involves conducting analysis to assess the effectiveness of resource allocation.

Joint Capability Integration and Development System

Leaders within the armed services must use JCIDS to develop the requirements documents for their branch of service (Joint Requirements Oversight Council, 2012). Each service (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines) has a Maneuver Center of Excellence whose personnel conduct analyses that determine the doctrine for their service (DoD, 2013a). For example, personnel at the Field Artillery School in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, are responsible for doctrine development and doctrine implementation for U.S. Army artillery equipment. Under the JCIDS process, the staff of each school's Maneuver Center of Excellence generates and validates requirements for equipment.

Subordinate to the Maneuver Center of Excellence is TRADOC, which serves as the change agent for amending doctrine. The JCIDS process generates three different documents that support the DAS under the acquisition approach or DAS. Those documents are the initial capability document, the capability development document, and the capability production document. All three documents feed into DAS, as depicted in Figure 4.

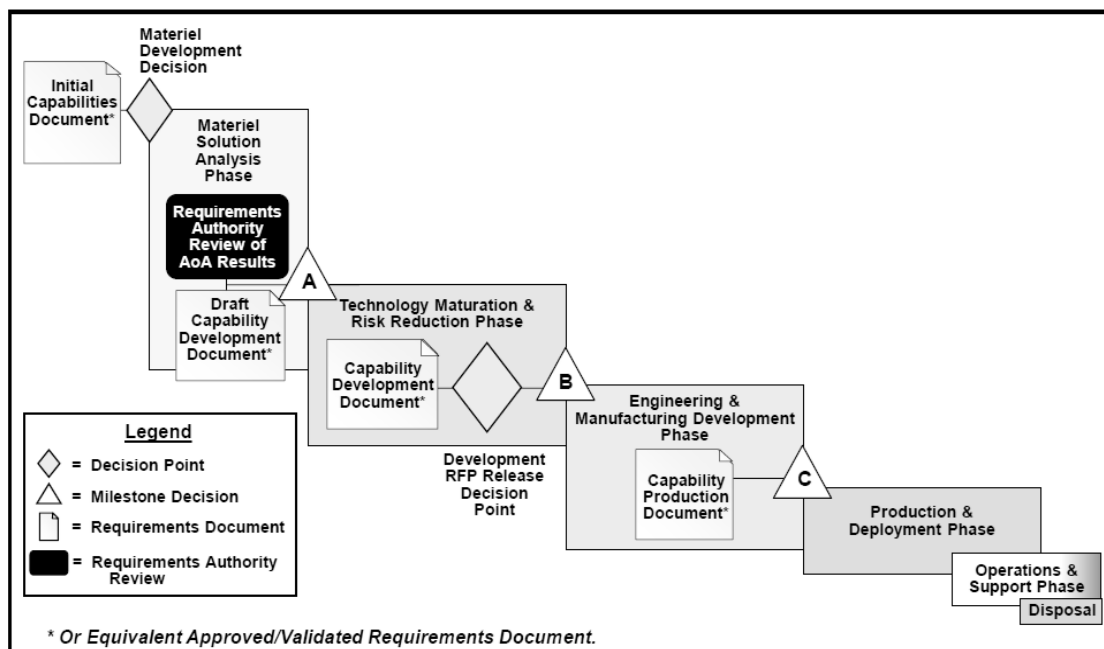


Figure 4. Defense Acquisition System diagram. From *Operation of the Defense Acquisition System*, by U.S. Department of Defense, 2015, retrieved from <http://www.acq.osd.mil/fo/docs/500002p.pdf>. Figure is in the public domain.

Defense Acquisition System

The DAS is a formal process managed by the DoD 5000-series directives (DoD, 2015) and guides the development and delivery of equipment for the AAP. All the armed services acquire major equipment using the DAS. The AAP and the DAS are almost identical, with the exception of a few nuances that the U.S. Army requires for developing and delivering equipment specific to the U.S. Army. Likewise, the Navy and Air Force acquisition processes are almost identical to the DAS, with the exception of a few nuances specific to the Navy and Air Force. The DAS relies on PPBE and JCIDS. The PPBE process allocates money, and JCIDS determines the type of equipment required for development.

Congress manages the acquisition process through functional areas. The functional areas plan and direct DAS, manage science and technology programs, formulate acquisition efforts, manage programs, conduct system engineering, conduct financial management, conduct procurement and contract management, perform acquisition logistics, conduct product support, manufacture and produce systems, and conduct tests and evaluations. The DAS diagram shown in Figure 4 illustrated each phase of the DAS.

The DAS has major milestones, such as Milestone A, B, and C. Each milestone requires significant documentation for entrance and exit criteria. The U.S. Army procures each major piece of equipment through the process in Figure 4. The program management office responsible for the equipment staffs the required documentation through various agencies. The staffing of documents in the DAS is lengthy. The process starts with a materiel development decision to determine if a materiel solution can solve the issue. Assuming a materiel solution can solve the problem, the proposed equipment solution continues in the DAS by entering into the materiel solution analysis phase through Milestone A and eventually into the technology maturation and risk reduction phase (DoD, 2013a).

The technology maturation and risk reduction phase involves developing a prototype. After the demonstration of technical specifications, the program transitions to Milestone B and enters the engineering and manufacturing development phase. Milestone B is the major milestone in DAS because it typically indicates the program has a high probability of succeeding, and soldiers might receive the equipment. Many programs do

not make it to Milestone B, despite making it to Milestone A and receiving adequate funding (DoD, 2013).

In the engineering and manufacturing development phase, the equipment undergoes engineering to more detailed technical specifications and undergoes intense testing and evaluation. After the equipment meets all requirements in Milestone B, the program transitions to Milestone C and enters into the production and deployment phase, which involves producing the product at a very low rate and solving testing and manufacturing issues before producing the equipment at full rate. As a result of the PPBE, JCIDS, and DAS systems not effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of soldiers in combat, the U.S. Army established the four systems described next under the ARAP to meet rapid acquisition requirements (Whaley & Stewart, 2014).

Army Rapid Acquisition Process: Postbureaucracy Efforts

The CDRT, JRAC, REF, and RFI are all rapid acquisition processes designed to provide equipment to soldiers in an efficient and effective manner. The four processes share characteristics associated with the theory of postbureaucracy. A detailed description of the four processes follows.

Capabilities Development for Rapid Transition. The CDRT process is an ARAP initiative managed by TRADOC and occurs biannually. Personnel at TRADOC develop training and doctrine for the Army and publish various training manuals to instruct soldiers in their specific career field. The CDRT process involves surveying soldiers in combat environments on equipment procured through the ARAP (TRADOC, 2013). Personnel at TRADOC assess the survey results and make recommendations on

what equipment should transition to a program of record managed under the AAP by a program manager. Management under the AAP is paramount because it includes funding and logistical support for the life of the program. Transitioning equipment to a program of record in the CDRT process can be difficult, but equipment transitioned to a program of record can significantly help soldiers. The CDRT process has been beneficial because some of the high-performing equipment used in Iraq and Afghanistan transitioned to programs of record. Because program management offices manage the equipment, most of the equipment has undergone significant improvements such as increased performance characteristics and developing a mature logistics support plan.

Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell. The JRAC is an organization that consists of representatives from all the armed services and that receives requests for equipment from commanders in the field in the form of joint urgent operational needs and joint emergent operational needs (Joint Requirements Oversight Council, 2012). Personnel at JRAC prioritize numerous requirements requests, determine solutions, and allocate funding for the new equipment. The JRAC meets on a regular basis to review the requirement request documents in the form of the joint urgent operational needs and joint emergent operational needs. After the personnel select and prioritize the requirements, they fund the effort. The JRAC will then supervise contract negotiations and procurement of the equipment through other organizations, such as program management offices.

Rapid Equipping Force. The REF is an Army organization managed by Army G-3, which is the tactical operations center of the U.S. Army. Established in 2002, the REF provides equipment to soldiers supporting the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan

(U.S. Army, 2014). The REF receives requests from commanders in the field through a document known as the REF 10-liner. Personnel at the REF assess the REF 10-liner and determine if they can find and field an equipment solution. The REF's goal is to provide an equipment solution to the soldiers on the battlefield within 180 days (U.S. Army, 2014). Personnel at REF analyze commercially available equipment to find an equipment solution. They may work with a vendor to improve the equipment before beginning contract negotiations to develop and procure the equipment. The REF personnel have established government contracting mechanisms to expedite equipment procurement. The REF has successfully developed equipment in support of both the Iraq and the Afghanistan wars.

Rapid Fielding Initiative. The RFI, established in 2003, is an organization that rapidly outfits soldiers with the latest and most technologically advanced clothing and other personal equipment just prior to deployment in support of combat operations (Department of the Army, 2009). Most of the equipment developed and issued by the RFI is personal equipment such as protective goggles, advanced cold weather gear, and other personal advanced equipment tailored for specific combat environments. Program Executive Office Soldier personnel manage the RFI and receive RFI requirements from TRADOC on the needs of deploying soldiers. Commanders and soldiers can provide comments and recommendations on RFI equipment through the Program Executive Office Soldier website. Issuing RFI equipment leads to opportunities to provide feedback on the equipment.

Studies Relevant to the Army Rapid Acquisition Process

The studies most relevant to this research project were research projects conducted by senior military officers in the U.S. Military Senior Service colleges. These individuals were seasoned leaders with extensive Army acquisition experience who were aware of the Army issues within their respective field. The studies selected are from acquisition professionals with extensive work and educational experience within the acquisition field. In particular, 10 studies related to my study: Baldauf and Reherman (2011), Pernin et al. (2014), Rasch (2011), Schwartz (2014), Solis (2011), U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011b), Whitson (2012), Whaley and Stewart (2014), Vinch (2012), and Riposo et al. (2014).

Baldauf and Reherman (2011) analyzed the REF's processes and the manner in which REF personnel responded to the urgent needs requested from soldiers during the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. The study was a case study with a literature review. Pernin et al. (2014) conducted a study on readiness reporting for an adaptive Army. The focus of the study was not the ARAP, although Pernin et al. recommended that the ARAP align more with the rapid changes to equipment requirements to facilitate a more accurate reporting system. Pernin et al. also drew from the lessons learned from the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars.

Rasch (2011) conducted a study on the lessons learned from the ARAP since the start of the two wars in the Middle East. The study consisted of a literature review and focused on the systems and processes used to develop and acquire equipment through the ARAP. The study also included recommendations to improve the ARAP. Schwartz

(2014) conducted a study in which he looked at general reforms to the AAP in its entirety. Schwartz did not specifically mention the ARAP, but Rasch noted that the new DoD Instruction 5000.02, which manages both the AAP and the ARAP, encouraged acquisition leaders to use sound rationale and tailor acquisition processes to be as efficient as possible. Schwartz also described the Better Buying Power initiatives that the DoD acquisition executive has implemented to increase acquisition productivity for DoD acquisition organizations and industry partners that support the DoD.

Studies by researchers for the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011b) and by Solis (2011) were both government-sponsored and supported by original data. The U.S. Government Accountability Office researchers provided recommendations to increase oversight of nonstandard equipment. The purchase of most of this equipment occurred through the ARAP. Solis provided recommendations on developing a more comprehensive ARAP strategy for procuring equipment. In a thorough literature review, Whitson (2012) emphasized the importance of planning for logistics when procuring equipment through the ARAP. Whaley and Stewart (2014) conducted a detailed study and provided recommendations on how to transfer some of the much-needed ARAP programs to programs of record that provide stable requirements and funding.

Vinch (2012) conducted a study that included a recommendation that the leaders of all existing ad hoc ARAP organizations whose staff procures equipment formalize relationships among themselves and standardize practices to sustain this vital capability. Riposo et al. (2014) conducted a literature review study and analyzed the increase in

schedule time for numerous acquisition programs. Riposo et al. noted issues with the ARAP programs in obtaining sufficient contracting mechanisms to procure equipment.

The results of the 10 studies indicated that the DAS must work in conjunction with the other two most senior processes: PPBE and JCIDS. All three systems operate independently and are more process oriented than focused on delivering equipment to soldiers. The researchers of the 10 studies also advocated for consolidating the numerous ad hoc independent organizations founded after 2001 in support of rapidly equipping soldiers during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. The authors of the 10 studies also called for Congress to allocate specific funding for rapid fielding initiatives. Limited funding is available, and Congress often takes money from other accounts and from other acquisition programs to fund ARAP initiatives (Rasch, 2011).

The 10 studies listed above were relevant to this research project and related to the research questions. The studies related to the research questions because the researchers analyzed recent studies and events related to issues within the Army acquisition profession and made several recommendations to help improve the process that would lead to improving equipment delivery to soldiers. These key studies included reviews of other studies and reviews of the literature. Few researchers had collected original data. Most of the original data collection occurred through studies from the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Literature Review of Key Variables

Scholars within the field of management have conducted a great deal of research on both bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. The overwhelming majority of the studies

conducted were qualitative. The variables commonly found throughout the literature associated with bureaucracy are legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and stability (Al-Habil, 2011; Clegg, 2012; Gargalianos et al., 2015; Labolo, 2013; Mahmood et al., 2012; Nhema, 2015; Torsteinsen, 2012; Wihantoro et al., 2015). The recurring variables most associated with postbureaucracy are responsiveness and flexibility (Laurin & Wagner, 2011). A discussion of the variables follows.

Legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and stability are the variables associated with bureaucracy and are at the cornerstone of research on bureaucracy (Al-Habil, 2011; Torsteinsen, 2012). These reoccurring variables surface frequently when researching bureaucracy. Researchers often link the variables back to Weber, who wrote a great deal about them. Even when modern scholars conduct research on bureaucracy, the variables legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and stability often surface, and some of Weber's original works appear as the foundation for the researchers' work. Many scholars have highlighted lack of responsiveness and lack of flexibility as variables they would like to see improved within the literature on postbureaucracy.

Managers have implemented postbureaucratic initiatives in many organizations to improve the responsiveness and flexibility of organizations managed under the general bureaucratic model (Park & Joaquin, 2012). In the public sector, NPM is a common postbureaucracy initiative that many organizational and government leaders have implemented to improve responsiveness and flexibility. The effectiveness of NPM is unclear and debated within the literature (Alonso, Clifton, & Díaz-Fuentes, 2015;

Buschor, 2013). Most scholars cited the short-term positive impact of NPM, but the long-term effects remain unknown.

