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Generational Differences in the Level of Commitment in the U.S. Marine Corps

Nadya Yvonee Yassa-Lopez
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Walden University

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Nadya Y. Yassa-Lopez

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2018

Abstract

Generational Differences in the Level of Commitment in the

U.S. Marine Corps

by

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MA, University of Phoenix, 2008

BS, University of Phoenix, 2006

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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Abstract

Generational differences directly impact the culture and discipline in the U.S. Marine Corps. Previous research suggests that Generation Y's characteristics do not align with traditional military service. The specific problem is that there is a gap in the research and scholarly literature on the level of commitment of Generation Y compared to Generation X Marines. The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. The theoretical frameworks for this study were the theory of generations and the organizational culture theory. The central research question was focused on the influence of Generation Y's experiences, ideas, and opinions on Marine Corps culture. In order for Marine Corps leaders to be effective, they need a better understanding of the people who work for them. This quantitative, cross-sectional survey study used a sample of 264 active duty, enlisted Marines from the 1st Marine Logistics Group in Southern California. The *t* tests revealed that Generation X has a higher level of commitment than Generation Y. However, the *t* tests also revealed that Generation Y's commitment profile indicates that the generation continues to serve because they want to or desire to remain in the Marine Corps. Lastly, multiple linear regression analysis revealed that each type of commitment was affected differently by the independent variables (age, gender, generation, and pay grade). The results provide the Marine Corps with a better understanding of generational issues. The positive social change from this research is the ability to sustain an essential and successful military culture and as a consequence, to improve the combat capability of the Marine Corps and the Department of Defense.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to the many Marines I served with over the years, those whom I worked for and those who worked for me. I have watched as the Marine Corps has evolved and changed because of your contributions, motivation, and drive. I am proud of what we do and the family that we create. You inspired my years of service and years of research. Thank you for what you have done, what you do, and especially what you will do. Your sacrifices do not go unnoticed. This is also dedicated to my mother, my sister, and my son. You have been with me the entire time I studied and have been my cheerleaders. Hopefully there will be no more use of the bandwagon and it is coming to a halt. Thank you for your love and support. Without it, I would never have succeeded not only as a Marine but also as a student.

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The second acknowledgement goes to my Marines past and present. Their encouragement and support has been amazing. This journey has led me to better understand the way they operate and behave. It has been enlightening and in many ways has helped me to become a better and patient leader. I only hope that my accomplishment will encourage and help them to also pursue their goals.

Finally, to my committee. Dr. McAllister and Dr. Thakkar, who continued to push me even when I wanted to walk away. Their encouragement, support, and challenges have made this experience hard but well-earned. I have a new title that I am highly proud of. Thank you for enduring the many phone calls of frustration and impatience.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2000, is the current dominant generation serving in the United States Marine Corps. According to the Marine Corps (2014), 155,344 of 167,138 Marines (93%) are part of Generation Y. Older generations are slowly moving out of the way, making way for Generation Y to take over, including Generation X (born between 1961 and 1980).

According to Stein (2013), Generation Y is significantly divided and not easily categorized or described homogeneously—as has been typical of previous generations. Among other researchers, Johansen, Laberg, and Martinussen (2013) and Roislien (2015) argued that Generation Y's typical characteristics and traits do not align with military service. Yet, Hinote and Sundvall (2015) argued that leadership at every level is not aware of the generational differences that each generation brings to an organization. What does that mean for the Marine Corps' culture? How does leadership prepare Generation Y to take over leadership roles?

Chapter 1 covers the following topics: the research background for this study (with a detailed literature review in Chapter 2), the problem, purpose, theoretical foundation of the study, the rationale for the selection of the design, a summary of the methodology (with a more detailed explanation in Chapter 3), significance, and implications for positive social change.

Background

Organizational culture is a heavily researched area. According to Schien (1992), organizational culture is an environment of shared values and beliefs that develops norms

for behavior in an organization. Its researchers have determined that the success and failure of an organization is associated with employees' acceptance and commitment to the culture.

Researchers have argued that employees' commitment to an organization is influenced by its leadership. Further, influences on organizational culture are also connected with generational influence, character, and desires. According to DeVaney (2015) and De Silva, Dutra, Velosa, Fischer, and Tevisan (2015), generational views and attitudes impact societal and organizational culture.

The organizational culture of the Marine Corps has experienced a number of changes that are not entirely self-initiated. Some of those changes included changes in uniforms, physical fitness standards, training about equal opportunity, extended training about sexual assault, and women being accepted in combat jobs. Vilcu (2015) argued that society and government influence organizational changes. Schein (2010) described organizational cultures as subcultures within a country. This idea can be translated to the military. Based on Schein's idea, the Marine Corps is a subculture of the nation. Just as generational differences have a direct impact on culture in society, they impact the Marine Corps.

Research exists that describes the culture of the military. Most of the literature is focused on the Army and the Air Force. The literature that describes the Marine Corps is limited to medical, mental health, and transition issues. Bonura and Lovald (2015) provided a broad overview of military culture, indicating that there are fundamental differences among the services. This was repeated by Hart and Thompson (2016). Bonura

and Lovald described military culture as highly structured. Redmond et al. (2015) echoed this description writing that military culture and military structure are based on policy, rules, and a strong framework.

According to Bangari (2014), leadership is the bedrock of the culture and discipline in the military. Bangari defined leadership as the engagement with followers to encourage forward momentum toward a shared goal and vision. Hussain and Hassan (2015) defined leadership as a science to lead others to a common goal. Gallus, Walsh, Driel, Gouge, and Antolic (2013) argued that leadership shapes good and bad environments. According to Johnson (2014), military leadership has lost its way over the last decade and has forgotten what it means to inspire subordinates. Johnson argued that military leaders have become managers.

Redmond et al. (2015) argued military culture is complex. While there are similarities with the nation, military culture has a distinct language, symbols, rituals, and practices that separate it from the nation. Vilcu (2015) commented that the military will accept changes to its culture and influences from society. Hajjar (2014) argued military services continue to adopt new cultural changes to support the home nation. However, Vilcu cautioned that the challenges military cultures face when adapting to the inputs from society include misunderstandings, criticism, and social demands. According to Vilcu, military service will adapt as long as the change does not affect the principles of the military system.

A trait of military culture that ensures success on the battlefield is discipline. Johnson (2012) argued that an essential part of enforcing rules and regulations is

discipline. According to Tinoco and Arnaud (2013), discipline is embedded in the culture of the military and expected to be embraced by military members at all times. A service member acts on all orders through obedience and discipline; there is an expectation of instant obedience to all orders.

Military culture is expected to be embraced by each of its members. Leadership must recognize the characteristics of its people to help sustain obedience and discipline. The characteristics described by many researchers of Generation X and Generation Y portray two distinctly different groups. Messarra, Karkoulian, and El-Kassar (2016) described Generation X as having unflinching loyalty to their workplace; Reis and Braga (2015), on the other hand, argued that Generation X displays commitment to their careers and not their employers. De Silva et al. (2015) claimed that Generation Y focuses more on a work-life balance and their relationships whereas Generation X places importance on the meaning of their work, learning, and development.

Not only do generational characteristics illustrate the expectations of a generation, they also contribute to the level of commitment. Mohsen (2016) and Nelson (2012) found that a generation's work values contribute to their commitment to an organization. The consensus among researchers is that generational commitment is based on their perceptions of the organizational culture. Yogamalar and Samual (2016) discussed the idea that generational expectations of leadership influence the organizational culture, which has a direct influence on generational commitment.

According to Johansen et al. (2013) and Hinote and Sundvall (2015), the characteristics of Generation Y conflict with military service. According to Howe and

Strauss (2000), Generation Y has a strong sense of community, a need for reinforcement, and a desire to know *why* immediately. Wiedmer (2015) commented that members of Generation Y are easily bored and require constant and rapid mobility in their occupations. Howe and Strauss (2015) reasoned that Generation Y prefers structure and rules to guide them. Johansen et al. (2013) claimed that Generation Y does not view military service as a way of life, but only as an occupation.

DeVaney (2015) argued Generation Y is constantly connected to social media and the internet. Wiedmer (2015) and DeVaney attributed to Generation Y a technological dependency: a reliance on the constant availability of information on the internet and smartphones. Hinote and Sundvall (2015) reasoned that Generation Y's world has been flat due to technology. Their need to know why immediately is not because they want to question authority, but because of their need to understand and become part of the plan. In other words, Generation Y does not intentionally snub the chain of command, which could be interpreted as a disruption or break in discipline. Hinote and Sundvall commented that due to technology, Generation Y members often have answers at their fingertips and are unashamed to engage with senior service members directly, rather than operating within the constraints of the chain of command. Roislien (2015) argued that because technology has been present during Generation Y's entire existence, they take for granted the availability of information.

According to Smith and Nicholos (2015) generational differences can create divides within an organization and hinder progress and effectiveness. The generational influences brought by Generation Y impact the military culture. According to Johansen et

al. (2013), the character traits of Generation Y, in fact, collide with military service.

Johansen et al. argued that because Generation Y has developed a self-absorbed reflection of self, they neglect the foundations and institutional values of the military.

Generation Y, according to Johansen et al. (2013), has a view of military service that is different from previous generations: this generation sees it as an occupation rather than a way of life, and thus weakens the military force and leadership. Stein (2013) argued that Generation Y is more narcissistic and self-confident than any other generation in the past. DeVaney (2015) furthered this argument, commenting Generation Y is not interested in working its way up; it wants immediate satisfaction. Arguably, Generation Y's characteristics and traits can compromise military discipline, creating a potential structural and cultural breakdown.

Problem Statement

The responsibility to teach and pass along customs and traditions remains on the shoulders of leadership. According to Hinote and Sundvall (2015), one of the challenges military leaders face is adapting to generational nuances that flood the culture and inevitably change the environment. The general problem in this research was that the unique experiences of members of Generation Y impact the way they think, act, and lead. Johansen et al. (2013) argued that the character of Generation Y is at odds with military service. They argued that Generation Y does not consider their service as a way of life, but rather an occupation. The specific problem in this study was the gap in the research and scholarly literature on the level of commitment of Generation Y compared to Generation X Marines. As a result, leaders in the Marine Corps lack the knowledge and

understanding to pass along the culture of the Marine Corps to their subordinates. As a consequence, there is the potential for a breakdown in discipline and for divides within the Marine Corps that may hinder progress and effectiveness.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to that of active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. In this study, I compared and contrasted the opinions and experiences of active duty, enlisted Marines within the pay grades of E1 through E9. The data were collected through a survey instrument, and categorized as either Generation X or Generation Y. The variables compared between these two groups were three measures of commitment: *Affective Commitment (AC)*, *Normative Commitment (NC)*, and *Continuance Commitment (CC)*. By conducting this research, I sought to close the gap in the scholarly research between Generation X and Generation Y. My findings were also intended to provide an explanation of the influences that Generation Y may have had on culture and discipline in the Marine Corps.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The following research question and hypotheses focused on a comparison of Generation X's and Generation Y's commitment to the Marine Corps, measured by three dependent variables. The variables were based on a 7-point Likert scale, 1 (*strongly disagree*) through 7 (*strongly agree*).

Is there a commitment difference between active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines and active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines?

H1₀: Average level of *CC* of Generation X = 4.

H1_a: Average level of *CC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H2₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation X = 4.

H2_a: Average level of *NC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H3₀: Average level of *AC* of Generation X = 4.

H3_a: Average level of *AC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H4₀: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y = 4.

H4_a: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H5₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y = 4.

H5_a: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H6₀: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y = 4.

H6_a: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H7₀: Average level of *CC* of both generations = 4.

H7_a: Average level of *CC* of both generations \neq 4.

H8₀: Average level of *NC* of both generations = 4.

H8_a: Average level of *NC* of both generations \neq 4.

H9₀: Average level of *AC* of both generations = 4.

H9_a: Average level of *AC* of both generations \neq 4.

H10₀: There is no difference in the level of *CC* between Generation X

Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H10_a: The level of *CC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H11₀: There is no difference in the level of *NC* between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H11_a: The level of *NC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H12₀: There is no difference in the level of *AC* between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

H12_a: The level of *AC* varies between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

Theoretical Foundation

In this subsection, the theoretical frameworks that grounded this study are summarized: the theory of generations and organizational culture theory (see Chapter 2, the literature review, for an extensive discussion).

The theory of generations has a history from the early 1920s. Mannheim (1923) argued that the theory of generations is an attempt to organize a group in social science. A social generation is a category and identification of a location and age. Mannheim argued that a generation is defined by shared experiences and thought. Howe and Strauss (1991) defined a generation as a cohort-group with specific dates that are influenced by *peer personalities*. They argued that *age location*, the common experiences in history at similar ages, is a fundamental aspect of a generation. Howe and Strauss contended that *peer personality*, the shared personality, is also a significant characteristic.

According to Mannheim (1952), education plays a significant role in the development of generations. Mannheim argued that education is geared toward the molding of generations through relationships that are influenced by the personalities of teachers, parents, and friends. While cultural surroundings can influence generations, they are more influenced by the personalities surrounding them. Not every age group or every generation creates specific characteristics for itself. When there are rapid social and cultural changes, generations adapt and create new characteristics specific to that generation. In contrast, when social and cultural changes occur slowly, a generation will link itself to one of the existing generations, and thus not create a distinction. Mannheim (1923) argued that generations are unable to see changes as they occur within their time. Only the newer generations identify the social and cultural changes and learn to adapt.

Furthering Mannheim's theory of generations, Eisenstadt (2003) discussed generational roles in society and found that generations (or age groups) have scope that links them to family, work, and society. Age groups are recognized and identified by society, which further leads to their education in tradition, techniques, and social continuity. Age groups participate in society which emphasizes their identification. Eisenstadt reasoned that classification into age groups early in a child's developmental stage serves as a preparatory channel for their future. Society defines each age group.

Eisenstadt (2003) argued that every society defines an age group based on values and cultural traditions. Eisenstadt argued that age groups are identified based on the social system within a society. Eisenstadt reasoned that through collective orientation,

age groups develop into their traditions and norms based on society, maintaining that age groups are an essential part of heritage and maintenance of social continuity.

Organizational culture theory became prominent in the 1990s, much later than the theory of generations. Schein (2010) defined organizational culture theory to explain socialized groups with shared assumptions, language, customs and tradition, values, and policies and principles. Much of culture is not visible, but it is the unconscious part of a group. Schein cautioned that cultural assessments should be aware of subcultures, strengths, and weaknesses of assumptions, and must have a purpose. Conducting a cultural assessment for no other reason than to gauge an organization's attitudes is of little value.

In his definition of culture, Schein (2010) argued that an organization's culture focuses on things that group members share. However, organizational culture is not simply the norms, behaviors, and traditions. Schein maintained that when discussing culture, the focus is on the structural stability, and patterning of an organization. Schein's argument was that structural stability suggests that an organization not only shares in the view or pattern, but that it is also stable because it defines who the group is.

Kotter and Heskett (1992) defined organizational culture as the qualities of a group passed from one generation to another. Kotter (1988) argued that a corporate culture can be built on norms of practices that are often viewed as clannish in nature. Organizational culture is often unnoticed by those enveloped by the culture. Only when there are attempts to alter the culture do those within the organization notice specific characteristics of it.

A significant aspect mentioned in both theories from Mannheim (1923) and Kotter and Heskett (1992) was the presence of subcultures. Mannheim argued that a generation may have sub-cohorts within its generation based on the social and cultural atmosphere. Kotter and Heskett also argued that organizations have sub-cultures, creating internal clusters of differences within an organization.

These theories provide a foundational understanding of the problem facing the Marine Corps today. As the Marine Corps faces changes in its structure, people, and environment, the impacts on the culture and discipline could be significant. According to Schein (2010), an organization's success or failure is dependent on the leader. But, sound and successful leadership requires an understanding and appreciation of structure, people, environment, and organizational culture. My research sought to identify the differences and influences of Generation Y, and how the generation's ideas and experiences affect the organizational culture.

Nature of the Study

The approach for this research project was a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. According to Rea and Parker (2014), survey designs are a tool to solicit information about respondents' opinions and attitudes. They also argued that one of the advantages associated with survey research includes the ability to generalize about a population based on data collected from a sample. Rea and Parker stated that the purpose of surveys is to collect three types of information: descriptive, behavioral, and attitudinal.

The focus was on the effects of generations, specifically Generation Y, as defined by Hinote and Sundvall (2015). Other factors may impact the level of commitment, but

they were not the focus of my research. However, when analyzing the demographics, I assessed the impact of demographic factors on the three dependent variables using multiple linear regression (MLR).

The instrument I used was the three component model of commitment (TCM) multidimensionality of military commitment survey, designed by Meyer and Allen (1991). Data from this survey provided the ability to measure and compare the views and attitudes of active duty, enlisted Marines categorized in Generation X and Generation Y. The categorization of these generations was based on their age (birth year).

According to Meyer, Kam, Goldenberg, and Bremner (2013), Meyer and Allen created TCM in 1991 in order to develop a commitment profile of employees within organizations. According to Meyer and Allen (1991), three forms of commitment are associated with a psychological attachment or mindset between an employee and an organization: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Each type of commitment is based on a bond between the employee and the organization: desire-based (affective), obligation-based (normative), and cost-based (continuance). As shown in Figure 1, these forms of commitment are measured by the TCM and are the dependent variables in this research: *AC*, *NC*, and *CC*.

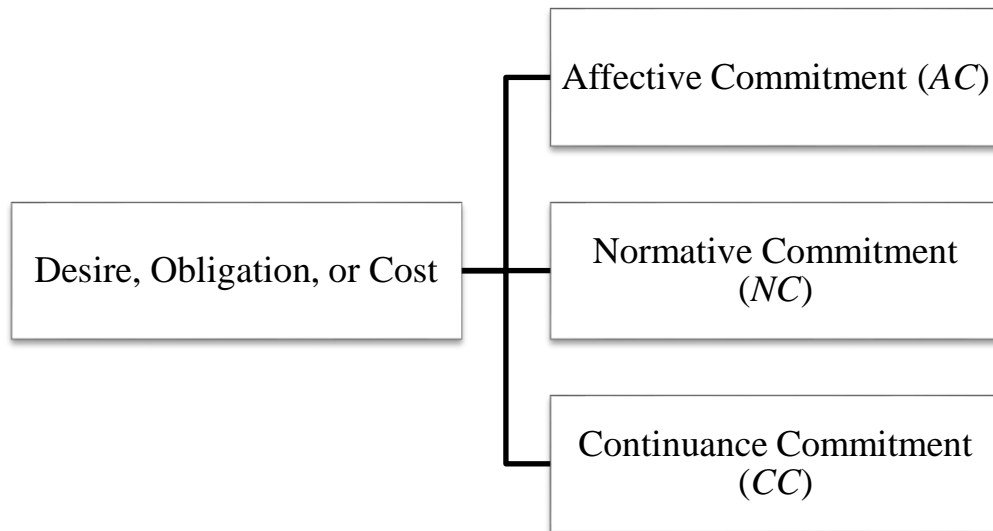


Figure 1. TCM of commitment. Adapted from *TCM Academic User Guide 2004*, by J. P. Meyer and N. J. Allen (2004), Ontario: University of Western Ontario. Copyright (2004) by University of Western Ontario.

Meyer et al. (2013) explained that TCM examines the level of commitment of participants in their target population and branch of service. Commitment is a psychological state or mindset. Depending on which attribute a participant scores highest in, a researcher can determine how that individual is tied to an organization and what drives her or him to continue working.

TCM results indicate whether an individual has an emotional attachment, based on the *AC* score. Meyer et al. (2013) associated *AC* with desire. If an individual feels a sense of obligation to the organization, it is reflected in the *NC* score. *CC* indicates the extent to which an employee's financial obligation compels them to remain with their organization—what Meyer et al. associated with an awareness of the costs associated with leaving an organization. Scoring higher in *CC* is an indication of higher financial or

social responsibility to remain with the organization. Scoring lower in *CC* indicates a personal acceptance or desire to remain with the organization that is not cost-based.

According to the TCM Academic User's Manual, TCM was developed to allow other researchers to alter the questions in the survey to ensure that participants are able to relate to the questions. In order to ensure that the participants were able to relate to the questions, any mention of *organization* was replaced with *Marine Corps*. Meyer and Allen (2004) recommended that the questions be mixed and administered out of order.

As shown in Table 1, the independent variable in this study was generation (Generation X and Generation Y). The dependent variables were *AC*, *CC*, and *NC*, which were measures of commitment. A demographic analysis of age, generation, gender, and pay grade helped provide an understanding of their influences on the dependent variables.

Table 1

Variables

Dependent Variable = TCM Score	Independent Variable	Demographics
AC	Generation (X, Y, X and Y)	Age
CC		Pay grade
NC		Gender

Note. Dependent variables are directly associated with TCM. The independent variable is a categorical variable with three values.

The sample frame included active duty, enlisted Marines, in pay grades E-1 through E-9, in one primary organization, 1st Marine Logistics Group (1st MLG) and six regiments or standalone battalions that were sub-organizations. The 1st MLG has approximately 15,000 active duty, enlisted Marines. I used a simple random sampling design and planned an equal number of participants in each group. According to Rea and

Parker (2014), a simple random sample allows for a sampling unit to be selected that does not favor any type of pattern.

Definitions

Active duty: Marines serving within the Marine Corps on a current enlistment contract (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

Affective commitment (AC): An emotional attachment and desire to remain with an organization (Meyer et al., 2013).

Armed Forces active duty base date: The date that a Marine began service in the military (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

Continuance commitment (CC): An awareness of the costs associated with leaving an organization (Meyer et al., 2013).

E-1: The pay grade of E-1 is the rank of private (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-2: The pay grade of E-2 is the rank of private first class (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-3: The pay grade of E-3 is the rank of lance corporal (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-4: The pay grade of E-4 is the rank of corporal, a noncommissioned officer (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-5: The pay grade E-5 is the rank sergeant, a noncommissioned officer (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-6: The pay grade of E-6 is the rank of staff sergeant, a staff noncommissioned officer (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-7: The pay grade of E-7 is the rank of Gunnery sergeant, a staff noncommissioned officer (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-8: The pay grade of E-8 includes the ranks of master sergeant and first sergeant, a staff noncommissioned officers (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

E-9: The pay grade of E-9 includes the ranks of master Gunnery sergeant and sergeant major, a staff noncommissioned officers (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

Generation: A group of people sharing age, period, and cohort (DeVaney, 2015).

Generation cohort: People of similar age in a similar location who experienced similar social, historical, and life events (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014).

Generation X: People born between 1961 and 1980 (Wiedmer, 2015).

Generation Y: People born between 1981 and 2000 (Hinote & Sundvall, 2015).

Leadership: A science to lead people towards a common goal (Hussain & Hassan, 2015).

Military culture: A complex organization structured around language, symbols, rituals, and practices (Redmond et al., 2015).

Military discipline: Non-hesitation and instant obedience (Tinoco & Arnaud, 2013).

Normative commitment (NC): A sense of obligation to remain with an organization (Meyer et al., 2013).

Organizational culture: Pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functions, which provide them with the norms for behavior in the organization (Brettel, Chomick, & Flatten, 2015).

Rank: A position in the hierarchy of the Armed Forces (United States Marine Corps, 2006).

Theory of generations: Theory that creates stereotypes to describe an entire generation's characteristics based on socio-historical environment (Mannheim, 1923).

Organizational culture theory: Combined set of key values, assumptions, understanding, and norms shared among members of an organization (Schein, 1999).

Assumptions

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. This research was based on the following assumptions—aspects of the research that are believed, but cannot be proven.

1. Participants would provide individual input from their knowledge and personal experience.
2. The data collection instrument (TCM) is reliable and valid based upon previous usage and validation.
3. TCM is able to accurately reflect the differences in the levels of commitment.
4. Participants would self-report all questionnaire responses truthfully and

accurately.

