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ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES FACED BY UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS AND THEIR SOURCES

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**ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES FACED BY UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS
AND THEIR SOURCES**

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ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES FACED BY UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS AND THEIR SOURCES

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, we use surveys and interviews with first-term sailors on board U.S. naval ships to identify the factors most influential in their stay/leave decisions and how these factors vary across gender and race/ethnicity groups. Our framework of analysis is built on Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory to highlight relationships between factors of diversity of leadership and peers, mentoring, and first-term retention. Our analysis finds that most underrepresented groups and females have very different experiences than non-Hispanic whites in relation to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs factors of safety and security, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization. Of these factors, negative experiences in social needs, which encompasses mentorship, the sense of belonging, and peer support, was found to have the largest impact on retention decisions of underrepresented groups and females. Based on these findings, our recommendation is the implementation of measures and strategic directives that address and resolve the gap felt in the lack of social needs fulfillment. We believe these findings can assist Navy leadership in their continuing efforts to improve strategies and initiatives to recruit, develop, and retain a high-quality military workforce. Improved racial and gender minority retention is a vital element in cultivating workforce talent and unlocking our Navy's full potential in better support of national defense.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AQDs	Additional Qualification Designators
BUPERS	Bureau of Naval Personnel
COMNAVSURFOR	Commander Naval Surface Forces
CSPI	College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative
DMDC	Defense Manpower Data Center
EAOS	End of Active Obligated Service of Naval Officers
GMT	General Military Training
MLDC	Military Leadership Diversity Commission
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NPC	Navy Personnel Command
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
OCS	Officer Candidate School
ODASD MC&FP	Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
USNA	United States Naval Academy
YOS	Years of Service

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In keeping with the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS), restoring warfighter readiness by building a lethal and diverse workforce through the retention of trained, skilled, and knowledgeable sailors is a sure way to maintain our strategic advantage in leading the Great Power Competition.

In support of the current administration's force requirements, the Navy is realigning its efforts to support the buildup of a 350-ship fleet by 2030, up from its current fleet of 292 ships. This is a substantial growth in the number of ships needed to support the new strategy. An increased number of sailors will be needed to man these platforms, which is why increased retention of highly skilled and talented sailors and subsequent recruitment of the nation's best and brightest should be a top priority in the near future. To fully support the NDS in growing a diverse force we need to take full advantage of the creativity and talent of the American warfighter by leveraging one of our military's greatest strengths - diversity. All service members need to feel represented throughout the ranks and supported personally and professionally. More supportive peers, mentors and leadership with a heightened employment of soft skills including cultural and emotional intelligence, and awareness of unconscious biases is critical.

Naval leadership and mentors have a profound influence on retention decisions of all sailors, but the influence is amplified when applied to sailors from underrepresented groups. The Navy has implemented numerous mentorship programs across designators and communities in an attempt to boost retention and sailor performance. Although recent studies have used personnel files to study the relation between peers and role models on retention decisions by sailors, the off-the-shelf data, as valuable as it is to generate important insights, misses important details on the peer and mentoring relationships that develop among sailors. In this thesis, we aim to bring in that missing piece by deploying a qualitative and quantitative research approach to complement the work of our predecessors.

Our data collection and analysis are based on Abraham H. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model and Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Model. Both models revolve around

job satisfaction and motivation as it relates to job performance. The models were used to develop the interviews and surveys. More specifically, the two models served as a basis to develop a survey on factors affecting retention and interview questions that aim to discover what factors undermine current retention efforts of first-term underrepresented sailors.

Upon approval from COMNAVSURFOR, data collection was conducted aboard four Naval Surface ships with first term officers and enlisted sailors. Initially we used surveys to collect and analyze data on the importance of peers and mentors among the significant factors influencing first-term sailors' retention decisions. Data analysis of the first-term sailor retention surveys determined that Maslow's Social Needs factor to be the most prominent in influencing underrepresented groups retention decisions. Findings among underrepresented groups revealed that Social Needs was a category that was regarded as high importance, and those in underrepresented groups were more likely to have a very negative experience among Social Needs factors. Further investigation was conducted using semi-structure individual interviews to discover the underlying themes behind Social Needs and their impacts on retention decisions of first-term sailors. The goal of conducting the interviews was to gain additional depth into the factors first-term sailors consider most impactful for their stay/leave decisions, and whether these factors vary between the majority and underrepresented groups (defined by race/ethnicity and gender).

The semi-structured individual interviews immediately followed the collection of survey responses. To note, we invited all the survey respondents to sit for an interview. Thirty-one percent of the sailors that provided survey answers volunteered to continue with the interview. Interviews were kept anonymous (no identifiers such as names, places were referenced in the interview). The interview was voice audio-recorded, and the recording was subsequently transcribed. Following interview transcription, the NPS data collection team analyzed the responses in each interview in search of recurring themes on factors considered in the stay/leave decision by first-term sailors. Quotes from sailors were taken from the individual interviews and placed into six recurring themes, listed below, that captured Social needs and other factors:

Theme 1: Underrepresented groups mention facing different hurdles than the comparison group, on issues related to Navy policies, culture, and interpersonal communication.

Theme 2: Underrepresented groups discuss more often than the comparison group less beneficial experiences with mentors. The interviews revealed some examples of positive mentoring experiences mentioned by sailors from the under-represented group.

Theme 3: Underrepresented groups mention limited opportunities in the Navy more often than non-Hispanic whites.

Theme 4: Underrepresented groups are more likely than the group of non-Hispanic white sailors to bring up in the interview difficulties fitting in with peers.

Theme 5: Most first-term sailors interviewed mentioned that they view soft skills in management as important and lacking.

Theme 6: Most enlisted sailors and junior officers interviewed state they value working with prior-enlisted officers.

Survey responses and interview themes revealed discoveries that were not entirely surprising. Findings also uncovered similar experiences and thoughts we shared during the course of our careers prior to conducting our research. The recurring themes from the interviews enlightened us all about the difficulties underrepresented groups deal with daily. The problems appear to be partly rooted in Naval culture and tradition, from oversights in Naval policies that unfairly target Black sailors to perceptions of limited opportunities for people of color and females based on few same-race/ethnicity and same-gender mentors and role models in higher ranks. Problems also occur due to alienation in interpersonal relationships with peers and superiors from problems with relatability and communication

During the interviews, people of color and females described the glass ceiling where diversity and representation stops. More so, the lack of representation means policies are often put in place without the input of underrepresented groups, where adverse effects are chalked up as just another oversight. Greater representation in higher ranks can solve many of these problems. It sends a message to the underrepresented sailors that their voices

are being heard, there is an example for them to follow, there are no limitations to what they can do, and most importantly, they can be themselves.

Underrepresented groups have continued to express the need for commonality and relatability in the upper ranks with the belief that more representation will result in more inclusive policies, fair treatment, and better mentorship. An increase in people of color in leadership positions, improved personality assessments and a focus on soft skill development for Naval leadership will not only improve retention of underrepresented groups, but of all sailors. Personality assessments are currently used by some Naval communities in hopes of building leadership capacity and developing managerial skills. If someone were to explore this area, one could improve upon it by incorporating cultural and emotional intelligence trainings to assess unconscious biases within individuals, essentially leading to conscious inclusion and management of sailors based on merit and not by their affiliation. We found camaraderie, mentorship, and leadership support to be important to all sailors, however, interpersonal relationships experienced by people of color were not as positive as their White counterparts. Sailors discussed the isolation from being treated differently by peers and superiors, and having to carry the extra weight of added stress during long underway periods. Over time this practice often leads to a fight or flight response from not having someone to relate to and share those experiences with. As a result, the retention decisions of underrepresented groups are negatively impacted by their reduced sense of social belonging and social contribution. One other important result was that nearly all enlist sailors and officers we asked mentioned that they preferred serving under prior-enlisted officers than under Naval Academy or ROTC officers.

Based on our results, we developed the following recommendations:

- Add cultural intelligence training into yearly General Military Training (GMT) requirements. Courses would closely follow the Armed Forces' effort to educate service members and deter negative behavior regarding sexual assault.
- Enhance current ethics and leadership courses and personality assessments for junior, mid-level, and senior-level sailors by incorporating emotional

intelligence and encouraging soft skill development in Naval leadership. Training would not only be provided at entry-level programs (Basic Training, OCS, USNA, ROTC) but could also be given at follow-on training for mid-level and senior-level enlisted sailors and officers.

- Increase the number of females and people of color in leadership positions. Increased representation throughout the ranks matter. Sailor preferences for prior-enlisted officers during interviews, especially among underrepresented groups, express the notion that commonality and relatability are important in interpersonal relationships.
- Have officers spend time as enlisted sailors. The Naval Academy and several ROTC programs use summer cruises to familiarize future officers with Naval operations. We could improve the learning experience by putting in place a uniform structure for midshipmen to serve their time onboard in an enlisted capacity, performing maintenance and standing watch with the junior enlisted sailors. The experience would be assessed and would also give midshipmen the incentive to learn and perform well.

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) has always been a breeding ground for change and innovation. In this case it also has the chance to lead the way in introducing change in our current military culture to one that is more inclusive and would increase diversity of thought. The unique community composition would allow for valuable insight and exposure to all service branches and foreign military officers. Future opportunities for further research through studies involving various platforms, communities, and services, or by developing pilot studies and metrics measuring the effects of diversity and inclusion training and competencies started at NPS.

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To All who read this:

“Always stay true to yourself, do what’s right, and give ‘em hell.”

To my family, friends, and loved ones... Thank you for your love, support, and encouragement.

—LT “JD” Thomas

I would like to thank amazing wife, Kayo, and my wonderful children, Katrina and Cayden, for the unconditional love and support during my time at NPS. They sacrificed a lot of time with me and were always supportive of the many long days and nights studying.

—LCDR Capreece Dunklin

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I. INTRODUCTION

To effectively manage its most important war fighting resource—its talented and diverse personnel—the U.S. Navy places great importance on continuously improving retention, especially among the first-term sailors. This is critical to supporting national defense objectives.

Effective mentorship is considered as a powerful element influencing first-term sailor retention. In recognition of this, the Navy has implemented numerous mentorship programs across designators and communities in an attempt to boost retention and sailor performance. Mentors provide insight, motivation, and inspiration to mentees and can have a strong impact on decisions such as whether to stay in or leave the Navy. More importantly, commonalities shared by mentors and mentees, such as career path, race, gender, and other common interests, are highly influential in cementing social bonds and augmenting the influence mentors can have on career decisions by mentees. Although recent studies have used large personnel files to study the relation between peers and role models on retention decisions by sailors, the off-the-shelf data, as valuable as it is to generate important insights, misses important details on the peer and mentoring relations that develop among sailors. In this thesis, our aim is to bring in that missing piece by deploying a mixed qualitative and quantitative research approach to complement the approach of our predecessors' work.

In this thesis, we use surveys and interviews to collect and analyze data on the importance of peers and mentors among the significant factors influencing first-term sailors' retention decisions. Additionally, we examine whether the role of peers and mentors on stay/leave decisions of first-termers differs among different demographic groups of sailors. The findings aim to inform policy on how to improve retention efforts in support of strategic diversity leadership.

The purpose and design of our research questions aim to support a better understanding of the role influencing factors, such as peers, role models and superiors have on first-term enlisted and officer sailors and their retention decisions. Additionally, the

questions aim to capture the impacts of diversity, other influencing factors, and their cascading effects that ultimately impact retention decisions.

A. PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the role of peers, role-models, and superiors on first-term retention decisions?

- What challenges do underrepresented groups face in the Navy?

The scope of this thesis includes the following:

- A qualitative and quantitative analysis of the effects of peers, role-models, and diversity on first-term enlisted sailors and officers. We used surveys and interviews to capture first-hand accounts of sailors' experiences.
- A statistical analysis of first-term sailors survey responses, by demographics and the stated importance of retention-influencing factors. Findings will be displayed in the form of bar charts and line graphs.
- The application of Herzberg's Two-Factor model and Maslow's Basic Needs model to analyze underrepresented-group first-term sailors retention decisions.
- Recommendations on racial/ ethnic minorities and females retention shortfalls and development of cultural competencies and emotional intelligence leadership skills.

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In Chapter II, we provide a brief survey of Navy initiatives on mentoring sailors. Chapter III presents the theoretical framework used in our thesis. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor theories will be implemented to provide a basis that will be used to measure quantitative data. Chapter IV presents a review of the previous studies our thesis builds on. Chapter V describes the methodology used to develop our surveys for data collection of first-term sailor, and presents the summary statistics of the collected data, by race, gender, and retention intentions. Chapter VI describes the approach used on the data collection of semi-structured

interviews of first-term sailors aboard four Navy ships. The chapter presents the results and themes derived from interviews. Chapter VII contains a final discussion and summary points followed by future recommendations for ways forward in improving career retention for underrepresented-group first-term sailors and possible areas of future research. Key points and ideas from various accredited sources will also be incorporated to gain perspective on the intended direction of Naval programs.

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II. BACKGROUND

In its efforts to capitalize on mentor influence, the Navy has implemented numerous programs across designators and communities in an attempt to boost retention and sailor performance. Although the Navy has fully incorporated the mentorship ideal throughout the fleet, the desired effect on first-term retention has not fully been completely achieved. The U.S. Navy Supply Corps is well-known for its networking and mentorship. It is ingrained in junior supply officers to connect with peers and more senior officers for career development, training, and general assistance. Chapters of the Naval Supply Corps Foundation exist around the globe to foster support and mentorship. On the other hand, the Navy's surface community does not have a comparative support system. Guidance and mentorship more often occur at the unit level, and peer and mentor relationships appear to be self-driven. As a result of a lack of support and mentorship, sailors may choose to separate or experience career decay.

Shortages in first term retention have a direct impact on fleet manning as well as the growth and development of a lethal force in support of national strategy. The most recent National Defense Strategy (NDS) identifies five threats: China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, and global terrorism; China and Russia are the primary threats. Also, the NDS bluntly depicts a U.S. military that is "losing its edge over potential competitors and urges increased and sustained investment" for "long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia" (Cancian, 2018, p. 7). According to the NDS, "China is the United States' most challenging long-term competitor. Its share of global wealth has more than tripled from 1994 to 2015, growing from 3.3 percent to 11.8 percent" (Cancian, 2018, p. 8). "China's share of global military spending has increased six-fold, from 2.2 percent in 1994 to 14 percent in 2018, and China is now the second-largest military spender in the world" (Cancian, 2018, p. 8). The outlook of NDS laid the groundwork, planning, and budgeting for a larger Navy and total military force with a greater global military presence.