Scholars have acknowledged the effectiveness of NPM but have also conceded that the basis of its effectiveness is the foundation of an already existing government or professional workforce (Mukokoma & van Dijk, 2013). The collective themes that come from the literature seem to indicate a trend that management under a bureaucratic model is a precursor to the successful implementation of postbureaucratic initiatives such as NPM (Ashraf & Uddin, 2015; De Vries & Nemec, 2013; Pollitt, 2015). The stable methodical processes already established within bureaucratic organizations support the successful implementation of postbureaucratic initiatives. The literature further indicated that leaders of successful organizations have improved responsiveness and flexibility through a hybrid bureaucracy approach (Emery & Giaque, 2014; Sturdy et al., 2014). The hybrid bureaucracy approach consists of using the best variables of bureaucracy such as legitimacy, authority, rationalization, and stability with the best variables of postbureaucracy such as responsiveness and flexibility.

The greatest strength of the scholars' research approaches were the consistency of their findings, which repeatedly included the same issues and inefficiencies in management under bureaucracy (Bezes et al., 2012; Handel, 2013; Zafra-Gómez et al., 2013). Further supporting the greatest strength was the findings by many of the scholars noting consensus on the instability of postbureaucracy initiatives after initial implementation (Buschor, 2013; Simonet, 2013a). Many organizational leaders are

implementing postbureaucracy initiatives to cope with bureaucratic management inefficiencies (Bezes et al., 2012; Handel, 2013; Zafra-Gómez et al., 2013).

The greatest weakness of the studies was the lack of relevant quantitative studies. Quantitative studies include a level of rigidity, but I did not find studies on management inefficiencies that included this methodology in significant quantities. The lack of quantitative research can be concerning to critics skeptical of qualitative studies, as well as to those having concerns about evolving management practices.

Some scholars with works reviewed within this study approached the management phenomena of inefficiencies in an exploratory qualitative case study analysis (Baldauf & Reheman, 2011). Many of the scholars conducted literature reviews on the subject, in addition to case studies on the specific phenomenon. Literature review studies included Rasch (2011), Vinch (2012), Whaley and Stewart (2014), Whitson (2012), Riposo et al. (2014), Schwartz (2014), and Pernin et al. (2014). A few of the studies consisted of interviews from experts within their field, such as the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011b) and Solis (2011). These two studies included primary research data. The case study methodological approach selected for this study aligned with other studies conducted on bureaucracy theory, postbureaucracy theory, ARAP, and AAP. Most of these studies were qualitative, with the majority of them including a case study or literature review approach.

Criticisms of Postbureaucracy

Critics of postbureaucratic systems cited instability, lack of long-term experience, profit-driven motives, and metric-focused goals as liabilities for organizations whose

leaders implement postbureaucracy efforts (Buschor, 2013; Simonet, 2013b).

Postbureaucratic organizations are at times unstable because of the constant transition of personnel in key leadership positions. These individuals might not have the requisite long-term experience to perform adequately in a new executive-level job. In addition to their lack of experience and their focus, profit is usually their main driver. Leaders of public sector organizations often function by making businesslike decisions in the best interest of the citizens and not in the interest of maximizing profits (Islam, 2015).

Drechsler and Randma-Liiv (2014) noted much of the economic turbulence that occurred after the 2009 economic recession was attributable to several tenets of NPM, which is a specific application of postbureaucracy. Drechsler and Randma-Liiv noted that relaxed financial regulations contributed to the economic demise of the stock markets in the United States, United Kingdom, and other Western European countries. An unbridled economic spirit caused many issues due to the lack of appropriate regulations, decentralization of powers, and reliance on the private sector.

Diefenbach (2009) cited some key criticisms of NPM based on years of research. Diefenbach noted NPM often replaces traditional values with an extreme focus on businesslike values of stakeholder interests, which can translate to an increase in profits. Diefenbach noted that managers' desire to implement NPM is often selfish, and many managers intend to increase their power and control of an organization. Workers often suspect such motives, and increased workloads and stress often lead to decreased productivity due to workers' lack of motivation and decreased work-life satisfaction.

Diefenbach (2009) and Siltala (2013) also noted that the constant change in organizations' structure further creates bureaucracy. Kim and Han (2015) provided numerous case study examples demonstrating that constant changes within organizations have caused many organizational issues. Granstrand and Holgersson (2013) analyzed the issues associated with disassembling organizations. Warf (2013) conducted a study on the impact of the Internet in the age of deregulation of telecommunications. For example, leaders of telecommunications regulations agencies employed individual lawyer contractors and other legal support staff to engage in numerous legal deregulation battles. These lawyers fought many cases on behalf of telecommunications agencies, and after they finished the case, their contract ended, and the lawyers and other legal support staff moved on to other similar jobs. Many of the telecommunications agencies lost a great deal of historical knowledge because the company fought numerous court battles on deregulation, and letting the lawyers move on to other cases resulted in a loss of institutional knowledge for the company. The lawyers and other legal support staff often worked other cases within the large legal network of deregulation. The lack of focus on organizational structure led to a significant loss of money, time, and potentially intellectual property for some of the telecommunications agencies.

Moynihan (2012) contended that the disastrous response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was a result of the newly established U.S. Department of Homeland Security absorbing the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The change in leadership and the new political appointment of people who lacked historical knowledge contributed to the embarrassing issues that unfolded as a result of the Hurricane Katrina response efforts.

Researchers have applied and studied the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy within the management sector of both government and private sectors. The literature includes an ongoing debate in which researchers have questioned the validity of bureaucracy in comparison to postbureaucracy. Leaders have applied bureaucracy to established Western governments from their creation to the present. Many scholars have questioned the effectiveness of bureaucracy (Diefenbach & By, 2012; Yeboah-Assiamah, Asamoah, & Kyeremeh, 2015).

Movement to Replace Bureaucracy

Due to trending management changes since the late 1970s and early 1980s, there has been a movement to replace bureaucracy with postbureaucracy initiatives because some managers and scholars deemed bureaucracy outdated and inefficient to manage (Bartels, 2009; Diefenbach & By, 2012). Torsteinsen (2012), Al-Habil (2011), and Diefenbach and By (2012) contended that classical bureaucracy was still as relevant as it had been in years past.

Sturdy et al. (2014) also contended that bureaucracy is still the foundation of management, even if leaders implement postbureaucracy initiatives. Park and Joaquin (2012) noted that bureaucracy can coexist with postbureaucracy. Diefenbach and By (2012) indicated that bureaucracy is the foundation of modern society and although not the most efficient form of management, it is effective and takes into account the concerns of the majority of people. Al-Habil (2011) noted bureaucracy is blind in execution. The written and unbiased rules of bureaucracy govern a nation or an organization. As a result

of the blind unbiased bureaucracy management tool, many people deem bureaucracy as impersonal.

Wihantoro et al. (2015), Yeboah-Assiamah et al. (2015), Rosenberg (2015), Al-Habil (2011), and Labolo (2013) contended that bureaucracy is impersonal, which may not be bad. Weber (2012) noted the impersonal management approach is one of the six characteristics of bureaucracy. An impartial tool should ensure the equal treatment of people, which bureaucracy supports through objectivity. Postbureaucracy includes attempts to consider the needs of each individual (Park & Joaquin, 2012), which can be a daunting task and can be a distraction for the effectiveness of postbureaucracy initiatives.

The Spread of Postbureaucracy Initiatives

Scholars have called for implementing postbureaucracy initiatives in many governments and corporate organizations as a response to global changes and as a result of technology and the Internet (Aykac & Metin, 2012; Major, 2012). Many scholars have specifically called for the implementation of NPM, which is an application of postbureaucracy principles (Colon & Guerin-Schneider, 2015; Haque, 2013; Lee, 2012). Leaders and managers in both developed and underdeveloped countries can see the benefits of NPM implementation. Postbureaucracy initiatives such as NPM implementation are a global phenomenon (Alonso et al., 2015; Francu, 2014; Goldfinch & Roberts, 2013; Kim & Han, 2015; Ortansa, 2012; Pollitt & Dan, 2013; Simonet, 2013a; Swirska, 2014; Zafra-Gómez, Bolivar, & Muñoz, 2012; Zia & Khan, 2013).

The United Kingdom was the first in a series of developed countries that implemented NPM in the 1980s (Pollitt & Dan, 2013). Norway also participated in the

implementation of NPM (Jantz, Reichborn-Kjennerud, & Vrangbaek, 2015). Germany was a late adopter of NPM in comparison to other European Union members (Manes Rossi & Aversano, 2015). France and Italy were also adopters of NPM due partially to European Union entrance requirements (Ongaro, 2012). Norway, Germany, France, and Italy have a hybrid mix of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy management approaches. The leaders within the countries still rely heavily on bureaucracy, which serves as a cornerstone of stability for their governing functions, but they also include NPM initiatives in some areas to keep pace with global workplace requirements.

Scholars have noted that NPM is most effective in governments and organizations that already have some form of established professional workforce (Ashraf & Uddin, 2015; De Vries & Nemeč, 2013; Pollitt, 2015). These scholars noted the failure rate is high for continuing NPM implementation within organizations that lack a professional workforce. Mukokoma and van Dijk (2013) contended failure occurred in some African nations during the installation and management of various basic governmental programs such as water and sewer infrastructure. Data indicated that basic forms of bureaucracy are necessary for the successful implementation of NPM. Given the success of postbureaucracy initiatives in established governments, some governments have also moved toward implementing bureaucracy and postbureaucracy hybrid initiatives (Emery & Giaque, 2014; Sturdy et al., 2014). The data indicated that basic forms of bureaucracy are necessary for the successful implementation of NPM.

Bureaucracy and Postbureaucracy Hybrid Initiatives

Like many of the European countries that adopted a few postbureaucracy initiatives such as NPM, some scholars support the notion of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy existing in a complementary manner or in a hybrid-type organization (Emery & Giaque, 2014; Sturdy et al., 2014). According to Park and Joaquin (2012), the George W. Bush administration set into motion NPM-centric initiatives. The postbureaucratic NPM initiatives included the strategic management of human capital, competitive sourcing of government services, financial performance improvement, and the implementation of electronic budget and performance integration tools.

The George W. Bush administration also attempted to implement the Government Performance and Results Act in which numerous government agencies underwent evaluation on program purpose and design, strategic planning, program management, program results, and overall rating scores (Park & Joaquin, 2012). The administration did not consider it necessary to reject bureaucracy. The focus of the administration's effort, like that of other nations, was to take the best of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy and merge the two to maximize efficiencies while creating stability for the near future.

Kletz et al. (2014) cited other examples of hybrid management-type organizations. Sturdy et al. (2014) and Wiesel and Modell (2014) noted that NPM is the evolution of bureaucracy and contended that bureaucracy still serves as the foundation of postbureaucracy hybrid initiatives and other postbureaucracy initiatives. Bureaucracy has evolved and continues to evolve to keep up with new global market requirements. Clegg (2012) cited the use of project management teams to complete short-term work

assignments as an example of the evolution. Jałocha, Krane, Ekambaram, and Prawelska-Skrzypek (2014) also highlighted the need for project management teams to understand the dynamics of postbureaucratic initiatives such as NPM to operate effectively in the management environment.

Financial Database Incompatibility

As the leaders of government-managed organizations continue to merge postbureaucratic organizations with bureaucratic organizations, particularly in government, there appears to be issues with finance accounting compatibility between various organizations (Laurin & Wagner, 2011; Sharma, Lawrence, & Fowler, 2012). These issues surface because bureaucratic organizations have different financial accounting practices than organizations operating under a postbureaucracy-like management style. In particular, Laurin and Wagner (2011) conducted a study on the Quebec employment services sector and described issues with accountability complexities mostly due to the incompatibilities in their financial database systems. The accounting issues occurred during postbureaucracy initiative implementation. More specifically, Laurin and Wagner labeled their postbureaucracy initiative results-based management a postbureaucracy initiative.

Sharma et al. (2012) described how postbureaucracy financial accounting practices were incompatible with a nation's bureaucratic financial approach. As a result of globalization, leaders of a Fiji telecommunications company had to embrace modern accounting practices to remain competitive in the telecommunications sector. Fiji's homogenous population also influenced the Fijian telecommunications market. Like

many islands in the Pacific region, Fiji had limited influence from outsiders, and in the case of a Fiji telecommunications company, there was resistance to implementing the change. Although leaders implemented postbureaucracy changes, they did so with Fijian cultural principles in mind. Kim and Han (2015) noted the importance of cultural impacts when implementing postbureaucracy initiatives. Government leaders implemented postbureaucracy initiatives in the South Korean government and private sector with success. As in Fiji, changes were necessary to some of the postbureaucracy initiatives to meet the cultural needs of the country.

Helden and Uddin (2016) examined financial database issues between government and corporate organizations, especially in emerging economies, and contended that financial leaders in emerging economies often attempt to implement accrual accounting as the standard for financial transactions between government and corporate entities, but accrual accounting procedures were not helpful in solving the incompatibility issues. Managers in the public sector often implement accrual accounting when implementing NPM initiatives (Buylen & Christiaens, 2014; Upping & Oliver, 2012). The focus of accrual accounting is performance metrics. The leaders of many countries with postbureaucratic initiatives, such as NPM, must adjust their accounting and financial systems to complement the new postbureaucratic initiatives. Poland, Pakistan, China, and other countries with emerging markets have accounting methodologies that support postbureaucratic management initiatives (Cai & Wang, 2012; Swirska, 2014; Zia & Khan, 2013).

Gap in the Literature

A great deal of research on ARAP exists. However, there was a gap in ARAP research from various Army acquisition functional areas. The specific management problem was the gap in knowledge and understanding about ARAP. The evaluation of ARAP by a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals narrowed this gap. The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The topics of the research questions for this study were the key problems of the current ARAP and the key factors that affect the performance of ARAP. Through the research questions, the study involved assessing the relationship between ARAP, bureaucracy, and postbureaucracy.

Summary and Conclusion

The major themes in the literature were Weber's theory of bureaucracy, which included an analysis of rationalization, legitimacy, and authority. Also analyzed were Weber's concept of ideal bureaucracy, the iron cage, and the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. This chapter included an analysis of the hybrid management approach of both bureaucracy and postbureaucracy. The evaluation revealed the issues associated with multiple accounting databases as a result of mixing postbureaucracy initiatives with bureaucracy. The implementation of postbureaucracy initiatives such as NPM around the world has had mixed results.