5. The selected sample would sufficiently represent all enlisted ranks within Generation X and Generation Y.
6. Members of the same generation have similar experiences and commonalities.
7. My rank of Sergeant Major would not influence participants' answers.

These assumptions were necessary in this study because I was unable to validate or verify the individual inputs and answers of the survey. As an anonymous survey, there was no opportunity for any follow-up questions or requests for clarification in the event a question was not answered or appeared to be invalid.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study included the opinions and experiences of Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines. Participants came from all different enlisted ranks within the Marine Corps that were assigned to one major subordinate command. The focus of the study was a comparison of the level of commitment of Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines. The scope of the study was chosen because there is a lack of research and knowledge on Generation Y's level of commitment in the Marine Corps. The parameters of this study included controls on the selection of participants and instrumentation.

The participants included Generation X and Generation Y enlisted, active duty Marines in the 1st MLG. Those excluded from participating included officers, Marines of other generations, reserve Marines, and civilians working for Marine Corps organizations. The excluded officers, other generations, reserve Marines, and civilians

working for the Marine Corps organizations would not inform this study but do provide ideas of future research.

The theories used in this study included organizational culture theory and the theory of generations. Some of the theories not included in this study were structuralism theory, rational choice theory, social identify theory, and social exchange theory. The excluded theories of structuralism theory, rational choice theory, social identity theory, and social exchange theory would not have informed this study but do provide ideas of future research.

Limitations

One of the foreseeable limitations of this study was the use of self-reporting questionnaires. Thus, the data reflects the opinions of the respondents, but may not reflect the true attitudes and beliefs of all Marines. In addition, using self-reported surveys increases the risk that participants do not answer all the questions truthfully or all of the questions. However, as mentioned in the assumptions, I assumed that members were truthful and accurate.

A second limitation was the sample frame which was limited to one Marine Corps unit located on the west coast of the United States that was intended to facilitate the generalization to the entire population of enlisted Marines. However, the data may not reflect attitudes across the entire Marine Corps, such as those located overseas and on the east coast which were not included in the sample frame.

A third limitation was that this study was focused on the experiences and opinions of the enlisted Marines within Generation X and Generation Y. This eliminated the

participation of the Marine officers, active reserve Marines, reserve Marines, and civilian Marines who make up a portion of the overall population. The conclusions were therefore limited to a subset of the overall Marine Corps.

The final limitation was that not all Marines have constant access to computers to complete a survey. The majority of junior enlisted Marines conduct their work outdoors and do not use computers throughout the day. All Marines are required to have access to computers, military accounts, and the internet because much of their annual training requirements are conducted through internet host programs. However, it was possible that not all Marines had access to computers at work during the timeframe of this research, which resulted in a low response rate.

Significance of the Study

There was a gap in the research and scholarly literature on the level of commitment of Generation Y Marines compared to Generation X Marines. In this study, I sought to identify and compare the differences between Generation X's and Generation Y's level of commitment in the Marine Corps. With a better understanding of how these generations view their organization, this study could provide leadership with a better knowledge frame focused on decision-making, organizational changes, and leadership.

The research was intended to review the current cultural conditions within the Marine Corps and help provide a better understanding of the influence Generation Y has on the culture of the Marine Corps. Having a better understanding of the impacts of Generation Y could help leadership better task-organize their Marines. Additionally,

having a better understanding of the impacts of Generation Y could increase the capability of leadership to maintain good order and discipline.

This study might also help identify strategies that would enhance a leader's ability to communicate with other generations. Understanding how and why Generation Y thinks and acts could give leaders the ability to handle challenging situations and issues that leaders may not have faced while dealing with their own or previous generations. A clearer understanding of Generation Y's impacts may also provide leaders the knowledge and understanding to instill and teach esprit de corps and Marine Corps culture. The positive social change that results from this research could result in a more combat-capable Marine Corps and Department of Defense.

Significance to Theory

This study may provide a clearer understanding of the direct impacts Generation Y has on the Marine Corps' culture and other organizations. As defined by Mannheim (1923), the theory of generations is ultimately focused on the characteristics and attributes of each generation. Mannheim argued that newer generations rejuvenate and reinvigorate society and cultures. My research may provide leaders with an understanding of how Generation Y, does in fact, rejuvenate and reinvigorate the culture.

Additionally, furthering this theory, this research may demonstrate that the generational characteristics often described by researchers are not as different as initially believed. Several researchers have argued that generational characteristics do change with each generation, but the changes are only a byproduct of the previous generation.

This study was also intended to further organizational culture theory. Kotter and Heskett (1992) argued that only by understanding the different levels of an organization's culture can a leader be effective in implementing change. Having a clear understanding about how members of an organization view their culture is imperative in making decisions toward a more productive organization.

In addition, by researching both theories, this study may demonstrate how generations view a culture that is historic and structured, as mentioned by researchers. The military is, by default, an organization with a culture that constantly recruits young members of society. By conducting this research, I intend to further the theory of organizational culture in a military setting.

Significance to Practice

According to Schein (2010), the behaviors, attitudes, and norms of an organization become embedded within the organization and drive its success. How employees adapt to their surrounding culture displays their attitude, commitment, and acceptance of the organizational culture. Understanding if an employee is committed to an organization is one step in a process of identifying whether a potential problem exists. This study may help show how Generation Y feels toward its commitment to an organization and ultimately the organizational culture.

This study was also focused on a highly structured environment where policy and rules dictate the Marine Corps' every action. Commitment to the organization is also a reflection of a Marine's commitment to the nation and his or her fellow Marines. Among others, Johansen et al. (2013) argued that Generation Y is unfit for military service.

However, according to United States Marine Corps (2014), the majority of the population in the Marine Corps is from Generation Y. Having a clearer understanding of Generation Y's commitment to the Marine Corps could provide leaders with a clearer understanding of how their presence influences the culture.

With a better understanding about how Generation Y thinks and acts, organizations—and specifically the Marine Corps—can better employ the newer generations while maintaining their different cultures. This study could provide leaders with a deeper understanding of the actual changes within an organization's culture based on generational influences. Just as the theories of organizational culture and the theory of generations will be further enhanced by this study, the results could provide a clear approach and deeper understanding that military and civilian practitioners will be able to use. While this study was focused on a military context, it could also be applied outside the military. The theory of generations has implications not only for individuals but also for those responsible to lead them, the organization they work in, and how their surroundings affect the idea of who they are.

Significance to Social Change

For decades the Marine Corps has had to be flexible, tolerant, and adaptable. While change is inherent on the battlefield, there are changes that occur within the ranks of the Marine Corps due to new leadership, new ideas, and new perspectives. Leaders and subordinates are forced to deal with these changes on a daily basis with little understanding.

This research was intended to provide leaders at every level a view into the differences between Generation X, who currently are among the senior ranks, and Generation Y, who are now joining the ranks of the staff noncommissioned officers. Having a better understanding of how people think provides leaders with tools to better approach, communicate, and lead Generation Y. If, generationally, a group works well with detailed directions and instructions, a leader can influence the way orders are dictated. This not only would affect the way Marines can lead their subordinates but also provide a tool for their future endeavors if and when they choose to leave the Marines Corps.

Change is unavoidable, constant, and has implications in the way leaders can develop their subordinates. Without an understanding of how people are affected, leaders cannot sufficiently support the changes. According to Campbell, Campbell, Siedor, and Twenge (2015), generational changes are directly linked to cultural changes. They argued the need to understand the differences and impacts of the people who make up the organization. The Marine Corps is a force of diversity with multiple levels of leadership and experiences. Hill (2015) and Hamad (2015) commented that military leaders are required to be adaptable, reliable, and steadfast in their jobs. In order for leaders within the Marine Corps to meet those expectations they must be afforded the tools to better understand the times and Marines. The results of this research study are expected to provide Marines and leaders with the tools to better understand their environment and to better sustain a culture of warriors.

The results of this study could provide leaders, not only in the Marine Corps, but perhaps those in the Department of Defense and in the civilian populace a better understanding of Generation Y's contributions to the environments and organizational cultures that they directly affect. This knowledge may allow employers, organizations, and the military to fully employ Generation Y effectively and efficiently. Mannheim (1943) argued that new generations always appear, but it is up to society whether or not generations are effectively incorporated and employed within society. Ultimately, this study's positive social change could yield a more combat-capable Marine Corps and Department of Defense.

Summary and Transition

Generational identity is an ongoing research topic receiving attention by many researchers. The current workforce is multi-generational. The theory of generations proposed that generations have different perspectives and views about life, work, the world, ethics, values, and individual or group capabilities. Arguably, in a time of complexity due to the mixing of generations in the workforce, leaders must be able to identify with their subordinates and understand their different thought processes, views, and values.

Generation X and Generation Y are the predominant generations currently serving in the Marine Corps. According to the literature, analyzed in Chapter 2, both generations have distinct characteristics and traits that distinguish and separate them. Generation Y has been described in various ways that suggest their inability to successfully serve in the military.

The Marine Corps is a diverse force with multiple levels of leadership and experience. Military leaders must be adaptable, reliable, and steadfast in their jobs, requiring them to understand the people who work for them. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines.

Chapter 2 consists of a critical review of the foundational theories of the study, and delves more deeply into the concepts of generations and organizational culture. Within the two theories, four key topics are identified: military culture, military leadership, military discipline, and generational gaps. The critical review of the current and past research also permits the identification of what gaps exist.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem addressed by this nonexperimental, quantitative study was the gap in the research on the level of commitment in the Marine Corps of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. Its purpose was to examine the impacts on the Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of Generation Y Marines compared to Generation X Marines.

The current literature identifies several differences—including in opinions and behaviors—between Generation X and Generation Y. The literature also identifies the need for organizations to adapt and use younger generations' contributions to accommodate attitudes and behaviors. The literature describes several aspects of military culture and notes significant differences among the different branches of the U.S. military. However, there is limited research on Marine Corps culture.

Chapter 2, an in-depth examination of the literature, covers the four major areas based on two theories. The first section includes the theoretical foundation of organizational culture theory and the theory of generations. The second section includes literature on organizational culture and military culture covering the attributes of military leadership and military discipline. The third section compares the literature on Generation X and Generation Y. The final section summarizes the literature review and describes the gap in the literature.

Literature Search Strategy

The following keywords were used to search from 2011-2017. The search focused primarily on peer-reviewed articles: *organizational culture, military life, military*

discipline, military culture, military leadership, military gaps, military-civil gap, generations, Generation X, Generation Y, generational cohorts, workforce, workplace, and generation gaps. The following databases were used: Google Scholar, Copley Catalog, Emerald Management, Business Source Complete, ProQuest, PsycINFO, SAGE, Military and Government Collection, and Encore Catalog.

Original works by theorists were located at the University of San Diego library (through the use of the universities electronic library catalog) to provide the foundation of both organizational culture theory and the theory of generations. This search was conducted by the theorists' last names to ensure all available resources could be used. Additionally, a search within Walden University's electronic books yielded some results. The scope of this search included the years 1923 to the present.

While conducting the literature search about Marine Corps culture, discipline, and leadership, there was limited research or references. This resulted in the search and identification of a generic definition of military culture and the Department of Defense culture. Within some of the articles, there was some discussion about Marine Corps values compared to other services. However, minimal research was available specifically about the Marine Corps' culture.

Finally, articles used by authors within the literature review provided additional sources. Most resulted in non-peer reviewed articles or antiquated articles that were unable to be used during this research. The content of the non-peer reviewed articles provided additional keyword searches that led to a larger data search.

Theoretical Foundation

The two theories that provided foundational groundwork were organizational culture theory and the theory of generations. The theorists this literature review focuses on are Schein, Kotter, Heskett, and Mannheim. Schein, Kotter, and Heskett were among the first theorists who argued and established organizational culture theory. Mannheim was one of the first theorists who argued and established the theory of generations. I will provide a review of their ideas.

Organizational Culture Theory

Culture surrounds everything. Cultures exist within a nation, a country, a state, a city, a town, and as small as a family. Beyond the expected cultures in society, cultures and subcultures appear within companies and organizations. Kotter (1988), Schein (1999), and Kotter and Heskett (1992) defined organizational culture as shared experiences among groups who create standard reactions, actions, and behaviors across their group.

According to Kotter (1988), culture plays a significant role in organizations, describing culture as clannish. Kotter proposed that culture creates environments focusing groups or organizations on long-term objectives. Kotter explained successful organizations develop organizational cultures are sustainable and are created at the birth or beginning of an organization's inception. Organizations lacking a common culture face difficulties when attempting to implement new ideas and commonalities midlife of an organization. Those who have been successful have only succeeded because of the leadership's involvement, beliefs in the organization, and practice of the culture.

Kotter and Heskett (1992) argued that organizational culture has two different levels of culture, a visible level, and a non-visible level. The first level they determined, relates to what the organization cumulatively values. They argued that this level is difficult to influence, change, or alter once established. The second level of culture is how the organization conducts itself through the naked eye, the behaviors are taught and encouraged. Kotter and Heskett commented although this level is not as difficult to change or alter, it still may prove challenging.

Schein (1999) mentioned cultures develop three levels when a group has shared experiences. The three levels included artifacts (what you see, hear, and feel), values (why), and shared assumptions (joint learning process). Schein (2010), like Kotter (1988), lamented that cultures are the result of what leaders impose upon groups and the concept is an explanation of normalization within an organization. Schein argued that normalization guides behaviors and creates structural stability.

According to Schein (1999), organizational culture is deep, stable, complex, and extensive. National culture creates the foundational basis for organizational culture in which an organization operates. Schein compared an organizational culture to the national culture, claiming as an organization's culture is a subculture, within an organization there are likely additional subcultures. Foundational culture within an organization builds subcultures and is further embedded by an association of mutual experiences within departments. Kotter and Heskett (1992) described this as well, commenting that all organizations have subcultures associated with different groupings.

While describing what culture is and is not, Schein (1999) stated that leadership and culture are intertwined. In general, culture is a social order which is encompassing of employees' personal lives and work. Schein argued that individuals with already seated ideas, emotions, and reactions create the basis of an organization's culture and bring their ideas to the table. Schein (2010) commented that leaders are the creators and the founders of an organization's culture. Kotter and Heskett (1992) explained that the creation of an organization's culture is often by the founder or the creator of the organization. Due to the responsibility placed on leaders, Schein lamented the need for leaders at every level to understand, not only the overall culture of the organization but additionally those subcultures nestled throughout.

Schein (1999) and Kotter and Heskett (1992) argued that culture is produced when a group's habit forms. Each one identified an organization that repeatedly solved a problem they encountered that resulted in the same manner by executing specific tasks. Eventually, this approach became rooted within the context of decision-making and problem-solving. Although not in all cases, those who are a part of the culture will forget where or why the decision-making process began and how the organization came to adopt certain practices. They argued that often the reason is rooted in the initial creation of the organization's culture. Kotter and Heskett claimed another way culture is passed on is through storytelling. They commented stories from the history of an organization would be told from one generation to the other to which promotes the culture of the organization.

The theorists also commented that culture is not always something that is seen on the surface. Schein (1999) argued that the shared assumptions are the foundation to create a culture. Shared assumptions are simply ideas and concepts commonly shared among those within the organization, which may not be known to others. Schein argued that cultural ideas are shared mental models; how an organization reaches its decision points, or why an organization conducts itself in a precise manner. However, Schein cautioned culture is not merely how things are done; culture is the stability of an organization providing meaning and predictability.

Theory of Generations

Mannheim (1923) argued that the theory of generations is an attempt at organizing a group in social science. A social generation is categorizing and identifying a location and age. Additionally, a generation is defined by shared experiences and thought.

Generations are a sign of progress and hope for the future. Mannheim (1952) commented generations are a symbol of progress in society. Mannheim commented that it is difficult to place time specific restrictions on a generation. His theory argued similar experiences create a generation. Mannheim's theory of generations was not to set boundaries and limits but to demonstrate how similar experiences and reactions create common trends linking a group together.

Mannheim (1943) postulated society suffers when they do not use the newer generations. This argument was that society should be willing and accepting of new ideas and ways to make forward progress in society. Mannheim argued that youth have

potential for a new start if properly indoctrinated into society. Mannheim postulated that the new ideas of generations ensure society does not become stagnant and unproductive.

This concept relates to his observations of society as new generations enter the world. Mannheim (1923) presented a scenario in his essay where new contacts are made with an established culture. The interpretation, understanding, and acceptance by the new contacts develop by the events occurring around them. Mannheim argued as previous participants within the culture exit the world, the new generation continues to endure, with a continuous cycle of new contacts. This cycle is the exposure of a generation to the social and intellectual arena where they are.

Mannheim's (1943) definition of a generation is likened to a position in social class. Just as social class is not linked to organizational membership or community membership, generations are structurally similar. Mannheim argued the similarities between social class and generations are the shared common location, such as the year they are born, a range of experiences limited by the year they are born, predisposing them to similar characteristics, thought, and experiences. It is a familiar experience which is repeated. However, just being born within a specific time period does not create the generation. There must be a common goal shared bringing the group together. Mannheim argued that a generation in China would very much be different when comparing a generation to another country.

Eisenstadt (2003) added to Mannheim's discussion on generations. Although societies are different and generations may differ from culture to culture, there are specifics every culture shares. Eisenstadt argued every culture has a point in a

generation's period when they enter from childhood to adulthood. This point was made to address the similar experiences within generations. This is a shared experience throughout the world. In specific cultures it becomes a shared experience through the generation bonding them into their cohort and shaping a part of who they are.

Strauss and Howe (1991) furthered Mannheim's theory of generations during their examination of the previous and emerging generations. Strauss and Howe defined a generation as a cohort-group with specific dates influenced by peer personalities. They argued age location, the common experiences in history at similar ages, is a fundamental aspect of a generation. Strauss and Howe contended peer personality, the personality generalization, is also a significant characteristic bringing a generation together.

Literature Review

This literature review is structured around two primary topics, military culture and generations. To understand military culture, it is first necessary to understand what researchers have defined as organizational culture and how it affects organizations. The first part of the literature review assesses research on how organizational cultures have been discovered and evaluated. The second part of the literature review focuses on the military and Department of Defense's organizational cultures. The third part of the literature review focuses on researchers' comments, descriptions, and observations about Generation X and Generation Y. The literature review is finalized with a comparison of Generation X and Generation Y.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture has been researched in various types of organizations. Organizations search for answers that would better aid them to meet productivity and efficiency goals. Consistently, researchers have argued that an organization's positive and negative character and environment can be directly linked to the organizational culture. Schein (2010) defined organizational culture as a combined set of key values, assumptions, understanding, and norms shared among members. Among the many different evaluations, researchers have discovered links between organizational culture and productivity, citizenship within an organization, job satisfaction, and performance.

Researchers often describe the culture of an organization as a single entity. It is viewed as the *who* and *how* an organization operates. Brettel et al. (2015) argued most organizations cannot be classified by one type of character description or having one culture. Brettel et al. found organizations often have multiple types of culture throughout the organization. They argued that not only are there various types of culture but culture has a minimum of three levels, to include basic values, behavioral norms, and behaviors/artifacts, similarly to Schein (2010). Berkemeyer, Juner, Box, and Muthing (2015) described organizational culture as a shared set of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myths.

The shared values, ideas, and beliefs of organizations are adopted from their surroundings. According to Berkemeyer et al. (2015), organizational culture is influenced by the surrounding society and culture. Brettel et al. (2015) argued that organizational culture is moderated by national culture.

However, organizational culture is not as easily recognized at a surface level. Brettel et al. (2015) identified four different cultures present in organizations. Berkemeyer et al. (2015) commented that in most organizations there are multiple subcultures. The purpose of Brettel et al.'s research was to determine how the organizational culture affected entrepreneurial orientation.

Entrepreneurial orientation is an organizational construct that encourages productivity and performance. The first culture identified by Brettel et al. was *group culture*, which they argued focused on interpersonal relations. The second culture was *hierarchical culture*, which they argued focused on routine and stability. The third culture was *rational culture*, which they argued focused on stability and goal achievements. Finally, the fourth culture was *developmental culture*, which they associated with changes.

To observe the four different types of culture, the use of quantitative research assisted in identifying if organizational culture played a role in employee actions within an organization. Brettel et al. (2015) conducted survey based research sampling over 2,700 companies via electronic mail. Using an already established model, Competing Values Model (CVM), they determined organizational culture is directly linked to entrepreneurial orientation. However, one of the limitations of their research identified the need to extend beyond one country. Arguing that national culture is an influence on organizational culture, results could differ if tested in a different country.

The subcultures in organizations are based on the overall culture of the organization. Berkemeyer et al. (2015) conducted quantitative cross-sectional survey

research. The purpose of their research was to identify characteristics of school culture. Their research was conducted at two different points in time, sampling a total of 1,831 teachers. In their research, they discovered that multiple cultural profiles are distinguishable in school organizations. Berkemeyer et al. found that each profile was a sub-culture of the overall organizational culture.

The overall culture of an organization is the driving force that leads to productivity, performance, and job satisfaction. Deem, DeLotell, and Kelly (2015) and Azanza, Moriano, and Molero (2013) conducted quantitative research linking organizational culture with productivity. Boyce, Nieminen, Gillespie, Ryan, and Dension (2015) discovered a link between performance and organizational culture. Overall, the link between organizational culture and employee results suggests that while a positive organizational culture influences employee actions, employee actions do not influence a positive organizational culture.

For employees to succeed in organizations, employees must buy into the organizational culture. Deem et al. (2015) used a random sample of 803 employees within one university. The purpose of their research was to determine the cultural acceptance and differences between part-time and full-time employees. They determined organizational culture directly links with organizational effectiveness. They found within the university, the organizational culture acceptance was not different between part-time and full-time faculty.

Azanza et al. (2013) similarly conducted a cross-sectional quantitative survey. Their population encompassed 114 companies with a sample of 571 employees. They

found organizational culture was directly linked with job satisfaction which resulted in higher productivity across the various organizational cultures. Boyce et al. (2015) discovered similar results in their research.

Boyce et al. (2015) conducted a six-year quantitative survey study connecting organizational culture to performance. The purpose of their research was to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and performance with customer satisfaction. The sample was gathered from employees within each dealership and customers who interacted with those dealerships. A key result they discovered was while organizational culture influenced performance, performance did not influence organizational culture in any of the 95 dealerships they surveyed. This argument was again identified by Ginossar et al. (2014).

Ginossar et al. (2014) argued burnout in HIV health care providers was directly linked to the organizational culture. They defined organizational culture as shared expectations for behavior. Ginossar et al. conducted a cross-sectional survey of 47 HIV health-care providers. Utilizing an already established survey, they discovered providers who operated in an environment where criticism was common practice burnt out quicker when compared to organizations with a culture of teamwork.

However, organizational culture is not a tangible item that anyone can reach out and touch. Researchers argue that leadership teaches organizational culture. Schein (2010) argued leadership is responsible and essential in developing and fostering organizational culture. Lancaster and DiMilia (2015) discovered the same point in their research. They found leadership not only influenced organizational cultures, but also

leaders influenced outcomes within an organization. This result parallels with Kotter and Heskett (1992) where they argued culture exerts powerful results and effects on people and their performance. Lancaster and DiMilia conducted a case study of one organization with over 5,000 employees. Interviews were conducted via telephone, email, and personal interviews.

Aligning with Kotter and Heskett (1992) and Schein (1999) Lancaster and DiMilia discovered in their research, an organization with a strong culture would also have various subcultures established by commonalities within groups. Even within the subcultures, Lancaster and DiMilia found that while employees emphasized the importance of the characteristics of organizational culture what was even more prevalent was the importance of leadership.

Campbell and Goritz (2014) also described leadership as the foundation of organizational culture. They conducted qualitative interviews with 14 independent experts from various fields of business. The purpose of their research was to identify how corrupt organizations influenced employee actions and decisions. They found when employees work in organizations with a corrupt culture, they allowed the same characteristics into their day to day lives. Popa (2012) supported this perspective discovering that positive organizational culture was interwoven in employees' day to day lives.

