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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LIFE-WORK BALANCE
AND THEIR IMPACT ON FEMALE OCCUPATIONAL
CHOICE AND RETENTION**

by

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March 2015

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ON FEMALE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE AND RETENTION**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores gender differences in defining, interpreting and achieving life-work balance and the factors influencing occupational choice among naval officers. Since Navy-wide data is not available, and it was not possible for us to conduct interviews and administer a large-scale survey during the study timeframe, we led a smaller study using a sample of naval officers from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). In particular, 15 semi-structured interviews and 197 observations from an online survey administered to NPS students, all with a wide range of experiences and subspecialties, were collected.

The data was analyzed using qualitative methods and common themes were identified. Findings suggest that men and women have similar definitions of life-work balance and identified similar factors that influence their occupational choice; however, women value more factors when making those decisions. While this study provides initial insight into factors that influence retention, gender differences in the scope and impact are worthy of further exploration.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
CDR	commander
CO	commanding officer
EFMP	Exceptional Family Member Program
ENS	ensign
FIW	family interference with work
ITACS	information technology and communication services
JAMRS	joint advertising, market research and studies
LT	lieutenant
LTJG	lieutenant junior grade
LCDR	lieutenant commander
LWB	life-work balance
MLDC	Military Leadership Diversity Commission Report
MSC	medical service corps
NFO	naval flight officer
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
OPNAV	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OSD	Office of Secretary of Defense
RL	restricted line officer
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corp
URL	unrestricted line officer
USNA	United States Naval Academy
SDWG	Navy's Strategic Diversity Working Group
SEAL	sea air land
SWO	surface warfare officer
WIF	work interference with family
WFC	work-family-conflict
WFE	work-family-enrichment
WFF	work-family-fascilitation

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—Jon D. Lee

Ashley, without your unending love and sacrifices, I would not have been able to successfully achieve my goals. John and Morgan, you both are my reason for continuously striving to be better in all aspects of my life. To my parents, in-laws, and all my family, thank you for giving me your support and keeping me grounded. I love you all.

—Kirk D. Emanuelson

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. ISSUE

The Navy has been interested in diversity within its ranks since the early 1970s. Since the Equal Rights Amendment was passed in 1972, eliminating sexual discrimination, the military was forced to adapt to keep up with social changes of the time. In 1974, after implementation of the All-Volunteer Force, the Senate Armed Services Committee passed Report 93–884, directing the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to submit annual reports on the composition of the force. While there have been ebbs and flows within the different designators and sub-specialties, female officer participation has continually lagged in its statistical representation compared to society as a whole. Lack of career opportunities, restrictions on occupational specialties, social and societal expectations, and individual goals may be factors contributing to this lag. In order to ensure a balanced fighting force encompassing female participation and success, continual focus on issues affecting both accessions and retention is required.

This study will analyze how female naval officers define, interpret, and achieve perceived life-work balance as well as how they select their occupational choice within the Navy. This will identify influences that explain gender differences in officers' decisions to join the Navy and, once in, if they stay beyond their initial obligation.

B. BACKGROUND

Social equity issues within the military are still relevant today (Eitelberg, 1979). Regardless of whether military service is viewed as a benefit or a burden, the ability to choose whether to participate is an important goal for all. The defense of the nation should not be intentionally or unintentionally distributed toward one group of individuals. While intentional barriers have mostly been eliminated (women can now or will soon be able to join the Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, and infantry units, for example), identifying unintentional policies or procedures that influence a group's decision is important in achieving this goal.

The increasing statistics of educated women in the workplace is proof of the gains that can be made (Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, 2011). From both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, increasing female representation creates more opportunities for females themselves, but also strengthens corporate culture and accesses previously untapped resources of knowledge, skills, and abilities. For example, the percentage of college-educated women in the United States has increased from 11 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 2012, and the percentage of employed females has increased from 40.8 percent in 1970 to 53.1 percent in 2012 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). These trends have carried over to the military where female officer participation has increased from 13.8 percent in 1977 to 21.4 percent in 2011 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). The Navy, however, has not been able to recruit more highly educated females to ensure that its defense force is representative of the people they serve in comparison to societal trends.