Researchers have written a great deal about the effectiveness of postbureaucracy initiatives compared to the effectiveness of bureaucracy. Considerable knowledge is

available on both bureaucracy and postbureaucracy, but whether postbureaucracy is the management tool of the future, especially in global markets, remains unknown.

Bureaucracy creates stability within organizations, and postbureaucracy initiatives do not consider the importance of stability.

Based on my review and critical analysis of the literature, researchers have conducted and published substantial research on the ARAP, but most of the literature is in periodicals or published as editorials. There are also published studies in which researchers conducted an analysis of literature already published in editorials. Limited research exists in which researchers collected firsthand data to support conclusions and make recommendations on ARAP. Because most of the existing studies are in non-peer-reviewed periodicals, they do not have links to theories. Additionally, the ARAP literature lacks a broad cross-section perspective from Army acquisition functional areas. Most of the ARAP literature published is from the perspective of program managers. The state of research for ARAP requires more research linked to specific theories and a perspective from various other Army acquisition functional areas.

My research led to recommendations on how to improve the ARAP to gain efficiencies in acquiring ARAP equipment. The recommendations were to provide logistical and sustainment support for ARAP equipment, maintain regular contact with soldiers requesting ARAP equipment, allocate proper funding for ARAP program managers, and institutionalize ARAP training at Defense Acquisition University (DAU). This exploratory qualitative case study consisted of in-depth semistructured interviews from various Army acquisition professionals with extensive management and leadership

experience. The next chapter includes a discussion of the research questions and the methodology used in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The general management problem was that the ARAP is inefficient at delivering adequate equipment to soldiers. However, there was a gap in ARAP research from various Army acquisition functional areas. The specific management problem was the gap in the knowledge and understanding about ARAP. An evaluation of ARAP by a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals narrowed this gap.

This chapter includes a detailed description of the data collection process, the rationale for selecting the methodology, and the role of the researcher, as well as the justification for selecting participants. Figure 5 includes a step-by-step methodology overview concerning data collection. The chapter includes the rationale for selecting purposive sampling, field testing procedures, procedures for recruitment, and participation and data collection processes. This chapter also includes a discussion on instrumentation; data analysis; and the methods used to ensure trustworthiness, reliability, validity, dependability, and confirmability. The chapter concludes with ethical considerations addressed in the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application.

Research Design and Rationale

Research Questions

RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?

RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?

RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

Step-by-Step Methodology Overview

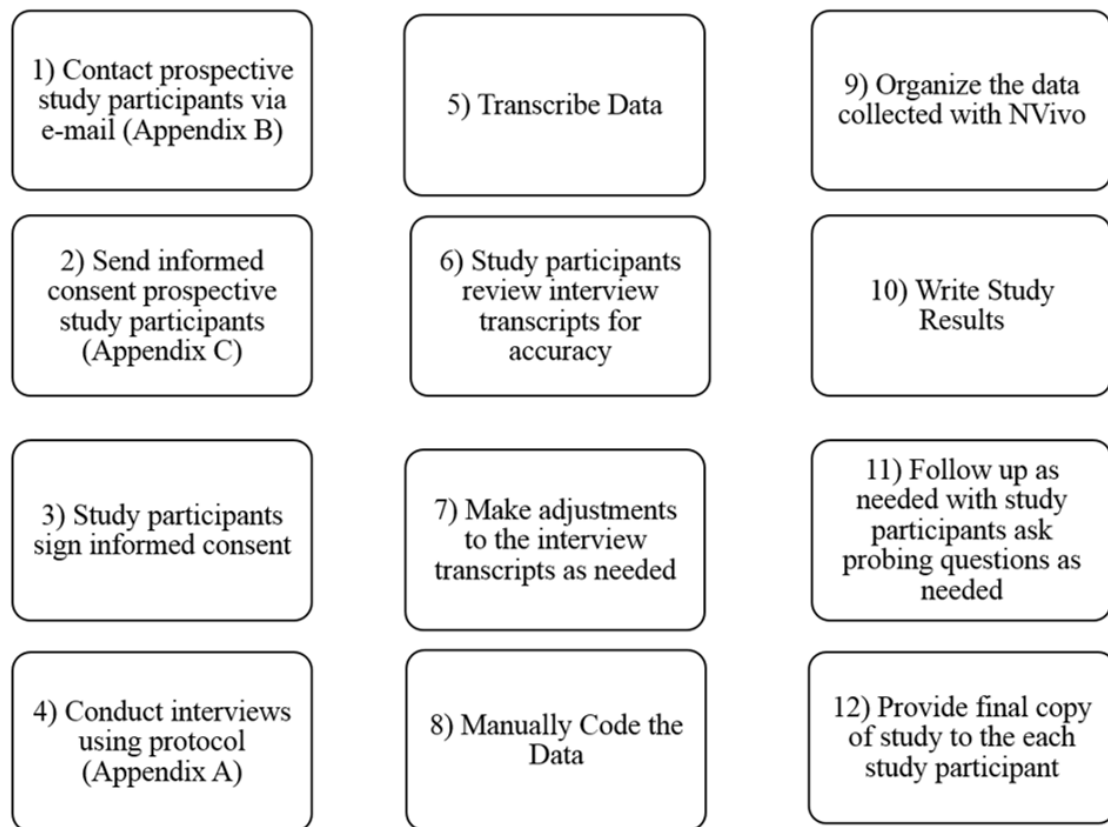


Figure 5. Step-by-step methodology overview.

Research Central Phenomena

This study involved addressing phenomena from the theory of bureaucracy and the theory of postbureaucracy, including NPM, which is an application of

postbureaucracy. The theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy helped to frame the study. The bureaucracy and postbureaucracy theories are well-defined, and researchers have written a great deal about these theories, although researchers have not studied postbureaucracy to the same extent as bureaucracy. Postbureaucracy requires additional research and development, as it emerged in the mid-1980s (Mukokoma & van Dijk, 2013).

The phenomena under study in the theory of bureaucracy include significant workplace production inefficiencies and lack of cognitive rationale when completing work tasks, especially large projects. Over the past few decades, the use of technology and the use of the Internet, which led to the expansion of information to almost every part of the world, have challenged the role of bureaucracy. Subsequent changes, such as the implementation of postbureaucracy initiatives, have led many organizational leaders to adjust their workforce management approaches to cope with changes in workplace environments.

The phenomena under study in the theory of postbureaucracy and postbureaucracy initiatives are dynamism and lack of long-term forethought. *Dynamism* is the process by which management makes abrupt management changes (Dutta, 2014). The changes can be positive or negative. An association exists between NPM and instability and lack of long-term forethought. Because of the information age and the spread of technology, NPM has gained a foothold in many organizations as a means to cope with new workplace dynamics. The implementation of NPM has created instability in the workforce, at both a management level and a worker level. NPM initiatives often

require numerous iterations of management implementation, which create a significant amount of turbulence within organizations. New public management and other postbureaucratic initiatives create dynamism, as rapid changes occur with the aim of achieving results quickly. This unrest in the workforce negatively affects productivity and inhibits organizational leaders from focusing on their core mission.

Lack of long-term forethought is the other phenomenon that leaders of NPM organizations often encounter. Many times, NPM efforts are too focused on the fiscal bottom line and immediate cost savings. The lack of focus on the long-term strategic plan for organizations can put them at risk and make them vulnerable to changes that organizational leaders are not able to manage. Such changes may severely degrade organizations and inhibit their ability to execute their primary business functions. These two phenomena required further investigation through a case study approach to ARAP systems.

Research Tradition and Rationale for Selection of Tradition

I selected the case study research tradition because of the complexity of the phenomena under investigation. Yin (2014) noted that case study researchers examine real-world contemporary phenomena and focus on answering questions of how and why. Yin further noted that case studies are beneficial when the number of variables or factors outnumber the limited number of data points. Yin indicated that researchers commonly use case studies in many disciplines, including business, education, psychology, and political science. According to Yin, case studies are appropriate because they allow researchers to attain full, unabridged information on the attributes of real-life events. The

case study approach best aligned with the goals of this study because the study involved analyzing real-life events in which the numbers of variables or factors outnumbered the data points. The research questions within this case study led to answers that indicated why and how the phenomenon occurs as opposed to simply what the phenomenon is about.

More specifically, this study was an exploratory case study because the research consisted of preliminary primary research within a field of study (Zogaj, Bretschneider & Leimeister, 2014). This study was an exploratory case study because the case study likely had no clearly defined set of outcomes (Zogaj et al., 2014). The study also entailed a data collection component that involved interviewing 15-20 Army acquisition professionals. The interview questions included specific questions that traced back to the main research questions, in addition to open-ended questions that illuminated themes and provided recommendations or ideas to help improve the ARAP.

Under the case study approach, I used the interview protocol to approach the phenomena from multiple angles, and in doing so, I explored various perspectives from experts within the acquisition community with extensive work experience with the ARAP. These individuals provided diverse perspectives on ways to improve the ARAP. The case study approach also included the opportunity for participants to discuss other issues or concerns not covered in the interview protocol. The freedom to converse about other issues while employing the interview protocol further enriched data collection. Furthermore, by using the interview protocol under the case study approach, I was able to analyze body language as a form of nonverbal communication during the interview.

People transmit 60-70% of communication nonverbally (Gkorezis, Bellou, & Skemperis, 2015). Astute researchers conducting interviews consider nonverbal communication as part of their data collection and data analysis.

Role of the Researcher

Stake (1995) outlined the role of the researcher in at least nine functions: participant observer, interviewer, reader, storyteller, advocate, artist, counselor, evaluator, and consultant. In this case study, as the researcher, I served in the role of interviewer and evaluator. As the interviewer, I asked questions that addressed the research questions both directly and indirectly. Each question asked in the interview protocol traced back directly or indirectly to the three main research questions for this study. This study also involved evaluating the results of interview questions with the intent of exploring potential shortfalls of the ARAP.

I had a professional relationship with most of the participants and had worked with many in the past as a fellow Army acquisition professional. A few of the participants were former bosses. Despite the fact that I formerly worked for these participants, the research conducted will not have any impact on my career progression or work relationships with the study participants. Some of these individuals served as professional mentors. None of the study participants worked for me, and I did not possess any power or influence over them. Some study participants came as referrals from other acquisition professionals. These referrals resulted from the snowball sampling technique, as discussed further in the Sampling Description section.

I managed bias by first acknowledging that as an Army acquisition professional, I had a bias for a process that operates more quickly and efficiently. An improved ARAP that brings equipment to soldiers is something that I have always desired. As a soldier, I have witnessed both the AAP and the ARAP on numerous occasions. I also mitigated the potential for researcher bias by ensuring that both research and interview questions did not have bias. All questions were objective, with no leanings toward a particular improved ARAP.

Conducting research on the AAP can involve ethical issues. Such issues can arise if interviewees are not in line and in agreement with the current process. The career progression of participants who publicly disagree with or publicly speak out against the process can slow tremendously. In an effort to mitigate such a possibility, I withheld participants' identities by maintaining strict confidentiality during data collection and analysis.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The population for this study consisted of graduates of DAU, which certifies both military and civilian personnel in various acquisition workforce functional areas. There are three levels of DAWIA certification. To earn Level I certification, individuals must complete DAU entry-level classes and have a minimum of 1 year of experience in their functional area. Level II has all the same requirements as Level I and requires the completion of intermediate DAU classes. Level II personnel must also have a certain number of college credits within their functional area. Level III certification indicates

expertise in an individual's functional areas. Level III certification indicates that the person has at least a bachelor's degree in his or her functional area, has worked in a leadership position for 4 years, and has completed a capstone-level course in the functional areas.

To ensure proper selection of study participants, member checks served to ensure that all the case study participants were DAWIA Level III certified in a particular functional area, with a few exceptions. Individuals who have a DAWIA Level III certification demonstrate a working knowledge of the AAP through other means such as extensive work experience with the AAP and the ARAP. There are exceptions. On rare occasions, DAWIA grandfathered some individuals based on the amount of time they had served in their functional area and before the formal solidification of DAWIA's functional area designations. Such circumstances are rare but could have resulted in some study participants not possessing a DAWIA Level III certification.

The sampling frame for this study consisted of DAWIA Level III professionals who were Army acquisition officers and Army civilians in the geographical vicinity of the mid-Atlantic area. The sampling frame consisted of Army acquisition professionals from various functional areas such as program management, contracting, test and evaluation, science and technology, and systems engineering. These functional area experts significantly affect both the AAP and the ARAP. Study participants were also from Army organizations that support the ARAP. Such organizations included the REF, Army Capabilities Integration Center, Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat

Organization, Army Test and Evaluation Command, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and Army Research Lab.

Individuals participating in this study had a DAWIA Level III certification in one of the following areas: program management, test and evaluation, systems engineering, or contracting. Individuals maintaining a DAWIA Level III certification are familiar with the AAP and have successfully demonstrated a high-level working knowledge of the ARAP. Study participants needed a minimum of 6 years of work experience within the Army acquisition community. Study participants also needed at least 2 years of experience working on an ARAP-supported program. This length of time in the Army acquisition community, in addition to the DAWIA Level III certification requirement, further validated the study participants as seasoned members of the acquisition community. Individuals with at least 6 years of acquisition experience had the requisite skills to serve as ideal study participants and to function as a representative sample from the ARAP acquisition population. The requirements within this paragraph served as the criteria to ensure that study participants had the proper qualifications to participate in this study.

The sample size for this study was 19. I conducted interviews with the study participants until data saturation occurred. According to Fusch and Ness (2015), data saturation occurs when no new themes, no new information, and no new coding appear while interviewing study participants. Fusch and Ness also noted that data saturation occurs when the data collected are sufficient to replicate the study. After the study met the four criteria, I terminated the interviews. I gauged the four criteria by conducting data

analysis after each individual interview. Approximately 15-20 study participants were necessary to meet the criteria. If interviewing 15-20 study participants had not met the criteria, I would have increased the study participant population to 25.