A. RETENTION GOALS

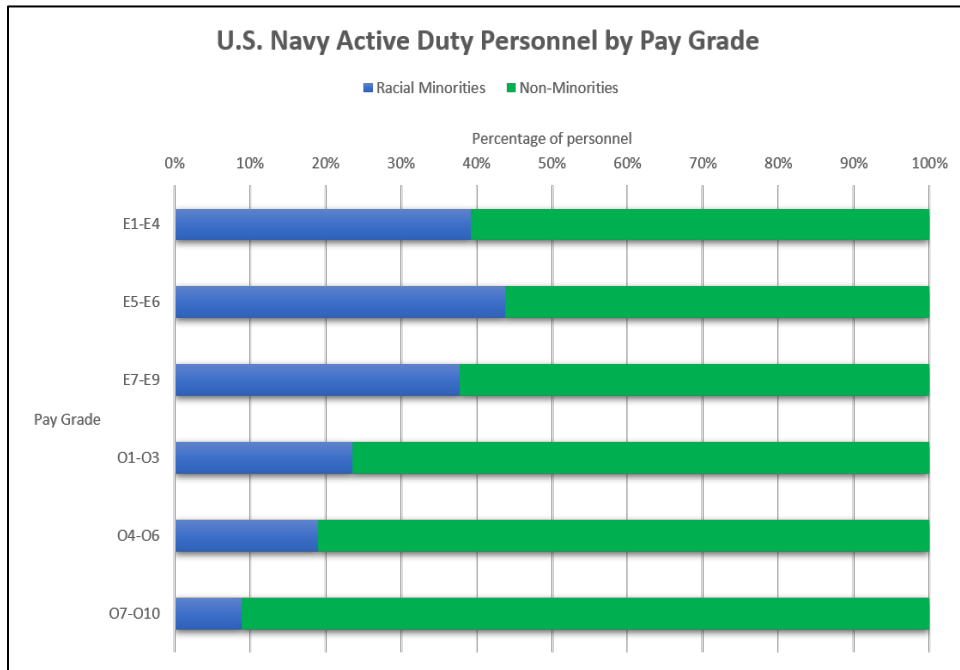
In support of the current administration's force requirements, the Navy is realigning its efforts to support the buildup of a 350-ship fleet by 2030, up from its current fleet of 292 ships. This is a substantial growth in the number of ships needed to support the new strategy. An increased number of sailors will be needed to man these platforms, which is why increased retention of highly skilled and talented sailors and subsequent recruitment of the nation's best and brightest should be a top priority in the near future. Funding and manning challenges remain at the forefront of achieving the 350-ship target. In efforts to address these concerns, the Navy has used various sailor recruitment and retention tools including selective reenlistment and milestone bonuses, and command reenlistment awards. Furthermore, the Navy has increased benchmark retention goals for sailors according to their time in service. The Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) has divided sailors into three zones in its efforts to target retention goals. Zone A consists of sailors from 0 to 6 years of service (YOS), while Zone B covers 6 to 10 YOS, and Zone C applies to 10 to 14 YOS. In accordance with the 2018 Demographics Report, the Navy's retention has improved steadily despite competing with a strong economy and historically low unemployment numbers. FY-18 retention surpassed the FY-18 benchmarks in all zones along with a decrease in attrition rates in all zones. According to the Navy Public Affairs Office; "FY-19 sailors in their first ten years of service—Zones A and B—decided to reenlist at rates of 64% and 72%, respectively, well above the benchmarks. Zone C, those in the 10- to 14-year windows, also met benchmarks, reenlisting at rates of 85%" (Navy Public Affairs Office, 2020). Specifically, the retention of first-term sailors has been the most challenging although having the lowest goal of attainment. In recent years, retention rates have shown promise through consecutive periods of upward trends, however, there is a missing element in the Navy's retention of talented sailors. Due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, retention levels may respond favorably for all services. The slowed economy and dramatic increase in unemployment throughout the country may influence sailors to continue active duty service. In light of the pandemic, the positive effect on retention may be a temporary solution for an ongoing problem. The downturn in the

economy may create additional time for naval leadership to address underling issues with retention.

B. FORCE BREAKDOWN BY RANK AND RACE

A detailed review of the 2018 Department of Defense Demographics Report reveals underlying diversity disconnects throughout the ranks. According to the 2018 report, “underrepresented groups represent nearly one-third (31%) of Active Duty personnel, despite the lowest proportion of underrepresented Active Duty members being found among high-ranking officers (O-7 to O-10)” (2018-demographics-report. (ODASD (MC&FP)). In the report, underrepresented groups are classified as personnel who identify as being other than Non-Hispanic White. We chose to limit our use of the term “minority” where possible when referring to people of color “because it is usually equated with being less than, oppressed, or deficient in comparison with the majority) (i.e., White people)” (“Racial and Ethnic Identity,” 2020). As shown in the graph (Figure 1), the overall percentage of underrepresented groups decrease with an increase in pay grade (2018-demographics-report [ODASD MC&FP], 2018).

Figure 1. U.S. Navy personnel percentage paygrades by race/ethnic status. Adapted from ODASD MC&FP (2018).



The retention decision for first-term sailors is typically made at the enlisted pay grades of E-4 and/or E-5, and the pay grade of O-3 for the officer community, which is usually between years 4–5 of active duty service. Based on the estimated rank and time of decision for retention, research shows the percentages of the underrepresented decrease over time. As depicted in the graph, underrepresented sailors above the milestone pay grades of E-5 and O-3 show a distinct decline in retention, represented by follow-on senior pay grades showing gradual and obvious decline in involvement by underrepresented groups. The 2018 DoD Demographic Report lists U.S. Navy racial-ethnic minority percentages at 19% for pay grades O-4 to O-6 and 8.9% for pay grades O-7 to O-10 compared to a DoD average of 21.1% for pay grades O-4 to O-6 and 12.3% for pay grades O-7 to O-10 (2018-demographics-report [ODASD MC&FP], 2018). This thesis will explore factors of why there is such a large disproportionate presence of underrepresented groups in the enlisted and officer ranks as sailors' careers progress and what factors drive disparate retention decisions across demographic groups.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the theoretical framework used in performing a qualitative and quantitative analysis on factors affecting first-term sailor retention decisions and discusses the close relationship between Abraham H. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The first step in understanding these theories is grasping the concept of motivation and how it applies to performance and satisfaction. In an organization, managers use motivation as an incentive for employees to contribute to achieving objectives.

According to an article from the International Journal of Business and Social Science by Ozguner, manager success is also dependent on how well they direct growth, knowledge, and skills of employees. The expectations and aspirations of both the employees and the organization should parallel in comparison. Overall, the goal is to maximize employee and organizational success. The key is to increase employee efficiency by tapping into their psychological needs through an organizational shift. There is a close and direct relationship between performance and motivation (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). An unmotivated team or employee cannot be expected to perform well. The lack of performance and motivation can be attributed to a lack of psychological factors. "Although most people do not know their exact motivation needs or how to express them, what is known is the unhappy feelings if the needs are not met. People want and look to be motivated and a person's psychological or physical needs provide motivation" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 8).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Figure 2) was introduced by Abraham H. Maslow in 1954. Since then, there have been revisions and updates to his original thesis, but the core of his theory remains the same. He argued that people have physiological, psychological, and social needs that have to be satisfied. "These needs are classified as, physiological, security, belonging to a group, and the need for love and creativity" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 2).

Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model
Source: McLeod (2007).

**Hierarchy of Needs Model
Abraham Maslow**



The focus of Maslow's model is to describe people's motivation and employees' personal development needs (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). Maslow's ideas are helpful in understanding what can be done to satisfy people in the workplace. His theory shows what factors, that if absent, will negatively influence attitudes and behavior, resulting in decreased motivation, while providing for those needs would improve motivation. "According to Maslow, an individual's needs are arranged in a hierarchy, from the lower-level physiological needs to the higher-level needs of self-actualization. The physiological needs are the highest priority, and until they are reasonably satisfied, the higher-level needs will not emerge to motivate behavior" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 7). Furthermore, better influence from external conditions are needed to make higher needs possible. "Better environmental conditions (familial, economic, political, educational, etc.) are all more necessary to allow people to love each other than merely to keep them from killing each other. Very good conditions are needed to make self-actualizing possible" (Maslow, 1954,

p. 99). Maslow's model consists of 5 hierarchy levels, consisting of extrinsic and intrinsic factors that increase in importance. The 5 levels and contents are as follows:

- Physiological Needs
- Safety Needs
- Social Needs
- Esteem Needs
- Self-Actualization

Physiological Needs, the first level of needs, are made up of the most basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. An organization such as the navy can satisfy the basic needs of its service members by providing satisfactory meals, uniforms, and berthing accommodations. "Once these basic needs are satisfied, the individual will become aware of higher-level needs" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 2).

Safety Needs, the second level of needs, become important once the physiological needs are satisfied. "These needs cause the individual to become concerned about security, protection from danger, and freedom from fear. In an organization, these needs may be satisfied by job security, benefit programs including insurance and retirement plans, and safe and healthy working conditions" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 2).

Social Needs, the third level of needs, "reflects an individual's desire for love, affiliation, and acceptance in relationships with other people. In a work environment, social needs are concerned with relating to friendly associates," identification with an organization's essence, and through participation in organized activities such as balls, command sponsored activities, and sports leagues (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 2).

Esteem Needs, the fourth level of needs, "represent the individual's concern for feeling important and respected by others and relates to the need for achievement, recognition, and status. Individuals seek approval and recognition from others. Job title and responsibilities, praise, and competent management are all important factors in satisfying the esteem needs" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 3). The navy contributes to esteem needs through personal awards and recognition

Self-Actualization, the highest level of needs, “is the need to realize one’s capacities and potentialities by achieving specific goals. A person attempting to satisfy this need seeks challenging work assignments that allow for creativity and opportunities for personal growth and advancement” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 3).

“An individual is never completely satisfied on any need level, but a sufficient amount of gratification of lower-level needs must be met if the individual is to seek to satisfy higher-level needs” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 3).

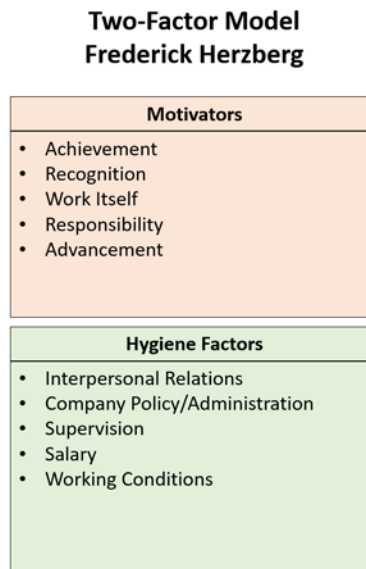
Frederick Herzberg’s Two-Factor Model (Figure 3) is another theory of motivation. Herzberg explains two factors that determine job satisfaction are hygiene factors and motivation factors. “Unlike Maslow’s theory, Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory argues that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction result from different causes. According to Herzberg, satisfaction depends on motivators and dissatisfaction is the result of hygiene factors” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 7). As a result, he defined motivators as intrinsic to the job, while hygiene factors are extrinsic to the job. Extrinsic motivation comes from outside a person: praise, money, promotions, benefits. Intrinsic motivation comes from inside: the feeling that you are doing something that matters, doing something that is interesting to you, the satisfaction from building a new skill or accomplishing something challenging (Randolph & Johnson, 2005). Job satisfaction is dependent on motivators and dissatisfaction is the result of hygiene factors. As it relates to a workplace environment, personnel will often leave due to a lack of hygiene factors (interpersonal relationships, salary, working conditions, etc.) In contrast, motivators such as career advancement, increased responsibility, and job fulfillment from the work itself, will cause them to continue. In observing Herzberg’s model, he did not see motivators and hygiene factors at opposite ends of the spectrum; they simply led to different outcomes. “The opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but no satisfaction” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014, p. 6). Herzberg’s theory also implies that employee expectations such as pay, decent working conditions, and fringe benefits do not cause motivation in workers but the absence of them below a certain level will cause dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg’s theory, in order to increase employee motivation, an organization should employ practices that would

incentivize employee output and foster a more satisfying and meaningful work environment Herzberg's theory consists of two hierarchy levels,

- Hygiene Factors
- Motivators

explained in more detail below.

Figure 3. Herzberg's Two-Factor Model. Source: Ozguner and Ozguner (2014).



Hygiene Factors are factors that contribute to job dissatisfaction and are extrinsic in nature. Hygiene factors relate to conditions surrounding doing the job or in the workplace and include company policies and administration, relationships with supervisors, interpersonal relations, working conditions, and salary. (McLeod, 2007) Examples of hygiene factors with regard to the Navy, consist of command leadership, command operational tempo, camaraderie, Navy rules and regulations, professional mentorship, and salary and bonus pay.

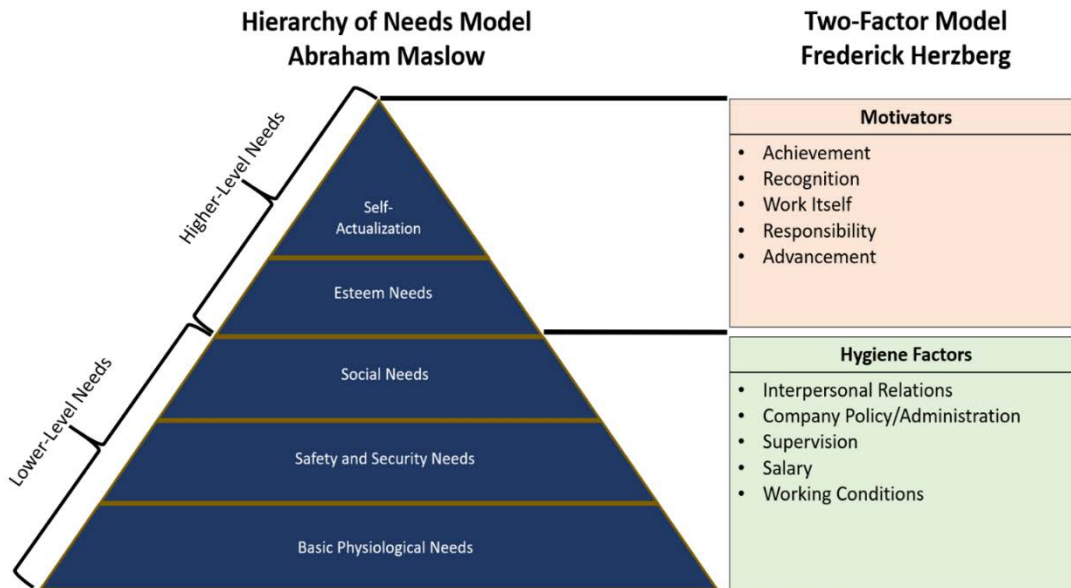
Motivators are factors that contribute to job satisfaction and are intrinsic in nature. Motivating factors lead to job satisfaction because of the need of the individual for self-growth and self-actualization, and consist of achievement, advancement, the possibility of growth, recognition, and work itself. (McLeod, 2007) Examples of motivating factors

include earning qualifications and awards, job fulfillment, potential leadership opportunities, and skill development.

B. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The use of Maslow and Herzberg’s models lay the foundation in understanding the influential factors that may have a profound impact on first-term sailors’ retention decisions. While the theories are closely related, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs derives from two concepts, which are people individual satisfaction and needs, yet Herzberg’s Two-Factor model derives from the application of motivators and hygiene factors (Figure 4) (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). “Maslow’s lower-level needs are equivalent to Herzberg’s hygiene factors and his higher-level needs correspond to Herzberg’s motivating factors” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). According to Maslow, lower-level needs must be satisfied in order to satisfy higher-level needs. In accordance with Herzberg’s theory, motivating factors increase job satisfaction and lead to increased motivation, in contrast to hygiene factors, which react to the environment and result in job dissatisfaction. “Both theories reveal important context in understanding management motivations and personnel decision-making” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014).

Figure 4. Maslow/Herzberg research comparison. Adapted from Ozguner and Ozguner (2014).



Based on their theories, a shift in the primary focus of naval leadership towards the improvement of known lower-level needs and increased satisfaction of higher-level needs will boost motivation and retention. In most organizations, managers focus of efforts are to satisfy lower-level needs, but focused fulfillment in the areas of pay and benefits or working environment alone does not mean personal performance will improve. An organization, such as the Navy, must aim to satisfy the mid-level to higher-level needs of its employees to maximize the potential of its personnel and fully achieve organizational effectiveness (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). In support of the latest National Defense Strategy, the 2018 demographic report states the creativity and talent of the American warfighter is our greatest enduring strength and restoring warfighter readiness by building a lethal and diverse force through the retention of trained, skilled, and knowledgeable sailors is a sure way to maintain our strategic advantage in leading the Great Power Competition (2018-demographics-report [ODASD (MC&FP)].)

In later chapters, the two theories will be used as a basis to develop survey and interview questions that look to discover what factors undermine current retention efforts of underrepresented first-term sailors.

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IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

Retention of skilled and knowledgeable officers and enlisted sailors continues to be a challenging goal for the Navy, especially those in highly technical and competitive career fields. The recent National Defense Strategy calls for a large expansion of the Naval fleet to 350 ships and approximately 10,000 additional sailors through FY2021. In order to meet this future demand, retention of a diverse and ready force must increase in priority for the Navy. Recent research has revealed that there is no distinction in retention efforts for underrepresented groups and White sailors. However, the retention of Racial Minorities has remained relatively lower than Non-minorities. More importantly, a shift in retention research must take place. It is critical for the Navy to determine why retention efforts for minorities fall short.

In this literature review we will review three previously written thesis research papers that examined various impacts on retention decisions of underrepresented junior officers and enlisted sailors. While previous research papers define role models and leadership as influential factors affecting retention for people of color, intrinsic factors, and qualitative reasoning are not captured.