The Navy's recognition of the benefits of diversity has increased over time. This has been demonstrated by its focus on increasing diversity within its ranks. While naval organizations and initiatives have changed through the years, a recent change was the establishment of the Navy's Strategic Diversity Working Group (SDWG) in 2007. The SDWG's mission is to support the recruiting, development, and retention of the best and brightest personnel the nation has to offer; the organization has become nationally recognized (Zimmermann, 2009). Within two years, the Association of Diversity Councils ranked the SDWG in the top 15 of more than 100 other diversity councils; in 2011, it was ranked number one in the nation out of 100 nominated organizations (Devera, 2011).

The continual focus on diversity within the Navy has resulted in the removal of exclusionary practices barring women from certain jobs or platforms. For example, in 1978, the Navy lifted a ban that prohibited women from serving on ships; they did the same for combat ships in 1993 and for the submarine force in 2010. According to a Pentagon announcement, women will be allowed to serve as Navy SEALs in 2016. Once this occurs, there will not be a specific policy preventing women from serving in any specialty within the Navy.

As a result of these changing policies and focus on increasing diversity—specifically female diversity—the percentage of female Navy officers has almost tripled in the last 30 years (Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, 2011). Specifically, participation increased from 6.3 percent in 1977 to 16.4 percent in 2011, as denoted in Table 1. Furthermore, Table 1 shows similar growth in all service components.

Table 1. Navy Female Active Component Officers with Civilian Comparison Group, FYs
1977–2011 (from Population Representation in the Military Services Report, 2011)

	SERVICE								CIVILIAN
FISCAL			NAVY				TOTAL DOD		COLLEGE GRADS
YEAR			#	%			#	%	%
1977			3,779	6.30%			15,222	5.90%	36.10%
1979			4,292	7.30%			18,787	7.30%	37.30%
1981			5,329	8.50%			23,200	8.70%	38.70%
1983			6,303	9.40%			26,776	9.50%	39.90%
1985			6,888	10.20%			29,964	10.40%	41.60%
1987			7,195	10.40%			31,654	11.00%	42.40%
1989			7,449	10.70%			33,220	11.70%	42.20%
1991			7,888	11.60%			33,740	12.40%	42.80%
1993			8,113	12.80%			31,528	13.20%	43.60%
1995			7,775	13.80%			30,606	13.80%	49.30%
1997			7,704	14.20%			30,041	14.20%	48.10%
1999			7,669	14.70%			30,031	14.70%	48.20%
2001			7,893	15.20%			30,828	15.30%	48.10%
2003			8,159	15.30%			33,624	15.90%	48.80%
2005			7,732	15.10%			33,670	16.00%	50.00%
2007			7,525	15.10%			32,213	15.80%	49.80%
2009			7,890	15.70%			34,083	16.20%	50.40%
2011			8,437	16.40%			36,237	16.60%	51.00%

While the increase in female Navy officers is encouraging, there is plenty of room for improvement. According to Figure 1, the percentage of female officers in the Navy is approximately one third that of their civilian college-educated counterparts in the United States.

A study by the Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies Program (JAMRS) (2014) identified possible reasons why female representation within the Navy lags behind societal representation. The study recognized lack of knowledge, job satisfaction, family planning impact, and job flexibility as potential explanations. Knowledge of a profession is important to making career decisions. The military is no exception to this rule. Job description, opportunities, and progression are some aspects someone may consider when making career decisions. Combat is an obvious association to a job description when discussing military career options within the Navy. While combat is a possibility within any naval career, there are varying degrees of risk associated with each career. The JAMRS' focus group project (2014) identified that females undecided about joining the military were unaware of non-combat related professions. It also noted that candidates viewed combat as a negative in their consideration of service. Uncertainty about getting the desired job or the ability to change jobs after joining was identified as well.

Job satisfaction may be another reason why women leave the Navy at higher rates than men. To support this, several studies have suggested that job satisfaction among women is more important in retention when compared to men (Szoc & Seboda, 1984; Quester & Gilroy, 2002). According to a 2014 brief from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, male retention in unrestricted line (URL) categories was two and a half times higher than women, but nearly identical in the restricted line (RL) categories (Office of Diversity and Inclusion Women's Strategy and Policy [OPNAV N134W], 2013). While this difference is most likely caused by a variety of factors, the vast difference between RL and URL, such as occupational duties and responsibilities, quality of life, and ease of transferability to civilian job market, could influence job satisfaction.