Fusch and Ness (2015) further noted that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to satisfying data saturation requirements. Researchers should strive to attain both rich and thick data in data collection for qualitative studies (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Fusch and Ness differentiated between rich and thick data and defined *rich data* as data quality and *thick data* as data quantity. Fusch and Ness recommended that qualitative researchers place a greater emphasis on collecting a balance of both rich and thick data to achieve proper saturation, as opposed to focusing on the specified number of study participants within qualitative studies.

Milford et al. (2016) noted that samples in qualitative research are generally smaller than in quantitative research. Njie and Asimiran (2014) indicated that qualitative researchers focus more on ensuring the quality of samples than on establishing large samples. Some scholars have published general guidelines on case study participant numbers that serve as a rule of thumb, but the rule of thumb varies. Njie and Asimiran indicated that as few as one study participant may be suitable for a successful case study. Gentles et al. (2015) reported that sample sizes are heavily dependent on the depth and complexity of the interviews. Other scholars such as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) have reported that the basis of the sample is a study participant's availability, research questions, data collection, and data analysis. Thus, there is no hard number required for

determining the number of case study participants, as long as saturation occurs (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Sampling Description

The purposive sampling method was the primary strategy, and snowball sampling was a secondary strategy. Purposive sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique that is not representative of the sample (Gentles et al., 2015) but designed for a specific population with information on a specific research topic. Researchers must ensure the sample aligns with the research questions under investigation.

Snowball sampling is a complement to purposive sampling. Snowball sampling is a technique in which study participants refer a researcher to other individuals eligible to participate in a study (Gentles et al., 2015). I asked study participants if they knew any other qualified individuals who would serve as good candidates and might be willing to participate in the study, and snowball sampling served as the means of identifying and recruiting four study participants.

Purposive sampling was an appropriate sampling technique because the individuals who could best answer the research questions were Army acquisition professionals. These individuals had a DAWIA Level III certification in their functional area, which ensured they had an in-depth understanding of their functional area in the AAP. Convenience or random sampling of the general population was not feasible for this study because the general population does not understand the AAP and the ARAP.

Instrumentation

This case study included an interview protocol as the primary data collection instrument. I developed an instrument that served as a tool for gathering data to answer the research questions for the case study. Some of the questions directly linked to the case study research questions, and other questions indirectly related to the research questions within the case study. Data collection is sufficient when themes repeat themselves in data analysis.

Numerous studies and articles that detail some of the shortfalls of the ARAP served as a foundation for the interview questions. The researchers of these studies analyzed the problems of the ARAP and the AAP. The studies used to support the questions were Baldauf and Reherman (2011), Pernin et al. (2014), Rasch (2011), Riposo et al. (2014), Schwartz (2014), Solis (2011), U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011b), and Vinch (2012).

The instrumentation for this study consisted of four parts: interview protocol questions, e-mail solicitation letter, letter of consent, and an interview question review protocol. The interview protocol (see Appendix A) consisted of 16 questions, and the aim was to provide recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP. The e-mail solicitation letter included details on the study for prospective participants, including the purpose of the study (see Appendix B). The solicitation letter provided an overview of the study and served as a way to obtain individuals' agreement to participate in the study. The letter of informed consent (see Appendix C) included a description of the study and of potential risks associated with the study. The letter of

consent also included a request that potential study participants sign the letter and agree to participate in the study. Field test protocol (see Appendix D) provides general guidelines on how Army acquisition professionals from DAU should assess and potentially provide recommended changes to the interview questions that I used to collect data for this study. The protocol provided instructions and background on this study for Army acquisition professionals reviewing the interview questions. The Army acquisition professionals from DAU reviewed, assessed, and provided recommendations on interview questions to support field testing for the interview questions.

The interview questions were sufficient to answer the research questions because they were directly and indirectly traceable back to the main research questions for this study. The responses to the questions from the interview protocol helped to answer the main research questions of this study. The interview protocol began with questions to obtain demographic and background data from the study participants. The interview protocol then transitioned into questions on specific issues associated with the ARAP and recommendations on ways to improve the process. The interview protocol concluded with open-ended questions so the study participants could discuss any issues or concerns with the ARAP not covered during the interview.

The interview protocol tool led to a few additional follow-on questions and to a few questions that required clarification. After conducting each interview, I wrote memos, reviewed my notes, and determined if study participants were providing adequate answers to the questions. Based on this assessment, I could have adjusted the protocol by adding more interview questions or by clarifying the interview questions.

Procedures for Field Test

I conducted a field test on the interview questions prior to interviewing study participants. The field test ensured the reliability and validity of the interview questions. The field test included experts in the Army acquisition field who analyzed the questions to ensure they would be adequate to answer the research questions for the study. The experts conducting the field test consisted of two Army acquisition professionals with experience in both the AAP and the ARAP. I recruited the experts from the DAU and sent DAU professors a solicitation letter (see Appendix E) that included a brief description of the study and a copy of the interview questions. As a result of the field test, one of the acquisition experts recommended adjustments to the interview questions to ensure they would result in data that would be suitable for answering the research questions. After I received feedback from the DAU professors, and they agreed that the questions would be adequate to support this study, I proceeded with interviewing study participants.

Procedures for Participant Recruitment, Participation, and Selection

I interviewed 19 study participants identified through Army acquisition professional colleagues with whom I had previously worked. After analyzing prospective participants, consolidating a list, and evaluating credentials and participant criteria, I recruited potential study participants through e-mail. The e-mail contained a detailed description of the purpose and the intent of the study, as well as a project letter that included a request for them to participate in the study. A copy of the e-mail solicitation letter prospective study participants received is in Appendix B.

After I received an e-mail confirmation from prospective study participants, I sent them a study participant letter of informed consent (see Appendix C). They signed the letter of consent and sent it back to me prior to me conducting the interview. After I received the letter of consent, I set appointments for the interviews with the study participants.

The first part of the interview questionnaire included questions on demographics. After the demographic questions, the interview questions shifted toward inquiring about the participants' experience with the ARAP. These questions confirmed the study participants had the proper qualifications to participate in the study. Qualified study participants possessed a DAWIA Level III certification in a functional area. The criteria for qualified personnel appeared in the Participant Selection Logic section. Because many of the study participants selected were middle- to senior-level Army acquisition managers in organizations that often use the ARAP, all study participants had sufficient qualifications to participate in the study. However, when two of the study participants did not have sufficient qualifications, then I politely terminated the interview after the participants provided information on their lack of work experience with ARAP or their lack of a DAWIA Level III certification.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred through interviews. After the study participants agreed to participate in the study, I coordinated a time and a location to conduct the interviews. Most interviews took place in participants' office or in a reserved conference room at their office location.

Interviews took place individually and lasted no more than 40 minutes. I recorded the interviews using an audio recording device. Data collection involved taking brief notes during the interview sessions. Near the end of each interview, I asked for permission to contact the study participants to follow up on any points requiring clarification. I also debriefed the study participants and asked them about any concerns they may have had about the information provided. I provided them my contact information and let them know that they could contact me if they needed to clarify any information or if they had any concerns about the information provided.

Frequency of data collection depended on the availability of the participants. I conducted no more than three interviews per week. Collecting data through interviews at this rate allowed me time to compile notes and write memos. During the time between interviews, I organized and coded the data and prepared for data analysis.

Member Checking

To confirm the accuracy of the data collected during the interview, I sent the transcripts from the interview to the study participants in a process known as member checking. Harper and Cole (2012) viewed member checking through the lens of quality control that lends additional accuracy, validity, reliability, and credibility to interviews. The study participants reviewed the transcripts for content validity and ensured they felt satisfied with the answers provided during the interview. Participants who wished to provide clarification to their interview responses made updates.

Member checking was suitable because study participants could provide additional information. It also provided participants with a high degree of confidence that

I interpreted their responses correctly. Through member checking, I assessed the study participants' understanding of the interview questions and the intent of the study.

Data Analysis Plan

In this research project, I used memos, coding, and contact summary sheets as data analysis research strategies. Maxwell (2013) described the strategies of memos and coding in qualitative data analysis, as well as the strategies of contact summary sheets, codes and coding, pattern coding, and memoing as data analysis strategies. Memos, which are researcher observations, can vary in length and composition. The memos helped capture recurring themes, as well as what I learned from the interview. Through the memos, I was able to capture nonverbal communication, in addition to summarizing initial findings. The memo data-analysis technique was useful in the results section of the research study. Contact summary sheets are similar to memos, except researchers can preformat them to determine salient points and themes from the interview. Contact summary sheets also can serve as a quick reference for participants' demographics.

I also used coding, which is a process in which researchers systematically tag and categorize responses for future analysis. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) described three phases of coding: (a) making the text manageable, (b) hearing what who said, and (c) developing theory. Researchers can use codes to identify themes in the data and to reference key parts of the data quickly for future analysis. Researchers can use coding to determine patterns within the data. Researchers also develop codebooks that serve as a reference guide for the codes they tag in their data. Researchers often write codes in the margins of interview transcripts or notes.

Coding can also link to the questions. In coding questions, researchers can organize or frame questions projected to answer a predetermined coding protocol known as precoding questions. I precoded some of the interview questions within this case study and directly or indirectly linked back to the overarching research questions of the study. I used NVivo 11 software as my qualitative data management software tool to organize, sort, code, and analyze my text-rich data. Through the software, I was able to identify relationships and trends within the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Triangulation, member checks, peer review, and saturation served to establish credibility or internal validity. Triangulation involved two forms: data triangulation and investigator triangulation. Under data triangulation, I collected data through interviews from various functional area experts with experience in both AAP and ARAP. The functional areas included individuals with DAWIA Level III certifications in program management, test and evaluation, systems engineering, or contracting.

I also triangulated interview data by collecting data from individuals who had worked or were working in various organizations or who had experience developing equipment for Army organizations. This case study consisted of participants from REF, Army Capabilities Integration Center, Army Test and Evaluation Command, Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense, Army Contracting Command, Army Research Lab, and various other organizations that support the ARAP.

Investigator triangulation took place through peer reviews of the transcripts. The peer reviews included other experts within the defense acquisition field.

Transferability

I established transferability or external validity through thick description and variation of participant selection (Smiley, 2015). One implication of thick description is that it entails a detailed and rich description of the data. This is a partial definition of thick description. The rest of the definition is that thick description provides a contextual sense of the data collected. I determined the context of the data through noting study participants' thoughts, perceptions, and emotions. Thick description thus helps provide an improved context and perspective of study participants.

For example, if a researcher were collecting data for a research project on death and dying, it would be prudent to annotate study participants who have a terminal illness. Study participants with terminal illnesses will likely have a unique perspective on death and dying. Thick data also include participants' culture and overall intention (Smiley, 2015). Because the AAP is such a multifaceted and complex process, the study included the thick description strategy to support the transferability or external validity of the data. The study included a variation of participant selection as described above by selecting study participants with different DAWIA functional areas.

Dependability

Audit trails and triangulation serve to establish dependability. I transcribed the interviews to establish an audit trail, and I organized the coding notes in the margins of the transcripts neatly for future reference. Additionally, I constructed and organized

memos and contact sheets for future reference. These documents directly traced back to the transcripts. The ability to cross reference the interview transcripts, memos from the interviews, and contact sheets further helped to establish the dependability of the study, as did triangulation. Triangulation occurred when similar themes surfaced from the transcripts, memos, and contact sheets.

Confirmability

Confirmability occurred when using the concept of reflexivity (Anney, 2014). Reflexivity is the technique by which researchers realize their own personal history or personal feelings that may influence the research under investigation. In an effort to counter reflexivity, I informed readers of my own personal biases with the AAP and the ARAP. I believe the AAP can benefit from some process improvements such as streamlined initiatives. Although I have biases with the AAP and the ARAP, I did not let my biases interfere with the ethics of this study.

Ethical Procedures

I ensured that I followed all required ethical procedures through the IRB. This study included the following documents from the IRB: solicitation e-mail, letter of consent, interview questions, and a coding data protocol memo of instruction. A Walden University representative provided IRB Approval No. 06-09-16-0129608 for this study after granting approval. I coordinated with the Army Research Institute and the Army Human Resource Protection Office to gain permission to collect data. Ethical concerns included ensuring none of the study participants were under my supervision. Also, study participants recruited to participate in the study could not benefit in any significant

manner that might influence data collection or the results of the study. I did not supervise or work for any of the study participants.

Study participants received information indicating that participation in this study was not a requirement. I notified them that there would be no penalty for deciding not to participate in the study, even if they changed their mind before the study began or at any time during the study. If a study participant had decided not to participate in the study, then I would have destroyed all data collected from that study participant immediately.

I treated all data collected as confidential. The study did not include names and identifiable information. Some of the data collected appear in this study as coded data. The raw data collected will remain in a lockbox in my house for 5 years after collection. After 5 years, I will destroy the data. I will destroy all other data after the publication of the study. I will erase electronic data from hard drives and thumb drives and shred paper data.

Summary

This chapter included a description of the methodology for this research study, the role of the researcher, and the purposive selection of study participants. This chapter also included a description of the nature of the study, the procedures for the field test, participant recruitment, data collection, and data analysis procedures. The chapter also included a discussion on instrumentation use; the data analysis plan; and tools used for determining the trustworthiness, reliability, validity, dependability, and confirmability of the data. This chapter concluded with the ethical procedures followed during the study.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the study. This chapter includes discussions on the field test, setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, results, and evidence of trustworthiness, concluding with a summary.

In this study, I examined the problem of the gap in knowledge and understanding about the ARAP by evaluating a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals with experience working with the ARAP. The three research questions developed to evaluate the ARAP were as follows:

RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?

RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?

RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

Field Test

The study included a field test to ensure the reliability and validity of the interview questions. The field test included experts in the Army acquisition field who analyzed the questions to ensure that they were adequate to answer the research

questions. Two DAU professors analyzed the interview protocol and the proposal. One of the DAU professors recommended that I add a question to the interview protocol that asked study participants to distinguish between the AAP and the ARAP to provide context and to help study participants to differentiate between the two processes. Based on the DAU professor's recommendation, I added a question. The other DAU professor accepted the interview protocol and had no recommended changes.

Research Setting

I recruited study participants from my professional networks within the Army Acquisition Corps. I conducted the interviews in accordance with the protocol. Study participants did not identify any changes in their occupation status that would affect the results of the study.