Popa (2012) lamented that organizational culture is heavily reliant on the leadership displayed within the organization. As with Campbell and Goritz (2014), Popa stated that leadership and culture are interwoven. According to Popa, an organizational

culture must have leadership in order to be able to operate. Additionally, the organizational culture directly affects how the organization is led. As with Campbell and Goritz's research, a corrupt organization will create corrupt leaders and followers. Popa argued that an organization's success and failure directly connects to the leadership's ethics and morals.

According to Popa (2013), organizational culture and leadership are synonymous. Popa argued organizational culture is a key factor for organizational performance, and leadership is a defining characteristic of an organization. By these arguments, Popa predicted that through strong leadership and a strong organizational culture, organizations can achieve goals.

Marchand, Haines, and Dextras-Gauthier (2013) conducted a cross-sectional quantitative survey to identify how organizational culture could affect the psychological and emotional well-being of employees. The population was derived from 30 workplaces combining 1,164 employees. The survey was distributed electronically to the participants through electronic mail. In their results, they discovered particular types of organizational cultures did in fact affect the wellbeing of employees. Found also by Korner, Wirtz, Bengel, and Goritz (2015), the results indicated organizational culture was directly linked with job satisfaction and resulted in negative or positive productivity depending on the organizational culture.

Korner et al. (2015) administered a survey which was distributed via one point of contact from 15 rehabilitation clinics. They argued a strong organizational culture assisted employees in accomplishing their goals, tasks, and provided job satisfaction. The

purpose of their research was also to validate the Input Process Output model, which they found valid and reliable. Korner et al. argued through their findings and previous research, an organization's culture is what holds it together. They described it as the *social glue*.

Understanding what and how organizational culture creates in an organization is vital to its success. As shown in the literature review on organizational culture, the culture is directly linked to employee productivity, job satisfaction, and performance. Arguably this can also be linked to how employees felt about their organization and their level of commitment and cultural acceptance.

Military Culture

Military culture as defined by Tinoco and Arnaud (2013) are the values, traditions, philosophies, and structure designed to shape a shared expectation of beliefs and behaviors. Clemmensen et al. (2012) argued the Marine Corps' culture focuses on unity, discipline, and sacrifice. Stephenson (2016) stated how the Army fights is a function of its culture. The organizational environment of the Marine Corps is its culture. Laurence (2011) argued the military's organizational culture is center focused on the ability to be warfighters and technicians/tacticians. As stated by Schein (1999) there are multiple levels of a culture. The military's culture is no less ambiguous. Cole (2014) argued the military's deep culture is blended with the members' shared emotional experiences.

Characteristics. Military culture is unique. Compared to the civilian population there are distinct differences that separate military culture and society. Military culture is

not the same across branches either. Bonura and Lovald (2015) argued that each branch has a unique culture. The United States Marine Corps has a significant, distinct, and separate culture from the other branches of service.

According to Reynolds (2015), the Marine Corps, compared to the other branches of service, is the best at instilling, sharing, and setting its organizational culture. Reynolds found in comparison to the other branches of service, no matter what rank or how long a Marine served, they understand, believe, and live the organizational culture. Reynolds claimed among the branches of services, the Marine Corps has one of the strongest cultures. According to Reynolds, through the Marine Corps' defining slogans such as *Every Marine is a Rifleman*, *Leaders Eat Last*, and *The Few the Proud the Marines*, the Marine Corps has mastered creating an organizational culture every Marine, no matter what grade, embodies. However, the Marine Corps' culture is one of the least researched among the services. On the other hand, the literature does provide a significant background and analysis of militaries and the Department of Defense as a whole.

Redmond et al. (2015) compared the mission differences and core values of each branch of service. They defined the Marine Corps' mission to "Train, organize, and equip Marines for offensive amphibious employment and as a force in readiness" (p. 11). They added the core values identified for the Marine Corps are honor, courage, and commitment. They contended military culture extends beyond just warrior ethos. They argued as part of the culture, an expectation of obedience, discipline, self-sacrifice, trust and courage are ingrained and expected of each of its members. Also, the culture employs

high standards targeted at sustaining training, self-improvement, community, and personal responsibility.

Cole (2014) argued that military culture is widely unknown. As agreed by most researchers, Cole's observation of culture indicated that culture has multiple layers. Cole commented that culture could be viewed from two simple perspectives, the visual aspects (shallow culture) and the nonvisible aspects (deep culture). According to Cole, the military's shallow culture included characteristics such as language and hierarchy. The military's deep culture, Cole included a sense of rules and regulations, self-expectations, and self-sacrifice.

Stephenson (2016) defined organizational culture as the symbols, rituals, and practices which describe and define an organization. Through a conceptual evaluation of the Army's cultural condition, Stephenson identified key attributes that characterize the Army's culture. The Army's culture has a broad range of characteristics not typically found in society's organizations. According to Stephenson, how the Army fights is a function of the culture.

Stephenson (2016) argued that military cultures are adaptable to their environments but are not the driving force to change a military's culture. Only those influences from top-down or strategic political influences directly impact the military culture as a whole. Stephenson commented that although organizational culture is common, in the military culture it is particularly strong. Stephenson claimed that to describe the Army's culture is not only to explain *how* and *why*, but also to see what

policies direct their actions. Stephenson contended that there are multiple levels of the culture in any military.

Pease, Bilera, and Gerard (2015) described the transition from a military culture to society as similar to immigrants arriving in the United States. They argued that medical health care providers must adapt and change their approach to support, treat, and care for military members or veterans. One significant characteristic Pease et al. described of military culture is the need and expectation of *mental fitness*. Some of the values they discovered that defined military culture included, honor, courage, loyalty, integrity, and commitment.

Bonura and Lovald (2015) argued that each branch of service is fundamentally different and cautioned that individuals would reflect their service's culture. They described the military culture as extremely structured. Hart and Thompson (2016) similarly discovered the same aspects of military students. They further found that not all military members affiliated with the military would cultivate the same behaviors due to their branch of service and type of affiliation.

Tinoco and Arnaud (2013) conducted a conceptual study on the Department of Defense. They described the military is a social institution. They termed the military culture as one driven by results-orientation and process orientation. Stephenson (2016) argued military culture is less open to adaptation or innovation. Price (2014) described military culture as a culture of compliance. Spain, Mohundro, and Banks' (2015) assessment of the Army's culture indicated a preference toward individuals who were tactically coherent rather than intellectually coherent perverting the ability to change or

innovate. Price argued that the culture is what provides the military the capacity to innovate and change when needed.

Tinoco and Arnaud (2013) argued that like any organization, the military also has stakeholders that have direct interest and influence on the culture of the organization. They identified the stakeholders as the lawmakers and other Department of Defense entities. Kamara (2015) supported this claim and added that the United States strategic culture influenced the military. Tinoco and Arnaud argued that military culture is impacted and influenced by these stakeholders and entities. One key characteristic difference Tinoco and Arnaud discovered between military culture and civilian organizational cultures is a sense of duty, or preservation of life. They also argued that military culture is a society embedded in culture.

Redmond et al. (2013) also contended that military culture is unique by defining the organizational culture based on its structure, framework, and rules. Redmond et al. also argued military culture overlaps with personal lives resulting in institutional orientation. As found by Popa (2013) and Campbell and Goritz (2014), Redmond et al. defined this by explaining, service members who value their military lives allow those values to cross into their personal home lives.

Hill (2015) and Tinaco and Arnaud (2013) described militaries as alternate or separate societies. According to Hill, militaries depend on a standardization of tools, training, methods, and organizations which ground the organizational culture. To define culture, Hill argued that culture is a theory of what works and is used to define behavior in organizations that are otherwise difficult to explain. According to Hill, the military's

culture is built on shared history and values. Hill described military culture as an execution oriented culture, one that values ceremony, tradition, and knowledge of history.

Meyer et al. (2013) conducted a survey of Canadian Forces to determine the level of commitment utilizing the Three-Component Model (TCM) of commitment. The purpose of their research was to determine the different profiles of commitment and compare the potential retention of the Canadian Forces members. Their population consisted of 25,642 from the Canadian Forces. They received a response from 6,501 participants, approximately 25.4% response rate. This web-based survey was administered through electronic mail with a link to the survey.

Based on the results, Meyer et al. (2013) identified six profiles with a level of commitment for each. They argued due to the low response rate, two profiles were not evaluated. They cautioned their findings may not translate directly to other armed forces and cautioned although self-reporting surveys are legitimate and valid, researchers should not dismiss the potential for response bias.

Leadership. The culture in the Marine Corps is directly influenced, taught, and upheld by its leaders. Leaders in the Marine Corps are placed in dangerous and often volatile situations requiring immediate decisions. According to Bangari (2014), Marine Corps leadership is the bedrock of the culture and discipline. Bangari stated that without leadership, the Marine Corps cannot function efficiently and effectively. As organizational changes occur, so must change occur within the leadership of the Marine Corps.

According to Popa (2013), changes in organizational culture are responses to changes to society's culture, evolution of technology, and leadership. Bangari (2014) discussed the complexity of military leadership. Bangari argued that leaders are expected to uphold such high standards that in some regard not even their civilian counterparts could master. Tulgan (2015) argued that powerful cultures are curated through organizations that know what their priorities are. Tulgan argued that the Marine Corps is one of two organizations that ensures *high behavior*, that is emphasized and executed by all members of the organization.

Johnson (2014) contributed to this argument that leadership within the military is foundational to the culture and organizational health. Johnson hypothesized and presented arguments suggesting the military has lost the art of leadership and rather behave and conduct themselves as managers. Johnson theorized this display is a threat to the military and is misdirected.

Johnson (2014) defined leadership as an art of igniting an organization to achieve something new, different, and sometimes radical. In this argument, Johnson hypothesized military leadership has lost its way over the last decade and has forgotten what it truly means to inspire subordinates, suggesting today's leaders have become careless. Johnson cautioned leadership is no longer in pursuit of inspiring and supporting subordinates, but are in the pursuit of progress. Johnson suggested leadership has become a lost art. Current leaders are cautious and are managers instead of leaders. They misdirect toward management and have become a threat to the military.

Sauser (2013) agreed with Johnson that it is the leaders' responsibility to foster an environment of an organizational culture of character. According to Sauser, leadership is responsible for mentoring and developing the next generation for the future, with the argument culture is not only how an organization conducted itself but how the organization achieved its goals.

Gallus et al. (2013) hypothesized toxic leadership interfered with positive organizational climates and organizational strength. They argued within the military, leaders play a significant role in shaping the organizational environments. Reynolds (2015) echoed this sentiment arguing that the responsibility of the organizational environment rested on the shoulders of the leaders.

Reynolds (2015) commented leaders provided a winning environment and mentorship which led into setting standards of performance and boundary conditions. Gallus et al. conducted an online survey of 5,182 enlisted service members with the Marine Corps representing only 20% of the population surveyed. The total population evaluated was 2,025. The multi-level survey combined two surveys which measured toxic leadership, toxic leadership congruence, unit civility, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Gallus et al. (2013) discovered leadership in the military is a significant factor in shaping, developing, maintaining, and changing any factor within a unit. They argued leadership by example is a significant characteristic. Senior leaders who demonstrate behaviors and beliefs teach their subordinates who in turn also behave in similar manners.

Reynolds (2015) also argued a leader is responsible for setting directions and establishing goals. Leaders are the link to an organization's success and failure. Of significance, one of the limitations of the study by Gallus et al. included the unknown of how the different services would compare (i.e. Marine Corps vs. Air Force).

Bangari (2014) contended military leadership is inundated with complex and turbulent environments. Military leadership is faced with change that is inevitable and necessary. Bangari pointed out any change is based on societal drives and indicative of the newer generations. According to Bangari, military leadership is required to maintain and attain professional excellence which includes, leading by example, empowering subordinates, providing a sincerity of purpose, maintaining moral integrity, showing genuine care and concern, displaying a compassionate approach, and being self-sacrificing and self-effacing.

Mentioned by Bangari (2014) and Johnson (2012), discipline is a part of the military culture. It is part of its structure and a necessity for its success. Discipline is a hallmark of military culture. Marines are expected to act and distinguish themselves in such a way as to separate themselves from day to day life apart from their civilian counterparts. Without discipline, the Marine Corps could lose battles.

Just as the overall culture is the responsibility of leaders to teach and instill, so too is discipline. Researchers such as Johnson (2012) and Elfers (2014) argued military discipline has been compromised and a breakdown has occurred. Researchers defined military discipline as non-hesitation and instant obedience. Elfers argued Marine Corps discipline is the constitution of the Marine Corps. According to Elfers, there is a link

between mission accomplishment, leadership, and discipline. Elfers and Johnson argued there is a breakdown in professional conduct and antisocial behavior impacting the discipline and in turn the culture.

According to Johnson (2012), military discipline is an essential part of enforcing rules and regulations. Understanding the military hierarchy, military leaders must be able to separate themselves personally to ensure a consistent professional relationship. Johnson acknowledged this ability to separate professional and personal relationships is difficult but necessary to ensure and maintain discipline.

Elfers (2014) postulated that the discipline, conduct, and behavior throughout the Marine Corps disintegrated the values of the Marine Corps. According to Elfers, leaders are looking for acceptance and rather than uphold and instill discipline they have chosen to compete for popularity. Elfers argued this continued conduct will in fact risk the foundational constitution of the Marine Corps.

Understanding the military culture and who is responsible for upholding traditions is an essential part of understanding the force. Marines are expected to be flexible, tolerant, understanding, and warriors. However, to instill any culture, leaders must know their subordinates. They must understand how they think and why they act. Without that connection, military leaders will falter and discover their efforts were for naught.

Generations X and Y

Discussions about generational differences have been ongoing for decades. Every decade examines the new generation and makes observations, comments, comparisons, and theories. Wiedmer (2015), Mhatre and Conger (2011), and Stein (2013) categorized

the three generations in the current workforce as, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Arguments abound that each generation places emphasis on different values. My research examines two generations, Generation X and Generation Y. The unlikeliness of Baby Boomers still currently serving on active duty as an enlisted Marine precludes them from evaluation in this study.

Gibson (2015) used the military as an example in an exploration of recruiting for organizations. One of the results Gibson discovered was the lack of military influence on the younger generations. According to Gibson, they are less likely to have military members who have served in any of the branches which ultimately leads to their ignorance or avoidance of service. Additionally, Gibson also mentioned that the downsizing of the militaries and closing of bases throughout the United States during the 1990s caused a significant deficit of military presence. Lastly, Gibson also maintained that a quarter of the youth are ineligible in the United States to serve in the military due to obesity and weight issues.

Generation X. According to Friedrich (2016), research about Generation Y and previous generations has overshadowed information about Generation X. Bosco and Harvey (2013) argued that Generation X's upbringing was during turbulent and trying times in society and politics which directly influences their character. Wiedmer (2015) similarly argued that Generation X experienced turbulent times. Becton et al. (2014) recognized that Generation X's life experiences that defined them included: economic uncertainty, recessions, high unemployment, inflation, downsizing, and high divorce

rates. Due to their experiences and environments, Bosco and Harvey (2013) defined Generation X as pessimistic, pragmatic, and self-reliant.

Becton, Walker, and Jones-Farmer (2014) conducted an online survey of 8,128 job applicants from two hospitals in the southeastern United States. Out of their population 1,515 participants were categorized as Generation X. In their research Becton et al. commented that the unpredictable environment present during Generation X's upbringing made them into a distrustful, lacking in loyalty, and self-reliant generation. Cekada (2012) echoed Becton et al., but added that although there is a lack of loyalty toward corporations; Generation X members are likely to be loyal to their immediate supervisors or teams.

Sparks (2012) conducted a longitudinal survey study from 2000 – 2004. The total sample included 451 nurses from multiple hospitals in West Virginia. The survey results suggested that different generations value different aspects of their work environment. Specifically, Sparks found that Generation X appeared unsatisfied with their work-life balance. This led to an increase of burnout and job changes when compared to previous generations. Sparks further argued that management and leadership should be aware of differences in generations to better equip them with anticipating or forecasting responses and turnover.

According to Tang, Cunningham, Frauman, Ivy, and Perry (2012) Generation X is less likely to sacrifice their family and personal lives for their work. Tang et al., claimed that Generation X prefers not to conform to normal practices. Friedrich (2016) described them as disillusioned and disengaged which followed Generation X into their workplaces.

However, Friedrich also argued that Generation X is adaptable and has proven to be over their life span.

Contrary to these descriptions, Wiedmer (2015) characterized Generation X as highly educated, active, balanced, happy, and family-oriented. Wiedmer concluded that through their experiences of watching downsizing and the recession, Generation X became more independent and financially cautious. Young, Sturts, Ross, and Kim (2013) and Krahn and Galambos (2014) argued that Generation X is one of the most highly educated generations and described Generation X as intrinsically motivated. Young et al. and Cekada (2012) described Generation X as resourceful and independent.

Young et al. (2013) conducted an Internet survey with 2,684 participants of whom only 503 surveys claimed that Generation X prefers challenges in their workplace and direct feedback. Additionally, Young et al., Krahn and Galambos (2014), and Becton et al. (2014) found that Generation X members sought a work-life balance. Lester, Standifer, Shultz, and Windsor (2012) conducted research through an online survey to compare actual and perceived workplace preferences. Similar to other researchers Lester et al. concluded that Generation X sought a work-life balance, but added that compared to previous generations they have a weaker work ethic.

Lester et al. (2012) discovered Generation X's leadership preference focuses on competency over seniority. Cekada (2012) and Coulter and Foulkner (2014) argued that Generation X prefers leadership that allows them the ability to solve problems on their own with the reassurance they were doing the right thing. Coulter and Foulkner discovered that Generation X is outcome focused rather than process focused.

Brown (2012) conducted mixed research to determine if generational perspectives impact employee interactions when organizations implement job intensification. The first part of Brown's research questioned participants about their perceptions of the other generation. The older generation commented that Generation X was disrespectful of rules and authority, not uncommon to what other researchers have argued.

The second part of Brown's (2012) approach was to survey the individual generations on their perspectives of work values. However, Brown did not find a significant difference between the older generation and Generation X. Both generations responded to a work-life balance equally. According to Brown, Generation X sees their work as a lifestyle rather than a means.

Lu and Gursoy (2013) found similar results in their research on Generation X argued that Generation X was born into change, increasing their tolerance and adaptability to change with their environments easily. Lu and Gursoy characterized Generation X as self-reliant and resourceful. They argued Generation X has a need for a work-life balance. Generation X's ability to adapt to change was similarly mentioned by Omana (2016).

Omana (2016), through a quantitative survey, examined how human resource professionals could use technology to reach across multiple generations. Omana described Generation X as self-reliant. Through their initiative and self-drive, Omana argued that Generation X are influencers and lead by example. Omana claimed when Generation X came into the workforce, they began altering the way typical organizations

operated. According to Omana, Generation X did not conform to formality and rigidity but preferred a relaxed environment.

Keys (2014) conducted qualitative research on Generation X's movement into management positions. The purpose of Keys' research was to identify Generation X's perceptions regarding their personal and professional relationship toward their loyalty and commitment in their organization. According to Keys, the current managers in place are on the cusps of retirement and Generation X were the next in line to take over those positions. Keys conducted 16 interviews with Generation X nurses who had at least 1 year experience in management.

Keys (2014) described Generation X in the same way as previous researchers. Specifically, Keys maintained that Generation X is results and goal-oriented which the results corroborated. During the interviews, Generation X mentioned their desire to meet metrics which they used as a measure of their professional and personal success. Generation X also maintained that training and preparation for their positions was a necessity. Several of the participants believed that they had not been properly prepared for the responsibilities expected of their positions. They argued that proper preparation and training would increase Generation X retention within the workplace.

Sox, Crews, and Kline (2014) described Generation X as one of the smallest generations in the workforce. They also commented that Generation X is the best educated compared to the older and younger generations. Sox et al. did not find alternative characteristics to describe Generation X that have not yet already been identified. However, they did argue that Generation X displays a no nonsense type

attitude in the workplace. Sox et al. maintained that Generation X expects results in the workplace and in meetings.

Sox et al. (2014) conducted qualitative research using the *Delphi method*. This method has a four step process that allowed participants on a panel to comment individually, as a group, and, analyze other contributions. The participation was conducted online and anonymously. The results of the panel maintained that Generation X does not want to waste time which they argued could lead to perceptions of effectiveness. Additionally, Generation X reasoned that proper planning ahead of time would alleviate the perception of ineffectiveness. The results suggested that communication before any meeting was instrumental to not only prepare Generation X for the meetings but also appeal to their attentiveness during meetings and potential engagement.

Ganesan and Krishnamurthi (2013) conducted an empirical study on the levels of emotional intelligence of Generation X managers. Their research included data from 243 Generation X managers across nine companies. The purpose of their research was based on the need for managers to have emotional intelligence to lead an organization successfully. The researchers determined the need to determine if Generation X had emotional intelligence to lead organizations successfully. The results of Ganesan and Krishnamurthi's research did determine that Generation X has the emotional intelligences needed to lead organizations successfully through the following decades. Of significance, the results indicated that Generation X is high in *self-awareness* but low in *self-motivation*.

Generation Y. According to Ferguson and Morton-Huddleston (2016), Generation Y makes up a high percentage of the workforce. According to Smith and Nichols (2015), VanMeter, Grisaffe, Chonko, and Roberts (2013), and Chung and Fitzsimmons (2013), managers, leaders, and organizations should be aware of Generation Y's distinct characteristics. The researchers determined Generation Y's unique characteristics and approaches to life directly influence how they perceive their roles in their jobs and their homes. A consensus by the researchers argued Generation Y members are family-focused and like Generation X, expect a work life balance which they view organizations should be able to accommodate.

Smith and Nichols (2015) described Generation Y as confident and optimistic. They argued they display higher self-esteem compared to previous generations. Smith and Nicolas argued that part of Generation Y's characteristics include confidence, team orientation, achievement focused, and technologically dependent. According to Smith and Nichols, Generation Y is family focused and optimistic stemming from their upbringing and watching their parents overcome adversity in the economy.

Celikdemir and Tukul (2015) agreed that Generation Y desired flexible schedules and a work-life balance. Through qualitative research, they conducted eight interviews with Generation Y. They argued that Generation Y prioritizes family over their occupation. According to Celikdemir and Tukul, because Generation Y was born into technology they prefer communication through e-mail and text messages. They described some of their personality traits as optimistic and assertive but loyal and committed.

Celikdemir and Tukul also cautioned that Generation Y craved attention, feedback, and guidance.

Aydogmus (2016) conducted a quantitative survey with a convenience sample of 477 participants. The purpose of this research was to identify key links between job satisfaction and personality characteristics within Generation Y. Aydogmus argued that Generation Y values skill development and forward mobility in their occupation, claiming that they prefer teamwork but also seek opportunities to make a difference in the organization. A significant characteristic drawn from this study was Generation Y's personal value of themselves. They believe they are invaluable to an organization and as such, expected special treatment.

Bencsik, Horvath-Csikos, and Juhasz (2016) conducted a quantitative survey study with a sample of 410 participants. One key characteristic they discovered in their research about Generation Y was their ability to multitask. They attributed Generation Y's ability to multitask to what they viewed as high qualification in digital knowledge. Bencsik et al. found that a virtual world and virtual friends significantly structured Generation Y's world.

VanMeter et al. (2013) described Generation Y as narcissistic. They argued Generation Y displays a sense of entitlement. The researchers claimed this behavior and attitude resulted from their parents who consistently pushed them to win at everything. Omana (2016) described this attitude as highly individualistic. Omana also commented that Generation Y prefers an organization that offered them upward mobility and would immediately move on to other opportunities if presented.