The first thesis, Terranova (2019), examined the effects of underrepresented-group command leadership and the effects on retention of underrepresented sailors. In addition, Greene (2019) addresses the effects of underrepresented-group command leadership on junior officer retention. Lastly, researching relationships between underrepresented-group command leadership and peer effects on sailor retention onboard various surface platforms were covered by Hernandez-Rodriguez and Serna (2020).

B. *THE EFFECTS OF MINORITY COMMAND LEADERSHIP ON RETENTION OF MINORITY JUNIOR OFFICERS (TERRANOVA, 2019)*

Terranova's research was based on historical and descriptive data on officers who served in the Navy Surface Fleet between 1995 and 2018 and produced a detailed analysis of commanding officers and senior leadership of underrepresented groups and their effect

on same-ethnicity junior officer retention. Additionally, the scope included a qualitative review on diversity in the military and the effects of same-race, same-ethnicity, and same-gender role models while leveraging a link to what the data set exhibits. (Terranova, 2019) For the study, he used two models to measure the role-model effect between command leadership of underrepresented groups and sailor retention. The Difference-In-Difference Senior Leadership model involved the effect of senior officers on retention decisions of junior officers of underrepresented groups while the Role Models Commanding Officer Model analyzed relationships between underrepresented groups of commanding officers, senior leadership, and junior officers. Regression equations were developed for each respective model, identifying 21 different role model effects. Among the three-primary underrepresented-group demographics generated, African American, Female, and Hispanic, only one role model effect proved to be statistically significant. The analysis determined African American senior leadership produced a negative effect on African American junior officer retention rates; “a one percentage point increase in the percentage of African American Senior Leadership yielded a 0.007 decrease in the likelihood of retention” (Terranova, 2019, p. 5). Although the effects did not uncover a statistically significant relationship between junior naval officers of underrepresented groups and senior leadership, Terranova established the following recommendations for future research and policy development:

- Develop and understand more effective retention methods for personnel.
- No change to Navy Recruiting Command efforts.
- Obtain accurate key identifiers and retention indicators to support data analysis, mainly Additional Qualification Designators (AQDs) and End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) of Naval officers.
- Examine other warfare communities employing the same role model effect and difference-in-difference models.

C. *AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF MINORITY COMMAND LEADERSHIP ON THE RETENTION OF MINORITY SAILORS (GREENE, 2019)*

Greene’s thesis provided a comprehensive examination of role-model effects for racial-ethnic minority same-category Navy personnel, such as command leaders and junior sailors of the same race, same ethnicity, or same gender. This thesis examined the influence that underrepresented-group command leadership has on the retention of underrepresented enlisted sailors in the Navy. Greene’s research consisted of an analysis of role-model effects of minority command leadership on minority enlisted sailors’ first-term reenlistment decisions with the goal of “analyzing first-term retention rates for minority enlisted sailors based on different levels of exposure to minority naval command leadership” (Greene, 2019, p. 5).

To do so, a data set of naval personnel was analyzed in a linear probability model. Findings revealed statistically significant evidence supporting same-minority-sailor-command leadership increases the probability of underrepresented-group first-term reenlistments and underrepresented-group leadership also improves retention for other enlisted sailors. Results determined a ten-percentage point increase in Black, Hispanic, enlisted, and officer command leadership increases the probability of Black and Hispanic retention. Additionally, a ten-percentage point increase in average female enlisted command leadership decreases the probability of a female reenlistment compared to a male reenlistment by 5.2% points. Greene concluded his research with the following recommendations for future analysis:

- Increased leadership opportunities for qualified Blacks, Hispanics, and Women.
- Increased underrepresented-group presence in senior leadership positions to assist in recruiting minorities of the same demographic.
- Adjustment of current Navy retention-oriented practices and policies to improve upon inclusion and representation of racial/ethnic and gender minorities.

- Unit-level data collection examining demographic composition.
- Command leadership involvement of unit-level strategic plans promoting diverse and inclusive work environments.
- Installment of unit-level command diversity committees and enforcement of their objectives.
- Revision of command climate surveys, highlighting command diversity and inclusion.
- Implementation of a reward-based accountability system based on diversity committee requirements.
- Review Navy Personnel Command (NPC) policy to improve diversity, ensuring racial-ethnic minority representation among command leadership.
- Include individual identifiers, Navy Enlisted Classifications (NEC), in future studies for a more detailed estimate on the effects of underrepresented-group leadership.
- Include additional races/ethnicities in future research.

D. *THE EFFECTS OF DIVERSITY AMONG PEERS AND ROLE MODELS ON U.S. NAVY RETENTION (HERNANDEZ-RODRIGUEZ & SERNA, 2020)*

Hernandez-Rodriguez and Serna (2020) examined the relationship between racial-ethnic minority command leadership in the Navy and peer effects on White and underrepresented-group retention for different Navy platforms. This comprehensive analysis evaluates how retention is influenced by diversity among command leadership, other role models, and peers. Hernandez-Rodriguez and Serna expanded on existing research by using data from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) to analyze the effects of same-diversity dimensions, and by also including additional platforms, communities, and mechanisms underlying any diversity effects. They concluded that an increase in same-dimension peers and role models could increase the likelihood of reenlistment and retention for certain demographic minorities during their first term of naval service (Hernandez-Rodriguez & Serna, 2020). Upon completion of their research,

Hernandez-Rodriguez and Serna deduced the following recommendations for incorporation in future research:

- In-depth understanding of underrepresentation-group retention.
- Diversity and Inclusion considerations in the Navy's detailing process.
- Increase leadership opportunities for qualified minorities.
- Additional studies involving various platforms and communities.
- Creation of commissioning programs mirroring that of the United States Coast Guard's College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI).
- Identify command level diversity issues.
- Unit-level command diversity committees and enforcement of their objectives.
- Command climate survey improvement, which includes topics covering unit diversity and inclusion.

E. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

There have been several academic studies on factors affecting Navy first-term sailor retention. Prior studies focus on role model effects for minorities. Using quantitative analyses and large data sets of pre-collected personnel data. However, some factors associated with retention decisions are not measured and thus not observed in these large data sets. The qualitative approach we take in our thesis provides needed reasoning of factors that affect retention for minorities. not captured with the quantitative methods, yet important in informing policy changes and targeted interventions.

Through first-term sailor retention surveys and semi-structured interviews with first-term sailors, this thesis will examine the role peers and role models have on retention decisions, and how this role varies among different demographic groups.

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V. SURVEYS ON FACTORS AFFECTING RETENTION

A. INTRODUCTION AND DATA DESCRIPTION

The first-term sailor retention survey (Appendix A) was developed to apply Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Models to the United States Navy's surface community. The retention surveys applied the basic needs and motivations of human beings to sailors and their decisions to separate or remain on active duty. The quantitative analysis began by identifying a group of human subjects who were the most susceptible to influence from peers and role models. In doing so, the decision was made to focus on enlisted and officer first-term sailors of both genders, of all races and ethnicities, and within the surface community. We chose the surface community due to a substantial number of sailors who either lateral transfer or separate from the navy after their first term. First-term sailors are defined as personnel currently in their first tour of active duty, post-training commands. Typically, a sailor in his/her first term is in the first five years of their contract, and between the ranks of E-1 and E-5 for the enlisted community and O-1 and O-3 for the officer community. Ultimately, we would need to categorize data from our target sample of first-term sailors and code their responses for data analysis. A broad target sample of sailors would not only allow us to capture the factors affecting retention decisions, but also better understand the effects of diversity.

B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following list comprises demographic information used on the First-term sailor retention survey. Not all information was used during the data analysis portion of the research study due to limited sample sizes. Additionally, Table 1 details the sample makeup of sailors who completed the survey. Altogether, 143 first-term sailors participated in the survey portion of the study.

- Community (enlisted or officer)
- Gender (Female or Male)
- Race/Ethnicity (Asian, Black/African-American, Hispanic, Native-American/Other Pacific Islander, White, Other)

Table 1. Sample numbers by group and race

Group	Sample Size
Community	Enlisted Sailors: 116 Officers: 27
Gender	Females: 37 Males: 98 Unidentified: 8
Race/Ethnicity	Asian: 10 Black: 23 Hispanic: 18 Native American/Other Pacific Islander: 3 White: 74 Other: 8 Unidentified: 7

We performed comparisons across groups and reenlistment intentions based on level of importance and experience for each individual factor. Regarding the question on intentions to stay or separate, the selections were “Separate” (1), “Possibly Separate” (2), “Neutral” (3), “Possibly Continue” (4), and “Continue Service” (5).

From the Demographic Information, we were able to classify each participant into groups and make comparisons between racial/ethnicities and gender. Unfortunately, we were unable to compare across gender or race/ethnicity within just enlisted or just the officer communities due to the limited sample size of officer participants we were unable to make comparisons across race/ethnicity and gender.

C. APPLICATION OF THEORIES

In developing questions for the sailors and factors of their retention, we relied on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Model and Herzberg’s Two-Factor Model. These models could speak to how and why diversity could affect sailors’ retention decisions.

There were also several points to take into account in the development of individual factors. First, the individual factors would need to be simple to understand by the sailors and limited in number to increase the likelihood of their willingness to complete the survey

altogether. Second, the factors would have to align with the categories within both Herzberg's and Maslow's models. Both models revolve around job satisfaction and motivation as it relates to job performance. Third, and most importantly, the factors would have to pertain to the lives of sailors. Listing factors that directly relate to the daily lives of the participating sailors will grant access to their motivations and job satisfaction.

As discussed above, Herzberg's Two-Factor model can be broken into two categories; Motivators and Hygiene Factors. Motivators are intrinsic job elements that lead to job satisfaction. Removal of motivators will concurrently lead to a lack of motivation. Hygiene Factors are elements that are the origin of dissatisfaction among employees in the workplace if not present. There are five categories within the Motivator Factor, to include Achievement, Recognition, Work Itself, Responsibility, and Advancement. Within the "Hygiene Factor, there are also five categories, which include Interpersonal Relations, Company Policy/Administration, Management, Pay, and Working Conditions" (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). According to Herzberg, fulfilling the Hygiene Factors will prevent dissatisfaction, but will not lead to motivation. Motivation is provided by other factors. So, to retain people you need the Hygiene factors; to motivate them, you need motivation factors.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model has five categories: Self-Actualization, Esteem, Social Needs, Safety Needs, and Physiological Needs. Self-Actualization and Esteem are higher-level needs while Social Needs, Safety and Security, and Physiological Needs are all lower-level needs. There appears to be a fairly close relationship between the two models and both Herzberg's and Maslow's models were used to form twenty individual factors that were to become the foundation for the first-term sailor retention survey. We aimed to capture the things sailors would most likely take into consideration when faced with the retention decision.

D. INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Table 2 comprises the twenty individual factors that were developed and used on the first-term sailor retention survey. Each individual factor could be relevant to a sailor's retention decision and aligns with both Herzberg's and Maslow's models. However, for

future reference, the individual factors are grouped and only applied to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs model.

Table 2. Maslow and factor grouping

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs	Individual Factors
Self-Actualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earning Qualifications and Awards • Fulfillment in Job Accomplishment • Future Opportunities in the Navy • Job duties • Potential Leadership Opportunities
Esteem Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate respect by superiors, free of bias due to your gender/identity/race (Respect by Superiors) • Evaluation Feedback/Process • Recognition of Hard Work • Resourced to do your job • Skill Development
Social Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Camaraderie; Feeling as if you’re part of the team (Camaraderie) • Peer Support • Personal Mentorship • Professional Mentorship
Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command Leadership • Command Operational Tempo • Navy Rules and Regulations
Basic Physiological Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Conditions • Salary and Bonus Pay • Working Conditions

E. VARIABLE DESCRIPTIONS:

The next step in forming the first-term sailor retention survey involved categorizing the individual factors within the extrinsic and intrinsic values of each participant. An “extrinsic value is the degree to which employees value material or instrumental work aspects, such as salary and physical working conditions” (Taris & Feij, 2001, p. 55). On the other hand, “intrinsic values refer to the degree to which employees value immaterial aspects of their jobs that allow for self-expression” (Taris & Feij, 2001, p. 55). In order to

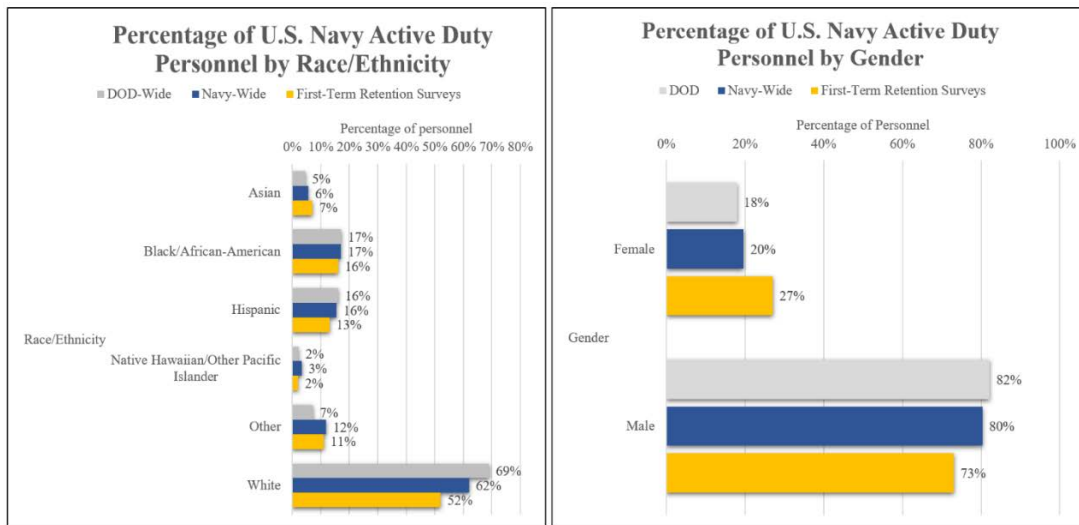
quantify those values, we chose to develop three questions that would aid in coding and data analysis. Experience Rating would apply to extrinsic value, “Level of Importance” would cover the intrinsic value and a final question would capture the retention variable. All three questions would use a rating scale for participants to choose from, but Experience Rating and Level of Importance would only apply to each individual factor. Level of Importance was captured by asking “How important will this factor be for your eventual decision to continue or separate from the Navy?,” and the rating scale ranged from 1 to 3: “Not Important” (1), “Important” (2), and “Very Important” (3). The question, “Has your experience with this factor been positive or negative?” was used to quantify the participant’s Experience Rating and capture the extrinsic value in the same way. The scale ranged from 1 to 5: “Very Negative” (1), “Somewhat Negative” (2), “Neutral” (3), “Somewhat Positive” (4), and “Very Positive” (5). By quantifying the extrinsic and intrinsic values of each individual factor through the use of Level of Importance and Experience rating scale questions, the coding, and data analysis processes was further simplified. Participating sailors would also be classified based on their response to a final question. The retention variable was included in a final comparison among participants based on their intentions to separate. A rating scale question asking, “What are your intentions to separate from the Navy?” was applied to quantify each participant’s intention to separate or continue service. The scale ranged from 1 to 5: “Separate” (1), “Possibly Separate” (2), “Neutral” (3), “Possibly Continue” (4), and “Continue Service” (5).

F. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the first-term sailor retention survey was to determine what factors contribute to retention decisions of first-term sailors. We analyze the survey responses using a quantitative analysis of the survey responses. This section provides a detailed description of the methods used to determine main drivers of retention decisions, based on the answers we received, and to explain the processes for establishing and comparing data sets. The process for analyzing the data and grouping into different data sets within each demographic group uses the variables defined in the previous section.

Statistics from the 2018 Demographic Report served as a basis for comparing total force with sample composition. Figure 5 illustrates the comparison of DoD and Navy-wide statistics, which were then used during data analysis to compare force composition with first-term sailor retention survey results. Based on the results, our sample composition well represents the composition of the force.

Figure 5. U.S. Navy gender and race/ethnicity breakdown. Adapted from ODASD MC&FP (2018).



Although the goal was to collect as many surveys from first-term sailors as possible, we were particularly cognizant of the expectation for our sample to reflect the distribution of races and ethnicities throughout the Navy and DoD. The goal was to include all first-term sailors to allow the widest distribution of participants that would accurately mirror the service member population as a whole. As a result, 143 first-term sailor retention surveys were collected upon completion of four ship visits, and as shown above, the representation in our sample was comparable with the figures reported in the demographics report. From our perspective, nearly all first-term sailors present to hear our initial explanation ended up filling out the survey.