Demographics

This study consisted of participants from the Army acquisition community. I recruited study participants from the Army Acquisition Corps. I contacted the study participants via e-mail and requested their participation in accordance with the protocol outlined in Appendix B. Study participants who agreed to participate in the study signed the letter of consent (see Appendix C). I coordinated time and location and conducted the interview at each study participant's convenience. The interviews took place at the person's place of employment and restaurants.

The study participants' demographics are in Table 1. Of the 19 study participants, 15 were civilians, and four were military officers. Fourteen were military veterans. Seven served in Iraq or Afghanistan, one served in Kosovo, and one served in Vietnam. Fifteen

participants had over 10 years of work experience in the acquisition community. Two had between 1 and 9 years of work experience in the acquisition community, and two had no previous jobs in Army acquisitions but had adequate experience working with the ARAP.

Table 1

Study Participant Demographic Overview (N = 19)

Participant number	Military or civilian	Combat experience in Afghanistan or Iraq	Military veteran	Years of acquisition experience	Level III DAWIA functional certification	Current acquisition job (functional area)
SP1	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Not certified	Requirements
SP2	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Engineering	Engineering
SP3	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Test and evaluation, science and technology	Test and evaluation
SP4	Military	Yes	Yes	Over 10	Engineering	Engineering
SP5	Civilian	Yes	Yes	Over 10	Program management	Program management
SP6	Civilian	No	No	Over 10	Program management and engineering	Engineering
SP7	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Test and evaluation, program management	Test and evaluation
SP8	Military	Yes	Yes	Over 10	Program management	Program management
SP9	Civilian	No	No	Over 10	Contracting	Contracting
SP10	Civilian	No	No	Over 10	None	Science and technology
SP11	Military	Yes	Yes	Over 10	Program management	Program management
SP12	Civilian	No	No	Over 10	Program management, engineering, test and evaluation, and logistics	Program management
SP13	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Engineering	Science and technology
SP14	Civilian	No	No	Over 10	Engineering and contracting	Contracting
SP15	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Test and evaluation	Test and evaluation
SP16	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Program management	Program management
SP17	Military	Yes	Yes	1-9	Program management	Program management
SP18	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Test and evaluation	Test and evaluation
SP19	Civilian	No	Yes	Over 10	Not certified	Requirements

The study consisted of a vast cross-section of Army acquisition professionals.

Study participants were DAWIA Level III certified in program management, science and technology, contracting, test and evaluation, engineering, and logistics. Study participants

worked in various jobs within the Army acquisition community, including program management, requirements management, science and technology, contracting, test and evaluation, and engineering. Table 1 depicts the demographics of the participants.

Data Collection

I collected data from 21 study participants through semistructured interviews (see Appendix A) from July 29, 2016, through November 4, 2016. I analyzed the data from 19 of 21 study participants. Two of the study participants did not demonstrate a true mastery of the AAP and the ARAP, and I did not use their data in the study. Twenty interviews took place face-to-face. I conducted one interview over the phone. Eighteen interviews took place at the person's place of employment, and the other three took place in restaurants. I recorded 19 of the interviews using a digital recording device to ensure the accuracy of the data. I later transcribed the data. I did not record two interviews because electronic devices were not permissible in the participants' office locations.

The interviews ranged from 25 to 40 minutes each. All study participants answered the interview questions in accordance with the interview protocol (see Appendix D). The 19 study participants whose data underwent analysis demonstrated extensive knowledge of the AAP and the ARAP. I encountered no issues or difficulties regarding data collection.

Within the study, there were three study participants who were not DAWIA Level III certified. Their current acquisition jobs did not require Level III certification. Two study participants were from the acquisition requirements functional area, and both had over 10 years of experience within the acquisition community. The other study

participant worked within the science and technology community functional area and had over 30 years of experience in the acquisition community. Despite the three study participants lacking DAWIA Level III certification, they were considered acquisition experts with qualifications to participate in the study.

Data Analysis

I organized the data from the semistructured interviews using NVivo 11. The coding process used to assist in developing themes followed the procedures used by Maxwell (2013). Coding categories led to determining themes though reoccurring phrases, ideas, topics, and concepts. I first started categorizing the data into large bins using the open coding concept described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). After categorizing the data using this technique, I was able to organize the data so that I could begin to identify developing trends. The emergence of trends enabled me to organize the raw data and further organize the data into themes.

Entering codes into NVivo facilitated the development of common themes. I completed five iterations of analysis to ensure that the organization of the data collected was optimal. Memos were written during and after each interview to analyze the data and to analyze each study participant individually. In the memos, I captured nonverbal responses that also assisted with data analysis. I identified 10 themes during my analysis. Table 2 contains a summary of the codes and themes.

Table 2

Coding and Themes

Codes	Categorization	Themes
ARAP team	Current key issues	Equipment sustainment
ARAP undefined	Risks of using ARAP	Equipment transition
Change in field needs	Risk mitigation vs bureaucracy	Equipment funding
Cooperation collaboration support	ARAP capture lesson learned	Requirements
Disposition analysis	ARAP future revisions	Direct soldier involvement
Enduring capability		Negotiations with stakeholders
Execution or follow-through		Bureaucracy reduces risk
Initial stages work well		Postbureaucracy increases risk
Lead times		AAP well defined
Logistics and test data		ARAP not well defined
Policy - bureaucracy		
Politics		
Program managers		
Transition process		
Votes and input		
Delivery timeline		
Enduring capability		
Funding		
Mission support		
Operational testing		
Safety		
Training and manuals		
ATEC reports		
Continuity of information		
Logistics		
Operational requirements - feedback		
Outcome analysis		
R&D - prototypes		
Stakeholders		
Strategic vision		
Sustainment and transition		
TRADOC		
CDRT process		
Collaboration		
Contracting		
Define the problem		
Delivery		
Documentation		
End user		
Enforce execution of process		
Input - feedback		
Integrated systems		
Policy - regulations		
Resources		
Science projects - banish or test		
Senior level involvement		

(table continues)

Codes	Categorization	Themes
Sole source acquisition process		
Stakeholders		
Streamlining process		
Threat assessment		
Training operational needs statement		
Vetting process		
REF perspective		
Senior leader support involvement		
Sustainment		

Discrepant Cases

There were no significant discrepant cases discovered during this study. Study participants reviewed their transcripts and made the necessary adjustments. Five of the 19 study participants provided minor edits to the transcripts. The transcript reviews and minor adjustments to the transcripts ensured that the data collected from the study participants were accurate.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

In an effort to ensure credibility, I applied member checking to verify the data collected and to ensure that there was no misinterpretation of the data. Study participants were also aware of the emerging results of the study. To ensure credibility further, data collection and analysis included memo and field notes. In an effort to curtail bias, I acknowledged my preferences, issues, and concerns with both the AAP and the ARAP. I also established credibility through triangulation. Themes extracted from the data collected demonstrated triangulation because numerous study participants repeated many of the same themes.

Transferability

The intent of this case study was not to transfer findings (Maxwell, 2013). The intent of this case study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The small sample size of 19 study participants limited transferability.

Dependability

The concept of redundancy helped to address dependability. Dependability occurred when study participants provided similar responses to the same questions (Trotter, 2012). Dependability was also demonstrated through triangulation in which similar themes surfaced from the transcripts, memos, and contact sheets. Digitally recording interviews, transcribing the interviews, and composing memos during the data collection process also enhanced dependability.

Confirmability

I addressed confirmability by using coding matrices and memos. Data from transcribed interviews supported this study. To mitigate personal bias and to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the results of this exploratory case study, study participants reviewed their interview transcripts for comments, and I informed them of the emerging results.

Study Results

The results of this study yielded themes that aligned with the research questions. The alignment of the research questions with the themes is depicted in Table 3. The study results are organized by research questions with corresponding themes. In the remainder

of this section, I describe the results of the study based on the data collected from participants.

Table 3

Themes From Interviews and Data Aligned With Research Questions

Research questions	Themes
RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?	Equipment sustainment, equipment transition, equipment funding
RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance (effectiveness and efficiency) of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?	Requirements, direct soldier involvement, negotiations with stakeholders
RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?	Bureaucracy reduces risk, postbureaucracy increases risk, AAP well defined, ARAP not well defined

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was as follows: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP? Three themes emerged from the qualitative analysis in response to RQ1 and the study problem statement: sustainment, equipment funding, and equipment transition. Explanations of the three themes follow.

Theme 1: Equipment sustainment. Sustainment was the most common of all themes and surfaced throughout most of the study. Sustainment also surfaced as the most common problem with ARAP, according to study participants. Fourteen of the 19 study participants noted the problem of sustainment.

Study Participant (SP) 11 and SP16 were from the same organization, and they both indicated that the ARAP had performed exceptionally well since 2001, while supporting the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. Army acquisition professionals managing the ARAP do a good job at delivering equipment to soldiers at the front end of the process

according to SP2 , but SP16 noted that the ARAP's biggest weakness is its ability to sustain the equipment. SP4 also noted that the Army acquisition professionals who manage the ARAP do a good job of initially delivering equipment to soldiers as quickly as possible. Because most of the ARAP equipment lacks a sustainment plan, SP12 and SP17 indicated that soldiers often abandon the equipment and do not use it. SP11 provided an example of a unit whose leaders had to either pay for the sustainment of a critical piece of equipment that they needed or put the equipment away in storage. The unit made the tough decision to pay for the equipment using funds allocated for other critical assets.

According to SP3, no one manages sustainment and the costs associated with sustainment. SP6 discussed the high cost of contractor logistics support that program managers often purchase for 1 or 2 years with ARAP-procured equipment. SP14 echoed similar concerns. After the contractor logistics support expires, soldiers put the equipment away in storage and do not use the equipment again, unless the unit purchases an expensive sustainment packaged for the equipment.

SP8 noted that logisticians often do not have a voice in the development of equipment under the ARAP model. Furthermore, when someone consults them on an ARAP product in development, it is often too late because the development of the equipment is complete. Because operations and sustaining equipment are the highest costs of equipment, SP8 indicated that Army acquisition logisticians spend a significant amount of money sustaining or maintaining the equipment. The ARAP lacks a clear logistics picture because no one conducts the proper reliability testing to inform the

logistics or sustainment plan. Involving logisticians early on could help better inform the sustainment plan.

SP8 recalled a project that required his team to upgrade the obsolete internal components of an equipment set procured under ARAP. SP8 was serving as the program manager for the equipment set at the time and realized the previous design of the equipment did not support a sound logistical plan to assist in maintaining the equipment set. In upgrading the internal components of the equipment set, SP8 empowered his lead logistician to serve as a key voting member of the working group upgrading the internal components. SP8 acknowledged that the design of the equipment under the guidance of his lead logistician resulted in significant cost savings and a sound logistical plan supported by the Army supply system.

SP10 discussed the lack of common logistical strategy as an issue for many ARAP programs. SP11 cited the mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles purchased under ARAP as an example. Because numerous contractors produced the multiple types of vehicles in a short time frame, a sound logistical strategy to support the vehicles was lacking. Because the vehicles were not all the same, maintaining the vehicles was a challenge and expensive.

Theme 2: Equipment transition. Equipment transition surfaced as a problem with ARAP among many study participants. SP1 and SP4 noted that the ARAP delivers equipment effectively, but the equipment does not always transfer to an enduring program or a program of record under the AAP. SP5 noted that there is typically not a

plan to transition equipment or to determine if the equipment can transition to an enduring capability.

SP11 stated that transitioning equipment to an enduring program can be a challenge. The equipment transfers with no money to support the program. The ARAP equipment is then competing for money from other programs procured under the AAP. The money for the AAP is timed and phased for a specific program 5 years out, and adding an ARAP program misaligns funding or reduces funding for programs under the AAP. For this reason, SP13 indicated that program managers managing AAP programs are reluctant to accept ARAP programs into their portfolio.

Theme 3: Equipment funding. Equipment funding emerged as a problem with the ARAP. Theme 3 indicates the need for funding and the need for the right kind of funding. Army acquisition community funding includes different types of funding for specific purposes. For example, procurement funding is strictly for procuring equipment and typically has a 3-year shelf life. Research development testing and engineering funding is for developing and testing equipment. This funding generally has a 2-year shelf life. Operations and maintenance funding is to maintain and build infrastructure on installations. Very few organizations have the necessary funding or the right mix of funding to develop, test, and procure equipment. SP1, SP11, and SP16 identified the need for flexible funding or a need to have the right mix of funds. The REF is one of the few organizations with the right mix of funding. Program managers within the REF procure most of their equipment under the ARAP, which is different from most program management offices. Most program management offices have procurement and limited

research development test and engineering funding and most of it serves to support enduring programs developed under the AAP.

SP16 also noted that there is a lack of funding set aside to develop prototypes. SP16 asserted that making more prototypes will allow leaders to determine the feasibility of procuring future equipment through testing and to facilitate more hands-on use by soldiers. SP16 also advocated prototyping equipment in deployed areas through three-dimensional printing.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What key factors are present that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition? Three themes emerged from the qualitative analysis in response to RQ2 and the problem statement: requirements, direct soldier involvement, and negotiations with stakeholders. A discussion of the three themes follows.

Theme 1: Requirements. Requirements was one of the key factors that impacted the performance of ARAP. Requirements means defining what equipment is necessary, the equipment specifications, or the technical specifications required for the equipment. Defining the requirements was a theme that SP7, SP12, and SP13 noted as a shortfall of the ARAP. SP7 said that the ARAP lacked a process for “requirement degeneration or requirement decomposer,” and SP12 described the “lack of requirement vetting and no one decomposes the requirement and analyzes what [equipment] is needed.” SP7 and SP12’s comments indicated the lack of analysis involved in determining the requirements

that will determine what equipment soldiers need. SP13 also noted, “We do not do a good job of defining the [requirements] problem up front. We must identify the exact requirement and not gold plate the requirement.” Gold plating in this case referred to defining equipment requirements beyond what is necessary.

Locking down the requirement can be difficult because of the evolving threat. SP15 asserted, “There is a struggle to lock down the requirement and approve the requirement” in part due to the rapidly evolving threat. SP6 further clarified that requirement managers within the Army must “determine the real threat, how long the threat will be out there, and who identified the threat” to define the requirement. SP18 discussed his concerns with requirements, stating, “The problem is that there is no overarching architecture that is driving all of these systems to look at requirements and then decide what functions and capabilities filters down and to find out what all these requirements are.” SP18 recommended a top-down approach by Army leadership to define and prioritize requirements.