VanMeter et al. (2013) described Generation Y's leadership preference as non-hierarchical and more team oriented. They argued Generation Y's exposure to the economic and political environments of their time significantly affected the way they view conflict, ethics, and life. Their research focused on a university over two semesters. With a sampling of 1,128 college students, VanMeter et al. found Generation Y was more accepting of ethical violations than previous generations. Through a self-reported evaluation on ethical ideology, VanMeter et al. discussed the results that if witnessed to an ethical violation, Generation Y members are more likely not to report the violation and in many cases, participate. The researchers attributed this likelihood to Generation Y's exposure to ethical violations by government and business conduct reported by the media over their generation's time.

Roislien (2015) conducted a case study of Norwegian Defense Cyber Academy. Roislien argued that Generation Y brings challenges to military life. Arguably, Roislien suggested that society has developed into an environment where choices are afforded to everyone which is in direct contrast to military life. According to Roislien, the military requires a structure such as a chain of command and unity, whereas, in contrast, society encourages individualism and choices.

Roislien (2015) claimed Generation Y was born directly into technology and subjected to the traits of individuality, independence, and flexibility. Further, a generation born into technology takes for granted aspects of life that have not always been readily available, for example, individuals' choice and judgment. Roislien concluded Generation Y's traits are at odds with military life. This gap, particularly in technology, led newer

members to question authority and rely more on their knowledge and experience than those within their hierarchy. Roislien cautioned that military service is a process of reworking ethos, social, and cultural consciousness encouraging the generation's involvement and input.

Wiedmer (2015) attributed technology as a significant impact in the lives of Generation Y. As DeVaney (2015), Hinote and Sundvall (2015), and Roislien (2015) discussed, Wiedmer also commented that members of Generation Y required constant forward movement and are easily bored, which she attributed to their technological dependency and the constant availability of information on the Internet and smartphones. Similarly to DeVaney, Wiedmer argued Generation Y seeks for a work-life balance. Wiedmer contradicted other researchers suggesting Generation Y are not as independent as previous generations. Rather, they require a great deal more feedback, mentoring and structure.

Ultimately, Wiedmer (2015) concluded organizations must take into account the multiple generations within their workforce. Consideration of a multigenerational workforce would enable an organization to facilitate its members and open doors for better communication. According to Wiedmer, the responsibility of leaders, mentors, supervisors, and businesses is to recognize what sparks a generation's interest and foster an environment where they can grow.

A significant trait identified by Chung and Fitzsimmons (2013) was Generation Y's need for what they termed *handholding*. They argued this generation is extremely high maintenance resulting in the need for reassurance and a lot of attention. Smith and

Nichols (2015) also agreed Generation Y prefers interpersonal relationships with their employer. They cautioned by not understanding this trait, organizations could affect employee performance, job satisfaction, and commitment.

Job satisfaction was again emphasized by Ahmad and Ibrahim (2015). They argued job satisfaction is a predictor in employee commitment. Ahmad and Ibrahim argued everything linked together. According to Ahmad and Ibrahim, for commitment to be present, employees must be happy within their jobs, but for them to be happy within their jobs, Generation Y required leadership and support. Ahmad and Ibrahim claimed leaders must be able to adjust and adapt to the generation in its workforce. They reasoned Generation Y's biggest challenge is communication and it is the responsibility of leaders to teach them how to communicate in an organization properly.

Stein (2013) enhanced the research on Generation Y beginning by describing the downside to the generation called *Millennials*. Based on statistical data, Stein found this generation is more narcissistic, self-involved, and self-confident than any other generation in the past. Stein continued his comments to place blame on the generations before who during their era wanted to give their children things they believed they had not had. Further, Stein commented that as the largest generation and population compared to those before them, this generation has begun to create subcultures.

Along with Stein (2013), Debevec, Schewe, Madden and Diamond (2013) suggested Generation Y is not all encompassing. Previous research has encouraged the generalization of generations shared values. Stein (2013) argued Generation Y has created subcultures within their generation, referring to it as *microgenerations*. Debevec

et al. argued the older part of Generation Y faced significant events during their formidable years which the younger part of Generation Y did not experience. They argued this culminating point created a divide in the generation.

Debevec et al. (2013) conducted exploratory interviews to compare and contrast differences between Generation Y's college juniors and seniors. In their research, they discovered specific events such as the depression, 9/11, and the first African American president directly impacted their views and attitudes. On the other hand, the younger part of Generation Y was not as affected by these events because of their age at the time.

Generation Y, according to these researchers, is one generation because they were raised during the specific time for the generation, and there are similarities due to the majority of their parents being similar in age. In the span of Generation Y, significant events have altered the attitudes and mindsets of the young compared to the old. Stein (2013) postulated the Millennials are not a new breed. In fact, Stein argued this generation is a by-product of the Baby Boomers. Stein commented their learned habits of narcissism stem from the previous generation of Baby Boomers. Additionally, the Millennials have morphed into something larger and more intense but have not created anything new.

With a basic understanding of Generation Y, leaders will be better informed and equipped to aid, lead, and mentor Generation Y. Just as important as having a basic understanding of Generation Y is understanding the differences between leaders and subordinates. Generation X are the current senior leaders. Generation Y is working

toward replacing Generation X. To prepare their replacements, leadership needs to see and understand their replacements.

Characteristic comparison. Impacting the culture of the Marine Corps are the generations that coexist and are constantly bringing with them changing views and opinions. According to researchers, as the new generations enter the workforce, they bring with them different views, values, and knowledge. Friedrich (2016) commented that each generation is influenced by their different life experiences which influenced their work styles, goals, and job engagement. Stein (2013) argued Generation Y brings with them new challenges that impact, shape, and alter organizational culture.

Within the literature, there are some such as Johansen et al. (2013) and Johnson (2015) who concluded that Generation X and Generation Y are not significantly different. Other viewpoints from Hernaus and Polski Vokic (2014) and Bosco and Harvey (2013) claimed that the two generations are significantly different but shared some similar characteristics. One of the trends discussed is the technological dependency of Generation Y. There are arguments that much of Generation X also has developed into a technological dependent generation. The difference is Generation Y was born into it.

Although there is a great deal of research suggesting there is a serious gap between Generation X and Generation Y, there is yet another viewpoint which suggested the generations are not quite as different as others have implied. Campbell et al. (2015) argued that a generation is a fuzzy social constraint. Not all researchers agreed on the exact dates of the generational cohorts. However, Campbell et al. argued that generational labeling is an accepted societal norm. One aspect they maintained about

each generation was that the older generation influences the younger generations.

According to Campbell et al., Generation Y was influenced by the older Generation Xers and the youngest of the previous generation. Generation X was influenced by the two previous generations similarly.

Bosco and Harvey (2013) argued that in a multi-generational organization the different generations were excited and enthusiastic to work together. Lester et al. (2012) conducted research to identify perceived and actual differences between generations in the workforce. They also discovered Generation X and Generation Y did have similar character traits. One of their discoveries also led to the finding that some of the perceived differences were false, and in many cases, generations misinterpret each other.

The research conducted on Generation Y has primarily been qualitative or conceptual. Cumulatively, researchers continued to argue Generation Y's traits and character clash with military service. Lastly, researchers to include Devaney (2015) and Hinote and Sundvall (2015), argued that organizations are responsible for providing environments where multiple generations can succeed and thrive.

Comparing Generation X and Generation Y, Mhatre and Conger (2011) argued Generation Y's attitudes, opinions, values, and views create significant challenges within an organization. Specifically, Generation Y looks for immediate answers, whereas previous generations were willing to suffer through decisions without the knowledge until later.

Murray (2013) also found that Generation Y wants instant results. The purpose of Murray's evaluation of generational differences was to identify the strength of each

generation and how to apply them in an organization. Murray claimed that generational disagreements and conflicts could affect the organization's ability to conduct its business effectively. While describing Generation X, Murray argued that they are resourceful and look for competence in their co-workers and superiors. Murray found that Generation Y are expert multitaskers and constantly require some form of stimulation.

Based on Murray's (2013) observation of a multi-generational workforce, one practice that brought everyone together was communication. Murray argued that aggressive communication was the key to creating and keeping a multi-generational team together and engaged. The recommendations of aggressive communication included, in person, followed by e-mail, and posting on bulletin boards. Murray claimed that this approach appealed to all generations.

Johnson (2015) compared a multicultural workforce arguing that organizations need to understand their employees to shape the organization to fit the needs of everyone. In the comparison of Generation X and Generation Y, Johnson discovered similarities. Johnson found that both generations require flexibility. Generation X and Generation Y search for challenges in their workplace. The two generations also share the idea that organizations should be less rigid and have a more casual work environment.

While there were similarities found in Johnson's (2015) analysis of Generation X and Generation Y, there were also some differences. According to Johnson, Generation X demands a high level of independence. In contrast Generation Y searches for collaborative opportunities. However, although differences exist, Johnson cautioned that both generations search for recognition of their accomplishments.

Johansen et al. (2013) reasoned that the generations change to alter and match society's changes where individualism and self-interest are more important. Johansen et al. added the selfish drives that push these two generations directly degrade the collective ideology of any of the Armed Forces. They further argued neither Generation X nor Generation Y view military service as a lifestyle but view their service as a means to an end, such as employment.

Johansen et al. (2013) contended that military identity is expressed in terms of culture, attitudes, values, and motivation. Also, they equate military identity with social identity theory. The researchers argued social identification is an internalization of values and goals of an organization. According to Johansen et al., as both society and the Armed Forces change, military identity is likely to alter accordingly. According to Johansen et al., society has developed in a direction where the rise of individualism and self-interest is more important to individuals. They argued this behavior weakens the military forces and leadership. This behavior has weakened authority, values, and overall respect for both.

Johansen et al. (2013) argued individualism represents an opposition to authority. Generation Y is at odds with military service. They commented because this generation has developed a self-absorbed reflection of self, they neglect the foundations and institutional values of the military. They found their view of military service changed to become an occupation rather than a way of life.

Hernaus and Polski Vokic (2014) conducted cross-sectional and cross-occupational empirical research. Their sample consisted of 512 participants from

different generations. Among their sample were Generation X and Generation Y.

Hernaus and Poloski Vokic defined a generational cohort as a group who shared social and historical life events. Comparing and contrasting Generation X with Generation Y, they found Generation X to be pragmatic whereas Generation Y was optimistic. Similar to other researchers, Hernaus and Poloski Vokic identified individualistic, cynical, informal, and independent as key characteristics of Generation X. Generation Y they described as ambitious, confident, moral, and socially aware as key characteristics.

Krahn and Galambos (2014) reasoned that due to the limited labor market when Generation X was entering the workforce, they displayed high career expectation but were unable to truly fulfill their ideology. Also, Krahn and Galambos argued that Generation X are materialistically drawn and display an extrinsic work value. In contrast, they found that Generation Y displays an intrinsic work value. However common between both generations, Krahn and Galambos claimed that the two generations desire variety in their work that would also allow them to have a greater impact on their surroundings.

Reis and Braga (2015) conducted a survey with a population of 937 participants. The purpose of their research was to identify how employers can attract employees from different generations. According to Reis and Braga, Generation X displays characteristics of self-confidence and independence. Generation Y displays characteristics of flexibility and the need for fast promotions.

Reis and Braga's (2015) research resulted in the finding that new generations are a challenge to policies and practices when there are unknown facets. They also found that

each generation prioritized different elements in the workplace. Reis and Braga's results showed Generation X identified development value as a priority when choosing an organization; in contrast, Generation Y identified economic value as a higher priority.

Omana (2016) discovered a preference of communication similarity between Generation X and Generation Y. Generation X grew up with technology and Generation Y was born into technology creating a digital environment where both generations prefer human resources to conduct business through mobile devices. Additionally, Omana argued that both generations expect contact with mentors but do not necessarily require personal appearances. Both generations are satisfied with electronic communication.

There are some distinct differences Bosco and Harvey (2013) identified to include, differences in skills and attitudes. Lester et al. (2012) described Generation X as skeptical and cynical. In contrast, Generation Y is described as optimistic. Overall, a consensus of each of the generations was a multi-generational workforce brings beneficial aspects to an organization.

DeVaney (2015) defined Generation X and Generation Y similarly to other researchers. Similarly to Stein (2013), DeVaney argued even within Generation Y there are differences within the generation itself. DeVaney further argued that Generation Y are socially conscience. They involve themselves and their lives around organizations that drive social change and positively impact society.

In comparison to other generations, DeVaney (2015) argued Generation Y's mindset and attitudes collided with other generations. Generation Y's traits included entitlement, optimism, civic-minded, values work-life balance, impatient, and team-

oriented (p.13). The research argued Generation Y does not look for something they could fit into; rather, they look for something fitting them. This characteristic is also attributed to the generation's idea they should not have to work up a ladder but rather begin their careers at the top of the ladder.

DeVaney (2015) concluded that it is the responsibility of an organization to provide an environment where Generation Y can succeed. She argued organizations should provide avenues for Generation Y to contribute within the organization and an environment where they feel they are part of a team. Yi, Ribbens, Fu, and Cheng (2015) commented that Generation Y searches for opportunities in the workforce that they believe meet their potential.

Hinote and Sundvall (2015) agreed with DeVaney (2015), an organization is responsible for providing an environment where Generation Y can thrive. Their observation of Generation Y was based on the position as the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer of an Air Force unit. During their tenure, their observations led them to believe Generation Y's technological abilities enhanced the unit's capabilities.

Hinote and Sundvall (2015) argued Generation Y has already proven their dedication and commitment to their service. The Department of Defense is an all-volunteer armed services and Generation Y continues to accept the responsibility and service. They did contend Generation Y does have a lack of trust toward authority and institutions. Hinote and Sundvall suggested an organization is responsible for creating an environment where trust can be built and developed. To accomplish this, they argued

organizations must foster an environment where questions, ideas, and opinions are welcomed.

Ferguson and Morton-Huddleston (2016) conducted quantitative survey research on Generation Y's financial management professionals. The purpose of their research was to identify strategies to best recruit, retain, and develop Generation Y for advancement within organizations. They argued that grooming Generation Y was an essential need of organizations to prepare for the departure of the older generations. The population consisted of 77 participants who completed two surveys through a common online survey tool.

According to Ferguson and Morton-Huddleston (2016), Generation Y is the largest generation in the current workforce. They found in their results that Generation Y identified organizational culture as a key factor in their decision to work for or stay with an organization. In addition, Ferguson and Morton-Huddleston characterized Generation Y as natural team players which they attributed to their need for coaching, feedback, and recognition. Hoole and Bonnema (2015) also identified similar attributes associated with Generation Y.

Hoole and Bonnema (2015) conducted a cross-sectional quantitative study. The purpose of their research was to determine if a relationship existed between work engagement and meaningful work and what differences existed among the generational cohorts. Hoole and Bonnema defined a generational cohort as a group who share life stages and experiences during the same time frame. They described Generation X as independent and flexible and Generation Y as team players and multitaskers.

Khor and Mapunda (2014) maintained that the generations are different but change their ideas and perceptions over time. Khor and Mapunda conducted a phenomenological study with the purpose of identifying the organizational priorities as viewed from the generations. As Hoole and Bonnema (2015) commented, Khor and Mapunda found Generation X prefers independence in their work environment. In contrast, Khor and Mapunda said that Generation Y prefers guidance.

In their analysis of the differences between Generation X and Generation Y, Khor and Mapunda (2014) contended that Generation X seeks to accomplish the job through skill and knowledge of both people and practice. Alternately, Khor and Mapunda found that Generation Y is more focused on the collectivism and the social relationships among members of the organization to accomplish the tasks. They did not suggest that one approach was better or more successful than the other. However, what they did find was that as the generations enter the workforce, their perspectives and opinions gradually change to adapt to their organizational culture and experiences.

Al-Asfour and Lattau (2014) described generational cohorts similarly. They argued that the generations have distinct differences in their experiences which have impacted their values, attitudes, and beliefs. According to Al-Asfour and Lattau, Generation X's defining moments included the oil embargo, embassy hostages, and AIDs. They identified Generation Y's defining moments with terrorism and the Oklahoma City bombing.

Due to the significant differences, Al-Asfour and Lattau (2014) argued that leaders must be able to adapt to the defined groups' expectations in the workforce and

characteristics. The characteristics of Generation X included diversity, techno-literacy, an expectation of fun, and an informal environment. Al-Asfour and Lattau commented that Generation X prefers leaders who were fair, competent, and straightforward. Generation X has little respect for authority and prefers a democratic relationship. In contrast, Generation Y's characteristics included optimism, confidence, and a focus on achievement. Al-Asfour and Lattau commented that Generation Y prefers a polite relationship with authority. Generation Y prefers team-work and prefers leaders who pull people together to complete a task collectively.

Bourne (2015) identified similar traits of Generation X and Generation Y. Through a phenomenological study, Bourne stated Generation X prefers a more informal atmosphere in comparison to Generation Y. Generation Y resembles older generations in that they displayed more respect for rules and authority. Additionally, Bourne described Generation X as skeptical and self-reliant. Whereby, in contrast, Bourne described Generation Y as optimistic and team oriented. However, one similarity discovered in this study was that both generations agree that communication is a necessity to success in an organization.

Lyons, Schweitzer, and Ng (2015) also discovered similarities among the generations. The purpose of the study was to identify career mobility across multiple generations. According to Lyons et al. the generations were not significantly unique. They argued that generational differences display progression in changing economies and society rather than distinctly different behaviors. Lyons et al. conducted a quantitative study comparing four generations to include Generation X and Generation Y. The

population consisted of 2,555 participants. Of significance, Lyons et al argued that Generation X and Generation Y in comparison to the older generations have twice as many employers. They attributed this to Generation X being brought up during economic difficulties, and Generation Y's focus on forward mobility and economic changes.

Messarra et al. (2016) observed that Generation X and Generation Y have significant differences separating them. Generation X, according to Messarra et al., was the first generation to be impacted by dramatic changes in technology. In contrast, they argued Generation Y were born into technology and have always had it. The dramatic changes in the workforce due to technology were only small examples of the dramatic changes during Generation X's upbringing. They argued Generation X developed a high level of skepticism and independence due not only to the drastic changes in technology but also due to economic climbs and falls, inflation, and terrorist activity.

In contrast to Generation X, Generation Y is described significantly differently. Wiedmer (2015) argued in favor of Generations Y's need for mentoring and coexistence with society. Messarra et al. (2016) also identified Generation Y's need for team oriented processes, decision making, and everyday involvement. While not specifically referring to military obligation or enlistments, they identified Generation Y's dislike and avoidance of hierarchically structured companies.

Commitment. De Silva et al. (2015), Yogamalar and Samuel (2016), and Carver, Candela, and Gutierrez (2011) found that organizational commitment comprised several factors that influence generational commitment and cultural acceptance. Mohsen (2016) and Nelson (2012) also found that generational commitment was based on organizational

cultures. The researchers all agreed that work values varied between Generation X and Generation Y which was incumbent on managers and leaders to recognize and understand.

De Silva et al. (2015) conducted a cross-sectional survey of 10,540 participants across 394 organizations. The purpose of their research was to assess generational perceptions of their work environment and the influences their perceptions had on organizational commitment. De Silva et al. defined commitment as a willingness to give energy and loyalty to a system such as an organization. De Silva et al. claimed that a favorable work environment influenced commitment in an organization.

According to De Silva et al. (2015), commitment has two measurements: instrumental commitment and normative commitment. Instrumental commitment De Silva et al. maintained was the relationship between the member and the organization. They defined normative commitment as socialization and work experience. According to De Silva et al., there was little significant difference across the generations that suggested one generation held work performed in the organization higher. The only difference seen in the results were that Generation Y had a higher value for skill development and career growth.

According to De Silva et al. (2015), Generation Y had slightly different results in their expectation and desire for leadership involvement. According to De Silva et al., the results of their research did show that Generation Y and Generation X expressed slightly different results regarding commitment. Argued by Yogamalar and Samuel (2016) as

well, De Silva et al. maintained that Generation Y placed importance on a work-life balance whereas Generation X placed importance on the meaning of their work.

According to Yogamalar and Samuel (2016), there are significant differences between the generations. They found that by not acknowledging the differences between generations, organizations face intergenerational conflict and a lack of organizational citizenship. According to Yogamalar and Samuel, the perception towards the organization influenced the commitment toward the organization. They argued that the values of an organization directly impact how the generation felt toward the organization. Generation Y gave more value to status compared to Generation X. Generation X found more value in job involvement.

Carver et al. (2011) conducted a cross-sectional survey to determine generational difference in organizational commitment. The sample consisted of 4886 teachers and employees with a 30% response rate. Carver et al. did find significant differences between the generations' conditions that increased or decreased their commitment levels. Generation X looks for opportunities to learn new skills. According to Carver et al., this leads to the generation's continued commitment. Across all generations, they found that trust in supervisors and managers contribute significantly to commitment.

According to Mohsen (2016), organizational commitment correlated with organizational culture. Mohsen conducted a case study to investigate the relationship between generational preferences and characteristics with organizational commitment. Using a three prong model of commitment, Mohsen argued that *Affective Organizational Commitment* is the relationship between the employee and employer's satisfaction in

their job. *Continuance Organizational Commitment* they defined as the relationship of the employee to the organization. Finally, Mohsen defined *Normative Organizational Commitment* as the relationship between the organization and employee based on ethical standards.

Mohsen's (2016) results showed that Generation X has a higher level of *Affective Organizational Commitment* compared to Generation Y. This indicates that Generation X displays concerns about their impact if they departed the organization. In contrast, Generation Y is not concerned about their impact if they departed the organization. Finally, the scores in *Normative Organizational Culture* indicated that this is important to both Generation Y and Generation X. The overall conclusion found that Generation X is more committed to an organization than Generation Y.

Nelson (2012) conducted a quantitative cross-sectional survey to determine affective commitment based on generational cohorts. 1,005 surveys were distributed resulting in 550 useable surveys equating to a response rate of 54.7 percent. Nelson defined affective commitment as a psychological link between an employee and the organization. This definition implied that an employee would be less likely to leave an organization voluntarily.

Nelson (2012) found that there were significant differences between Generation X's and Generation Y's beliefs in affective commitment. Generation X displays a higher satisfaction with their subordinate-leader relationships than did Generation Y. However, both generations identified a high level of work-family conflicts. According to Nelson and Festing and Schafer (2014), organizations would benefit by investing additional

resources into better developing leaders and strengthening their subordinate-leader relationships.

Festing and Schafer (2014) reasoned that generational effects on talent management are crucial for retaining Generation X and Generation Y. In a conceptual examination of talent management, Festing and Schafer defined talent management as a subunit of human resources. They argued that talent management is the ability of an organization to employ, train, and retain qualified individuals. To create an environment where organizations limit employee turnover, Festing and Schafer maintained that the organizations must emphasize a corporate culture that communicates with their talent base. Generation Y expects a higher level of career development. Generation X expects independence. According to Festing and Schafer, both generations expect a work-life balance.

Mencl and Lester (2014) conducted research using TCM to determine the differences between workplace characteristics from a generational view. The total final sample included 505 participants, 88 categorized as Generation Y and 144 categorized as Generation X. The remaining participants were categorized in the older generation. Their results showed similarities between the generations identifying work factors that were important.

However, although similarities existed, the results did reflect some differences between Generation X and Generation Y. The differences included career advancement opportunities, diversity climate, and immediate recognition and feedback. According to Mencl and Lester (2014), Generation Y values career progression opportunities and

immediate feedback over Generation X. Generation X is more concerned with the moderating effects toward career progression. Mencil and Lester maintained that Generation X's concerns focus on the perception rather than the immediate gratification or actual actions.

Lub, Bla, Blomme, and Schalk (2016) claimed that generations would display different levels of affective commitment based on their work attitudes. They hypothesized that Generation Y's job content, career development, and rewards fulfillment obligations would be a stronger predictor of work outcomes. Lub et al. argued that these predictors align with Generation Y's characteristics of high self-esteem and a sense of entitlement. Alternatively, Lub et al. claimed that Generation X's predictors for work outcomes were social atmosphere and organizational policy obligations. These results align with Generation X's experience in job insecurity and their preference of fair treatment and clarity of work.