With the first-term sailor retention surveys, we categorized the Level of Importance variables and Experience Rating variables for each factor for each demographic based on race, gender, and intention to stay. We focused on the probabilities for a “Very Negative”

experience rating and the “Highest Level of Importance” variable in the data analysis. First, we determined the percentage of “Very Negative” experience and “Highest Level of Importance” across genders, race/ethnicity, and intentions to stay. After compiling the probabilities for each demographic group’s “Very Negative” experience rating and the “Highest Level of Importance,” the probabilities for each individual factor was coded using Maslow’s models. Later, in Chapter VI, Herzberg’s model is used as a reference to compare groups. In doing so, we were able to draw several comparisons by race, gender, and personnel intentions to stay.

G. POTENTIAL ISSUES WITH SAMPLE-SELECTION

Prior to reviewing results from the first-term sailor retention surveys, this section discusses three issues discovered during our research that must be addressed. The problems in question involve data collection. The first error concerned ship selection for our research. Before data collection could begin, we were required to have ship assignment and ship visit approval from higher authority. In total, four ships were assigned by COMNAVSURFOR to participate in data collection. The participating ships encompassed disproportionately diverse command triads in terms of race/ethnicity and gender. Altogether, 50% of the command triads consisted of racial/ethnic minorities, while one-third of the command triads were females. These statistics are much higher than that of those collected from the 2018 Navy’s Demographics Report, whereas Navy-wide statistics report that 19% of U.S. Navy command-level personnel (O4-O6) are racial/ethnic minorities and 15% are females. In comparison, the participating ships held a higher percentage in both racial/ethnic minorities and females than what was recorded Navy-wide. As a result, these patterns may have had a profound effect on the overall experience of first-term sailors, and more so, an impact on thesis findings.

The second issue in data collection involved command-level initiatives put in place by the commanding officers of participating ships. During an in-brief with one of the Commanding Officers (CO), the CO mentioned receiving a form of leadership awareness training while attending the Naval War College. “The Hogan’s Assessment was developed in 1987 by Drs. Joyce and Robert Hogan in hopes of scientifically measuring personality

for business” (*Hogan Assessments / Personality Tests That Predict Performance*, n.d.), and within the past decade, has been used by the DoD to assist military leaders in talent development and talent acquisition. The Hogan’s Assessment currently offers eight separate series of assessments, including the Hogan 360 Assessment, which is administered to first tour division officers just prior to their departure from their first command. The results are analyzed, and division officers are briefed on the results during follow-on training. One series is also administered to senior leadership, prospective COs, and “gives leaders a complete understanding of their performance capabilities, challenges, and underlying motivators along with a five-step development planning worksheet and career development primer.” (*Hogan Assessments / Personality Tests That Predict Performance*, n.d.) Through their own initiative, the respective CO arranged for senior leadership aboard the ship to also receive the assessment. As a result, the additional training administered to the ship’s senior leadership may have led to improved shipboard interpersonal relationship experiences for first-term sailors, and therefore, skewed the results.

The third issue involved participants’ completion of the first-term sailor retention survey. During administering the surveys, participants constantly expressed concerns of confidentiality in completing the demographics portion of the survey in fear of reprisal by their command. Although their anonymity concerns were addressed by the data collection design and research protocols, some sailors intentionally left those portions of the survey blank. In response, surveys missing gender, race/ethnicity or community identifiers were categorized under the “Other” category.

H. HOW IMPORTANT ARE “SOCIAL NEEDS” AMONG OTHER RETENTION FACTORS?

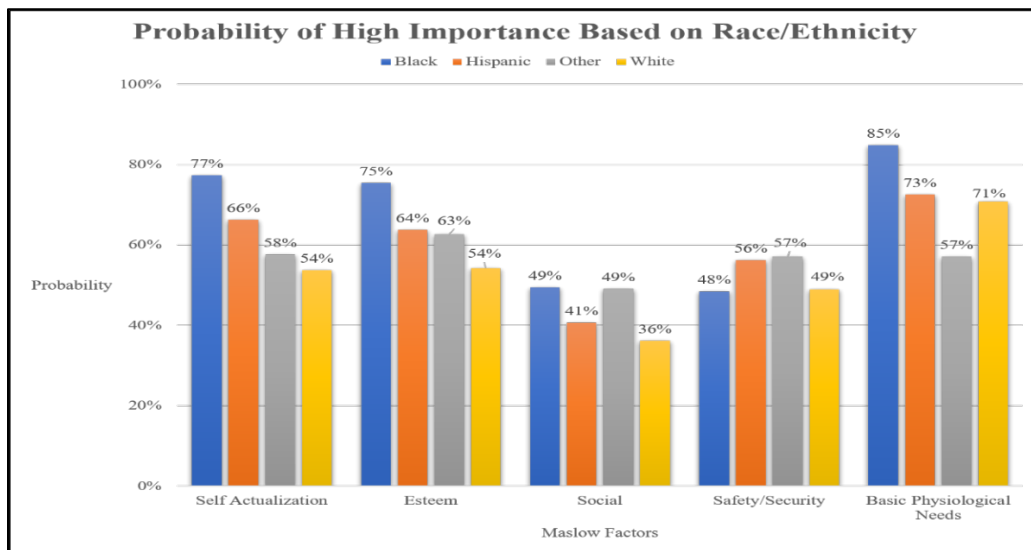
Social Needs connect Maslow’s higher-level needs to lower-level needs. It is one area where underrepresented groups are more likely to have a “Very Negative” experience and are more likely to feel the factors are of high importance. Failing to address this critical factor creates gaps and does not allow sailors to feel supported and eventually leads to attrition.

Our ultimate objective with the first-term sailor retention survey is to examine the stated importance and experiences related with Social Needs for minorities compared to others. First, we need to determine where Social Needs fits relative to other types of retention factors. Results displayed in Figures 6 and 7 highlight the “Highest Level of Importance” differences across gender and race/ethnicity under all five categories of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs model. In the same manner, Figures 8–10 show “Very Negative” experiences across gender, race/ethnicity, and intention to stay. Due to the small population sample size, participants who identified as being Asian, Multi-Racial, or Native American/Pacific Islander were included in the category of Other. For a more detailed reference of individual factors that fall under each of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs category, please refer to Table 2.

1. Highest Level of Importance

Maslow’s Factors that reported the “Highest Level of Importance” among races/ethnicities are depicted in the figure above (Figure 6). Black participants reported the highest importance in four of five categories, including Basic Physiological Need at 85%. The largest difference among participant groups occurred in the Self-Actualization category between Black and White groups at 23.6%. Overall, the Social Needs factor recorded the lowest probability of high importance across races/ethnicities.

Figure 6. Importance by race/ethnicity

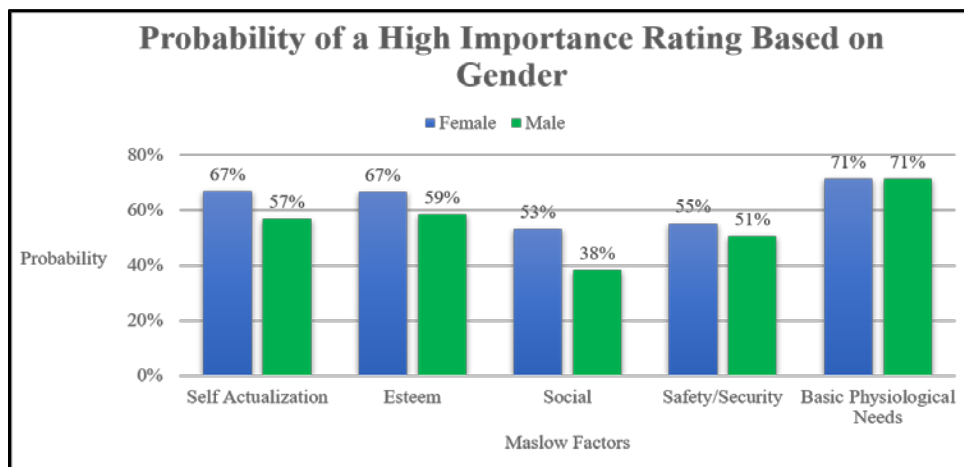


Among factors, each recorded a probability of high importance equal to or higher than that of white first-term sailors except for “Other” under Basic Physiological Needs. However, this exception could be due to a problem with sample selection, stemming from participants’ unwillingness to fill in the race/ethnicity portion of the survey’s demographics section. Failure to identify with one of the races/ethnicities led to participants’ survey data being placed in the “Other” category, which may have impacted results for this category of Maslow’s Factors.

2. Gender

In Figure 7, the probabilities of a High Level of Importance across genders are depicted. females and males follow similar trends across Maslow’s Factors, but overall, most Maslow’s Factors have a higher probability of being more important to females than males. In addition, higher-level needs hover close to 60%, respectively, while lower-level needs increase from Social Needs to Basic Physiological Needs for both genders. Of note, Social Needs recorded the lowest responses for both females and males.

Figure 7. Male/Female high importance

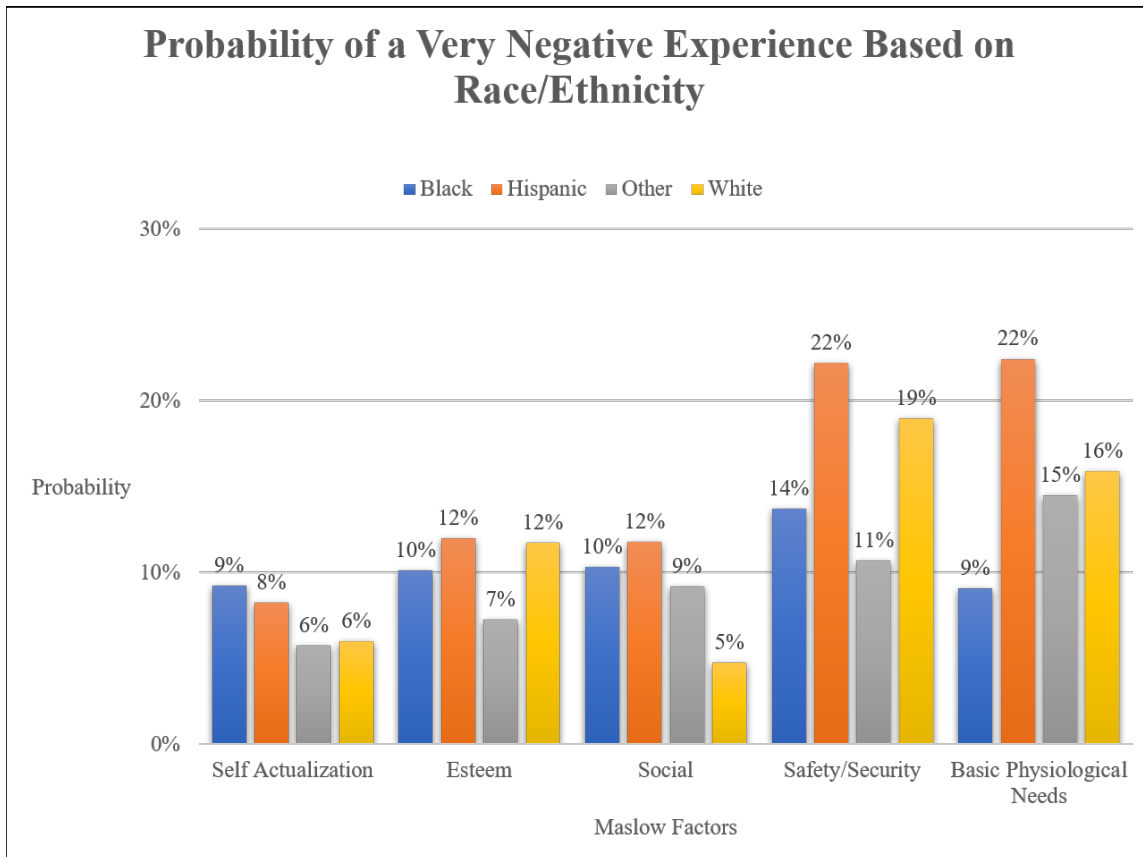


Lastly, females were more likely to record higher probabilities of importance in the bottom four needs categories, only equaling males in the Self-Actualization category. For Social Needs, female participants recorded a probability of high importance 15% higher than males and 4% higher in Safety and Security Needs.

3. Very Negative Experience

In Figure 8, the “Very Negative” experiences of sailors are categorized by race within Maslow’s Factors. Hispanics show the highest probabilities in four of the five categories, including 22% in Safety/Security and Basic Physiological Needs. Blacks show the lowest probability in Basic Physiological Needs, yet Whites show the lowest probability of a “Very Negative” experience in the Social Needs factor at 5%. Overall, Self-Actualization and Social Needs show the lowest probability of “Very Negative” experiences, while the greatest disparity between races/ethnicities is among lower-level needs (Social Needs, Safety/Security, and Basic Physiological Needs). The greatest disparities among racial/ethnic minorities and Whites are found in lower-level needs, specifically in Social Needs. Here, racial/ethnic minorities are more than twice as likely to have a “Very Negative” experience than Whites.

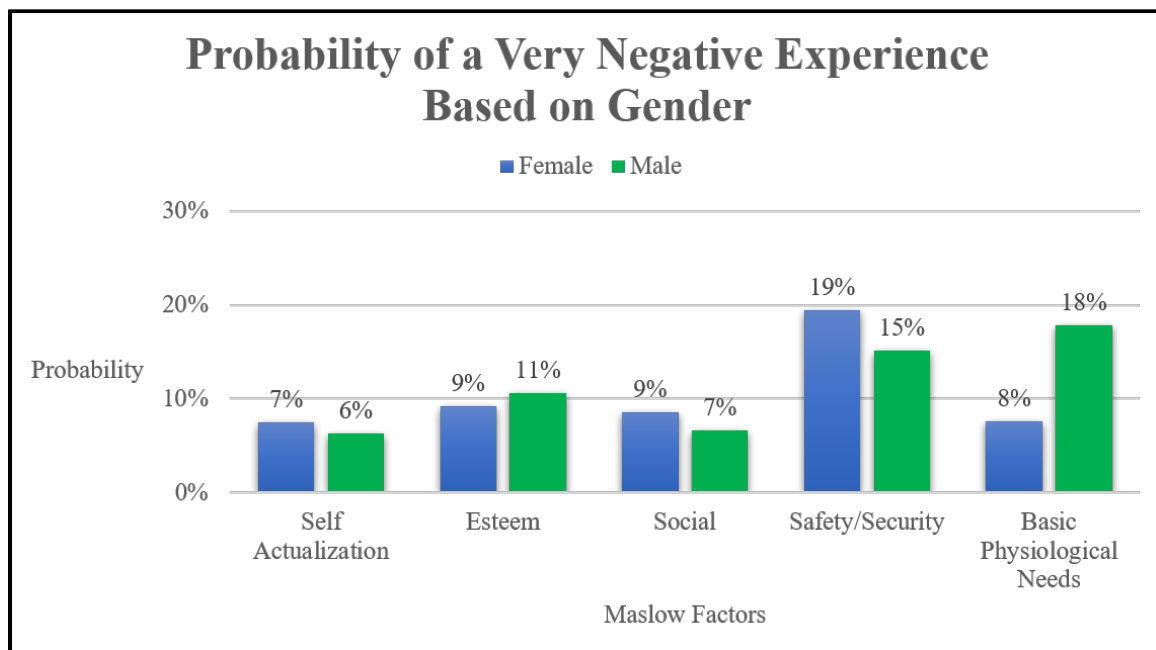
Figure 8. Maslow factor Race/Ethnicity negative experience comparison



4. Gender

The probability of “Very Negative” experiences among genders is depicted in Figure 9. For both genders, probabilities of a “Very Negative” experience remained below 20% and hovered relatively close in proximity for each factor, apart from Basic Physiological Needs. The assumption for the difference in probabilities for Basic Physiological Needs is that berthing accommodations may differ for females and males onboard surface ships due to population and command safety precautions, which may contribute to differences in experiences. Females and males show the greatest difference in Safety/Security and Basic Physiological Needs. Overall “Very Negative” experiences in lower-level needs were higher among males, however, females had the highest “Very Negative” experience in Safety/Security with 19% compared to 8% in Basic Physiological Needs. The belief behind an increase in probability for females’ “Very Negative” experience under Safety/Security may be due to concerns with personal safety as it relates to sexual assault and harassment. Altogether, Self-Actualization and Social Needs exhibited the lowest probability of “Very Negative” experiences for both groups.