Theme 2: Direct soldier involvement. Under this theme, study participants described the issues associated with not having adequate direct soldier involvement while using ARAP as an issue that decreases ARAP’s performance. SP12 noted there is a “lack of relationship with the end user.” That relationship involves communicating with the end user or the soldier on a regular basis to ensure the equipment under development continues to align with what the end user needs or with requirements. SP7 recommended that program managers discuss the progress of the equipment with the end user or soldier at least weekly to ensure no significant changes are necessary. SP7 further noted that this

approach is important, especially in the engineering phase where changes to the equipment could affect the fit, form, and function of the equipment.

SP13 echoed the issue of soldiers' participation in the requirement process to assist in understanding the requirements by stating that Army acquisition professionals, specifically program managers, "must do a better job of involving the operational Army up front in the development of rapid acquisition. As the product is engineered, there is not enough involvement/interaction with the end user." SP15 supported the notion of soldier involvement, especially when the soldiers are deployed and for collecting data on prototype equipment.

There is at times a desire to bring in the user representative and not the user when developing equipment under the ARAP. User representatives develop the theory and concepts of operations on how soldiers should employ equipment. From an Army doctrine perspective, user representatives have the responsibility of developing requirements for soldiers. The end users are the soldiers requesting the equipment and will eventually receive the equipment, typically using the AAP. The user representative and the user are sometimes at odds on the equipment needed. SP7 noted the frequent lack of a "knowledgeable user or user representative to tell the material developer [program manager] what they [soldiers] really need." SP7 indicated that user representatives' operational experience is out of date, and they may not have the latest operational experience required to assess the requirements needed for the equipment. Given the difference in opinion between the two, the requirements community must resolve these issues to improve ARAP performance.

Theme 3: Negotiations with stakeholders. This theme appeared throughout the study as a way to improve the performance of ARAP. As the ARAP remains essentially undefined, as noted by SP17, it is typically new to key stakeholders who play an important role in designing and developing the equipment. Furthermore, program managers must often negotiate with stakeholders while using the AAP as the baseline. The biggest stakeholder that requires the most negotiations is the test community. SP12 noted testers want to test everything. SP12 described the “inability of the test community to demonstrate flexibility. There is still a desire within the test community to test the performance parameters instead of testing the equipment to see what it can or cannot do [from an ARAP perspective].”

SP4 stated,

The [ARAP] process is always a negotiation, there’s always the process that will you go back and forth. This can be confrontational in a good way because you work though figuring out what’s minimal and what’s optimal, for example the level of testing required. Minimally, what’s required is a safety release, but the test community has negotiated, and their minimum is the capability and limitation report/assessment, in addition to the safety certification. The capability and limitation simply tell the soldier what the equipment can and cannot do, which is watered down from the requirements of the traditional acquisition process. It’s a balance. You work with your tester. It’s a give-and-take process in order to get to the best product for the soldier. We don’t always do everything or test everything

that the tester wants to test. We assume some risks in some areas that testers are not comfortable with.

Although most negotiations with stakeholders center on testers, SP11 discussed issues with other organizations that did not have the infrastructure or knowledge to support rapid acquisition initiatives under ARAP. SP11 noted that when developing and procuring equipment, the leaders of organizations whose personnel manage spectrum management and public health requirements are slow to grant approvals and do not recognize the urgency required to develop and procure equipment under ARAP.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was as follows: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP? Using qualitative analysis, four themes emerged in response to RQ3 and the study problem statement: bureaucracy reduces risk, AAP well defined, postbureaucracy increases risk, and ARAP not well defined. A discussion of the four themes follows.

Theme 1: Bureaucracy reduces risk. Under this theme, six study participants acknowledged that bureaucracy in general reduces risk and is akin to the AAP. Army leaders often enplace rules that require more checks and balances, specifically in the AAP or traditional acquisition process. As it relates to Army acquisition, SP8 noted that in the AAP, every stakeholder has a chance to vote and to vote often. The AAP includes everyone to ensure a reduced risk. SP4 discussed bureaucracy as a way to reduce the risk and stated that under the AAP, “Typically someone has identified a problem, and some additional layer of oversight, to help mitigate that risk. . . . Over the years and all the

checks and balances . . . causes things [to] get unwieldy at some point.” SP12 further cited the DoD 5000.02 as the chief document that establishes acquisition rules that help manage or reduce risk. SP9 also supported the notion that, in the AAP,

Bureaucracy a lot of times tends to decrease risk, because you are adding additional layers and checks and double checks into a system. So, there is a fine balance in risk mitigation. I can do something 100% but is the 95% solution acceptable? That’s part of my job is to balance risk in the contracting area, knowing is the amount of risk tolerable or not.

Other study participants noted that, while operating under the AAP, the amount of documentation required to acquire equipment is high due to added bureaucracy and the desire to accept risk is low. SP14 and SP6 discussed the concept of risk and articulated that when soldiers are not in a deployed environment, then the AAP process undergoes more scrutiny and the process slows down significantly, specifically as it relates to all the programmatic documents required. SP14 further noted that the tolerance for risk is more acceptable in deployed environments than when soldiers are not in deployed environments.

Theme 2: Postbureaucracy increases risk. In contrast to bureaucracy, postbureaucracy involves more risk and aligns more with the ARAP. According to SP11 and SP14, to deliver equipment to soldiers under condensed timelines, commanders must assume more risk than under the ARAP in comparison to the AAP. SP6 stated the following:

When we have a rapid initiative [ARAP], the bureaucracy is decreased. Because we know that there is an urgent and approved requirement, so the bureaucracy is mitigated or kept in check to support the soldiers. The risk of not meeting the schedule is decreased because the existence of bureaucracy is decreased. The user [soldier] still, however, accepts some of the risk through what he agrees to in the capabilities and limitations report.

SP14 further noted that the tolerance for risk is more acceptable in the deployed environment than when soldiers are not in a deployed environment.

Theme 3: AAP well defined. The AAP serves as the foundation of the ARAP. The AAP is well defined in the DoD 5000.02 and in the DoD 5000.02. SP8 noted it documents programs as they move through various milestones. The design for much of the documentation is to reduce risk, which aligns with the theory of bureaucracy. SP17 also noted how well defined the AAP process is in comparison to the ARAP. SP17 further noted that the focus of the AAP is on scalability and therefore it must be very well defined to support the design, production, and sustainment of equipment. SP6 indicated the AAP must be a well-defined process because it produces equipment that will be in the Army inventory for 20 years and beyond.

Theme 4: ARAP not well defined. The notion that the ARAP is largely undefined was prevalent throughout the study. Lack of a true ARAP definition aligns with the theory of postbureaucracy. SP8, SP10, SP17, SP18, and SP19 expressed this as an ARAP characteristic. SP8 noted, “There could be a couple different definitions of

what rapid acquisition means.” SP17 stated, “Rapid acquisition is not a clearly defined term.” SP19 specified, “Rapid Acquisition is really undefined.”

SP8 further acknowledged that if the ARAP was “institutionalized,” then it may not be rapid. The undefined aspect of the ARAP allows program managers the autonomy to deliver equipment to soldiers. Institutionalizing the ARAP may harm its effectiveness. SP8 indicated institutionalizing rapid acquisition may not be the most effective way to deliver equipment to soldiers. SP8 noted rapid acquisition provides loose guidance on how to deliver equipment to soldiers, which may be the most productive way to deliver equipment to soldiers.

SP18 supported the loose definition of ARAP. SP18 further stated, “We need to think outside of the box and cannot have preconceived ideas.” SP18 alluded to the notion that ARAP, as largely undefined, provides flexibility for creative program managers with good judgment to go out and develop equipment for the soldiers. SP4 noted that it would not be easy for program managers to develop and deliver equipment to soldiers under the ARAP because it is relatively undefined. SP4 further noted that negotiating with those stakeholders to deliver equipment to soldiers can at times be confrontational, but it is the interest of delivering equipment to soldiers that may ultimately save lives. According to SP4, confrontation is necessary to get the best equipment for soldiers in the timeliest manner.

Other Key Themes

Lessons learned but forgotten. Some study participants acknowledged that leaders within the Army learned lessons over time but forgot the lessons along the way.

SP5 recapped some of the conversations with World War II veterans from the 10th Mountain Division, where they learned how to mitigate extreme-cold-weather injuries. Many of those same World War II soldiers served in the Korean War just over a decade later and they had to learn many of the same lessons again to alleviate cold weather injuries.

SP13 echoed similar discussions regarding experiences during the Vietnam War. SP13 said that many of the lessons learned from a tactical perspective were some of the same lessons learned in the current Afghanistan War. SP13 further noted the difficulty of capturing the lessons learned and applying them later so that soldiers do not have to “reinvent the wheel.” SP13 gave credit to the individuals within government organizations that do an exceptional job of collecting data on the lessons learned but noted that accessing and applying the data had been difficult. SP8 noted similar concerns as SP13 mentioned regarding applying the lessons learned. SP8 noted that data on the lessons learned exist, but the current culture does not support applying those lessons learned, and until there is a culture that embraces reflecting on lessons learned, government organizations will continue to collect unused data.

Mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP). MRAP is the premier product acquired under ARAP. Five of the 19 study participants noted MRAP was the “poster child” of ARAP. In fact, many authors have written about MRAP and documented how the DoD, including the Army, procured the MRAP. Friedman (2013) conducted a recent case study documenting the MRAP under the ARAP. The MRAP provided exceptional protection for soldiers, but had challenges from a logistics and a quality control

perspective. SP11 noted controlling quality was difficult because program managers procured the vehicles so quickly and through so many different vendors. SP11 witnessed instances in which the measurements of the MRAP did not match the manufacturer's specification, which created issues when loading MRAP on aircraft and ships for transport. SP10 attributed many of the MRAP logistical issues to managing the various subvendors from the numerous models of MRAP. Ensuring quality equipment and ensuring timely delivery to soldiers were the two priorities when developing MRAP, so a sound logistical strategy became a secondary goal. As a result, maintaining the MRAP fleet has cost the DoD a significant amount of money.

Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and government off-the-shelf (GOTS).

Four of the 19 study participants discussed the needs for Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and government off-the-shelf (GOTS) to increase the speed of delivering equipment to soldiers. COTS refers to equipment available from any commercial company, whereas GOTS refers to equipment developed by a government agency and available for sale or distribution on a limited basis. SP11 and SP16 both attributed their speed of delivering equipment to soldiers to using COTS and GOTS. Typically, COTS and GOTS require little if any modification and are available for testing quicker than equipment that program managers had to engineer, prototype, and test. SP2 acknowledged that significant modifications to the COTS and GOTS slow the process and limit a program manager's ability to deliver equipment to the soldiers in a timely manner. SP10 and SP18 also expressed concerns with the reliability of the COTS and GOTS equipment delivered to the soldiers.

Themes by Acquisition Functional Areas

This study involved assessing ways to improve the ARAP from a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. Table 4 depicts themes and aligns the themes with the functional job of each study participant. Based off the data collected, all functional area acknowledged the need for improved sustainment and a need to understand the requirements. All but two functional areas indicated the need for more direct soldier involvement with the program manager when developing and procuring the equipment. Engineers, program managers, requirement managers, and science and technology professionals discussed the need for a transition plan for ARAP equipment. Program managers, requirement managers, science and technology professionals, and test and evaluation professionals noted that ARAP remains largely undefined, while the contractors, engineers, program managers, and science and technology professionals cited that bureaucracy reduces risk.

Table 4

Theme Alignment of Acquisition Functional Areas

	Contracting Engineers				Program management				Requirement Science and manager technology		Test and evaluation								
	9 ^a	14	2	4	6	5	8	11	12	16	17	1	19	10	13	3	7	15	18
Funding								x		x		x			x				
Transition					x		x		x	x		x			x				
Sustainment		x			x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x
Requirements		x					x			x		x			x		x	x	x
Direct soldier involvement						x	x	x		x					x		x	x	x
Negotiations with stakeholders							x	x	x										
Rapid acquisition undefined						x		x			x		x	x					x
AAP defined							x				x								
Bureaucracy reduces risk	x	x				x		x		x					x				
Postbureaucracy assumes more risk		x					x												

^a Numbers in this row refer to the study participants.

Summary

Through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals, this qualitative exploratory case study involved exploring three research questions. Table 3 showed the research questions aligned with the themes for this study. The focus of RQ1 was on the key problems with the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP, and the three themes that aligned with RQ1 were equipment funding, equipment transition, and equipment sustainment. The focus of RQ2 was the key factors that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP, and the three themes associated with RQ2 were requirements, direct soldier involvement, and negotiations with stakeholders. The focus of RQ3 was how the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP, and the four themes associated with RQ3 were bureaucracy reduces risk, postbureaucracy increases risk, AAP well defined,

and ARAP not well defined. This chapter also included other themes found within the data. Chapter 5 includes discussions, conclusions, and recommendations for future ARAP and AAP studies.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Purpose and Nature of the Study

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The problem examined in this study was the gap in the knowledge and understanding about the ARAP, which was addressed through an evaluation of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals with experience working with the ARAP. This study includes recommendations to improve the development and procurement of equipment under the ARAP.

The study's methodology consisted of an exploratory case study with semistructured interviews. The qualitative approach was suitable to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues associated with the ARAP. The focus of the qualitative approach was on the richness and quality of the data and not on the number of participants (Yin, 2014). The findings from the study built on the foundations of 19 study participants, validated through triangulation and member checking.

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 included an overview of the study and the problem statement. Chapter 2 contained a literature review bounded by the theoretical and conceptual framework. Chapter 3 included an outline of the methodology of the study, and the focus of Chapter 4 was data collection and data analysis. This chapter consists of interpretations, findings, limitations, recommendations, and implications.

Interpretations of the Findings

Three research questions framed this study:

RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?

RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?

RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was as follows: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP? The data collected in the study indicated that there are problems when acquiring equipment under the ARAP. Some of the problems associated with acquiring equipment under the ARAP revealed by study participants during the data collection process mirrored some of the problems published within the literature. The key themes supporting RQ1 were equipment funding, equipment transition, and equipment sustainment.