Farr-Wharton, Brunetto, and Shacklock (2012) conducted survey research on employee affective commitment based on supervisor-subordinate relationships. They argued that when there is a satisfactory relationship nurses are more confident and self-assured to use intuition when making decisions about patients. Farr-Wharton et al., found that the use of intuition is important to Generation X more than it is to Generation Y. This self-confidence also relates to the nurses' empowerment which the researchers directly correlated to employee turnover and affective commitment. Farr-Wharton et al. maintained that affective commitment of Generation Y is heavily reliant on the relationship between the supervisors and subordinate.

Mencel and Lester (2014) argued that generational commitment or loyalty were not as significant as other researchers have argued. Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, and Gade (2012) similarly argued that generational differences in organizational commitment were not as significant as has been previously discussed. Through a survey design, the researchers evaluated the difference in organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Costanza et al.'s sample contained 19,971 participants.

Costanza et al. (2012) maintained in their results that the variances displayed should be explained by alternative measures beyond age and generation assignment. They argued that although differences did exist in the level of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, they were too small to conclude that generational cohorts had any impact.

After a review of the literature, what remains unknown is the impacts on culture in the Marine Corps as a result of the level of commitment and cultural acceptance of Generation Y compared to Generation X. The literature argued Generation Y is unable to serve in the military. However, the majority of Marines currently serving are categorized in Generation Y and have successfully served over the past 10 years. There is a gap in scholarly research, knowledge, and understanding about the level of commitment and cultural acceptance of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines.

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 2 consisted of a review of the foundational theories of the study to include organizational culture theory and the theory of generations. The second part of

the chapter included an in-depth literature review encompassing the Department of Defense and Marine Corps' culture, and Generation X and Generation Y.

There was limited literature directly related to Marine Corps culture. Some of the literature discussed the Department of Defense and assisted in providing some foundational aspects of the Marine Corps' culture. The Marine Corps' culture is structured and inundated with tradition, history, and complexity. Understanding the expectation of the culture leads to a clearer outlook of the culture and expectations of its members. Understanding the culture does not necessarily provide a definitive understanding about all the members. To understand the Marines, we must first understand how they were raised and what they were raised to believe.

This led to the examination of Generation Y. With a better understanding of how Generation Y was raised and what they were raised to believe, organizations can envelop them into their culture with approaches best fitting their generational needs. Further, while some literature suggested Generation Y's characteristics and traits opposed military service, other arguments suggested this to be a fallacy. Lastly, some researchers have argued outright, while others have subtly suggested the existence of a divide within Generation Y that has not existed previous generations.

What remains unknown is the impact and differences Generation Y has on leadership, culture, and discipline within the Marine Corps. The literature provided a foundational idea of how Generation Y behaves and thinks. The literature does not provide distinct actions Generation Y has taken while serving in the Marine Corps and how those actions or ideas impact the culture, leadership, and discipline.

Chapter 3 describes and justifies the planned methodology. This chapter provides the design, strengths, and limitations of the methodology and data collection instruments. Additionally, Chapter 3 identifies the rationale of the design, sampling procedures, and data analysis plan. Further Chapter 3 provides ethical considerations, researcher's role, and participant protection.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. In this study, I compared and contrasted the opinions and experiences of active duty, enlisted Marines in the pay grades of E1 through E9, categorized according to Generation X and Generation Y. The research goal was to close the gap in the scholarly research, highlighting the contrast between Generation X and Generation Y, and explaining what, if any, influences Generation Y has had on Marine Corps culture.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed overview of how the research was planned to be conducted. In the following sections the research design and rationale, methodology, population, sample, instrumentation, data collection, analysis, and ethical consideration are explained. The theoretical foundation of this study was organizational culture theory and the theory of generations.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study, I investigated and compared the commitment levels of active duty, enlisted Marines assigned to 1st MLG. The independent variable was generation, categorized into Generation X and Generation Y. The dependent variables for the research question were three measures of commitment: *AC*, *NC*, and *CC*.

There are different approaches that could have been used for this research to include, qualitative interviews and focus groups. However, because there was limited information on Marine Corps culture and Marines' commitment, I wanted to establish a

baseline to determine if there were differences between the generations. The appropriate approach for my research was a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. According to Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, and DeWaard (2015), cross-sectional designs are focused on the collection of data that already exists, such as a person's experience, history, or opinion. Cross-sectional designs allow for a random sample to be drawn that describe a pattern. The purpose of this nonexperimental study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. The categorization of these generations was based on their age.

Among other researchers identified in the literature review, Berkemeyer et al. (2015) and Brettel et al. (2015) conducted survey-based research to identify different aspects of employee relations toward the organizational culture. Carver et al. (2011), Nelson (2012), and Lub et al. (2016) conducted cross-sectional surveys to identify generational commitment issues within their identified populations and organizations.

The gap in the literature identified in Chapter 2 suggested the need for further examination into how Generation Y responds to an organizational climate such as the Marine Corps. The anonymous survey allowed participants to answer questions without fear of retribution. The survey also allowed multiple Marines to be reached simultaneously even if they were not currently at their home station. Marines are constantly training, deployed, or engaged in various activities that may prevent them from participating in a research project conducted by an alternate approach, such as interviews or focus groups. My chosen design was intended to encourage participation

because it was at their leisure, rather than the necessity to conduct an interview at a specific time and place.

Lastly, a letter of approval was awarded by the Commanding General contingent upon IRB approval. The implication was once I had IRB approval, I would be required to liaison with the Commanding General of 1st MLG in order to gain approval to begin my research.

Methodology

Part of the importance of providing the methodology is to enable other researchers the ability to repeat research or conduct similar research in the future. The methodology described in the following section details how I identified my population and sample. I explain how I intended to recruit and collect the data required for my research. There was no pilot test because I used an already established research instrument. Additionally, no archival data was used during my research.

Population

According to United States Marine Corps (2016) and as depicted in Figure 2, Generation X makes up 7% of the total population of enlisted Marines in the Marine Corps. Generation Y makes up 93% of the total population of enlisted Marines in the Marine Corps. Based on the assumption that the overall Marine Corps population is applicable to the subordinate units, of the 15,000 enlisted Marines in 1st MLG, would be expected to include 1,050 Marines born into Generation X and 13,950 Marines born into Generation Y.

The sample frame included active duty, enlisted Marines, within the pay grades of E-1 through E-9, assigned to one primary organization, 1st MLG, and six regiments or standalone battalions that are subordinate organizations within 1st MLG. The organizational structure is depicted in Figure 3. I planned to obtain a roster of the unit's Marines from the point of contact provided by the Commanding General's staff. No Marines were contacted to participate in my research until I received approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

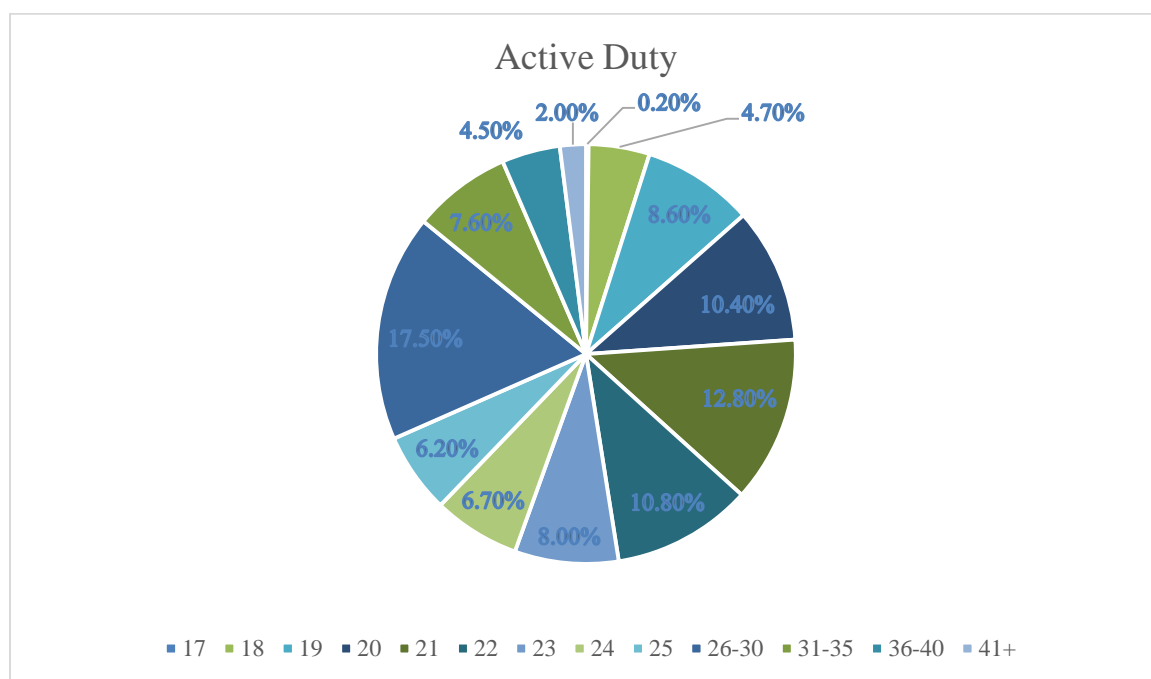


Figure 2. Age breakdown of enlisted Marines. Adapted from Concepts and Programs Almanac, In *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs*, 2014, Retrieved October 4, 2018, from <https://mcconceptsandprograms.com/almanac/active-duty-enlisted/age-distribution>. Copyright 2014 by U. S. Marine Corps.

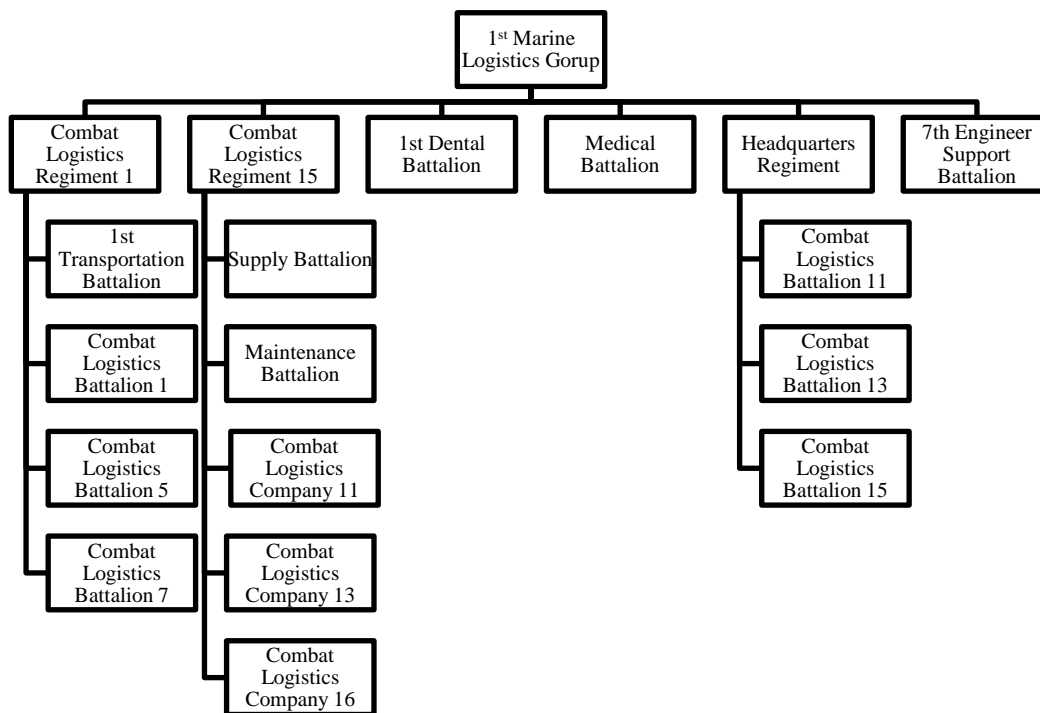


Figure 3. 1st MLG organizational chart. Created by the author based on information on <https://www.1stmlg.marines.mil/>

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The sampling strategy I used was a simple random sampling design. The samples that were to be drawn were an equal number from each generation. According to Frankfort-Nachmias et al. (2015), simple random sampling assigns an equal probability in being selected. According to Rea and Parker (2014), a simple random sample allows for a sampling unit to be selected that does not favor any type of pattern.

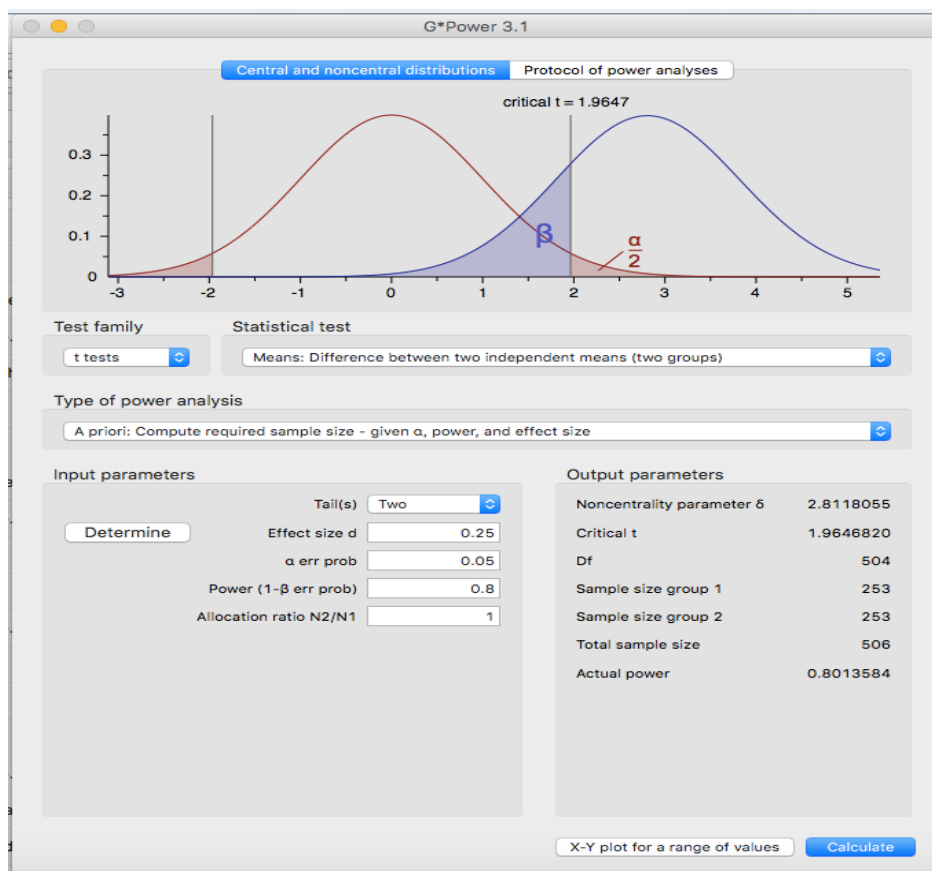


Figure 4. The G*Power analysis calculated the sample size. Adapted from “G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences,” by F. Faul, E. Erdfelder, A. Buchner, and A.G. Lang, 2007, *Behavior Research Methods*, 39(2), p. 175-191.

I used the G*Power program to calculate the minimum sample size. Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, and Buchner (2007) argued that the G*Power calculator was created for statistical tests commonly used in social science (p. 175). Faul et al. (2009) argued that the defaults embedded in the G*Power calculator are based on Cohen’s statistical analysis of effect size, error probability, and power. Field (2013) argued that a .05 level

of significance ($1 - \alpha$) is standard practice. Additionally, Field recommended a power ($1 - \beta$) of .8 and an effect size of .25.

Based on these recommendations, a .05 level of significance ($1 - \alpha$), .8 ($1 - \beta$) power, and an effect size of .25 were used. The G*Power analysis was conducted using the *t* test family. As depicted in Figure 4, the minimum sample size was 506, evenly distributed between the two groups (Generations X and Y).

Guo, Kopec, Cibere, Li, and Goldsmith (2016) conducted a comparison of survey approaches to determine an average response rate. They determined that an internet-based survey with no incentive received approximately a 17% response rate. To compensate for the potential non-responses, the survey would need to reach at least 2,977 potential participants.

Lastly, to analyze the impact of demographic factors on the dependent variables, a MLR analysis was planned. This test facilitates identifying factors that impact the level of commitment of both generations, specifically of those who may be on the cusp of both generations.

Procedures for Recruitment

Upon receipt of approval from the IRB and the Commanding General of 1st MLG, an electronic link invited participants to take the survey. Coordination was made via e-mail through the survey division at Headquarters Marine Corps. Each valid e-mail was sent a consent form with the invitation and link for the survey.

In the event of a low response rate, especially among Generation X Marines, I planned to extend the survey an additional 30 days to allow additional participation.

However, in the event the extension did not solicit enough participation to meet the minimum sample size (253 per group), or to have equal numbers in the two groups, I planned to conduct a *t* test with disproportionate samples. According to Rea and Parker (2014), the *t* test is capable of testing either a disproportionate sample or a proportionate sample.

Procedures for Participation

Informed consent was delivered via three methods. The first of which was through the chain of command. I provided the Commanding General with a detailed explanation of the intent, purpose, and proposed problem for them to have the ability to inform their units properly. The second approach was through an e-mail to the individual participants. The final approach was through the link provided in their e-mails via the website. The participants had the option to agree with the consent or disagree with the consent. If they disagreed with the consent then they were routed to a page that would thank them for their time and need only to close their browser. If they agreed with the consent, they were taken to the first question. The survey was planned to take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Procedures for Data Collection

I planned to collect my data via the internet host SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey provides the ability to export reports and data in various formats that would enable importing of the survey results into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SurveyMonkey provides control measures to ensure duplicate answers and/or duplicate participation does not occur. The Internet host also allows researchers to disseminate a

link via email that connects the activity of the recipient and allows only one entrance into the survey. This control measure required me to provide detailed instructions to ensure participants understood they had only one opportunity to participate in the study.

At the end of the survey, on the last question, the participants were to be directed to a final page reassuring them the survey was anonymous and no attribution would occur from their responses. The final page thanked them for their participation and their service in the United States Marine Corps. Once they were led to this page, they only needed to close their browser to exit. There were no follow-up procedures as the survey was anonymous and there was no way of identifying any of the participants.

Instrumentation

Meyer et al. (2013) argued commitment can be defined by three primary components: desire, obligation, and cost. To inform the dependent variable, I used the TCM survey. Meyer et al. argued TCM allows the examination of the level of commitment within their target population and branch of service. They commented that commitment is a psychological state or mindset. The survey used a 7-point Likert scale of response ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The results of the survey were used to determine the differences between Generation X and Generation Y Marines' level of commitment and acceptance of the organizational culture.

Permission from the developer to use TCM was awarded. The permission was granted based on academic use and specifies TCM cannot be used commercially without additional permission. The academic package identified specific criteria that cannot be changed to ensure the survey maintains validity and reliability. However, it did provide

instructions on what items should and could be changed. One of the recommendations was to alter the words *organization* to reflect a specific organization to provide clarification to participants. In my survey I altered the word *organization* to reflect *Marine Corps*.

TCM is grouped into three sections, directly related to three dependent variables (*AC*, *CC*, and *NC*), with six questions scored 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) under each section.

The first section of the survey is composed of questions directed toward determining *AC*. Responses to this section represented one component of the level of commitment of Generation X and Generation Y. The questions listed below directly relate to the culture of the Marine Corps as described in the Chapter 2 literature review.

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the Marine Corps.
2. I really feel as if the Marine Corps' problems are my own.
3. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to the Marine Corps.
4. I do not feel like 'part of the family' in the Marine Corps.
5. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to the Marine Corps.
6. The Marine Corps has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

The second section of the survey is composed of questions directed toward determining *CC*. Responses to this section represented one component of the level of commitment of Generation X and Generation Y. The questions below directly relate to how the generations view their obligation of service as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2.

1. Right now, staying with the Marine Corps is a matter of necessity as much as desire.

2. It would be very hard for me to leave the Marine Corps right now, even if I wanted to.

3. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave the Marine Corps now.

4. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving the Marine Corps.

5. If I had not already put so much of myself into the Marine Corps, I might consider working elsewhere.

6. One of the few negative consequences of leaving the Marine Corps would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

The final section is composed of questions directed toward determining *NC*. Responses to this section represented a component of the level of commitment of Generation X and Generation Y. The questions below directly relate to how the generations view their obligation of service as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2.

1. I do not feel any obligation to remain with the Marine Corps.

2. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave the Marine Corps now.

3. I would feel guilty if I left the Marine Corps now.

4. The Marine Corps deserves my loyalty.

5. I would not leave the Marine Corps right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.

6. I owe a great deal to the Marine Corps.

Data Analysis Plan

A data analysis plan provides a detailed process that would enable other researchers to conduct similar research in the future. The data analysis plan provides a detailed explanation of how my data was cleaned, screened, analyzed, and used to answer the research questions. Chapter 4 provides the graphical analysis and descriptive statistics for data obtained from the survey. Multiple steps were taken to ensure information was complete and accurate. Figure 5 is a graphical display of the data analysis plan.



Figure 5. Data analysis plan.

Data Cleaning and Screening

According to Mauthner and Gardos (2015), the purpose of data cleaning and screening procedures is to make every value meaningful, intelligible, and useful (p. 163). Meyer and Allen (2004) cautioned that screening for missing information is imperative in the validation of collected data. Meyer and Allen argued that in cases where there are missing answers in the survey, the researcher should consider removing the individual's

responses from the sample. The distributed survey required participants to answer every question in an attempt to avoid the possibility of missing data.

Further, I used SPSS to assist in detecting any significant deviations or extreme cases. According to Rea and Parker (2014), SPSS provides researchers the ability to conduct a robust analysis of their data. This software package was chosen for its ability to assist in planning, data collection, analysis, reporting, and deployment of the analytical process.

Demographics Variables

To determine the demographics of the sample, the beginning of the survey asked basic questions about age, gender, pay grade, and armed forces active duty base date. Demographics are analyzed with graphical analysis and descriptive statistics in Chapter 4.

Study Variables

The variables of this study included one independent variable, categorized into Generation X and Generation Y; and three dependent variables, which were measures of commitment *AC*, *CC*, and *NC*.

The responses from each section of the survey were averaged to inform the dependent variables. If under the section, *AC*, Participant 1 answers the six questions with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and participant 2 answers the questions with 5, 5, 6, 6, 5, and 6, the result would be an average of 3.5 (slightly disagree) and 5.5 (slightly agree), respectively.

If evidence from the hypothesis test indicated that the average population score for *AC* for Generation Y was lower than 4 (where a value of 4 is the midpoint in the

Likert scale), a conclusion that could be drawn is that the generation has a low level of commitment. In contrast, if evidence from the hypothesis test indicated that the average population score for *AC* for Generation Y was greater than 4, a conclusion that could be drawn is that the generation has a high level of commitment. Similar conclusions could be drawn for other measures of commitment.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The analysis of data was focused on testing the following hypotheses while answering the associated research question:

Is there a commitment difference between active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines and active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines?

H1₀: Average level of *CC* of Generation X = 4.

H1_a: Average level of *CC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H2₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation X = 4.

H2_a: Average level of *NC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H3₀: Average level of *AC* of Generation X = 4.

H3_a: Average level of *AC* of Generation X \neq 4.

H4₀: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y = 4.

H4_a: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H5₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y = 4.

H5_a: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H6₀: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y = 4.

H6_a: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

H7₀: Average level of *CC* of both generations = 4.

H7_a: Average level of *CC* of both generations \neq 4.

H8₀: Average level of *NC* of both generations = 4.

H8_a: Average level of *NC* of both generations \neq 4.

H9₀: Average level of *AC* of both generations = 4.

H9_a: Average level of *AC* of both generations \neq 4.