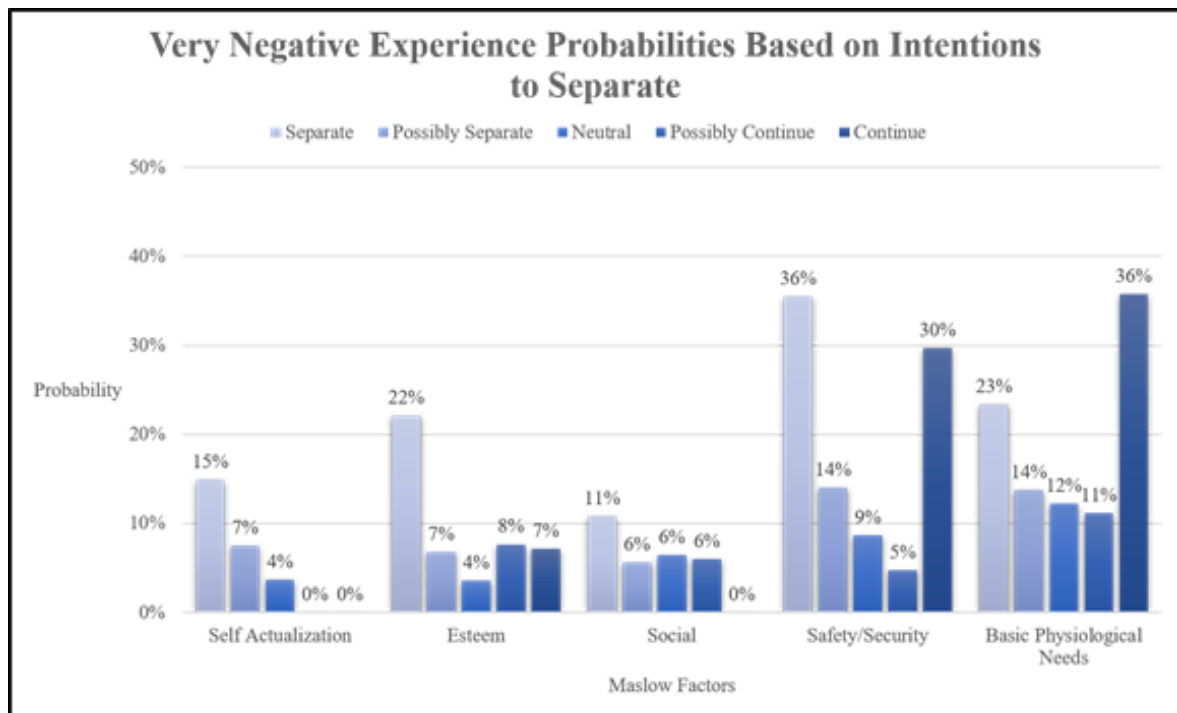
Figure 9. Male/Female breakdown



5. Intentions to Separate

In Figure 10, the “Very Negative” experiences of sailors are categorized by intentions to separate within Maslow’s Factors. First-term sailors who intended to separate led four of the five categories, with the exception of Basic Physiological Needs. The expectation was that first-term sailors who intended to separate would be more likely to have “Very Negative” experiences in each category, but a stark observation of the data shows first-term sailors who intended to continue active duty service had the highest probability of “Very Negative” experiences in Basic Physiological Needs and was only 6% points lower than the leading category of first-term sailors intending to separate for Safety/Security Needs. More importantly, there was a 0% probability of a “Very Negative” experience for first-term sailors who intended to continue service under Self-Actualization and Social Needs. First-term sailors with an intention to possibly continue service also had a 0% probability of a “Very Negative” experience under Self-Actualization. Overall, lower-level needs carried the highest probabilities of “Very Negative” experiences.

Figure 10. Maslow Factors Separation intentions/ Very negative experience



6. Chapter Conclusion

Our initial analysis shows statistically significant findings regarding Self-Actualization and Social Needs. Self-Actualization is a higher-level need and depends heavily on the leaders, not the organization. Ozguner and Ozguner (2014) state “A person attempting to satisfy this need seeks challenging work assignments that allow for creativity and opportunities for personal growth and advancement.” However, Social Needs encompasses acceptance, affiliation, belonging, and love. As it relates to Herzberg’s Two-Factor model, Social Needs strongly correlate to interpersonal relationships. “People need to feel needed. People need to feel they belong and are an important part of the group” (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). Social Needs recorded the lowest responses for both females and males regarding level of importance. Furthermore, racial/ethnic minorities are more than twice as likely to have a “Very Negative” experience than Whites.

For this reason, we chose to narrow the scope of our analysis and focus solely on Social Needs and the specific factors affecting retention decisions for minorities. Social Needs has low importance for all demographics relative to other Maslow categories, yet “Very Negative” experiences are higher for minorities in Social Needs in comparison to other Maslow categories.

I. FINDINGS ON “SOCIAL NEEDS” FACTORS

This section shifts toward a more focused analysis of Social Needs. Figures 11–15 below, compare the “Highest Level of Importance” and “Very Negative” experiences with Social Needs for minorities compared to others. Social Needs consists of four individual factors: Camaraderie, Peer Support, Personal Mentorship, and Professional Mentorship. “Oxford defines Camaraderie as mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together” (“Camaraderie,” 2020). In similar fashion, “Peer Support involves a process of giving and receiving help among individuals who are in similar situations. A peer can be defined as a person of equal standing with another—someone who is equal to another person in some important respect such as age, social class, or experience” (“Peer Support,” 2006). Mentorship is separated into Personal Mentorship and Professional Mentorship to account for differences in guidance, influence, and direction. Personal

Mentorship can be defined as guidance received on personal matters, yet Professional Mentorship considers technical, career, and job-related advice and direction.

1. Highest Level of Importance

In Figure 11, first-term sailor responses to the four individual factors of Social Needs are depicted. Camaraderie is the most important Social Needs factor to Blacks, Whites and Others, while Personal Mentorship is the most meaningful to Hispanics. Blacks and Others maintained the highest overall averages of importance among the four demographics: leading three of four categories. In contrast, Whites recorded the lowest average of importance, specifically in mentorship, while Hispanics averaged lower in Camaraderie and Peer Support. Altogether, Minorities are 11% points more likely to feel Social Needs are of high importance than Whites.

Figure 11. Race/High social need importance comparison

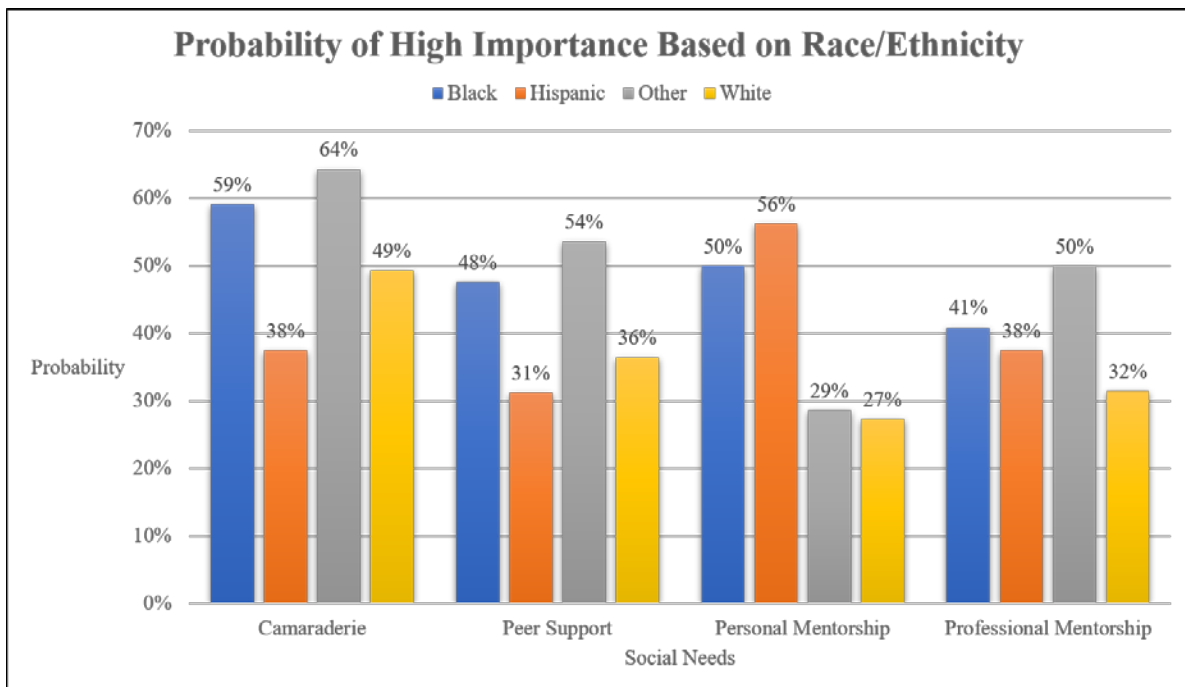
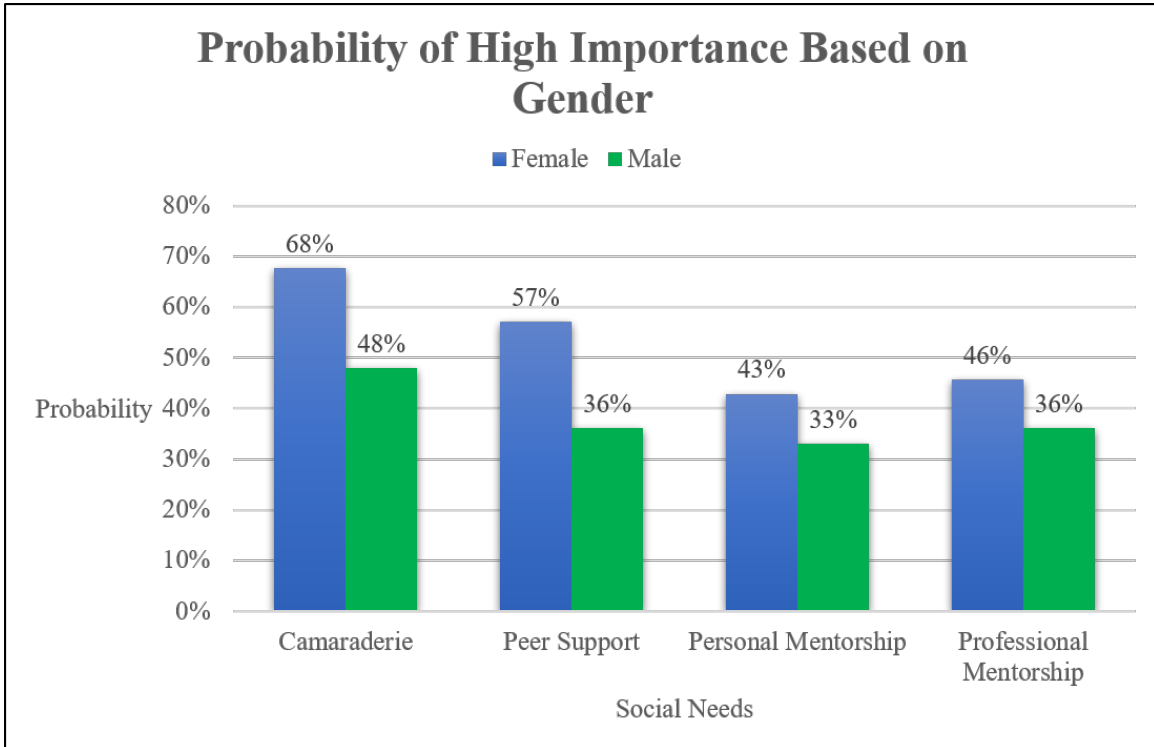


Figure 12 illustrates gender comparisons with Social Needs factors. Females are 20% more likely to feel Camaraderie and Peer Support are of high importance than males, leading all four factors by as much as 21% but not less than 10%. Camaraderie was listed

as the most important Social Needs factor, with the highest response by both groups and averaging 58% probability of high importance. With an overall average of 47.5%, Peer Support came in 10% lower than Camaraderie. Of note, Female and Male first-term sailors considered Personal and Professional Mentorship the least important Social Needs factors. Overall, females are more likely to feel Social Needs are more important than males.

Figure 12. Male/Female social need importance comparison

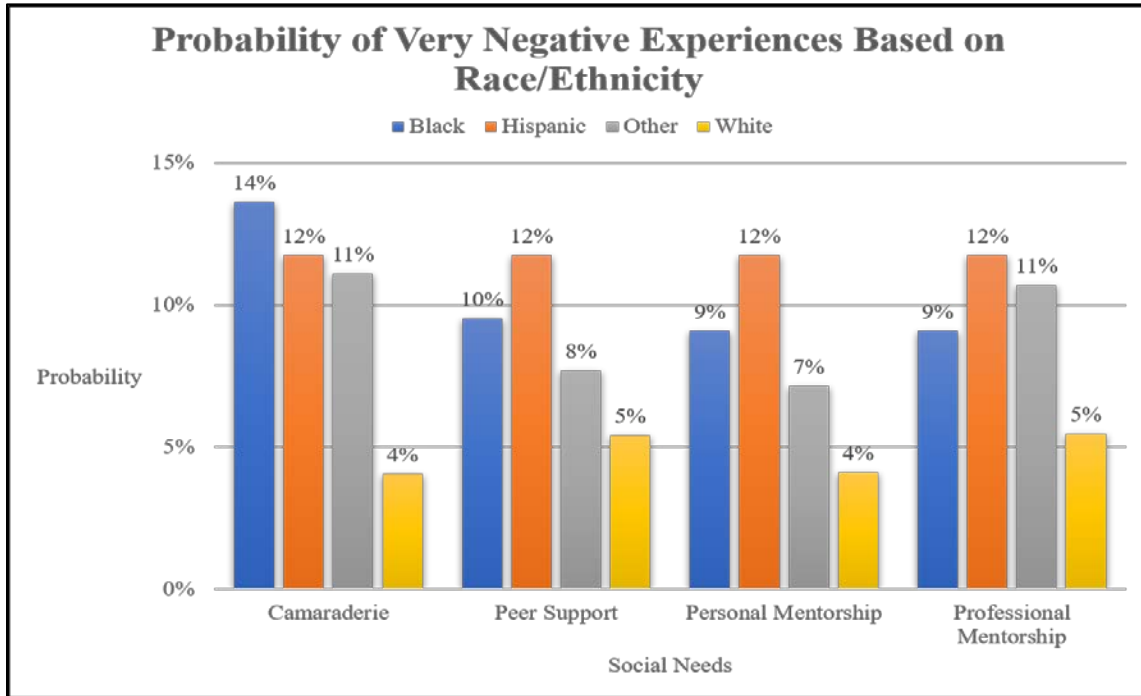


2. Very Negative Experience

The probabilities of “Very Negative” experiences between Races/Ethnicities based on Social Needs Factors are highlighted in Figure 13 Overall, Hispanics averaged the highest probability of “Very Negative” experiences among racial/ethnic groups with 12%. Blacks recorded the highest probability of “Very Negative” experiences under Camaraderie, while Whites were the least likely to have a “Very Negative” experience, averaging 4.5% throughout the Social Needs factors. It was our belief Minorities would have significantly higher probabilities of “Very Negative” experiences regarding

interpersonal relations and as a result of our analysis, Minorities are as much as 3 times more likely to have a “Very Negative” experience as it relates to Social Needs compared to Whites.