Equipment sustainment. The theme of sustainment appeared throughout the literature and appeared as the top theme within this study from study participants. Within the study, the terms *sustainment* and *logistics* were interchangeable. Many of the study participants highlighted a lack of focus on a coherent logistical plan to support the equipment acquired under the ARAP. Within the literature, the study participants'

concerns aligned with themes within the literature. Whitson (2012) noted the importance of planning for logistics, and many of the study participants noted that lack of planning was a widespread concern. Whaley and Stewart (2014) also noted that because of a lack of a sound logistical strategy that integrates ARAP equipment into the Army's logistical system, Army leaders waste money buying civilian contractor logistics support, and some of the study participants also indicated that this was a concern. Williams et al. (2014) discussed issues associated with integrating logistics with equipment using the ARAP model.

Equipment transition. The theme of transitioning equipment to a program of record or transitioning equipment to an enduring capability was the second theme that surfaced with many of the study participants. This theme also tied back to the literature. Whaley and Stewart (2014) highlighted the need for a plan to transition equipment procured under the ARAP to a program of record. Having a plan to transition or not transition allows program managers to allocate funding for ARAP equipment transitioning to programs of record, as indicated by the study participants and by Whaley and Stewart. The plan to not transition ARAP programs allows Army leaders to divest of the equipment and store equipment for potential future use if needed.

Equipment funding. The theme of equipment funding also appeared in the literature as an issue, but not in the same manner in which it surfaced in the results of this study. In the literature, equipment funding appeared as Congress not setting aside money specifically for ARAP initiatives; most of the money that funds acquisition initiatives comes from other programs (Rasch, 2011). The equipment funding issues that surfaced in

this study centered on the inflexibility of the funding that Congress appropriates for program managers to manage ARAP initiatives. More specifically, program managers do not have the right type of money to use for the intended purpose. For example, program managers need research development, testing, and engineering money to design, develop, and test equipment, and in many cases, they have too much procurement funding that typically is only usable for procuring equipment.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What key factors are present that affect the performance effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition? The data collected in the study provided factors that impact the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARAP. Study participants revealed that some of the factors involved with acquiring equipment under the ARAP during the data collection aligned with some of the problems published within the literature. The key themes supporting RQ2 were requirements, direct soldier involvement, and negotiations with stakeholders.

Requirements. The theme of requirements appeared both in the literature and in the results of this study. Within the literature, Whaley and Stewart (2014) underscored the importance of ensuring that program managers have a stable requirement to deliver equipment to soldiers. Study participants indicated that leaders within the Army had significant difficulty defining requirements and had trouble not changing the requirements after their development was complete. Within this study, the participants acknowledged that the Army does not have an established procedure to decompose and

understand the requirements provided to them from soldiers in deployed locations.

Because acquisition professionals within the Army do not fully understand the requirements and have not decomposed the requirements, some of the equipment developed is not sufficient to meet soldiers' needs.

Study participants also noted that the requirements are often evolving. The evolution of the requirements is due in part to enemies changing the threat and to soldiers changing their minds on the type of equipment they desire. The enemy changing its threat or the way in which it operates is normal, but soldiers changing their minds on what they want is not always expected. This change is often the result of soldiers not understanding what they want and at times simply wanting something different after they have had time to assess the enemy's tactics more effectively.

Direct soldier involvement. Direct soldier involvement is a theme not reflected in the literature but reflected in the results of this study. The fact that the theme did not appear in the literature does not negate its importance as a key factor contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of ARAP initiatives. I presume that not finding direct soldier involvement in the literature was an oversight based on the limited body of research that exists. Direct soldier involvement essentially requires effective communication, which is one of the key tenets of effective leadership according to DuBois et al. (2015). The study participants who acknowledged the importance of direct soldier involvement focused their discussions on the need to ensure that program managers maintained regular communications with the soldiers as they developed and tested their equipment. Direct involvement such as regular weekly meetings, as recommended by one study participant,

would keep the user directly involved and communicate any potential issues with the equipment or any changes in the requirements.

Not reflected in the literature, but reflected in the study results, study participants distinguished between direct involvement with the soldier and not the soldier representative. *Direct involvement with the soldier* entails regular communications with soldiers in a deployed environment about the status of their ARAP initiatives. *Direct involvement with the soldier representative* entails direct communication with soldiers or civilians representing the soldiers' needs, who can at times approach solutions from a theoretical perspective. Their tactical experience may also be out of date. Study participants advocated for direct soldier involvement with soldiers in deployed areas in an effort to receive direct feedback and the latest combat operational insight.

Negotiations with stakeholders. Negotiations with stakeholders was not a theme found in the literature, but it appeared in the results of this study, mainly from a test and evaluation perspective. Because ARAP as a concept is loosely defined, and the body of research on the ARAP is limited, the fact that negotiations with stakeholders does not appear as a theme in the research is not alarming. As noted by some of the study participants, negotiations with stakeholders, specifically the test and evaluation stakeholders, are necessary to develop and test equipment under rapid initiatives. According to some of the study participants, the test community's responsibility is to test the equipment to the fullest extent and under the most extreme conditions, but under rapid acquisition initiatives, such testing is not always necessary due to the time and

funding required for those tests. To mitigate the possibilities of overtesting, negotiations with test stakeholders are essential.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was as follows: How do the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP? The data collected in the study provided insight on ways in which the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy aligned with and explained ARAP. Some study participants provided views on the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy as they relate to risk. The data collected from the study participants did not necessarily align with some of the themes published within the literature. There is a great deal written in the literature on the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy, but not much is available that specifically aligns with ARAP. The lack of data and lack of support in the literature links to the methodology of this study. Exploratory case studies, as defined by Zogaj et al. (2014), consist of preliminary primary research within a field of study. This study meets that criterion. Despite the lack of themes in the literature, study participants provided comprehensive insight on ways in which the theories of bureaucracy and postbureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP. The key themes supporting RQ3 were bureaucracy reduces risk, postbureaucracy increases risk, AAP well defined, and ARAP not well defined.

Bureaucracy reduces risk. Some participants indicated that bureaucracy reduces risk. Program managers operating under the AAP manage programs of record or enduring capabilities that support using bureaucracy as a risk-reduction tool. Some study participants noted that under the AAP, all the stakeholders have a vote on developing the

equipment, which serves as a risk-reduction tool to ensure that soldiers receive the best equipment with the best possible performance and the safest equipment that is logistically supportable. Because of the well-documented approach to developing equipment under the AAP, study participants noted that the AAP is well defined.

AAP well defined. Many of the study participants mentioned this theme in the interviews. Many acknowledged that the AAP is well defined in comparison to the ARAP. Although the DoD 5000.02 is the document that guides the development and procurement of equipment, and it provides guidance on both the AAP and the ARAP, the focus of most sections of the DoD 5000.02 is on the AAP, which supports the notion that the AAP is well defined.

Postbureaucracy increases risk. The notion that postbureaucracy increases risk received strong support throughout the study. Program managers typically focus on cost, schedule, and performance. Schedule and performance are often the focal areas in developing and delivering equipment to soldiers. Program managers must deliver equipment that meets adequate performance specifications, and program managers must meet schedules and deliver equipment to soldiers in a timely manner under the ARAP. Because schedule and performance are so important, risk is more acceptable under the ARAP. Commanders in the field, especially in deployed environments, are more likely to accept increased risk and receive equipment not yet fully tested to understand the performance of the equipment as long as it meets the schedule. The urgency in the need for equipment supports the appetite for increased risk and drives all stakeholders to operate more within the framework of a postbureaucratic construct.

ARAP not well defined. Many of the study participants noted this theme. As the ARAP is not well defined, it provides program managers the flexibility to define a plan to deliver equipment to soldiers, and program managers must educate and negotiate with stakeholders on their input for developing the equipment. Program managers must also tailor the ARAP for their specific needs and decide which stakeholders can vote.

Limitations of the Study

Two limitations in this study were small sample size and transferability. Limitations to this study existed due to the small sample size of 19 study participants. This case study included an exploratory case study methodology, which is not transferable to a larger population.

Although I attempted to mitigate bias through member checking and triangulation, it is difficult to eliminate all bias. Member checking and triangulation techniques helped to increase the validation of data. As a military officer, I have over 10 years of experience working with both the AAP and the ARAP, and based on my experience, I do favor one over the other. I believe that there was bias in some of the study participants' responses based on their experiences, especially in the case of study participants with combat experience under the ARAP. A few of the study participants exhibited a great deal of passion when responding to the interview questions.

Recommendations

Recommendation for Action

Army leaders should consider the recommendations of this study to improve the ARAP. Throughout this research study, I provided an assessment of the ARAP using a

cross-section of Army acquisition professionals. Although the United States has been at war for 15 years, the current world order of events indicates that the U.S. Army will continue to be part of future dynamic conflicts that will include the ARAP. The results of this study include four recommendations to improve the ARAP.

Recommendation 1: Logistical and Sustainment Support for ARAP Equipment

My first recommendation is to mandate logistical and sustainment support for all equipment procured or developed under the ARAP. Based on the findings in this study and the themes uncovered in the literature, logistical support of equipment developed and procured under ARAP is lacking. As noted both in the literature and by the study participants, soldiers often do not use the equipment after it breaks because logistical support is not available after the small window of sustainment support expires. The equipment often goes into storage, and units forget about it. Furthermore, considering logistical support as an afterthought is often expensive and consumes a large part of program managers' budgets.

Recommendation 2: Maintain Regular Contact With Soldiers Requesting ARAP Equipment

My second recommendation is to mandate that program managers develop equipment under the ARAP to maintain regular contact with the soldiers requesting the equipment. This regular contact facilitates communications between the two, and it will ensure that program managers meet the needs of the soldiers requesting the equipment. A program manager may receive guidance to develop a piece of equipment with certain parameters on Day 1. At Day 275, when the program manager contacts the unit to deliver

the equipment, the unit may no longer be in a deployment environment, or the threat in the area where the soldiers operate may have evolved such that they no longer need the equipment. Regular dialogue with the soldiers requesting the equipment could better inform the program managers of changing requirements.

Recommendation 3: Allocate Proper Funding for ARAP Program Managers

My third recommendation is to allocate the right funding for ARAP programs. Only a few organizations that specialize in acquiring equipment under rapid initiatives have the right types and mix of funding to support the effective development and procurement of the equipment. The REF is one of the few organizations with the right allocation and type of funding. Program managers with ARAP programs should receive the same mix of funding to support procuring and developing programs. For example, developing and testing equipment requires research development testing and engineering funding. Equipment procurement requires procurement funding and operations and maintenance funding to maintain or upgrade structures. Program managers of ARAP initiatives lack the proper mix of funding to manage ARAP programs effectively.

Given the dynamic nature of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, Congress should consider rapid acquisition funding. Rapid acquisition authority funding exists but comes from other programs, and the type of money it transitions to is often unclear and creates confusion for the program managers spending the money. Congress should develop a new type of funding specifically allocated for rapid acquisition. The last 15 years of war have indicated that significant improvements in managing rapid acquisition are possible.

Recommendation 4: Institutionalize ARAP Training at DAU

My fourth recommendation is to institutionalize ARAP training into Defense Acquisition University (DAU) training to help expose Army acquisition professionals to rapid acquisition initiatives. The DAU classroom exposure would help prepare various stakeholders to support rapid acquisition initiatives. Some of the study participants noted working with rapid acquisition initiatives is a foreign concept. I further recommend that DAU professors integrate rapid acquisition initiative scenarios into capstone exercises to complete Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level III certifications to provide practical experience with rapid acquisition efforts.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies on the ARAP should include a wider population. The study participants should not be DAWIA Level III certified but should assist with developing rapid acquisition initiatives. Future studies should include more people from the requirements community.

Future research on rapid initiatives could also involve comparing Air Force rapid acquisition initiatives with Army rapid acquisition initiatives. The Air Force and the Army have a great deal in common from a ground operations standpoint and often align on Joint Service requirements. Future research comparing the two services' rapid initiatives could lead to insight on both services and improve rapid initiatives for both.

Future studies should compare the Rapid Equipping Force (REF) with the Army Rapid Capability Office. Personnel at REF have supported the war on terrorism since 2001 and have conducted a tactical mission supporting brigades and below. The true

mission of the Army Rapid Capability Office, established in 2016, remains undefined. The focus of the Army Rapid Capability Office may be strategically implementing rapid acquisition initiatives for key programs. A study in the next 24 months might provide insight into how leaders of the two organizations can leverage each other's capabilities to continue delivering equipment to soldiers in a more efficient and timely manner.

Although highlighted limitedly in the data collected for this study, the contracting process is often an obstruction to delivering equipment to soldiers in a timely manner. Future researchers should focus on streamlining the contracting process to support rapid acquisition initiatives more effectively. The study participants in future studies of this nature should consist mostly of contracting officers with ARAP experience.

Future ARAP studies should have a larger study participant population. Such a study might consist of e-mail surveys and statistical analysis to determine the results. Many current acquisition studies are qualitative and have small samples. A future e-mail survey study might increase the population pool and include statistical analysis to help add to and diversify the body of knowledge on acquisition studies.

Future studies should consist of interviewing more senior-level officials on rapid acquisition initiatives. Such study participants should consist of members of the government senior executive service and general officers. Those individuals typically have extensive knowledge and ARAP experience and can provide lessons learned based on their decades of acquisition experience.

Implications

Significance to Social Change

This study contributes to positive social change by improving the national defense of the United States through better equipping soldiers to defend against threats to national security. The results of this study provided insight and recommendations to improve the ARAP. If leaders apply some of the recommendations and lessons learned from the participants, then the delivery of quality equipment to soldiers may be more effective and efficient.

This study also contributes to positive social change by ensuring Army acquisition professionals continue to be good stewards of U.S. taxpayer dollars. The findings and recommendations in this study can contribute to improved efficiencies and effectiveness in the ARAP that may improve cost savings, reduce Army acquisition timelines through the timely delivery of suitable equipment to soldiers, and improve the sustainment of equipment. These improvements may save soldiers' lives and reduce the procurement of nonstandard equipment that increases long-term maintenance costs.

Significance to Practice

U.S. Army leaders have used the ARAP extensively since 2001 and, based on the results and findings of this study, some noteworthy lessons can and should apply to current and future ARAP initiatives. Practitioners, specifically program managers, should implement the sustainment and direct soldier involvement recommendations to improve ARAP initiatives. Given the past use of ARAP and the dynamic nature of current world events, the use of ARAP or some form of rapid acquisition initiatives will continue in the

future by the U.S. Army and other services. The recommendations put forth in this study are reasonable, and their logical implementation will improve the ARAP.