H10₀: There is no difference in the level of *CC* between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H10_a: The level of *CC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H11₀: There is no difference in the level of *NC* between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H11_a: The level of *NC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H12₀: There is no difference in the level of *AC* between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

H12_a: The level of *AC* varies between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

Statistical Tests

I conducted three separate statistical tests in this study: a chi-square test, *t* test, and MLR. The chi-square test was used to indicate if the sample represented the

population by pay grade, gender, and age. The chi-square test was used to determine if the sample was representative of the overall population in the Marine Corps.

According to Field (2013), the *t* test is used when a researcher desires to examine the difference between variable means. An independent *t* test was used to evaluate the difference in mean level of commitment from a neutral score (4) and between the two groups. According to Rea and Parker (2014), the independent sample *t* test is used when the dependent variable is on the interval scale and the independent variable consists of only two categories. Each of the hypotheses were tested using the *t* test of means.

I used MLR to identify the relationship of the dependent variables to multiple independent variables, including demographics. The purpose of the analysis was to discover whether the relationship between the set of demographics and if they influenced the dependent variables.

Threats to Validity

When conducting research, it is imperative to ensure that the conduct of the project is ethical, valid, and reliable. Researchers are required to identify threats that could impact their research. This includes threats to external validity, internal validity, construct validity, and ethical procedures. In addition, identification of mitigation techniques assists researchers in ensuring their research does not fall victim to those threats.

External Validity

External validity refers to the generalizability of a treatment or condition and the effects on the outcome. The threats to external validity included reactions to prior testing

or experiments that can affect bias and responses. There are limited threats to external validity in survey research. In my research the participants have never had exposure to the survey and were only asked to complete the survey once.

Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to the treatment impacting a participant and providing the proof to support the claim. There are several threats to internal validity but only a few would directly impact survey research. The threats to internal validity include instrumentation, statistical regression, and selection of subjects. To mitigate threats to internal validity there are several steps to ensure anonymity. Instrumentation was mitigated by the use of an already established, validated, and reliable survey. Rea and Parker (2014) argued surveys that are too long will cause participants to lose interest or not participate. The TCM survey has been used during a number of research projects and has proven to be effective in length and time.

The second and third threats to internal validity are statistical regression and selection of subjects. The threat of statistical regression refers to the possibility of participants being selected based on their extreme responses. The threat of selection of bias is based on the bias of choosing specific groups to compare others to. By ensuring randomization was used in the selection of participants, both of these threats were mitigated.

Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to an instrument's ability to measure the concept being tested. To test the proposed hypotheses, the survey was adapted from the TCM;

Multidimensionality of Military Commitment. According to Meyer et al. (2013), Meyer and Allen developed TCM in 1991, to develop a commitment profile of employees within organizations. They argued commitment can be defined by three primary components: desire, obligation, and cost. Meyer et al. argued TCM allowed the examination of the level of commitment within their target population and branch of service. They commented commitment is a psychological state or mindset.

Ethical Procedures

Prior to conducting any research I obtained IRB (Approval 08-15-17-0342315) and Headquarters Marine Corps approval. Only the participants authorized by the Commanding General, Headquarters Marine Corps, and Walden University's IRB were contacted once permission was granted. The manner in which participants were contacted was based on the permission from the review boards and the Commanding General. I ensured participants rights and confidentiality was covered and safeguarded.

The Commanding General granting provisional permission to conduct my survey research. Additionally, I received certification with Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program) certifying the completion of the Department of the Navy's Basic Course in Human Research and Responsible Conduct of Research which was required by Headquarters Marine Corps to conduct any human research.

Data that were collected are being stored electronically on a password protected file on my personal computer. The only individuals who have access to the data are me, my chair, and Headquarters Marine Corps if the need should arise.

To ensure no bias was present, I took steps to avoid personal influence on the survey process. I am an active duty Sergeant Major (E9). I have previously served in 1st MLG command in which I requested to conduct my research survey. However, I am no longer stationed with this command nor am I in a position to influence participation or results. As of December 2016, I was moved from this command and have no direct or indirect involvement with the Marines who are assigned to 1st MLG.

Summary

Included in Chapter 3 is information about the research methods I intended to use throughout this study. In this chapter, I established the purpose of the study, which was to examine the impacts on Marine Corps culture as a result of the commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. This study's theoretical foundation was based on Schein's, Heskett's, and Kotter's theories of organizational culture, and Mannheim's theory of generations. Chapter 3 provided a description of the dependent variables and independent variables. Additionally, Chapter 3 identified the population, sampling procedures, recruitment, participation procedures, data collection, and instrumentation as it relates to the methodology. Lastly, Chapter 3 provided details of the threats to validity and ethical procedures.

Chapter 4 provides the statistical results of this research. It describes the differences in data collection, the actual time frame, and the recruitment and response rates. Chapter 4 also provides demographics of the sample and the statistical significance of each test conducted.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. I compared and contrasted the opinions and experiences of active duty, enlisted Marines in the pay grades E1 through E9, categorizing them into Generation X and Generation Y. This research was intended to close the gap in the scholarly research.

In this chapter, I describe the data collection procedures, present and clarify any discrepancies from the planned data collection procedures, and report baseline descriptive and demographic characteristics of the sample. Additionally, in this chapter are the descriptive statistics of the study, the statistical assumptions that affected the study and various tables and figures that illustrate the findings from the statistical analysis of the data.

Data Collection

In this section, I provide the time frame and discrepancies for data collection, the recruitment and response rate, and the demographics and representation of the population. This section shows the significant differences between my planned research and how the research was actually conducted.

Discrepancies in Data Collection

There were a few differences between the planned data collection and the actual data collection. The discrepancies included the tool used to collect responses, the number

of potential respondents contacted, my communication approach, and how participants were selected.

The liaison at Headquarters Marine Corps Survey Division, informed me that SurveyMonkey was no longer an allowed instrument when surveying Marines. However, MAX.gov was provided as an alternative and identified during IRB review. With the assistance of the Survey Division, I was given an account and created the survey for distribution. MAX.gov provided the same safeguards and advantages that SurveyMonkey provided.

A second discrepancy was the number of Marines I was able to reach. Of the total Marines within 1st MLG, only 2894 Marines had active emails. In addition, none of the commanders were contacted, who may have ensured more Marines took the survey because the IRB did not approve this step. This ultimately resulted in a 9.12% response rate, almost 8% lower than originally forecasted by the literature.

Finally, due to the low response rate, I obtained a disproportionate sample (with a sample size of 200 and 64 for the two groups respectively), which was smaller than the minimum sample size originally calculated. As planned, I proceeded to use the *t* test and MLR.

Time Frame for Data Collection

Initially, the data collection period was scheduled for 30 days. However, after the initial 30 days I only had 42% of the total sample needed. A reminder was delivered electronically at the 15-day marks in between each of the 30-day periods, all of which was outlined in the IRB application and approved. I extended the data collection period

from September 13, 2017 through October 13, 2017, to November 13, 2017, to sample enough participants.

Recruitment and Response Rate

There was a sampling frame of 2,894 individuals for this study. Headquarters Marine Corps Survey Division identified the list of potential participants from their system. In accordance with the study design, I categorized each Marine into one of two categories, Generation X or Generation Y, based on their age. No Marines were contacted or recruited prior to receiving IRB approval from Walden University and Headquarters Marine Corps IRB.

I provided Headquarters Marine Corps Survey division with the approved informed consent in the body of an e-mail from Walden University's IRB. 2,894 potential participants received the email invitation on the day of the launch. During the initial launch of the survey, I received 215 responses, which was 7.42% of the population. A reminder email was sent to participants at the 15-day mark which yielded an additional 75 participants, for a total of 290, or 10.02% of the population. I decided to extend the survey an additional 30 days. The extension was emailed out to the potential participants with the 15-day reminder which resulted in an additional 2 participants, for a total of 292.

Overall the survey resulted in 292 responses with 28 incomplete surveys. I ended with a total of 264 completed surveys, resulting in a 9.12% response rate. The average time it took a participant to complete the survey was 5 minutes and 21 seconds. The fastest time recorded was 1 minute and 27 seconds. The slowest time recorded was 50 minutes and 46 seconds.

Demographics of the Sample

The total sample yielded a response from Generation Y of $n = 200$, 75.76% and a response from Generation X of $n = 64$, 24.24% of the total sample. The survey requested four sets of demographic information to include age, gender, pay grade, and armed forces active duty base date. Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample. The percentage of Marines in each demographic category were obtained from Headquarters Marine Corps (2015).

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	Survey %	USMC %
Age			
Gen X	64	24.24	7.00 ^a
Gen Y	200	75.76	93.00 ^a
Gender			
Female	53	20.23	7.65 ^b
Male	211	79.92	92.35 ^b
Pay Grade			
E1	0	0.00	5.94 ^c
E2	2	0.76	11.17 ^c
E3	28	10.61	26.49 ^c
E4	59	22.35	23.19 ^c
E5	51	19.32	16.25 ^c
E6	35	13.26	8.74 ^c
E7	48	18.18	4.96 ^c
E8	24	9.09	2.33 ^c
E9	17	6.44	.95 ^c

Note. $n = 264$. There were zero E1 participants.

a. The data for Gen X and Gen Y USMC % are adapted from “Active duty enlisted age distribution,” by United States Marine Corps, 2014, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*,

retrieved from <https://mcconceptsandprograms.com/almanac/active-duty-enlisted/age-distribution>

b. The data for female and male USMC % are adapted from “Active duty enlisted gender distribution,” by United States Marine Corps, 2016, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*, retrieved from <https://marinecorpsconceptsandprograms.com/almanacs/active-duty-enlisted/gender-distribution>

c. The data for pay grade USMC % are adapted from “Active duty enlisted grade distribution,” by United States Marine Corps, 2015, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*, retrieved from <https://mcconceptsandprograms.com/almanac/active-duty-enlisted/age-distribution>

Representation of Population

A chi-square goodness of fit test was conducted to identify whether the sample was representative of the population based on pay grade, gender, and age. The first chi-square was conducted with 8 degrees of freedom to compare the Marine Corps’ frequencies by pay grade to those who participated in the survey. The null hypothesis was that there is no difference in frequencies between the sample and the population. Based on the test results, displayed in Table 3, chi-square = 302.803, $p = .0001$ ($p < .05$). As a result, I rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was a discrepancy between the observed and expected frequencies.

Table 3

Chi-Square Frequencies by Pay Grade

Pay Grade	Observed <i>n</i>	Expected <i>n</i>	Residual
E1	0	15.68	-15.68
E2	2	29.48	-27.48
E3	28	69.93	-41.93
E4	59	61.22	-2.22
E5	51	42.90	8.10
E6	35	23.07	11.03
E7	48	13.09	34.91
E8	24	6.15	17.85
E9	17	2.50	14.50
Total	264		

Note. The expected *n* data for pay grade is adapted from “Active duty enlisted grade distribution,” by United States Marine Corps, 2015, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*, retrieved from <https://mcconceptsandprograms.com/almanac/active-duty-enlisted/age-distribution>

I conducted a chi-square test with 1 degree of freedom to compare the Marine Corps’ frequencies by gender to those who participated in the survey. Based on the test results, displayed in Table 4, chi-square = 57.697, $p = .000$ ($p < .05$). I rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that there is a discrepancy between the observed and expected frequencies.

Table 4

Chi-Square Frequencies of Gender

	Observed <i>n</i>	Expected <i>n</i>	Residual
Male	211	243.8	-32.8
Female	53	20.2	32.8
Total	264		

Note. Expected *n* percentages is adapted from “Active duty enlisted gender distribution,” by United States Marine Corps, 2016, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*, retrieved from

<https://marinecorpsconceptsandprograms.com/almanacs/active-duty-enlisted/gender-distribution>

I conducted a chi-square test with 1 degree of freedom to compare the Marine Corps' frequencies by generation to those who participated in the survey. Based on the test results, displayed in Table 5, chi-square = 120.565, $p = .000$ ($p < .05$). I rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there is a discrepancy between the observed and expected frequencies.

Table 5

Chi-Square Frequencies by Generation

	Observed n	Expected n	Residual
Generation X	64	18.5	45.5
Generation Y	200	245.5	-45.5
Total	264		

Note. Expected n percentages is adapted from "Active duty enlisted age distribution," by United States Marine Corps, 2014, *Almanac U.S. Marine Corps*, retrieved from <https://mcconceptsandprograms.com/almanac/active-duty-enlisted/age-distribution>

The test results show that my sample was not representative of the overall Marine Corps which is further explained in Chapter 5. In addition, Chapter 5 provides what limitations existed due to the lack of representation and the impacts on my results.

Study Results

This study was intended to close the gap in the scholarly research, highlighting the contrast between Generation X's and Generation Y's level of commitment in the Marine Corps. TCM's three commitment scales (*CC*, *NC*, and *AC*) provided the input to inform the variables, to test the hypotheses, and respond to the research question.

To ensure that the responses for the three DVs were distributed normally, I tested the samples for normality using a normal probability plot, and all were normal. As illustrated in Figure 6, for AC and Generation Y, the data are distributed normally.

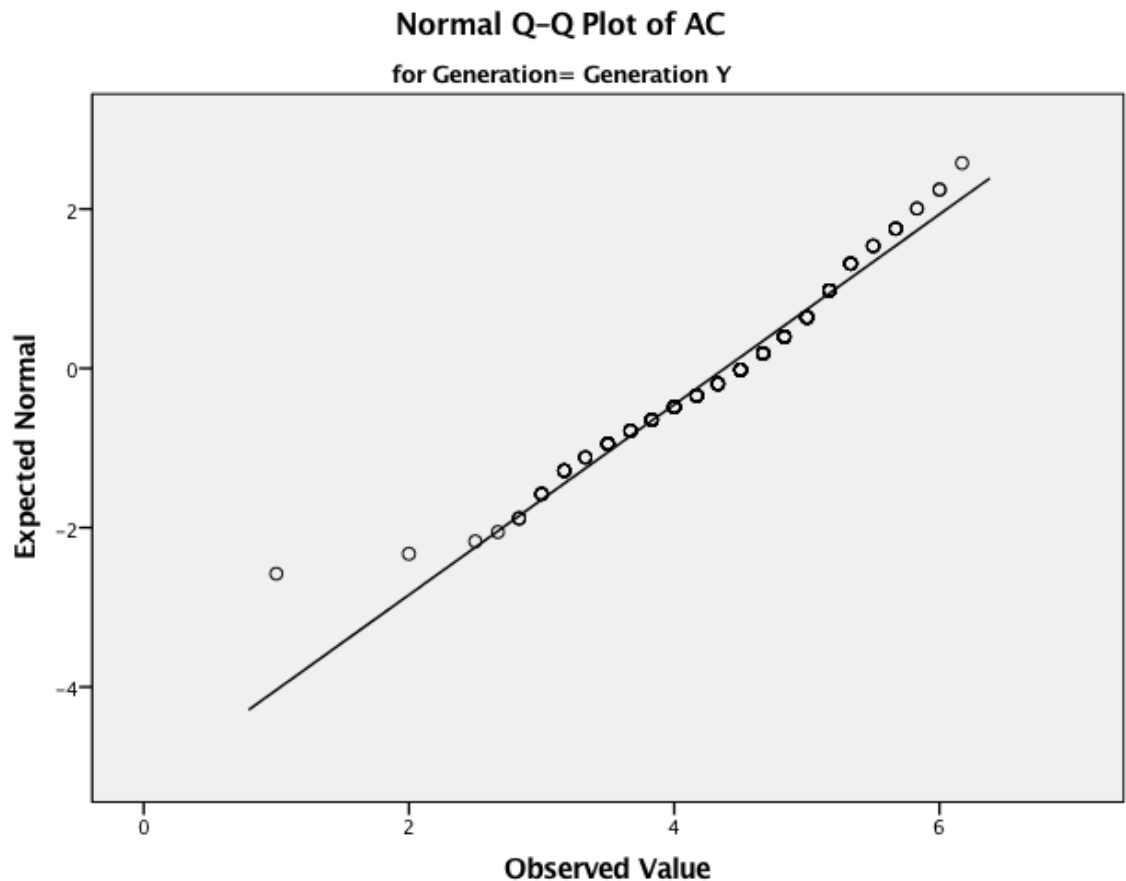


Figure 6. Normal probability plot for AC and Generation Y.

Research Question

Is there a commitment difference between active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines and active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines?

H_{10} : Average level of CC of Generation X = 4.

H_{1a} : Average level of CC of Generation X \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 6, when measuring commitment using *CC* for Generation X, $t(64) = -5.573$, $p = .000$, $M = 3.203$, $SD = 1.144$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *CC* differs from 4 for Generation X.

Table 6

Generation X CC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
<i>CC</i>	-5.573	63	.000	-.797	-1.082	-.511

H₂₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation X = 4.

H_{2a}: Average level of *NC* of Generation X \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 7, when measuring commitment using *NC* for Generation X, $t(64) = 3.324$, $p = .001$, $M = 4.562$, $SD = .169$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *NC* differs from 4 for Generation X.

Table 7

Generation X NC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
<i>NC</i>	3.324	63	.001	.562	.224	.901

H₃₀: Average *AC* of Generation X = 4.

H_{3a}: Average *AC* of Generation X \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 8, when measuring commitment using *AC* for Generation X, $t(64) = 12.722$, $p = .000$, $M = 4.940$, $SD = .5913$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *AC* differs from 4 for Generation X.

Table 8

Generation X AC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>AC</i>	12.722	63	.000	.940	.793	1.088

H₄₀: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y = 4.

H_{4a}: Average level of *CC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 9, when using *CC* for Generation Y, $t(200) = -5.770$, $p = .000$, $M = 3.418$, $SD = 1.425$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *CC* differs from 4 for Generation Y.

Table 9

Generation Y CC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>CC</i>	-5.770	199	.000	-.582	-.780	-.383

H₅₀: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y = 4.

H_{5a}: Average level of *NC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 10, when measuring commitment using *NC* for Generation Y, $t(200) = 1.237$, $p = .217$, $M = 4.134$, $SD = 1.536$. Because $p > .05$, I failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is insufficient evidence that the mean *NC* differs from 4 for Generation Y.

Table 10

Generation Y NC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>NC</i>	1.237	199	.217	.134	-.079	.346

H₀: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y = 4.

H_{6a}: Average level of *AC* of Generation Y \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 11, when measuring commitment using *AC* for Generation Y, $t(200) = 6.436$, $p = .000$, $M = 4.381$, $SD = .83730$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *AC* differs from 4 for Generation Y.

Table 11

Generation Y AC Independent Sample Test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>AC</i>	6.436	199	.000	.381	.264	.498

H₇₀: Average level of *CC* of both generations = 4.

H_{7a}: Average level of *CC* of both generations \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 12, when measuring commitment using *CC* for Generation X and Generation Y combined, $t(264) = -7.552$, $p = .000$, $M = 3.366$, $SD = 1.366$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *CC* differs from 4 for both generations combined.

Table 12

Combined CC One Sample t test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>CC</i>	-7.552	263	.000	-.634	-.799	-.469

H₈₀: Average level of *NC* of both generations = 4.

H_{8a}: Average level of *NC* of both generations \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 13, when measuring commitment using *NC* for Generation X and Generation Y combined, $t(264) = 2.581$, $p = .010$, $M = 4.238$, $SD = 1.495$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that the mean *NC* differs from 4 for both generations combined.

Table 13

Combined NC One-Sample t test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>NC</i>	2.581	263	.010	.238	.056	.419

H₉₀: Average level of *AC* of both generations = 4.

H_{9a}: Average level of *AC* of both generations \neq 4.

As displayed in Table 14, when measuring commitment using *AC* for Generation X and Generation Y combined, $t(264) = 10.241$, $p = .000$, $M = 4.517$, $SD = .820$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude there is sufficient evidence that the mean *AC* is different from 4 for both generations combined.

Table 14

Combined AC One Sample t test

Test Value = 4						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
<i>AC</i>	10.241	263	.000	.517	.417	.616

H₁₀: There is no difference in the level of *CC* between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H_{10a}: The level of *CC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

As displayed in Table 15, when comparing commitment using *CC* for the difference between Generation X and Generation Y [Generation X ($M = 3.203$, $SD = 1.144$), Generation Y ($M = 3.418$, $SD = 1.426$)], $t(264) = -1.231$, $p = .221$, with a mean difference of .215. Because $p > .05$, I failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is insufficient evidence of a difference in the mean *CC* score between Generation X and Generation Y.

Table 15

CC Mean Difference

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
CC	-1.231	262	.221	-.215	.175	-.548	.109

H1₀: There is no difference in the level of *NC* between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

H1_{1a}: The level of *NC* varies between Generation X Marines and Generation Y Marines.

As displayed in Table 16, when comparing commitment using *NC* for the difference between Generation X and Generation Y, [Generation X ($M = 4.562$, $SD = 1.354$), Generation Y ($M = 4.133$, $SD = 1.526$)] $t(264) = 2.137$, $p = .035$, with a mean difference of .429. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis, and conclude that there is sufficient evidence of a difference in the mean *NC* score between Generation X and Generation Y.

Table 16

NC Mean Difference

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
NC	2.137	118.499	.035	.429	.201	.031	.826

H1₂₀: There is no difference in the level of *AC* between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

H12_a: The level of *AC* varies between Generation X and Generation Y active duty Marines.

As displayed in Table 17, when comparing commitment using *AC* between Generation X and Generation Y, [Generation X ($M = 4.940$, $SD = .591$), Generation Y ($M = 4.381$, $SD = .837$)] $t(264) = 5.906$, $p = .000$, with a mean difference of .559. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that there is a difference in the *AC* score between Generation X and Generation Y.

Table 17

AC Mean Difference

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
<i>AC</i>	5.906	263	.000	.559	.095	.337	.746

The results of this study show that Generation X and Generation Y have differences in the way they view their service in the Marine Corps. Chapter 5 provides further discussions and observations into the results of the *t* test.

Multiple Linear Regression

I conducted a MLR analysis with four predictors to evaluate if and to what extent age, gender, generation, and pay grade predicted the score of the dependent variables *CC*, *AC*, and *NC*.

The general form of regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k + \varepsilon$$

where

Y = the dependent variable (CC , AC , or NC)

β_0 = the Y intercept for the population

β_i = the slope for the population (the coefficient for the independent variable X_i)

X_i = each independent variable (age, gender, generation, and pay grade)

ε = random error in Y for observation i

The categorical independent variables, gender, generation, and pay grade were converted to an appropriate number of dummy (numerical) variables. Gender was converted to reflect 1 = male and 2 = female. Generation was converted to 1 = Generation X and 2 = Generation Y. Lastly pay grade was converted to numerical variables that directly correspond to the military pay grade (E1 = 1, E2 = 2, E3 = 3, etc.).

The following is the mathematical expression of the hypothesis for the overall model:

$H_0: \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \dots = \beta_k = 0$ (there is no linear relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables).

$H_1: \text{at least one } \beta_j \neq 0$ (there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable and at least one independent variable).

The results of the MLR analysis are significant if the F -statistic $>$ critical value of F or if the p -value $\leq .05$. This reveals that at least one β is significantly different from zero. Then, utilizing the t test and its associated p -values, the significance of any individual independent variable can be evaluated.

The first MLR null hypothesis was that age, generation, gender, and pay grade do not influence the *CC* score. As displayed in Tables 18-20, adjusted $R^2 = .013$, $F(4, 269) = 2.849$, $p = .120$. Because $p > .05$, I failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is insufficient evidence that any of the coefficients is different from zero (i.e., that any of the independent variables [age, generation, gender, and pay grade] influenced the *CC* score). In other words, the regression model with all four independent variables was not a significant predictor of *CC*.

Table 18

CC MLR Model Summary with Four Predictors

Model	<i>R</i>	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.167	.028	.013	1.355

Note. Predictors: (Constant), Generation, Gender, Pay Grade, and Age.