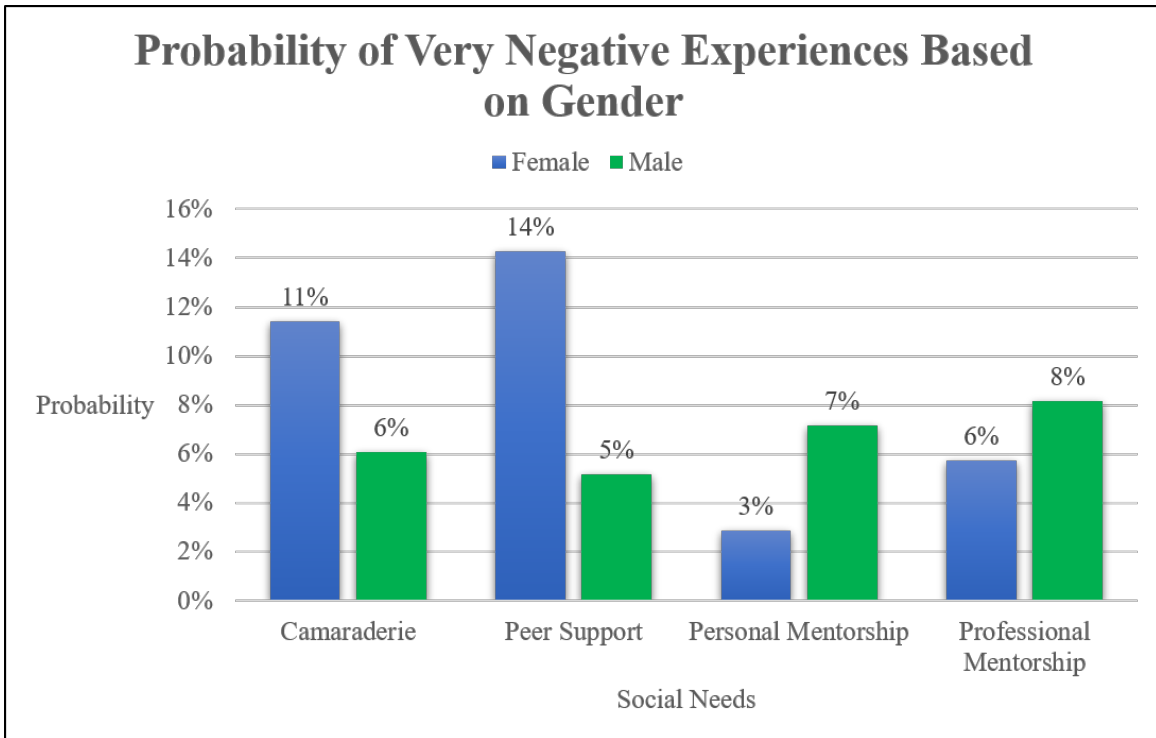
Figure 13. Race and negative experience probability



In reference to Figure 14, genders are compared based on their responses to Social Needs factors. Females were more likely to feel a “Very Negative” experience for Peer Support and Camaraderie, yet males were more likely to have a “Very Negative” experience pertaining to Personal and Professional Mentorship. At 14%, females were 2.8 times more probable to have a “Very Negative” experience regarding Peer Support compared to males. Although close in probability percentage, females were less likely to have a “Very Negative” experience relating to Mentorship-related factors. Under Personal Mentorship, females were only 3% likely to have a “Very Negative” experience. It was our assumption females would have a higher probability of “Very Negative” experiences altogether due to the overwhelming composition of males in the Navy. As shown in Figure 5, males make up 80% of the Navy. Despite forming one-fifth of today’s Navy, females have a low probability of “Very Negative” experiences regarding mentorship-related

factors. In contrast, the probabilities of “Very Negative” experiences increase substantially for females in peer-related factors.

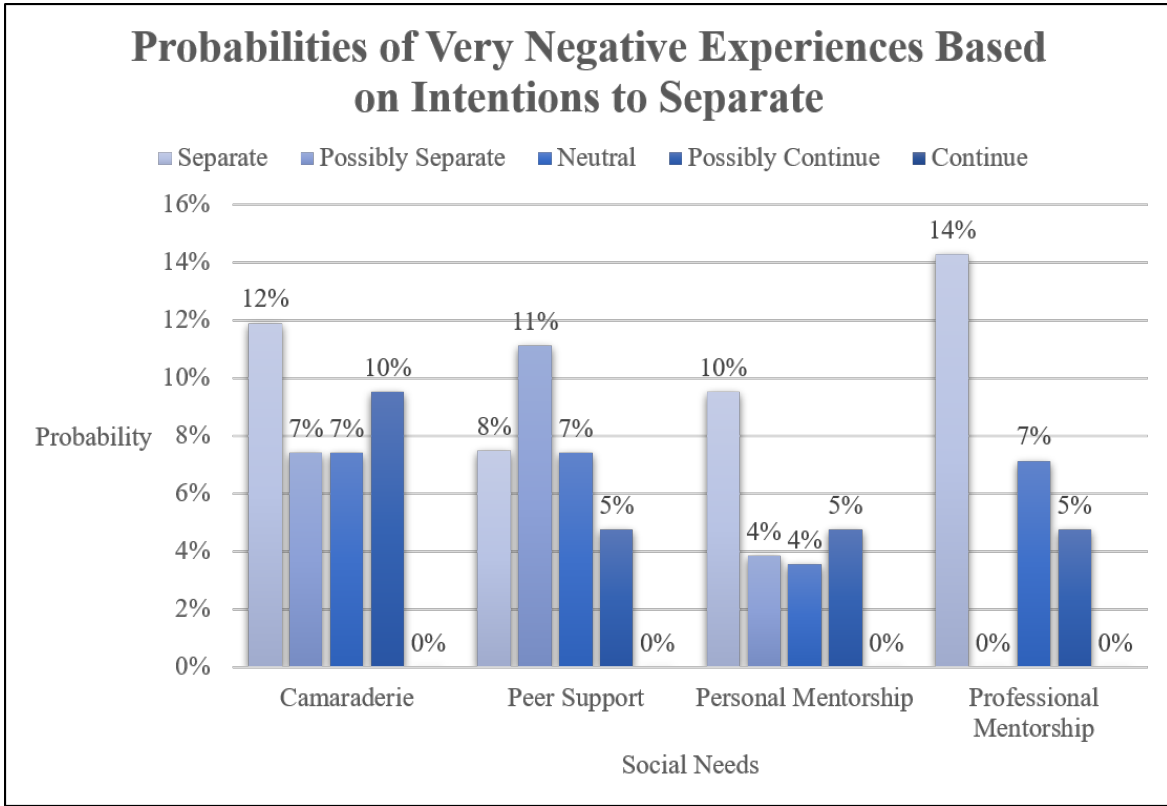
Figure 14. Male/Female social need negative experience comparison



3. Intentions to Separate

The data depicted in Figure 15 shows the comparisons between first-term sailor intentions to separate and the Social Needs factors. It was our belief sailors leaning towards intending to separate would have higher probabilities of “Very Negative” experiences, and data would show a downward trend in probabilities from Separating to Continuing Service. Even though first term separating sailors led three of four factors and sailors intending to Continue Service had a 0% probability of having a “Very Negative” experience in every Social Needs factor, this did not prove our belief to be true. Sailors Possibly Separating also had a 0% probability under Professional Mentorship and at 11%, were more likely to feel a “Very Negative” experience regarding Peer Support. The bottom line is sailors separating from the Navy have an overall higher probability to have a “Very Negative” experience with Social Needs.

Figure 15. Probability comparison based on social need experience and intentions to separate



J. CHAPTER CONCLUSION—SOCIAL NEEDS

It was observed through several comparisons in the data analysis process that, although Social Needs are not as important to participants as the four remaining needs categories in the hierarchy, it is one area where racial/ethnic minorities and females are both more likely to have a “Very Negative” experience and are more likely than non-minorities and males to feel the factors are of high importance. With respect to Social Needs, minorities were more than twice as likely to have a “Very Negative” experience and 10 percentage points more likely on average to rate the individual factors as having high importance. It should also be noted that females are 1.4 times more probable on average to feel Social Needs are of high importance and are also more likely to have a “Very Negative” experience concerning Camaraderie and Peer Support compared to males.

In Dr. Steve Rose's article, "What are Our Social Needs?," he defines Social Needs as "the need for a perceived sense of personal significance achieved through a perceived sense of both social belonging and social contribution" (Rose, 2015). By incorporating social belonging and social contribution through a sense of connection, friendship, intimacy, and trust, Social Needs appear to link lower-level needs and higher-level needs. Furthermore, Social Needs have an external reliance on peers, superiors, role models, and the organization itself. Sailors are social beings as all humans are, and when a perceived sense of social belonging and social contribution is fulfilled, a sense of well-being often leads to the ability to pursue Esteem and Self-Actualization. However, "when social needs are not met and our sense of personal significance is threatened, we compensate through fight or flight responses to restore or escape our lost sense of significance" (Rose, 2015). The lack of a sense of social belonging and social contribution negatively impacts retention decisions for racial/ethnic minorities and females.

Data analysis of the first-term sailor retention survey responses determined Social Needs factors to be the most prominent in influencing retention decisions of underrepresented groups. In the following chapter, we use semi-structured individual interviews to discover the underlying themes behind Social Needs and their impacts on retention decisions of first-term sailors.

VI. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OF FIRST-TERM SAILORS

A. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the survey responses, presented in the prior chapter, gives us some insight into racial/ethnic and gender differences in factors that determine first-term retention decisions. While the survey responses analysis tells us about *what* the stated differences in these factors are, the interviews provide us with a better understanding of *why* these different perceptions might occur. For example, the surveys told us that some first-term sailors had “Very Negative” experiences regarding camaraderie. With the individual interviews, we learn what could have caused the sailors to answer they had “Very Negative” experiences that impacted their first-term stay/leave decision. In this chapter, we describe the interview process, and present the main themes identified from the interviews we conducted, along with quotes that exemplify these themes.

B. INTERVIEW METHODOLOGY

We used a semi-structured individual interview approach, immediately following the collection of survey responses from first-term sailors of four Navy ships. To note, we invited all the survey respondents to sit for an interview. Thirty-one percent of the sailors that filled survey answers volunteered to do continue with the interview. The sample of sailors that generated interview answers may not be random.

Findings and recommendations from prior studies on retention of underrepresented groups (as referenced in Chapter IV) served as the framework for designing the interview questions for our project. The interview structure (Appendix B) consists of six broad questions, covering the main issues typically surrounding first-term sailor retention decisions: (1) interpersonal relationships, (2) diversity, (3) management style, and (4) other key factors not covered in the survey.

Participation in interviews was entirely voluntary. The interviews were conducted over the course of several hours, after the surveys were completed during our morning brief to (nearly) all first-termers on the four ships. The one-on-one interviews were conducted in a private area with only the research team and sailor present. Completing a survey was

not a requirement for participating in an interview, however, the process was designed to sequentially highlight key factors in a sailor's retention decision on the survey before going into the semi-structured interview. Interviews were kept anonymous (no identifiers such as names, places were referenced in the interview). The interview was audio-recorded, and the recording was subsequently transcribed. Following interview transcription, the NPS data collection team analyzed the responses in each interview to identify recurring themes on factors considered in the stay/leaving decision by first-term sailors we interviewed.

As noted above, sample-selection bias may be present in the themes identified from the interview discussions. The first-term sailors who volunteered to seat for the interview might have had stronger positive and/or negative feelings toward the factors concerning their retention decisions. In our observations, some members of underrepresented-groups refused to discuss certain topics, but offered additional details after the recorder was turned off. The majority of those off-the-record conversations concerned possible differences in treatment due to race/ethnicity, perceived favoritism towards other sailors, and overall isolation. Not being able to use these as part of our analysis may understate the extent of some of the findings from the interview answers.

C. THEMES

In this section, we present the findings from the semi-structured individual interviews. The goal of conducting the interviews was to gain additional depth into the factors first-term sailors consider most impactful for their stay/leave decisions, and whether these factors vary between the majority and under-represented groups (defined by race/ethnicity and gender). Where applicable, we present the theme and its underlying sub-themes, organizing the discussion using comparisons between non-Hispanic white sailors and the members of underrepresented race/ethnic groups, and between males and females. Just as defined in Chapter II, underrepresented groups are classified as the aggregate group of Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native-American/Other Pacific Islander, and Other Sailors.

Listed below are six themes identified from analyzing the interview transcripts. They capture insights around Social Needs, other related factors, and correlating themes, as follows:

Theme 1: Underrepresented groups mention facing different hurdles than the comparison group, on issues related to Navy policies, culture, and interpersonal communication.

Theme 2: Underrepresented groups discuss more often than the comparison group less beneficial experiences with mentors. The interviews revealed some examples of positive mentoring experiences mentioned by sailors from the under-represented group.

Theme 3: Underrepresented groups mention limited opportunities in the Navy more often than non-Hispanic whites.

Theme 4: Underrepresented groups are more likely than the group of non-Hispanic white sailors to bring up in the interview difficulties fitting in with peers.

Theme 5: Most first-term sailors interviewed mentioned that they view soft skills in management as important and lacking.

Theme 6: Most enlisted sailors and junior officers interviewed state they value working with prior-enlisted officers.

1. Theme 1. Underrepresented groups mention facing different hurdles than the comparison group, on issues related to Navy policies, culture, interpersonal communication

Members of the underrepresented groups who volunteered to discuss factors that are most important in their stay/leave decisions mentioned they often felt they were treated differently, often unfairly, by their superiors.

For example, several black sailors spoke on how certain Navy-wide policies on grooming were meant for white people. Even informal guidance was cited as insulting to underrepresented groups. One such example mentioned by an interviewee points to guidance when going on a port visit.

Other hurdles brought up by members of the underrepresented group relate to interpersonal relationships with superiors and role models, where they discussed issues of communication and relatability.

In the interview transcripts, nearly all of the sailors from the underrepresented group mentioned instances where they perceived that the issues they brought up to their supervisor/ leadership were ignored, marginalized, or even swept under the rug. One such example regards gender issues, including sexual assault, which might be outdated. Other sailors mentioned that, in response to the lack of response from leaders, they developed a sense of distrust and isolation from leadership. In the interviews, we noticed a change in behavior by underrepresented sailors when discussing mentor relationships and treatment by superiors.

In our experience during the interviews, approximately half of the underrepresented sailors were hesitant to discuss unfair treatment during interviews, some avoiding direct references to situations, or resorted to writing their true feelings on pieces of paper. Others refrained from discuss race-related issues with the voice recorder running, but opened up when the recorder stopped. The observation that some of the underrepresented-group sailors we interviewed felt the need to speak about their experiences off the record is worth taking into account and further investigating. It could be due to a culture of fear of retribution. To reiterate, our study was designed to maintain anonymity and participation was entirely voluntary. sailors of both underrepresented groups (race/ethnicity, and gender) expressed a sense of discomfort in the working environment and negative influences on their psychological safety.

Here are some quotes demonstrating the different hurdles faced by sailors, mentioned in the interviews.

(Underrepresented-group female): “I don’t think there’s anything that’d make me want to reenlist, other than ... [to] just take care of my family. My family is really what pushes me to deal with all of this. But right now, I don’t see anything positive with moving forth and continuing...I’m not comfortable with the environment. I recently just did a survey on our command. We had a Command Climate Survey, and I literally—I’m not comfortable. I put that on there. I’m not comfortable being in this environment. No, I’m not comfortable.”

(White female): “Well, I will just tell you—and I’m allowed to talk about it ’cause it’s okay—but I was stationed on a different ship before this, and my immediate supervisor ... sexually assaulted me. ... [H]e was supposed to be my leader, which made it all the more worse. ... [T]his individual not

only was promoted to ¹[...], but h [H]e was entrusted with so many things and was supposed to be my leader. And so it's not only like faulty leadership on his part, obviously, but also faulty leadership on the people surrounding him that maybe didn't see some things that they should have. I think that, after that experience, there was a lot of people who, obviously, helped me and a lot of positive female role models, which is huge for me as a female. But even then, I don't think that—I just think that the culture and the leadership style is pretty widespread, and it's lacking, and there's just a certain—there's just like a culture to it. And it needs to be better. And somebody like me, it makes me not want to stay in. And I mean I think that most people would understand why, but even if I hadn't had that experience, I still would feel like the leadership is lacking this way up the chain.”

(Underrepresented-group male): “As a person of color, I can't shave every day. I can't do it, literally just cannot do it, because if I do...I'm gonna get hair bumps everywhere. | Now you're telling me shave or get out. How fair is that? I'm gonna call it oversight because I think it's just the fact that they want everybody to look one way, but if you want to be diverse, everybody doesn't look the same way.”