Conclusion

The ARAP's performance at providing equipment to soldiers since 2001 has been exceptional, but despite its exceptional performance, there is room for improvement, and this study included recommendations from a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals on ways to improve the ARAP. The key theme that emerged from this study was the need for a coherent sustainment plan for equipment procured under the ARAP. This was the most prevalent theme highlighted by the majority of study participants. This theme also readily appears throughout the literature. Given the support to improve the sustainment of the ARAP from both study participants and the literature, Army leaders should consider adding adequate sustainment support to all Army rapid acquisition initiatives. The two other key themes that deserve consideration and implementation are the need to define and decompose requirements and the need for program managers to ensure soldiers provide regular feedback during equipment development under the ARAP. These two themes will assist in improving the ARAP.

The Army operates in a dynamic and complex world in which the ARAP will continue to serve as the primary means to deliver equipment to soldiers. The Army champions itself as a learning and adaptive organization. Applying the lessons learned from this study aligns with the Army's learning and adaptive culture and will continue to support the defense of the United States.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my doctoral level research study on the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. I am Jason Tate and I am doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting a doctoral dissertation study to find recommendations on how the Army can deliver equipment to soldiers in a more efficient and effective manner. The title of the study is an exploratory study on the improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Over the past ten years the Army Rapid Acquisition Process has been used extensively. This process delivered equipment to soldiers in numerous locations worldwide. This study will assist in documenting the lessons learned from the past decade of acquiring equipment through the Army Rapid Acquisition Process.

All data collected during this interview will be recorded. The data will be treated as confidential data. Some of the data collected will be published in a doctoral dissertation. Names and identifiable information will not be included in the dissertation study. The raw data collected will be maintained in a lock box in my house 5 years from collection. After 5 years, the data will be destroyed. All other data will be destroyed after the publication of the study. A final copy of the published dissertation will be e-mailed to each study participant.

Again, thank you for participating this study. Do you have any questions? Are you ready to begin?

- 1a) What is your current job?
- 1b) How long have you held your current job?
- 1c) What acquisition jobs have you held in the past?
- 2a) Do you or did you previously serve in the uniformed military
- 2b) If yes, in what capacities and for how long?
- 3a) How many years have you held your current job?
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1-9 years
 - 10 years or more
- 3b) Have you held any acquisition jobs in the past?
 - No

- Yes

(IF YES) How many years, in total, did you hold your *previous* acquisition jobs?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-9 years
- 10 years or more

3c) How many years have you been working for your current organization?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-9 years
- 10 years or more

3d) Do you, or did you previously, serve in the uniformed military?

- No, I have never served in the uniformed military (SKIP TO Question 4)
- Yes, I currently serve in the uniformed military
- Yes, I previously served in the uniformed military

(IF YES) Did you serve in the Afghanistan or Iraqi Wars?

- No
- Yes

4a) What is your current Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) level of certification?

4b) In what functional area do you hold this certification (program management, contracting, test and evaluation.....)?

5) What is your experience with the Army Rapid Acquisition Process? (e.g. RFI, REF, CDRT, JRAC, JUONS and JEONS.)

6) In your opinion, what current key issues exist with the Army Rapid Acquisition Process, if any?

7) How does the hierarchical structure of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process impact its efficiency and effectiveness?

8) How do you assess the Army Rapid Acquisition Process manager's ability to balance achieving the goals of their specific functional area (Test and Evaluation, Requirement Managers and others) with a holistic approach of ensuring quality equipment is delivered to soldiers in a timely manner?

- 9a) Are Army Rapid Acquisition Process managers focused too much on following the rules of the process as opposed to delivering quality equipment to soldiers in a timely manner?
- 9b) If yes, what can be done to refocus the managers?
- 10a) What are the risks of using the Army Rapid Acquisition Process?
- 10b) How can the risks be mitigated?
- 11) Is there a connection between risk mitigation and the existence of bureaucracy in the Army Rapid Acquisition Process? If so what is the connection?
- 12) Are there any key lessons learned that may contribute to the improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process?
- 13) How can the Army best capture and implement the lessons learned from the Army Rapid Acquisition Process over the past twelve years?
- 14) In forecasting the future revisions of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process, what critical process components should be considered to deliver more efficient and effective quality equipment?
- 15) If you were able to restructure the Army's Rapid Acquisition Process, how would you restructure it?
- 16) Do you know of any other individuals who would serve as a good candidate to participate in this study?

Appendix B: E-mail Solicitation Letter for Potential Study Participants

Dear Sir or Madam: (personalize and add their name)

I am requesting your agreement to participate in a doctoral level research study on the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. This study seeks to find recommendations on how the Army can deliver equipment to soldiers in a more efficient and effective manner. The title of the study is *an exploratory study on the improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process*.

During the past 10 years, the Army Rapid Acquisition Process has been used extensively. This process delivered equipment to soldiers in numerous locations worldwide. This study will assist in documenting the lessons learned from the past decade of acquiring equipment through the Army Rapid Acquisition Process.

As a fellow Army acquisition professional and also a doctoral student, I understand that your time is limited and very valuable. I request no more than 60 minutes of your time for a personal interview with you on your experiences with the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. The results will be used for recommending areas of improvement for the Army Rapid Acquisition Process.

All data collected will be treated as confidential data. Some of the data collected will be published in a doctoral dissertation. Names and identifiable information will not be included in the dissertation study. The raw data collected will be maintained in a lock box in my house 5 years from collection. After 5 years, the data will be destroyed. All other data will be destroyed after the publication of the study. A final copy of the published dissertation will be e-mailed to each study participant.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please reply to this e-mail by September 5, 2106 and I will contact you to arrange a date, time and location for me to conduct the interview at your convenience. At that time I will ask you to sign a formal letter of consent (attached) to participate in the study. Please feel free to call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or e-mail me at jason.tate@waldenu.edu if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

Jason F. Tate
Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Doctoral Candidate, PhD Management Program
College of Management and Technology
Walden University

Appendix C: Study Participant Letter of Consent

Dear Army Acquisition Professional,

This letter is to obtain your formal consent to participate in a research project that assesses the effectiveness of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. Specifically, the intent of this study aims to determine ways to improve the Army Rapid Acquisition Process to deliver equipment to soldiers in a more efficient and effective manner.

This study will include 15 to 20 study participants who will be interviewed on the effectiveness of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. Each interview will last no more than 60 minutes and will take in a place face-to-face venue for each study participant. After the interview is complete, the study participant will receive a copy of the interview transcript via email for a chance to confirm or correct the accuracy of data collected.

I, as the researcher will have access to the interview data transcripts. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your data will be destroyed immediately. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Although there are no foreseeable risks for this study, you may withdraw from this study at any time for any reason. There is no penalty for withdrawing or deciding not to participate in this study.

Research data will be collected between July 2017 to November 2016. Participation and record of participation in this study will be confidential. Data will be kept in a secure location in an effort to ensure data cannot be traced back to the study participants. Additionally, names and identifiable personal information will not be included in the dissertation.

I am an Army acquisition professional and also a doctoral student at Walden University working under the direction of Dr. Walter McCollum and Dr. Donna Brown at the College of Management and Technology, Walden University. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email me at jason.tate@waldenu.edu. This project has been reviewed in accordance with the Walden University policies and the Army Research Institute procedures that govern your participation in this research. Questions or concerns regarding this study can be directed to the Walden University Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210.

The Walden University IRB approval number for this study is 06-09-16-0129608 and the expiration date for this IRB approval is June 8, 2017.

A check in the box and your signature provide your consent to participate in this study. Please have this signed letter available to submit to me at the start of our scheduled interview or I will have extra consent forms available at the interview.



(Print Full Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Sincerely,

Jason F. Tate
Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Doctoral Candidate, PhD Management Program
College of Management and Technology
Walden University

Appendix D: Interview Question Review Protocol

Acquisition Professional Role and Responsibility for Reviewing Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to review the interview questions for the research study on the Army Rapid Acquisition Process (ARAP). Your input is important because as a Defense Acquisition University (DAU) professor, you are considered to be an expert on defense acquisition processes. Given your experience with teaching and working within the community of Army acquisition professionals, you have the requisite skill set to analyze the enclosed interview questions. I ask that you ensure the interview questions are adequate in determining the issues associated with ARAP. I also ask that you determine if the interview questions are sufficient enough to provide recommendations to improve the ARAP. Additionally, I ask that you specifically provide an assessment of the questions and provide recommendations for additional questions and make suggested edits to the standing interview questions listed below.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory case study is to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. Though there has been some research on ARAP, the research conducted to date fails to exploit the expertise and competencies of the various acquisition functional areas. Instead, previous research was performed by a narrow range of acquisition expertise (mostly from a program management perspective), and relied primarily on personal opinion rather than scholarly analysis of original documents and experiences. Thus, there is a need to expand ARAP research and consider

the views of acquisition professionals from a wider range of functional specialties and expertise. Those various acquisition functional areas considered for my study are program management, contracting, test and evaluation, science and technology, and systems engineering.

Main Research Questions for the Study

RQ1: What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?

RQ2: What key factors are present that impact the performance, effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?

RQ3: How do the theories of bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

Nature of Study

This will be an exploratory qualitative case study that involves interviewing Army acquisition professionals who have experience working with the ARAP. The aim of the interviews is to increase knowledge and understanding on the deficiencies of the ARAP and then to elicit recommendations on how to improve the ARAP. The methodology will include purposive and snowball sample techniques for 15-20 Army acquisition professionals who have worked in the Army acquisition community for a minimum of 6 years and are Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level III certified in a functional area. First, I will create interview questions and conduct a field test with subject matter experts from the Army acquisition field. After the field study is successfully conducted, I will sample the population through semistructured interviews.

Finally, I will transcribe, code, and analyze the data with the qualitative analysis NVivo 11 software.

If you have any questions about the study or the interview questions, please contact me via e-mail at jason.tate@waldenu.edu or call me on my mobile at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Jason F. Tate
Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Doctoral Candidate, PhD Management Program
College of Management and Technology
Walden University

Appendix E: Solicitation Letter for Field Study Participants

Dear Sir or Madam: (personalize and add their name)

I am requesting your participation in a field study to support in a doctoral level research study on the Army Rapid Acquisition Process. The title of the study is *an exploratory study on the improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process*. The field study consists of 16 research questions on the rapid acquisition process.

The purpose of this study is to increase knowledge and understanding of the deficiencies of the ARAP through the lens of a broad cross-section of Army acquisition functional area professionals. The study seeks to find recommendations on how the Army can deliver equipment to soldiers in a more efficient and effective manner.

The 3 main research questions for this study are listed below.

- 1) What key problems have surfaced in the acquisition of equipment using the current ARAP?
- 2) What key factors are present that impact the performance, effectiveness and efficiency of ARAP and that could serve as a basis for developing improvements in equipment acquisition?
- 3) How do the theories of bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy align with and explain the ARAP?

This will be an exploratory qualitative case study that involves interviewing Army acquisition professionals who have experience working with the ARAP. The methodology will include purposive and snowball sample techniques for 15-20 Army acquisition professionals who have worked in the Army acquisition community for a minimum of 6 years and are Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level III certified in a functional area. The data from the interview questions will be transcribed, coded, and analyzed undergo qualitative analysis with NVivo 11 software. As an expert in rapid acquisition, I ask that you review and provide comments on 16 interview questions. I need you to determine if the questions are sufficient to increase the knowledge and understanding of the ARAP from a broad section of acquisition professionals. I encourage you to make recommendations to the questions and provide feedback to me on the questions via e-mail.

If you are willing to participate in this study to support my doctoral study, please reply to this e-mail by DATE. At that time I will provide you a copy of the 16 interview questions. Please feel free to call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or e-mail me at jason.tate@waldenu.edu if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

Jason F. Tate
Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Doctoral Candidate, PhD Management Program
College of Management and Technology
Walden University

Interview Questions for Review on the Army Rapid Acquisition Process

1) What is your current job, how long have you held your current job, and what acquisition jobs have you held in the past?

2) Do you or did you previously serve in the uniformed military, if so, in what capacities and for how long?

3a) How many years have you held your current job?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-9 years
- 10 years or more

3b) Have you held any acquisition jobs in the past?

- No
- Yes

(IF YES) How many years, in total, did you hold your previous acquisition jobs?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-9 years
- 10 years or more

3c) How many years have you been working for your current organization?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-9 years
- 10 years or more

3d) Do you, or did you previously, serve in the uniformed military?

- No, I have never served in the uniformed military (SKIP TO Question 4)
- Yes, I currently serve in the uniformed military
- Yes, I previously served in the uniformed military

(IF YES) Did you serve in the Afghanistan or Iraqi Wars?

- No
- Yes

4) What is your current Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) level of certification and in what functional area do you hold this certification (program management, contracting, test and evaluation.....)?

5) What is your experience with the Army Rapid Acquisition Process? (e.g. RFI, REF, CDRT, JRAC, JUONS and JEONS.)

- 6) In your opinion, what current key issues exist with the Army Rapid Acquisition Process, if any?
- 7) How does the hierarchical structure of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process impact its efficiency and effectiveness?
- 8) How do you assess the Army Rapid Acquisition Process manager's ability to balance achieving the goals of their specific functional area (Test and Evaluation, Requirement Managers and others) with a holistic approach of ensuring quality equipment is delivered to soldiers in a timely manner?
- 9) Are Army Rapid Acquisition Process managers focused too much on following the rules of the process as opposed to delivering quality equipment to soldiers in a timely manner? If so, what can be done to refocus the managers?
- 10) What are the risks of using the Army Rapid Acquisition Process, and how can the risks be mitigated?
- 11) Is there a connection between risk mitigation and the existence of bureaucracy in the Army Rapid Acquisition Process? If so what is the connection?
- 12) Are there any key lessons learned that may contribute to the improvement of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process?
- 13) How can the Army best capture and implement the lessons learned from the Army Rapid Acquisition Process over the past twelve years?
- 14) In forecasting the future revisions of the Army Rapid Acquisition Process, what critical process components should be considered to deliver more efficient and effective quality equipment?
- 15) If you were able to restructure the Army's Rapid Acquisition Process, how would you restructure it?
- 16) Do you know of any other individuals who would serve as a good candidate to participate in this study?