Table 19

CC MLR ANOVA with Four Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	13.578	4	3.395	2.849	.120
Residual	475.515	259	1.836		
Total	489.093	263			

Note. Dependent variable *CC*. Predictors: (Constant), Generation, Gender, Pay Grade, and Age.

Table 20

CC Coefficients with Four Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.791	1.126		.702	.483
Age	.064	.031	.379	2.067	.040
Gender	-.062	.216	-.018	-.287	.775
Pay Grade	-.125	.119	-.162	-1.053	.293
Generation	.825	.328	.260	2.518	.012

Note. Coefficients table is based on a MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is *CC*.

However, upon closer examination, two of the independent variables (age and generation) were significant. I re-ran the MLR with three IVs: age, generation, and a two-factor interaction (2FI) which is the product of age and generation. As displayed in Table 21-23, adjusted $R^2 = .034$, $F = 4.051$, $p = .008$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of age, generation, and the 2FI influences the CC score; and that at least one coefficient is different from zero.

Table 21

CC MLR Model Summary with Three Predictors

Model	<i>R</i>	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.211	.045	.034	1.341

Note. Predictors: (Constant), age, generation, and 2FI.

Table 22

CC MLR ANOVA with Three Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	21.840	3	7.280	4.051	.008
Residual	467.253	260	1.797		
Total	489.093	263			

Note. Dependent Variable: *CC*; Predictors: (Constant), age, gender, and 2FI.

Table 23

CC Coefficients With 3 Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	
(Constant)	7.719	3.029		2.548	.011
Age	-.135	.074	-.797	-1.825	.069
Generation	-2.813	1.529	-.886	-1.839	.067
2FI	.093	.039	.708	2.410	.017

Note. Coefficients table is based on a MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is *CC*.

Figure 7 displays the interaction of the predictors age and generation for the dependent variable *CC*. As displayed below, a positive linear relationship is present with Generation Y. Generation X displays a negative linear relationship associated with the *CC* score. The 2FI was significant, and I will discuss the meaning of the interaction in Chapter 5.

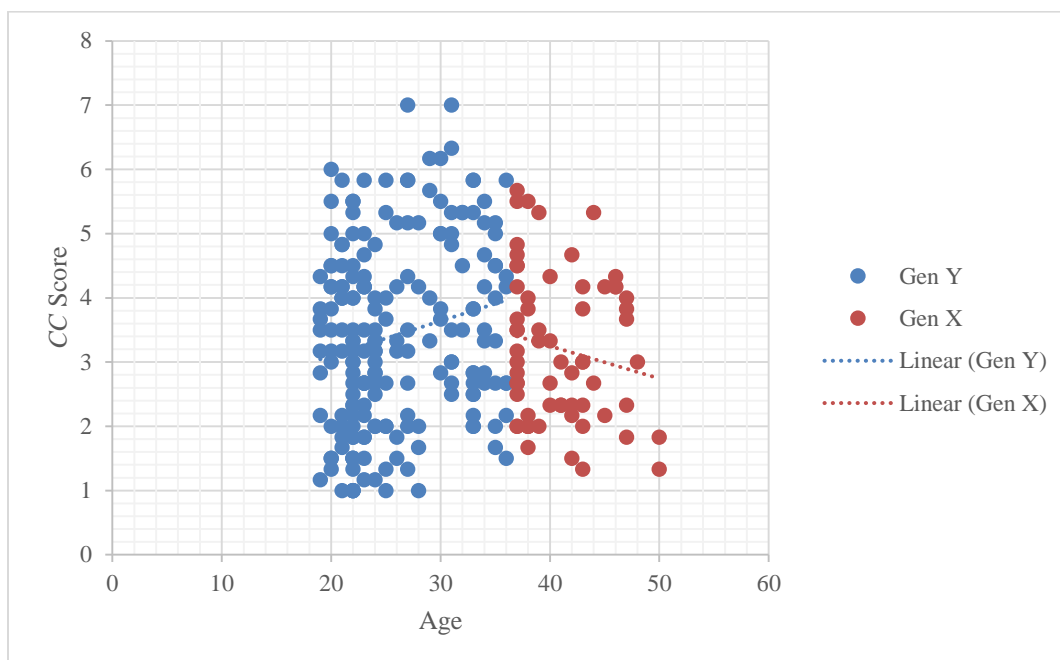


Figure 7. Scatter plot relationship of Generation X and Generation Y CC score relationship.

The second null hypothesis was that age, generation, gender, and pay grade do not influence the AC score. As displayed in Tables 24-26, adjusted $R^2 = .173$, $F(4, 259) = 14.780$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of age, gender, generation, and pay grade influences the AC score; and that at least one coefficient is different from zero.

Table 24

AC MLR Model Summary with Four Predictors

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.431	.186	.173	.745

Note. Predictors: (Constant), age, gender, pay grade, and generation.

Table 25

AC MLR ANOVA with Four Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.839	4	8.210	14.780	.000
Residual	143.864	259	.555		
Total	176.703	263			

Note. Dependent Variable: AC; Predictors: (Constant), age, gender, pay grade, and generation.

Table 26

AC Coefficients with Four Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	3.635	.619		5.868	.000
Age	.008	.017	.083	.496	.621
Gender	-.223	.119	-.109	-1.883	.061
Pay Grade	.152	.065	.327	2.323	.021
Generation	.031	.180	.016	.175	.861

Note. Coefficients table is based on a MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is AC.

Upon closer examination, pay grade and gender were either significant or nearly so. This led me to rerun the regression analysis with these two independent variables. As displayed in Tables 27-29, adjusted $R^2 = .179$, $F(2, 261) = 29.682$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that gender and pay grade are different from zero and influenced the AC score.

Table 27

AC MLR Model Summary with Two Predictors

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.430	.185	.179	.743

Note. Predictors: (Constant), Gender and Pay Grade

Table 28

AC MLR ANOVA with Two Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.695	2	16.347	29.682	.000
Residual	144.008	261	.552		
Total	176.703	263			

Note. Dependent Variable: AC; Predictors: (Constant), Gender and Pay Grade

Table 29

AC Coefficients with Two Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	3.783	.231		16.378	.000
Gender	-.230	.117	-.113	-1.963	.051
Pay Grade	.181	.027	.390	6.807	.000

Note. Coefficients table is based on a MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is AC.

I re-ran the test with three IVs: gender, pay grade, and a 2FI which is the product of gender and pay grade. As displayed in Table 30-32, adjusted $R^2 = .180$, $F = 20.282$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of gender, pay grade, and 2FI influences the AC score; and that at least one coefficient is different from zero.

Table 30

AC MLR Model Summary with Three Predictors

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.435	.190	.180	.742

Note. Predictors: (Constant), Gender and Pay Grade

Table 31

AC MLR ANOVA with Three Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	33.510	3	11.170	20.282	.000
Residual	144.008	260	.551		
Total	176.703	263			

Note. Dependent Variable: *AC*; Predictors: (Constant), Gender and Pay Grade

Table 32

AC Coefficients with Three Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.250	.448		9.483	.000
Pay Grade	.089	.081	.191	1.102	.272
Gender	-.611	.334	-.299	-1.828	.069
2FI	.078	.064	.250	1.217	.225

Note. Coefficients table is based on a MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is *AC*.

Figure 8 displays the possibility of a 2FI between the independent variables, gender and pay grade. However, since the 2FI was not significant ($p = .225$) in either Table 32 or Figure 8, I conclude no interaction exists between the independent variables. The best predicative model of *AC* is the model in Table 29.

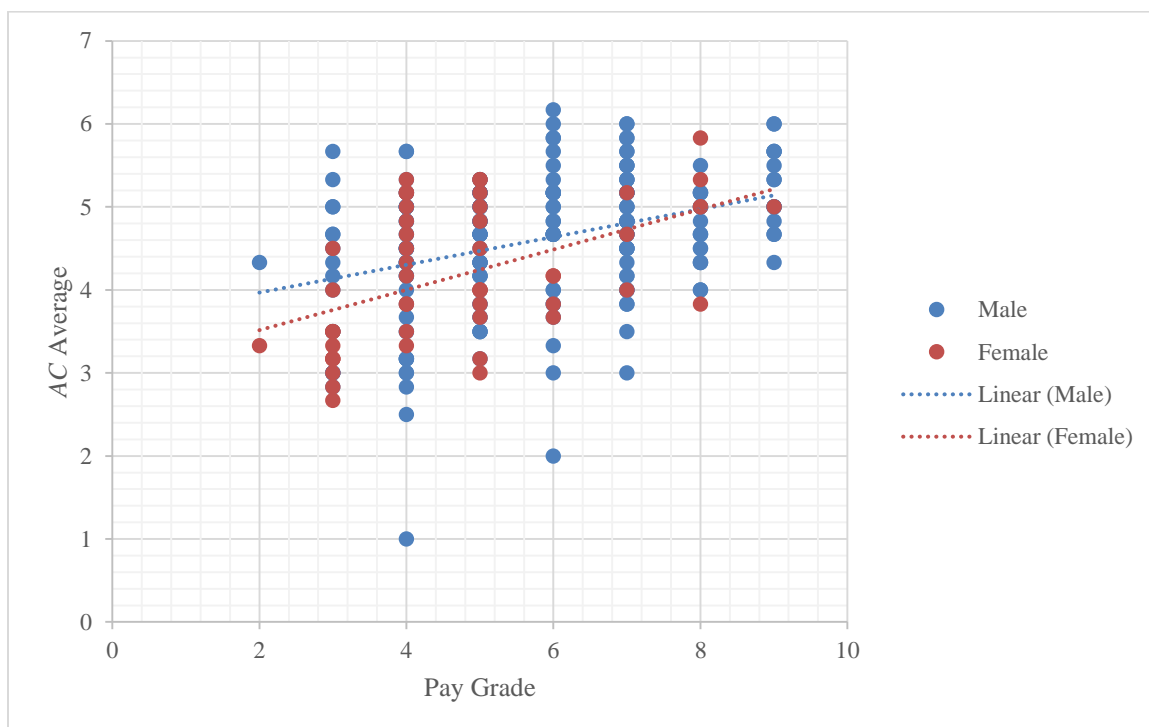


Figure 8. Scatter plot relationship of male and female AC score relationship.

The third null hypothesis was that age, generation, gender, and pay grade do not influence the *NC* score. As displayed in Tables 33-35, adjusted $R^2 = .082$, $F(4, 259) = 6.894$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of age, generation, gender, and pay grade influences the *NC* score; and that at least one coefficient is different from zero.

Table 33

NC MLR Model Summary with Four Predictors

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.310	.096	.082	1.432

Note. Predictors: (Constant), age, gender, pay grade, and generation.

Table 34

NC MLR ANOVA with Four Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	56.588	4	14.147	6.894	.000
Residual	531.457	259	2.052		
Total	588.045	263			

Note. Dependent variable NC. Predictors: (Constant), Generation, Gender, Pay Grade, and Age.

Table 35

NC Coefficients with Four Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	.371	1.191		.312	.756
Age	.086	.033	.464	2.620	.009
Gender	-.127	.228	-.034	-.559	.577
Pay Grade	-.006	.126	-.007	-.044	.965
Generation	.860	.346	.247	2.482	.014

Note. Coefficients table is based on an MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is NC.

Upon closer examination, age and generation were significant. I reran the MLR with age and generation. As displayed in Tables 36-38, adjusted $R^2 = .088$, $F(2, 261) = 13.721$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of age and generation influences the NC score.

Table 36

NC MLR Model Summary with Two Predictors

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.308	.095	.088	1.428

Note. Predictors: (Constant), age and generation.

Table 37

NC MLR ANOVA with Two Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	55.944	2	27.972	13.721	.000
Residual	532.101	261	2.039		
Total	588.045	263			

Note. Dependent variable *NC*. Predictors: (Constant), Generation and Age.

Table 38

NC Coefficients with Two Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.120	1.080		.111	.912
Age	.087	.018	.470	4.803	.000
Generation	.878	.341	.252	2.577	.011

Note. Coefficients table is based on an MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is *NC*.

However, I wanted to determine if there was an interaction between age and generation. I re-ran the test with three IVs: age, generation, and a 2FI which is the product of age and generation. As displayed in Tables 39-41, adjusted $R^2 = .085$, $F = 9.112$, $p = .000$. Because $p < .05$, I rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence that a regression model comprised of age, generation, and 2FI influences the *NC* score; and that at least one coefficient is different from zero.

Table 39

NC MLR Model Summary with Three Predictors

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.308	.095	.085	1.431

Note. Predictors: (Constant), age, generation, and 2FI.

Table 40

NC MLR ANOVA with Three Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	55.944	3	18.648	9.112	.000
Residual	532.101	260	2.047		
Total	588.045	263			

Note. Dependent variable *NC*. Predictors: (Constant), Generation, Age, and 2FI.

Table 41

NC Coefficients with Three Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.114	3.232		.035	.972
2FI	-7.697	.041	-.001	-.002	.999
Generation	.881	1.632	.253	.540	.590
Age	.087	.079	.471	1.107	.269

Note. Coefficients table is based on an MLR run in SPSS. The dependent variable is *NC*.

Figure 9 displays the possibility of a 2FI between the independent variables, age and generation, for the dependent variable *NC*. However, since the 2FI was not significant ($p = .999$) in either Table 44 or Figure 9, I conclude no interaction exists between the independent variables. The best predicative model of *NC* is the model in Table 38.

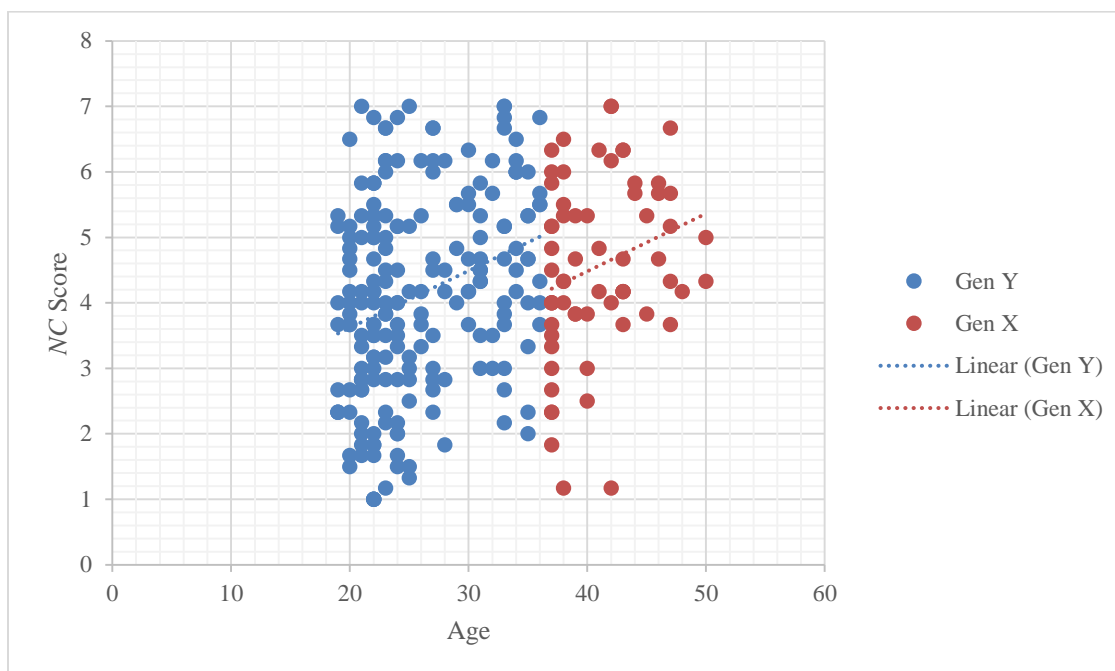


Figure 9. Scatter plot relationship of Generation X and Generation Y NC score relationship.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I described the discrepancies between the planned study and what actually took place. I provided an in-depth view of the overall conduct of my study, which included a detailed description of the timeframe and how I recruited participants. Through my survey administrator, I was only able to reach 2894 Marines which resulted in a response rate of 9.12% over the course of 60 days while the survey was available.

Through the chi-square tests, I was able to determine that I did not have a true representation of the population within the Marine Corps based on rank, gender, and age. However, I will explain in Chapter 5, the impacts on the outcomes of my research were not significant. The results of the t tests showed the differences between the two generations and I was able to develop a commitment profile for Generation X and

Generation Y. On the *AC* and *NC* scales, Generation X resulted in higher levels of commitment (Table 17 and Table 18). Generation Y scored highest in their commitment profile on the *AC* scale. However, on the *CC* scale, there was not a significant difference between the two generations, which will be further analyzed in Chapter 5.

Lastly, the MLRs were used as an exploratory analysis. My analysis showed that pay grade and gender were influencers on the *AC* scale, and age and generation were influencers *NC*. The MLR run on *CC* produced a complex result showing that the 2FI (the product of age and generation) was an influencer, but not the variables independently. Chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the results, conclusions, and recommendations for future study and research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study was to examine the influence on Marine Corps culture due to the level of commitment of active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines compared to active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines. This research was intended to close the gap in the scholarly research, highlighting what influences Generation Y has had on Marine Corps culture.

In this chapter, I provide an interpretation of the findings based on the literature review in Chapter 2. The limitations of my study are described based on generalizability, trustworthiness, reliability, and validity. Recommendations for future research are provided. Finally, I identify the societal and organizational implications that impact positive social change.

Interpretation of Findings

This study addressed one research question and tested 12 hypotheses. The hypotheses compared Generation X and Generation Y on three scales, which measured their individual and combined levels of commitment to the Marine Corps. The results indicated that there are differences; they will be discussed and explained in this chapter.

The Sample's Representation of the Population

In Chapter 4 I documented several tests to determine if my sample was representative of the overall population of the Marine Corps. I compared the demographics of generation, gender, and pay grade. The results of the chi-square tests indicated that I did not have a true, proportional representation of the overall Marine Corps population based on pay grade, gender, and generation. As displayed in Table 3,

staff noncommissioned officers participated more than Marines of junior grades.

Additionally, proportionately, more females participated in the survey than males.

The results indicated that Generation X had proportionately more participation than Generation Y. However, it was not my intent to sample a representative number from each generation; instead, the intent was to obtain an equal sample from each, if possible; or at least an adequate sample for the purposes of comparing them using multiple dependent variables.

I was not able to obtain the overall desired equal sample size. As shown in Figure 10, this affected the power of the statistical test, where $\text{power} = 1 - \beta$. Using G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) the post hoc β with a sample size of 264 was .464, or a power of .536. Translated, this means that the probability of a false negative (a Type II error) was 46.4% (failing to detect an effect—the influence of the model or individual independent variables on the dependent variable); whereas, the desired probability of a false negative was 20%. This affected the ability to generalize specific characteristics of the overall population of enlisted, active duty Marines because the test may have failed to find an effect that in fact exists in the population.

Another way of explaining the impact of lower sample size is to say, for a power ($1 - \beta$) of .80, $\alpha = .05$, and the sample size obtained, the test was capable of detecting an effect size of .36. This is a less precise test than originally planned, in which the test was intended to detect an effect size of .25. But since α was set at .05, effects (differences in means) that were detected in this sample were likely to be true (only a 5% chance of false positive, or detecting an effect that was not in fact true).

According to Rea and Parker (2014), nonresponse bias could result in potential bias since a significant portion of the non-respondents could have a different view. Rea and Parker cautioned that survey results below 50 percent response rate should be cautiously viewed as a basis for precise quantitative statements (p. 196).

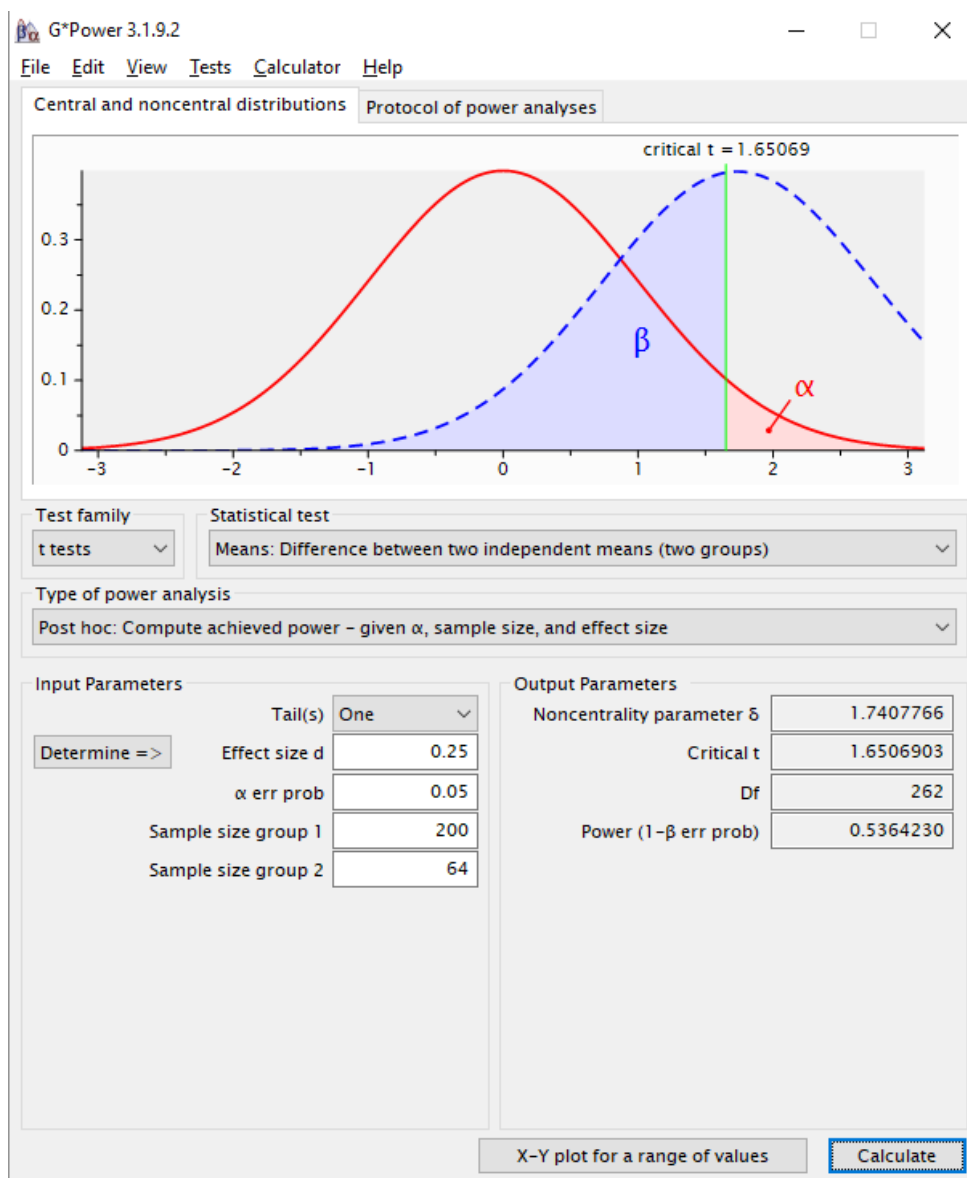


Figure 10. G*Power Analysis with actual sample size. from “G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences,” by F. Faul, E. Erdfelder, A. Buchner, and A.G. Lang, 2007, *Behavior Research Methods*, 39(2), p. 175-191.

TCM Scores

Figure 11 displays the commitment profiles of Generation X, Generation Y and their combined profile. In addition, Figure 11 also displays the differences among the three dependent variables. While not all tests resulted in differences between the two generations, as will be explained, Figure 11 does display differences among the three measurements. The midway point on the Likert Scale was 4 (undecided).