(White male): “I don't see a lot of like initial racism I do see that sometimes there can be troubles and miscommunication. I had that with a sailor that we had two years back. He was an African American and he spoke kinda in a different dialect sometimes. And so sometimes that made it difficult for me to work with him, and it just made [it] kinda a frustration on me 'cause I wasn't always willing to really work to understand him sometimes 'cause of like I just kinda grew out of patience for it—which I feel bad about... I think that's the biggest factor I think, is, honestly, is communication. If we just talk to each other and we, like I said, we just learn like where we came from, it makes us better as people and it makes us better as a command to trust each other better.”

(Underrepresented-group female): “[sailor's recount of command liberty guidance] And then you go on liberty and they'd be like, “Oh, when you go on liberty, go with somebody you trust... You don't have to go with people that are your color...[J]ust go out with somebody you trust. You don't have to go out with just black people.”.... Like I work in a high stress environment...And just having that little thing like that playing in the back of your head only adds to the stress.”

(Underrepresented-group male): “I'm very much aware of my surroundings, and I don't believe I have the same amount of rope as my counterparts in general. It's just things, life in general, things I've seen. I try to be a little bit more careful how I go about things because I don't want to

¹ Content removed to preserve the anonymity of the respondent

be labeled as, “Oh, this guy is aggressive,” which is often something people like to label people that look like me...we don’t have the same amount of rope, like we don’t get that cushion that others get, and that’s just the reality, and that sucks.”

2. Theme 2: Underrepresented groups discuss more often than the comparison group less beneficial experiences with mentors

As Ozguner and Ozguner (2016) explain:

The road to better motivation, according to Herzberg’s theory, is to make the job more meaningful and satisfying. Whenever possible, jobs should be made to offer a greater sense of responsibility, achievement, recognition, and growth potential.

The role of mentors and superiors is helping meet the low-level and high-level needs of their subordinates. The phrase “people don’t leave bad jobs; they leave bad managers” is often used in the private sector to simplify the importance of the superior’s impact on individuals, the working environment, and retention.

The Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) define career functions as ways “meant to help the mentee advance in his or her career and include coaching, sponsorship, protection, and providing challenging assignments,” while also defining psycho-social functions as a way to “enhance a mentee’s feelings of competence, identity, and effectiveness and include role modeling, friendship, counseling, and providing acceptance and confirmation.”(MLDC, 2010) We also define superiors as shipboard personnel who are higher in position, rank/pay grade or watch station.

Sailors of all racial/ethnic groups and both genders highlighted how important mentorship and leadership support was for them. Overall, non-Hispanic White interviewees mentioned more positive and cohesive mentor relationships with command personnel, while underrepresented groups were more likely to mention feelings of disconnect and a lack of guidance between them and senior members on board, sometimes due to weak relatability or communication issues. Here are some quotes demonstrating the importance of mentors and how underrepresented groups tend to have less beneficial mentor relationships.

(White female): “I think having a proper role model is better for us. ... [Y]our friends are good ... but you also need to have somebody who’s been through it before.”

(White male): “[When discussing an influential role model] “The Captain—the biggest thing he told me when I checked onboard ... ‘We take pride in you being yourself.’”

(Underrepresented-group female): “I feel like leadership has to kinda sit down sometimes with people and say, ‘Hey, what is it that you think you need or what is it that you want for us to do? Even if it’s only 5 years or you’re gonna do 20 years, what is it we can do to help you on your path, whatever that is?’ And I feel like people need that individualized [attention] sometimes, so that way they know that they’re cared for and they’re not just another number to another Chief or to another Division officer.”

(Underrepresented-group female): “I don’t feel supported or helped...It’s kind of just been me, hitting my head until I get a little bit further...you just push yourself through.”

The interviews revealed some examples of positive mentoring experiences mentioned by sailors from the underrepresented group. Interestingly, when one female from an underrepresented group had a beneficial experience with a mentor, it was treated as a pleasant surprise, as if she was lucky to have had one. There were not such responses to positive mentorship experiences from non-Hispanic white sailors, as they appeared to make it seem like it was normal to have a good mentor.

(Underrepresented-group female): “[H]aving an African American female who also had natural hair come into my division, where I was the only female, it was just like a sigh of relief. Like we instantly connected. ... [Referring to a Warrant officer discussed earlier in the interview] He was a Caucasian male. He was an older gentleman, but he reminded me of my dad. They really helped me get qualified, [and] get my pin super early. Like it was just really nice to have their support all the time.”

3. Theme 3: Underrepresented groups mention limited opportunities in the Navy more often than non-Hispanic whites

Most people would want to have some upward mobility in their profession. Upward mobility in one’s profession is a factor in the stay/leave decision. Any perceived limitation in their opportunities to succeed in the Navy could affect sailors’ job satisfaction and retention in their job. Due to the racial/ethnic and gender disparities among those in higher

ranks (as we described in Chapter II), underrepresented groups could have a sense of more limited opportunities. This is exemplified in the following quotes.

(Underrepresented-group female): “Like where’s my future? And even my mom was like, ‘You’re not really gonna do 20. No one’s gonna pick you to be a CO of a command one day or something like that. So that’s the uncertainty.’ I’m like, ‘Well, I’ll just have to wait and see and do the best I can.’ But that’s the uncertainty; like even my mom doesn’t think the Navy’s gonna pick me to be in command.”

(Underrepresented-group male): “There’s no one I can relate to in the wardroom. So, for sure, there are some personalities that I like, but it would be cool if there was another [person of the same race/ethnicity] in the wardroom...it would be nice if there was somebody I could relate to.”

(Underrepresented-group male): “[If] you go look at other branches, it’s not uncommon to see people of color in senior leadership. There’s a huge disparity between the Navy and its leadership and what it looks like versus almost all the other branches. Like I’ve gone to different places and I’ve seen people of color as a CO, XO, top guy or whatever. And then you see Navy it’s usually white. ... I do feel like I have to work harder than my counterparts.”

(Underrepresented-group male): [Responding to bad bosses, their personalities, and reasons he’d reenlist] “Probably personalities, how well one is probably put together or squared away. Like I know a few officers on other ships that I would absolutely love to work for, like I want to work with this guy...I think it’s the similarity thing. We’re a lot alike. I spoke to them offline, and I’ve seen their work. Just, man, I want them to come here. Do you know what I mean? And then if I were ever to do that or get that kind of flexibility of where I go—I understand that you get that flexibility when you slate for new commands. Before you do that, pick the ideal location. I would 100% circle number five [continuing on active duty]

4. Theme 4: Underrepresented groups are more likely than the non-Hispanic white sailors to bring up fitting in with peers in the interview difficulties

For this study, peers are defined as shipboard personnel “belonging to the same societal group, based on age, grade, or status” (“Peer,” 2020). Non-Hispanic white interview participants tended to have stronger senses of camaraderie onboard, compared to underrepresented groups. Non-Hispanic white females did not tend to have any worse sense of camaraderie than their male counterpart.

(White male): “We’re a big melting pot, and we’ve clashed many times, but at the end of the day I think we all thoroughly love each other and we help each other no matter what, like at work, not at work. I know if I needed help doing whatever tasks, I’d call someone that I know that I work with, and I know that they’d be there for me (White-majority interviewee).”

(Underrepresented-group male): “I don’t hang out in the wardroom. I feel like if you say the wrong thing to another officer, they may or may not have your back. We’re supposed to be one team, one fight, but just that culture is like—you know what they say about the SWO pin? They got two swords, one to stab the guy in front of you and one to stab the guy behind you.”

Also, perceptions of commonality was a recurring topic throughout the interviews where non-Hispanic white interviewees expressed commonality in terms of personality and attitude. Yet, underrepresented groups expressed commonality with peers based on ethnicity, common mistreatment by superiors, and whether peers identified as being a part of the LGTBQ community. Interpersonal relationships with peers can be viewed in the same manner as mentor relationships, where issues among peers are derived from personality, as well as unconscious biases and personal beliefs regarding underrepresented groups. The limited number of underrepresented groups in the Navy was mentioned as a barrier for these sailors who expressed periods of isolation and depression as a result of limited camaraderie.

Expanding personality assessments and soft skill development into entrance level training (boot camp, OCS, ROTC, USNA) and follow-on service schools, may have the potential to improve peer relationships by reducing unconscious biases, and enhancing emotional and cultural intelligence.

5. Theme 5: Most first-term sailors interviewed mentioned that they view soft skills in management as important and lacking

“Soft skills, often called ‘people skills’ refers to the understanding of people and the ability to manage them in social contexts” (Cappelli & Won, 2013). Examples of soft skills include communication skills, emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, negotiating, empathy, and work ethic. Many interviewees expressed the notion of a trickle-down effect from senior leadership down to lower-level junior officers. It was their experience that senior-level officers established a tone for the working environment and in

turn directly influenced the behavior and management style of junior sailors. The quote below demonstrates an example of a lack of empathy.

(Underrepresented-group male): “I really don’t think it’s their personality. I think it comes with the community that they’re in. I feel like, because that’s the way they operate, that’s what they think is right to do. It’s like a culture...This is what we do. This is how we’re supposed to do it ... We have discussions, in berthing, and they’d be like, “Yeah, so I mean like, because this was done to me, I’m gonna make sure that happens to the next guy.”

Interview transcripts uncovered detailed reasoning for first-term sailor preferences in leadership. Sailors placed overall experience, knowledge, personality, and technical knowledge atop the list of answers, while concurrently emphasizing soft skills. Soft skills appear to be the separator between good and bad leaders. Below are quotes highlighting interviewees’ discussions regarding management style, with a few noting the problems with the culture in the SWO community.

(White female): “They cared about those people who were under them, and they worked in a way where their presence was effective but it was never overbearing. It was like they did their job well, but they weren’t in everything. They didn’t micromanage. They focused on the things that were under their control, and then they let us do our jobs. And trusted us.”

(Underrepresented-group female): “They’re losing their talent because their talent’s either choosing to get out or switching communities. So, when you look at those senior SWOs, which to me is my deciding factor, you don’t inspire me to stay here. And I sit here and I wonder how far would you make it if you were in a different community or if you were in the civilian sector?”

(Underrepresented-group female): “My answer to the solution is the Navy needs to get better. They need to get more selective in who they’re promoting in that Surface Warfare community. I think that there does need to be better leadership throughout the Surface Warfare community ... better skill training and development. Why is the SWO community the only non-technical job in the United States Military that has to offer a retention bonus? You don’t even have to offer a retention bonus to an infantry officer in the United States Marine Corps.”

6. Theme 6: Most enlisted Sailors and Junior Officers interviewed state they value working with prior-enlisted officers

One factor that could explain differences in management style is whether an officer is prior-enlisted. Based on personal experience, we suspected that sailors might prefer serving under prior-enlisted officers, or Mustangs as they are known as. This would largely be due to prior-enlisted officers having experienced the enlisted life, and, thus, the opportunity to develop some of the soft skills, described above, that would help them be good leaders. Such soft skills include being empathetic and having good cultural awareness and good communication skills. With this in mind, we included a question on this at the end of our semi-structured interviews, although we did not get to those questions in all interviews.

From the interview transcripts, we found that most sailors who spoke to us (both enlisted and junior officers) did indeed prefer serving with prior-enlisted officers. There were several reasons mentioned, such as understanding what is reasonable to ask of enlisted sailors, avoiding the unnecessary tasks, and generally treating sailors better. Some also said that ROTC-commissioned officers were preferred next, and Academy graduates were the least-preferred to serve under for a few reasons, including that some of them acted like they were better than the rest and some rules did not apply to them.

Here are some quotes that illustrate discussion points on experiences with prior-enlisted officers.

(Underrepresented-group female): “In general, people who are prior enlisted kind of have just like a more down-to-earth way of going about business...I think officers are a little better off on board when they’ve been prior-enlisted, because I think they have a better understanding of how both sides work, rather than just having a one-sided approach. Some officers talk to enlisted sometimes gives off the impression of just ‘I’m more high and mighty than you’ kind of thing.”

(White male): “So, prior-enlisted definitely are a little bit more grounded. Like they know, ‘Okay, this is what’s expected. This is what’s actually accomplished. Like you can actually do this.’ ... [P]eople from the Academy ... seem to come here and they already have it in their head that they know what’s going on. ... They did their schooling ... but it doesn’t automatically qualify you because there’s a lot to learn on a ship And

so I believe that Mustangs work better. And I've always been actually kinda curious why we don't encourage that more, because to me it makes more sense to have somebody who's had naval experience first go into ... an officer role, as opposed to bringing somebody who has no naval experience and being in charge of an entire division."

The discussions with the interviewed first-term sailors present several suggestions on improving management effectiveness. One enlisted sailor had the recommendation that all officers spend a few or several months as an enlisted sailor aboard a ship so that they understand the life of an enlisted sailor. This could include improvements to the summer program for Academy and ROTC members to spend time in an operational and sea-going command. The Naval Academy currently uses midshipmen cruises (that are a few weeks in length) to acclimate future officers to the rigor of sea duty. However, the program could be expanded to include a longer period on a ship and a required assessment to be completed by a designated representative onboard, preferably a senior enlisted sailor. Currently, there is no uniform structure for ships to follow when directing midshipmen during their summer cruises, so midshipmen sailors typically spend their time onboard shadowing more senior officers or observing training drills. To enhance their learning experience, midshipmen could serve their time onboard in an enlisted capacity, performing maintenance and standing watch with the junior enlisted sailors. Upon completion of the midshipman's time onboard, the assessment would be forwarded to the Naval Academy to be included in their Quality Point Rating (QPR). Being included in the QPR could give the midshipmen the incentive to work hard and be respectful. Suggestions also include increasing the number of enlisted sailors who become officers, which might be a worthwhile policy change. It could also reduce the burden to recruit and train new officers.

D. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Our analysis of the semi-structured individual interviews has highlighted several gaps in perceptions of belonging in the Navy across races/ethnicities and genders. Interpersonal relationships are a fundamental piece of Naval culture and tradition, yet the experiences affecting groups are quite different. The underrepresented groups discuss feelings of exclusion accompanied by periods of social isolation and personal insignificance. These experiences are often amplified during long periods underway. A

major contribution to the surface community's inability to retain and expand on underrepresented-group representation in senior ranks is a combination of a perception of lack of commonality, lack of relatability throughout, and leadership's ineffective use of soft skills to manage the diverse personnel.

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VII. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the factors that are most impactful in the first-termers' stay or leave decisions. Our survey tool and semi-structured interview discussions highlight the challenges underrepresented groups face while serving in the Navy and determine the extent to which those challenges were affecting their retention decisions. The two main research questions addressed in this thesis are listed below:

- What is the role of peers, role-models, and diversity on first-term retention decisions?
- What challenges do underrepresented groups face in the Navy?

Our survey and the interview approaches allowed us to focus on a wide range of factors explaining such challenges. The recurring themes from the interviews enlightened us about some of the difficulties underrepresented groups deal when it comes to the decision to stay or leave the Navy career. The problems appear to be partly rooted in Naval culture and tradition, from oversights in Naval policies that appear to present different constraints to Black sailors, to perceptions of limited opportunities for people of color and females based on few observed same-race/ethnicity and same-gender mentors and role models in higher ranks. Issues also occur due to alienation in interpersonal relationships with peers and superiors from problems with relatability and communication.

Each sailor joins the Navy for a different reason. Some sailors join for the pay and benefits; others join for the sense of duty or adventure; and still, others join for the opportunities to excel in the service of a larger mission. It would appear that most people considering a career in the Navy would want a chance at upward mobility and any limitation would affect job satisfaction and retention. The lack of representation resonates with underrepresented groups, as seen in the racial/ethnic and gender disparities in the higher ranks (Chapter II). During the interviews, people of color and females described the glass ceiling where diversity and representation stops. More so, the lack of representation

means policies are often put in place without the input of underrepresented groups, where adverse effects are chalked up as just another oversight. Greater representation in higher ranks may solve many of these problems. It sends a message to the underrepresented sailors that their voices are being heard, there is an example for them to follow, there are no limitations to what they can do, and most importantly, they can be themselves.

Current events also highlight a deep history of different vantage points. It was not until June of 2020, 155 years after the Civil War ended and 72 years after the Armed Forces were integrated, that the Navy decided to ban public displays of the confederate flag; often seen by White southerners as a symbol of heritage, but a constant visual reminder to people of color everywhere that racism and oppression are still alive and well.