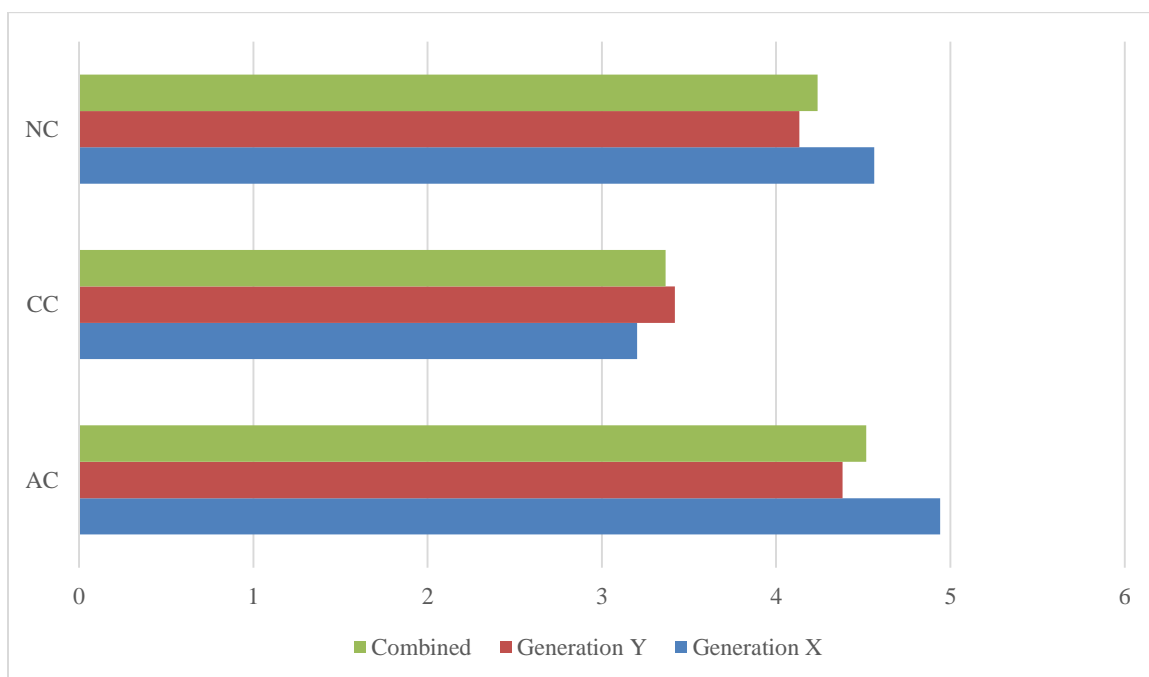


Figure 11. Commitment profile of Generation X, Generation Y, and combined.

Generation X vs. Generation Y Interpretation

This section is organized into four groups based on the hypotheses. The first group, Hypotheses 10-12, focuses directly on answering the research question: Is there a commitment difference between active duty, enlisted Generation X Marines and active duty, enlisted Generation Y Marines?

Hypotheses 1-3 analyze Generation X's commitment scales. Hypotheses 4-6 analyze Generation Y's commitment scales. Hypotheses 7-9 is an analysis of the overall scores combined. Lastly, I provide an overall conclusion on what my results suggest about the two generations.

Generational Comparison. Hypotheses 10, 11, and 12 focused on answering the research question. The results of the three hypothesis tests showed differences in commitment levels between Generation X and Generation Y. Of the three tests, only one test did not display a significant difference (*CC*). There are differences between Generation X's and Generation Y's level of commitment in the Marine Corps.

Generation X and Generation Y did not exhibit a difference in their *CC* scores. Generation X's *CC* score was a 3.203, in comparison, Generation Y's *CC* score was a 3.418. The *CC* score is an indicator of the extent to which an employee's financial or personal obligation compels them to remain with their organization; what Meyer et al. (2013) associated with *an awareness of the costs associated with leaving an organization*. These results indicate that neither generation remains in the Marine Corps because of financial instability or hardship (because their *CC* scores were statistically equal and below a score of 4). Both Generation X and Generation Y are committed to remaining in the Marine Corps because they desire to be a part of the organization, not because of financial instability or hardship.

Considering *NC*, the hypothesis test revealed a difference between the generations. Generation X's *NC* score was a 4.562, whereby in contrast, Generation Y's *NC* score was a 4.134. The *NC* score is an indicator of an individual's sense of obligation

to the organization—whether or not they believe or feel that the organization has earned their commitment and dedication. What this difference indicates is that Generation X feels a stronger personal obligation than Generation Y. Generation X's *NC* score was greater than 4, indicating a strong desire to remain in the Marine Corps. Generation Y's *NC* score did not differ from 4, which indicated an ambiguous desire to remain in the Marine Corps.

Lastly, Generation X and Generation Y exhibited differences in their commitment level under *AC*. Generation X's *AC* score was a 4.940 compared to Generation Y's *AC* score of 4.381. The *AC* score is an indicator of an individual's desire to remain with an organization due to personal attachment, feeling, and emotion; what Meyer et al. (2013) called desire. What this difference exhibits is that Generation Y's feelings of attachment or belonging are not as strong as Generation X's. However, both generations had *AC* scores greater than 4, indicating both have strong desire to remain in the Marine Corps.

The additional hypothesis tested each generation's commitment levels and a combined commitment level of the total force (within the parameters of my sample).

Generation X's Commitment Profile. Hypotheses 1-3 explored Generation X's commitment in the Marine Corps, measuring from a midpoint value of 4 for all three scales. All three hypotheses were significant, indicating a positive commitment profile for all three measurements. Generation X scored a 3.203 for the dependent variable *CC*. When the score is higher than 4 for the dependent variable *CC*, there is an indication that the individual remains with the organization because of a cost association of losing something materialistic or of a financial obligation. Generation X's score indicates that

the generation does not stay with the organization because of a financial burden or obligation.

For the dependent variables *NC* and *AC*, a score above the midway mark of 4 is correlated with a positive commitment level, that the individual feels an obligation (*NC*) and desire (*AC*) to remain with the organization. For the dependent variable *NC*, Generation X scored a 4.562. This suggests that the generation remains in the Marine Corps because of a feeling of obligation toward the Marine Corps. For the dependent variable *AC*, Generation X scored a 4.940. This indicates that the generation remains in service because they want to or desire to remain in the Marine Corps.

While all three scores for Generation X indicate positive levels of commitment, Meyer and Allen (2004) argued that the three scales of commitment can indicate the primary reason a person chooses to remain with their organization. Of the three scores, Generation X scored highest from the midway mark for the dependent variable *AC*, indicating that the primary reason they remain in the Marine Corps is due to their emotional and personal desires to stay.

Generation Y's Commitment Profile. Hypotheses 4-6 measured Generation Y's commitment scales in the Marine Corps, measuring from a midway point value of 4 for the three measurements. Two of three hypotheses were significant, indicating a positive commitment profile on at least two of three measurements. Generation Y scored a 3.418 for the dependent variable *CC*. This indicates that they do not remain in the Marine Corps because of a financial burden or fear of financial loss.

For the dependent variable *NC*, Generation Y scored a 4.134, which was found to be not significantly different from a midpoint value of 4. This indicates that the generation is undecided about their obligations toward the Marine Corps. This aligns with Lu and Gursoy's (2013) research that found that Generation Y does not feel a loyalty toward an organization. Finally, for the dependent variable *AC*, Generation Y scored a 4.381. This indicates that the generation remains in service because they want to or desire to remain in the Marine Corps.

Based on Generation Y's results, the primary reason they remain in the Marine Corps is because of a personal desire. Generation Y does not remain in the Marine Corps due to a fear of losing something financially or cost-based. Nor does Generation Y feel an obligation to remain in the Marine Corps.

Combined Commitment Profile. Hypotheses 7-9 combined the scores of Generation X and Generation Y, measuring from the midway point of 4. These scores indicate the overall total force's commitment toward the Marine Corps, based on my sample. The three hypothesis tests were significant and the results indicate positive commitment levels on the three measurements. Combined, the generations scored a 3.366 for the dependent variable *CC*, a 4.238 for the dependent variable *NC*, and a 4.517 for the dependent variable *AC*. Combined, of the three averages the generations scored highest from the midway mark for the dependent variable *AC*, indicating that they remain in the Marine Corps due to personal and emotional desires to stay, which aligns with the individual generations' results.

The results of the hypothesis tests correlate with the results of Mohsen's (2016) and Nelson's (2012) research. According to Mohsen, Generation X is more concerned with their impact on the organization if they departed which is reflected in their normative commitment scores and their feeling of obligation toward the Marine Corps. On the other hand, Generation Y did not indicate any obligation toward the Marine Corps, negatively or positively. Aligning with Nelson's research, my results indicate that both generations are committed to the Marine Corps because of desire, although a difference in affective commitment was present.

In my research, scores on the TCM survey align with other researchers who argued that Generation Y would display lower levels of commitment toward organizations. Even researchers, to include Hernaus and Polski Vokic (2014) and Bosco and Harvey (2013), who argued that there are similarities between the two generations, still found differences. Yogmalar and Samuel (2016), Carver et al. (2011), and Nelson (2012) argued that Generation X and Generation Y display different levels of commitment. Mencl and Lester (2014) and Costanza et al. (2012) also found differences between the two generations in their commitment toward organizations. In my research, Generation X exhibited a higher level of commitment under *AC* and *NC*. However, under *CC*, my hypothesis test revealed that there was little difference between the two generations.

Previous research and my results support that Generation X and Generation Y have differences in their commitment levels toward the Marine Corps. My research and my results are supported by researchers who argued that each generation is different and

would display different levels of commitment, ultimately dependent on what was driving them.

The Marine Corps' promotion system is designed so that individuals work their way up, earning promotions based on time served and performance. Some research indicates that Generation Y is opposed to such a process and expects to be placed in positions based on their perceived individual merits. This appears to be reflected in their results under their obligation-based commitment. While Generation Y does make up the majority of the enlisted ranks currently, their continued service is not because they believe they owe the Marine Corps anything.

As indicated by my test results, Generation X has a higher level of commitment than Generation Y. However, that does not indicate that Generation Y does not have commitment as argued by Johansen et al. (2013). They argued that Generation Y's characteristics are in direct conflict with military service. Additionally, Johansen et al. argued that Generation Y does not value military service as a way of life, but instead as an occupation. Therefore, my results do not agree with Johansen et al.

Finally, as a combined force, Generation X and Generation Y scored highest on the *AC* scale, compared to *NC* and *CC*; indicating their continued service is due to a desire-based commitment. Their commitment profile also indicates that they do not remain because they have a cost-based commitment. Additionally, there are feelings of obligation to remain in service. The Marines believe in what they do and have a personal desire to continue their service.

Multiple Linear Regression

In this section I will provide an explanation about how each of the influencers affected the dependent variables. The four demographic variables that were evaluated in the MLR analysis were age, generation, pay grade, and gender. The purpose of conducted MLR is to allow an exploratory analysis for predictor variables. Through the MLR I was able to see other elements that may have affected the way participants answered the survey.

MLR revealed that each of the DVs was affected differently by the independent variables. The first MLR showed that *CC* was influenced by age, generation, and a 2FI (age * generation); the second MLR showed that *AC* was influenced by pay grade and gender; and the third MLR (*NC*) resulted in influencers of age and generation. The results suggest a view that not only does generation and age influence commitment, but specifically gender and pay grade are also influencers.

Continuance Commitment. The best predictive model from the MLR for continuance commitment was a regression model with two independent variables (age and generation) and their 2FI. The model was significant, and can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{Predicated continuance commitment} = 7.719 + (-0.135) \cdot \text{age} + (-2.813) \cdot \text{generation} + (0.93) (\text{age} \cdot \text{generation})$$

However, the usefulness of the model as a predictor or explanation of continuance commitment requires further discussion. The model only accounts for 4.5% of the

variation in continuance commitment, indicating that there may be other explanatory variables; or the response variable is simply quite noisy or random.

The results of the MLR, especially considering the 2FI as illustrated in Figure 7, suggest that while a person's age or generation, considered individually, may not be significant influences on their continuance commitment, a combination of their age and generation may be influential. This could indicate the fact that generations are influenced by their group and their combined experiences. The influence of age on continuance commitment depends on the generation; likewise, the influence of generation depends on age.

Specifically, this model shows that, generally, as a Marine gets older by a year, their *CC* score decreases by .135. In the *CC* scale, the decrease in scores is a positive correlation between the commitment of the employee and the organization. The lower the score, the less an individual feels a cost-based motivation to remain with the organization. As a Marine ages each year, there is a correlation with advancement and promotion which means an increase in pay. The MLR showed that Generation X has a predicated *CC* score that is 2.813 points lower than Generation Y.

Figure 7 and the 2FI suggest there is more to this phenomenon. The 2FI, illustrated in Figure 7, indicates that as a Generation X Marine gets older (earning increased promotion with pay raises) and more financially secure (heading toward retirement), their commitment toward the Marine Corps is less and less based on their financial obligations. On the other hand, Figure 7 showed an increase in *CC* scores for Generation Y Marines as they increased in age. Opposite of Generation X, as Generation

Y get older, not yet eligible for retirement, and unsure about their future, they have an increase in their need for financial stability, and their *CC* scores increase.

Affective Commitment. The best predicative model from the MLR for affective commitment was a regression model with two independent variables (pay grade and gender). The model was significant, and can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{predicated affective commitment} = 3.783 + (-.230) \cdot \text{gender} + (.181) \cdot \text{pay grade}$$

However, the usefulness of the model as a predictor or explanation of affective commitment requires further discussion. The model only accounts for 18.5% of the variation in affective commitment, indicating that there may be other explanatory variables.

The results of the MLR, based on pay grade's influence, shows that as a Marine is promoted to the next pay grade (E1 promoted to E2, E2 promoted to E3, E3 promoted to E4, E4 promoted to E5 etc.), their *AC* score increases by .181. Affective commitment is based on an emotional attachment toward the organization, whether or not a person feels a personal obligation. Pay grade's significance indicates that experience within the Marine Corps would contribute to the individual's affective commitment level. This could explain that Marines who continue to progress in the Marine Corps and are promoted are more likely to have a higher emotional attachment to the Marine Corps.

Gender also influences affective commitment levels in the Marine Corps. Compared to the males, the females display a lower score. Specifically, the model shows that, generally, a female Marine's *AC* score is lower by -.230 compared to male Marines.

As displayed in Figure 8, between the pay grade of E7 and E8, both genders begin to align and score similarly. Both male and female Marines have a positive linear line as they are promoted. What I have seen in the Marine Corps aligns with the lower commitment levels of the female population. Of the 264 participants in my study, 53 were females (20%). According to USMC (2016), 7.65% of the enlisted active duty Marine Corps population is female. Although I did not find an interaction, Figure 8 does suggest that regardless of gender, an increase in pay grade will influence affective commitment.

Normative Commitment. Lastly, the best predictive model from the MLR for normative commitment was a regression model with two independent variables (age and generation). The model was significant, and can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{predicted normative commitment} = .120 + (.087) \cdot \text{age} + (.878) \cdot \text{generation}$$

However, the usefulness of the model as a predictor or explanation of normative commitment requires further discussion. The model only accounts for 9.5% of the variation in normative commitment, indicating that there may be other explanatory variables.

Specifically, this model predicts that as a Marine gets older by a year, their *NC* score increases by .087. An obligation-based commitment relates to how an individual believes they owe to the organization. In the *NC* scale, the increase in scores is a positive correlation between the commitment of the employee and the organization. The higher the score, the more an individual feels an obligation-based association to remain with the organization. As a Marine ages each year, there is a correlation with advancement and

promotion which can be interpreted to mean a feeling of loyalty because of their success and increased positions of responsibility. Generation X has a predicated *NC* score that is .429 points higher than Generation Y.

The influence of generation is also present in the model. As shown in Figure 9, a positive linear line is present as the generation ages. This suggests that Generation X has a .878 higher level of normative commitment. This correlates with the aging of the Marines and their increased roles of responsibility as they continue their service.

The MLR showed that multiple factors influenced the way a participant responded to the survey. A Marine's age and generation cohort influenced how they viewed or answered the questions, but their position (pay grade) also influenced their commitment. Those who are more senior in the Marine Corps have already made the commitment and accepted the Marine Corps as a way of life. However, what was interesting were the older Generation Y Marines who did not indicate the expected commitment levels that would be expected of their pay grade.

The fact that gender was influential on how participants answered the questions was not surprising. The Marine Corps has faced many challenges over the past couple of years with female integration, and as such, many women in the Marine Corps have felt different levels of pressure to perform. The Marine Corps has a disproportionate number of females compared to males. According to USMC (2016), 7.65% of active duty Marines are female, compared to 92.35% who are male.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation was the use of an internet survey. The response rate for my survey was 9.12%. I used a disproportionate random sample based on the respondents and participation. Although I was still able to analyze my data, I did not meet my anticipated number of participants which would have required me to reach out to a greater population. I was limited to only what the Headquarters Marine Corps Survey Division could pull from the database which was 2,894, resulting in less than the target number of 2,977.

In addition, the use of an internet survey is based on the assumption that participation is honest, truthful, and complete. There were a total of 292 responses including 28 incomplete surveys. This affected the participation percentage and sample size.

The second limitation, as mentioned in Chapter 1, was the demographic of pay grade. Only enlisted Marines were contacted to participate in my study. Officers and civilians working for the Marine Corps were not contacted to participate. By limiting the Marines asked to participate in my survey, this could have been a contributing factor in the number of Marines I was able to reach.

A third limitation was the defining dates of the two generations. A generation is defined based on a 20-year span. However, what is less distinct are the similarities between the youngest of the older generation, compared to the oldest of the younger generation. By creating a line between the two generations, I divided a population which may have had similar societal influencers which could result in personality similarities.

To address this limitation, I also considered age, and not merely generation, in my regression analysis.

Lastly, the use of an internet-based survey may have been a limiting factor in my research. Conducting interviews or focus groups may have provided more depth and enhanced the results of my research. However, I do not believe my rank or my position affected the number of participants in the survey. I do believe my rank and position would have hindered my research if I had attempted to conduct interviews or focus groups.

Recommendations

The literature review provided a general explanation of the differences between Generation X and Generation Y. Limited prior research focused specifically on the Marine Corps. The results of my research suggest that there are differences between the two generations; however, with a higher population of Generation Y in the Marine Corps, understanding what drives them and what binds them to the organization is deeper than what an Internet-based survey can discover. Qualitative research using focus groups and one-on-one interviews could help to discover how the generations view commitment and what it means as a Marine.

My research shows that while there is a difference between the two generations, Generation Y does have positive commitment levels. A question that is brought to light as a result of my research is, What similarities do these generations have that guide them or drive them to join the Marine Corps? Additional research into the characteristics and personalities of Marines may better guide leaders to know and understand enlisted

members. This brings up the question, Do Marines share similar personality characteristics that drew them to becoming a Marine instead of entering another branch of service?

Studying officers would bring another perspective and field of interest. The difference between enlisted and officer Marines would provide a significant understanding about the culture and commitment. There are many young officers who are expected to perform at extremely high standards immediately upon receiving their commission. How they adapt and accept the culture of the Marine Corps could highlight some of what the young enlisted Marines project.

My research highlighted an ongoing challenge the Marine Corps continues to face. As a Marine and a female, I have often faced many challenges in my career where my leadership was questioned because of my gender. It is often disheartening and frustrating when confronted with the notion that my gender affects the way my leadership is received by subordinates. I would like to see this research go a step further and explore the interaction of gender and generation in respect to the commitment of Marines from a qualitative perspective. One-on-one interviews or focus groups may help to clarify and further identify the differences between the two generations and differences in gender

Implications

My research provides a positive contribution to the theory of generations, professional practice, and positive social change by providing a better understanding of the generational gap present not only in the Marine Corps, but possibly in society and other organizations. The literature review in Chapter 2 explored perceived and tested

differences between the two generations (Generation X and Generation Y). There exists some research about the complexity of Generation Y, which were reflected in the higher commitment scores among the younger participants of Generation Y compared to the older participants. However, this phenomenon may be attributed to experience in the Marine Corps and increases in pay grade rather than a difference because of age or generation association. However, in general, researchers have argued that no matter how small or large the generational gap is, leadership is responsible to see, understand, and adapt to it. This is where my research may be most helpful to the leadership within the Marine Corps.

My research showed that Generation Y is committed to the Marine Corps. Their commitment profile showed that they do not feel a cost-based obligation to remain in service. Generation Y's commitment profile also indicated that they do not feel an obligation toward the Marine Corps. However, Generation Y's commitment profile did indicate that they have an emotional attachment that drives them to continue to serve faithfully in the Marine Corps.

Generation Y's commitment profile contradicted Roselein (2015) and Johansen et al. (2013) who argued that Generation Y does not have the characteristics needed for military service. In fact, my research did not suggest Generation Y is individualistic as Roselein and Johansen et al. (2013) argued, but Generation Y is a generation that is societal- and communal-based. Bosco and Harvey (2013) and Krahn and Galambos (2014) argued that Generation Y desires an occupation that makes them feel as if they have or will contribute to their environment. My research showed that this characteristic

is one of the strong characteristics of Generation Y that makes them an asset to the Marine Corps and the Department of Defense.

One topic that the current literature fails to explain is the impact of generational gaps in the Marine Corps. What my research showed is that Generation X and Generation Y have different levels of commitment and are committed in different ways to the Marine Corps, but committed nonetheless. Young et al. (2013) conceded that there are differences between generations in the workplace, but my research demonstrated that just because there are differences, Generation Y's commitment should not be discounted.

My results have the capability of providing leadership in the Marine Corps a stepping stone to a better, stronger, and deeper understanding of the Marines. According to Sorensen (2010), leadership is key in developing and training Generation Y. Sorensen stated, "Creative thinking can peel away mental models, fixed beliefs, and limited mindsets" (p. 6). By effectively developing and leading Generation Y Marines, the Marine Corps will prepare them to lead future generations. My research will not only enhance leadership knowledge but also provide them with the tools to equip them when dealing with younger generations.

Lastly, my research directly contributes to organizational professional practices. My research demonstrated that while differences may exist, Generation Y does have commitment toward the Marine Corps, which can also be translated to other areas of business. The literature argued that each generation has different ways of communicating and leadership, and everyone must understand how each generation relates to their organization which will yield positive results if applied. Mannheim (1923) argued that

society should embrace new generations so that society may continue to develop and mature. By understanding and embracing the characteristics of younger generations, the Department of Defense, the Marine Corps, and society can allow our nation to grow and mature. Each generation brings the commitment needed to sustain a strong warrior culture that the Marine Corps is expected to have.

Conclusions

Just as generational influences affect the culture in the nation, they also affect the culture in the Marine Corps. This has led older generations to voice concerns and complain about how the young negatively influence established institutions. Those rooted in treasured traditions are especially protective of what they would view as time-honored and necessary. Though newer generations may alter the way a business thinks about particular situations, they will not change the traditions, as those are systemic and structurally based. On the other hand, having an understanding about the differences between the generations will ensure that senior leadership improves their understanding and values of what the young bring to the organization.

In order for the Marine Corps leadership to be effective, they must have a clear understanding about what drives and motivates their Marines. Generation Y is committed to the Marine Corps because they have an emotion-based attachment to the organization. This is their motivation and drive. Meyer et al. (2013) argued that when an individual has an emotion-based commitment, they are more likely to perform at higher levels than those who score higher in other commitment profiles. Generation Y continues to serve its nation because of a personal desire.

With newer generations entering the workforce, the responsibility to understand their ways of thinking and acting will be placed on the shoulders of Generation Y. During the conduct of my research, I have already begun to hear Generation Y Marines complain about the newer generation. It is their turn to understand the generational gaps and the differences that they encounter. However, before that happens, Generation X has a responsibility to teach, mentor, and train Generation Y. Ultimately my study provides the Marines and the Marine Corps with a stepping stone to understanding, that just because Marines display differences in their way of thinking, that is not an indication that they do not care. It is only an indication that they are different, and appreciating that difference is what will benefit the Marine Corps and the Department of Defense. This approach will pave the way to a stronger warrior organization and social change.

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