We found camaraderie, mentorship, and leadership support to be important to sailors. However, interpersonal relationships experienced by underrepresented groups were not as positive as their White counterparts. Sailors of underrepresented groups discussed the isolation from being treated differently by peers and superiors; and they felt this much more strongly during the stress of deployments and long underway periods. Over time these experiences often lead to a fight or flight response (Chapter V) from not having someone to relate to those experiences. As a result, the retention decisions of underrepresented groups are negatively impacted by their reduced sense of social belonging and social contribution.

In light of exposure to these experiences, serving under prior-enlisted officers (Mustangs) appears to be a saving grace for some sailors. After all, a significant number of Mustangs are people of color and female, and through their experiences, they not only help those underrepresented groups with regard to commonality and relatability but also seem to possess the soft skills needed to effectively motivate a wide range of sailors.

Hannibal Barca is arguably one of the greatest military generals throughout history who could lead and inspire sailors from multicultural backgrounds who spoke different languages. Having come from the small nation of Carthage, he was able to bring the Roman Empire to its knees during the Second Punic War. Credit to his success can be attributed to a lifetime of training or his infamous war elephants, but his management style was also a

likely key contributing factor to his success. The majority of sailors who participated in the interviews favored leaders who, like Hannibal Barca, had better soft skills. It might be beneficial to increase the number of enlisted sailors who become officers. In doing so, a possible policy change may reduce the burden to recruit officers, cut recruiting and training costs, and stimulate retention of underrepresented groups. Additionally, an increased focus to develop the emotional intelligence and cultural awareness of service members throughout the Navy will undoubtedly enhance soft skills and therefore improve the retention of all sailors.

B. AN EXAMPLE OF HOW INSTITUTIONAL CUSTOMS NEED TO CHANGE

We recognized diversity in the Navy as an area in need of further research, and decided to focus the interviews on diversity based on the findings of prior theses, the Diversity and Inclusion Roadmap 2019, and information provided by the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We wanted to determine how much harder is it for underrepresented groups because there are fewer of them compared to Non-Hispanic White male sailors (Chapter II). Recent events have also begun to shed light on race-related issues rooted in problems within the Navy's culture. The lasting effects of reports from the 1920s that guided policy on integration are still being felt throughout the ranks. In November of 1925, the Chief of Staff conducted a study titled the Employment of Negro Manpower in War, which unfairly and incorrectly assessed black servicemembers. The study would conclude "negro men have an inferior mentality...and are inherently weak in character compared to white men" ("Employment of Negro Manpower in War," 1925).

Even today, certain institutional customs put underrepresented groups at a disadvantage. The United States Naval Academy's use of the Order of Merit (OOM) highlights disadvantages underrepresented groups face in pursuit of a commission. The system ranks midshipmen by lineal numbers, which are used when ultimately selecting service communities upon commission. OOM takes inputs from Military Performance and Physical Education (P.E.) among other categories. Military Performance includes peer and company leadership evaluations and Physical Education includes scores from required physical training, such as boxing and swimming. OOM is assessed at the end of every

semester and compounded just before graduation, which ultimately helps to “determine [a Midshipman’s] rank in class and lineal number in the Armed Forces” (Davis, 1996, p. 10).

Often, members of underrepresented groups are at a disadvantage in peer evaluations. They often find themselves alienated from the masses due to the shock of being immersed in a culture unfamiliar to their own. For underrepresented groups, the experience at the Academy is filled with pockets of challenges to fit in and to learn a foreign culture to be successful. Compiled with the academic workload, this can be quite challenging. Commonality and relatability once again show their importance as camaraderie and peer support increase in priority. For midshipmen who are not able to adapt to the newfound culture, their peer and company evaluations often reflect negatively. Generally, background differences and challenges with communication and personality issues result in the underrepresented-group midshipman being perceived as standoffish, aggressive, or even angry. In turn, their OOM ranking is negatively impacted.

Their OOM ranking might also be negatively impacted by the criteria used in the physical-training part of the assessment. As with all the armed forces, physical training is a major part of the Academy’s assessment criteria, and is another area where culture makes a difference. Activities like swimming and sailing are known to disadvantage underrepresented groups, mainly Black people, who for the most part are not exposed to these activities until reaching a service academy where their first exposure is usually the one that counts. Subsequently, a midshipman’s continued failure will result in counseling, restricted privileges, and remedial courses; continuing to decrease his/her lineal number.

Peer and company evaluations and physical education reflect the dominant culture of the Academy, and for underrepresented groups, you have to fit in and adapt to the culture or else risk further isolation. This could negatively affect their career because the compounded effects of peer and company leadership evaluations and negative scores from remedial courses in swimming and sailing over an extended period of time result in a significant decrease in lineal number, and ultimately affect community selection, job satisfaction, and career trajectory.

C. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

From countless personal experiences, things we have witnessed, and things related to us from our shipmates, the experiences of underrepresented groups in the Navy mirror those from decades past; the reluctance to speak your mind to avoid being labeled the “angry black guy,” changing your tone and demeanor to prevent being categorized as “hostile,” and even refraining from congregating in groups for fear of being classified as a “gang” by non-minorities and leadership. The emotional labor created by the threat of being stereotyped often leads to coping mechanisms where underrepresented groups may use code-switching to appear less threatening or surround themselves with others like them to provide a sense of release and make light of unfair treatment.

Almost 100 years after the Chief of Staff’s report, in May 2020, a *New York Times* article highlighting the lack of underrepresented groups in the most senior ranks of the Armed Forces, noted that “Some 43 percent of the 1.3 million men and women on active duty in the United States military are people of color...but the people making crucial decisions are almost entirely white and male” (Cooper, 2020, p. 3). The sentiments and intentions toward diversity may be different, but the culture remains the same. Although there are efforts to address diversity at the lower levels, it is an organizational problem ingrained in the culture and requires an organizational solution from the top.

The Navy’s aviation and subsurface community have similar issues with diversity and retention of underrepresented groups. A 2018 article in *Military.com* reported, “In Navy maritime squadrons, nearly 2.7 percent of pilots are black. And in helicopters, a field which does have a greater proportion of female pilots, black aviators are barely better represented than in jets, making up just over 1.9 percent of the total...and [to] the best of the Navy’s knowledge, there has never been a female African-American fighter pilot” (Seck, 2018). Diversity issues also affect the other services. Helene Cooper of the *New York Times* recently reported, “Of the 41 most senior commanders in the military—those with four-star rank in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard”—only 5 are people of color or female” (Cooper, 2020, p. 4).

If our goal is to increase retention of underrepresented groups, we have to change our strategy. Underrepresented groups have continued to express the need for commonality and relatability in the upper ranks with the belief that more representation will result in more inclusive policies, fair treatment, and better mentorship. An increase in people of color and females in leadership positions, improved personality assessments, and a focus on soft skill development for Naval leadership should not only improve retention of underrepresented groups, but of all sailors. Personality assessments are currently used by some Naval communities in hopes of building leadership capacity and developing managerial skills. If someone were to explore this area, one could improve upon it by incorporating cultural and emotional intelligence trainings to assess unconscious biases within individuals, essentially leading to conscious inclusion and management of sailors based on merit and not by their affiliation.

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) has always been a breeding ground for change and innovation. In recent years, NPS changed the Navy with a groundbreaking study of sleep patterns in the surface community. The study resulted in the implementation of the Circadian Rhythm, changing the surface Navy's culture forever. Similarly, NPS has another chance to spearhead innovation. Diversity and inclusion affect us all, and the spark for change can best be done here. The Peterson Forum and the NPS Chapter of the National Naval officers Association push for continued dialogue are among the few initiatives on campus beginning to take shape. Future research could help in this effort through studies involving various platforms, communities, and services, or by developing pilot studies and metrics measuring the effects of diversity and inclusion training and competencies here at NPS. Feedback systems are important in ensuring an organization properly executes its strategy and those actions are actually creating the desired results or outcomes (National Security Affairs Faculty, Naval War College, 2012). With this, it is possible for NPS to once again reshape the Navy's culture and offer a way forward.

In keeping with the 2018 National Defense Strategy to build a more lethal force via cultivating workforce talent, it is necessary for the way forward to include a focus on underrepresented-group retention in its strategies to recruit, develop, and retain a high-quality military and civilian workforce. Hernandez-Rodriguez and Serna states, "we can

strategically incentivize minorities through the provision of career-enhancing opportunities and other programs that will level the playing field for racial/ethnic and gender minorities and enhance Diversity and Inclusion in the Navy” (Hernandez-Rodriguez & Serna, 2020, p. 83). Greater retention of underrepresented groups not only depends on increased leadership opportunities for qualified females and people of color, but progress also relies on a consolidated effort by higher authorities to incorporate new strategies and initiatives to reshape the Navy’s surface community.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

It takes years to change an organization’s culture, as seen with the Navy’s efforts in the early 2000s to reduce sexual assaults and misconduct. If the Navy were to have training that makes all service-members aware of the things, some outlined in this thesis, that make the Navy more difficult on underrepresented groups, could again, change Naval culture. The goal would be to change culture by influencing behavior. Here are some ways to enhance the Navy’s efforts to increase Diversity and Inclusion, and stimulate retention of underrepresented groups and other sailors:

- Add cultural intelligence/leadership development training into yearly General Military Training (GMT) requirements. Courses would closely follow the Armed Forces’ effort to educate service members and deter negative behavior regarding sexual assault. In similar fashion, navy-wide commands could also give training during Safety-stand-down, which typically take place prior to a major leave period.
- Enhance current ethics and leadership courses and personality assessments for junior, mid-level, and senior-level sailors by incorporating emotional intelligence and encouraging soft skill development in Naval leadership. Training would not only be provided at entry-level programs (Basic Training, OCS, USNA, ROTC) but could also be given at follow-on training for mid-level and senior-level enlisted sailors and officers.

- Increase the number of females and people of color in leadership positions. Increased representation throughout the ranks matter. Sailor preferences for prior-enlisted officers during interviews, especially among underrepresented groups, express the notion that commonality and relatability are important in interpersonal relationships.
- Have officers spend time as enlisted sailors. The Naval Academy and several ROTC programs use summer cruises to familiarize future officers with Naval operations. We could improve the learning experience by putting in place a uniform structure for midshipmen to serve their time onboard in an enlisted capacity, performing maintenance and standing watch with the junior enlisted sailors. The experience would be assessed and would also give midshipmen the incentive to learn and perform well.

Lastly, continuous support of the Naval Postgraduate School's research studies and force improvement efforts would be of great benefit. As stated earlier, NPS is where innovation happens, and aspiring leaders are sent to develop new strategies, tactics, and ways of thinking. The institution has always been a source of refuge for the Armed Forces, relying on NPS for solutions to problems and to assist in keeping our forces at the forefront. Opportunities for future research could take shape in the following ways:

- Research studies involving various platforms, communities, and services, or by developing pilot studies and metrics measuring the effects of diversity and inclusion training and competencies here at NPS.
- The addition of a leadership development curriculum into course requirements
- Implement pilot studies on the NPS campus with students, faculty, and staff
- Develop and implement metrics measuring the effects of diversity and inclusion training, and leadership courses.

APPENDIX A. RETENTION SURVEY



**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL**

First-Term Sailor Retention Survey (Enlisted and Officer)

This is a survey for first-term sailors attached to sea-going surface ships. This survey is intended to assist researchers at the Naval Postgraduate School in improving retention throughout the United States Navy. This survey is to be answered anonymously. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. However, it is possible that the researcher may be required to divulge information obtained in the course of this research to the subject's chain of command or other legal body. Disclosure of professional misconduct or where criminal acts took place, will require reporting to command leadership. As a volunteer in this study, you do not have to answer any question you prefer not to answer and can stop further participation at any time.

Demographic Information:									
Please fill in the demographic information below to further assist researchers in data analysis with current and future studies. Demographic information is <u>optional</u> , but appreciated. Please select from each of the following categories.									
Community:	Enlisted	Officer							
Gender:	Female	Male	Race/Ethnicity:	Asian	Black / African-American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pac. Islander	White	Other

Survey Ratings:
Please give your honest assessment pertaining to your decision to continue or separate from the Navy by circling one of the numbers below each question based on the factors listed to the left of the page.

	Factors	How important will this factor be for your eventual decision to continue or separate from the Navy?			Has your experience with this factor been positive or negative?				
		Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	Neutral	Somewhat Positive	Very Positive
1	Job Duties	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
2	Skill Development	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
3	Fulfillment in Job Accomplishment	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
4	Peer Support	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
5	Feeling as if you're part of the team, overall comraderie	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
6	Resourced to do your job	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
7	Earning Qualifications and Awards	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
8	Potential Leadership Opportunities	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
9	Command Leadership	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
10	Navy Rules and Regulations	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
11	*Appropriate respect by superiors, free of bias due to your gender/race/identity	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
12	Recognition of Hard Work	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
13	Professional Mentorship	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
14	Personal Mentorship	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
15	Working Conditions	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
16	Living Conditions	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
17	Command Operational Tempo	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
18	Salary and Bonus Pay	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
19	Perceived Future Opportunities in the Navy	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
20	Evaluation Feedback/Process	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5

*The term "Appropriate" partly means proper respect and not experiencing bias due to your gender/race/identity.

On a scale of 1 to 5, what are your intentions to separate from the Navy? (Circle One)

Separating from the Navy	Leaning towards Separation	Neutral	Possibly continuing Active Duty	Continuing on Active Duty
1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX B. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

NPS Team

1. As you have formulated or will formulate your decision to leave or continue in the Navy, can you describe the key factors to that decision?
 - Do you anticipate that your decision will be based more on:
 - positive motivating factors?
 - negative de-motivating factors?
 - Follow-up by asking what the positive and negative factors are?
 - If they can't think of any, ask for the positive and/or negative aspects of:
 - (a) the people,
 - (b) general life in the Navy,
 - (c) certain events you have experienced,
 - (d) opportunities (or lack of opportunities) for skill development and growth
 - (e) lack of anything else you can see yourself doing or want to do, or
 - (f) something else?
 - How important are each?
2. Think of the 3 to 4 people or sets of people who will be the most important influencers (positively or negatively) for your decision on whether to stay. Describe your professional relationships with these people. (Give them pseudonyms if you like—maybe numbers or names with same first letters.)
 - Are they:
 - Peers (berth mates, workmates, other first-term sailors)?
 - Superiors, ship leadership?
 - Role models?
 - How important are each to your decision?
3. For peers:
 - What was it about them (positive/negative) that makes them influential?
 - What caused you to connect or not connect with them?
 - Personality?
 - Similar or different culture or tastes?
 - What could have made the peer experience better for you?
4. For superiors or role models:
 - What was it about them (positive/negative) that makes them influential?
 - What caused you to connect or not connect with them?
 - Personality?
 - Similar or different culture or tastes?
 - Leadership style?
 - Prior-Enlisted experience?

- Do you notice any management differences between the Chief's Mess (E7-E9), prior-enlisted (including Warrant Officers and LDOs) or non-prior-enlisted officers?
- Are there any management styles that work better than others? In what ways?
- What could have made the role model experience better for you?

5. Diversity:

- **The Similarity-Attraction Theory** asserts that people enjoy experiences more when they do it with people similar to them. Others follow a different theory that people enjoy being around greater diversity in demographics and personalities. In response to a push to more accurately reflect our nation's workforce, the Department of the Navy released **the Diversity and Inclusion Roadmap (DIR)**, which outlines three strategic initiatives to improve diversity and maximize inclusion. The initiatives are: a promise to recruit from a diverse group of applicants, cultivate an inclusive culture, and develop strategies to equip leaders with the ability to effectively manage diversity.
 - Do you feel your division, department, command is a reflection of those initiatives?
 - Does your experience with diversity or lack of it have an effect on your decision to re-enlist?
 - Do you feel those in your division, department, or command share the same experience?

6. What is something that would make you more inclined to reenlist/continue in the Navy?
- How important are these influencers relative to more money for re-enlisting/continuing?

Additional Elements

To each answer, when appropriate, we would like permission to ask one of two follow-up questions:

1. Would you like to elaborate on that?
2. How important do you think that event will be for your eventual decision to stay or separate?

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