Family planning in the Navy is quite different compared to civilian equivalent places of employment. The JAMRS' focus group (2014), consisting of female college

students and graduates, observed that “almost all participants intend to be married, have children, and work full-time in the future” (p. 3). All felt the main difference between females in the military and civilian life is caused by deployment or time away from home, which is not as prevalent in civilian occupations.

Studies also noted that women with one or more children were from 10 to 20 percent less likely to want a job in which travel was required (Arora et al., 2011). With deployment and travel being a large component of naval service, this may influence women with respect to both accession and retention.

Looking at these possible reasons why women in the Navy lag behind civilian statistical percentages, it becomes possible that communicating job opportunities and addressing life-work balance issues may be a good place to start.

C. PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to answer the following questions:

1. What are the critical factors of life-work balance among female naval officers? How have these factors changed throughout their careers after experience has been obtained?
2. Why do females withdraw from military service at higher rates than males?
3. What are the factors that influence gender differences in military occupational/sub-specialty choices and do these factors influence retention?
4. How does relative proportion of females in a given occupation affect a female naval officer’s occupational choice?

After analyzing the information gathered, this research will identify policies that can be changed or implemented to address the occupational choice and life-work issues identified.

D. SCOPE/METHODOLOGY

This project uses qualitative analysis of surveys and interviews given to male and female naval officers assigned to the Naval Postgraduate School. The interviews are used

to identify life-work differences between genders and gather personal perspectives and stories of life-work balances not possible through the use of surveys. The surveys are used to identify factors influencing occupational choice decisions as well as life-work balance importance. This research will then analyze the data to determine significant factors affecting occupational choice and life-work balance and their impact on the decision to continue service in the Navy.

E. BENEFIT TO THE NAVY

This thesis aims to better understand decisions affecting women's occupational choices and to discuss changes that will improve life-work balance for women in the Navy. The hope is also to identify key issues affecting the propensity of women to select specific occupations. With the information gathered on these topics, this research will identify ways to increase female accession and retention—not only to increase diversity within the Navy but to increase overall readiness. Furthermore, this will provide a framework for other services to use to assist them in diversifying their officer corp. Additionally, any potential life-work balance issues located within different communities can be identified and addressed to positively impact both males' and females' decisions to remain in the Navy.

F. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows: Chapter II provides a literature review on the two major themes used to explain gender differences in retention—life-work balance and occupational choice. The first part of this chapter focuses on definitions and previous studies that relate to modern life-work balance using civilian and military empirical studies. The second part of Chapter II examines the literature on occupational choice and decision-making linked to gender representation. Chapter III describes the study sample, survey and interview procedures, data collection, and research methodologies employed. Chapter IV presents the results and interpretations developed from the data analysis. Chapter V provides a summary and conclusions for the study, policy recommendations based on the research, and addresses topics for further research.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. LIFE-WORK INTRODUCTION

The history of women's life-work balance has undergone many changes over the years. From women's inception into the workforce, they, like men, have had to make choices about balancing their work lives with their respective home lives and tradeoffs or sacrifices between the two. This is known as the work-family interface. It is important to identify the social, economic, and societal trends that can potentially influence the life-work decision dynamic (De Hauw & Greenhaus, 2014). De Hauw and Greenhaus interpret this interface as a career landscape, constantly evolving to keep up with the changing of the times. A study of previous literature is critical in ascertaining and identifying potential trends and predictors of human decision-making in work and family choices. Furthermore, understanding historical analysis and definitions will help determine how female officers define life-work balance in the context of their naval careers and if, in fact, their definition and priorities of balance have changed or evolved as their careers have progressed.

1. Role Theory

Role theory, described by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), discusses the relationship between work life and non-work pursuits. It includes an individual's participation in all domains of life, including occupation and leisure, but more specifically the expectations of effort, norms, and behaviors, to achieve self-fulfillment and productivity in each role. Byron (2005) expands this role theory to encompass family domain roles. Variables such as income, hours of work, number of children, age of youngest child, and family support all can be directly applicable to the study of life-work interaction among female naval officers.

a. Work-Family Conflict

The most prominent understanding of imbalance is the conflict that occurs between an individual's work life versus home life and the inevitable choosing between

the two. Work-family conflict (WFC) occurs when “role pressures from work and family are mutually incompatible such that participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the other role” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

Work can interfere with family (WIF) and family can interfere with work (FIW). The terms “WFC” and “WIF” were used interchangeably throughout previous literature, as well as “FWC” and “FIW.” For the purpose of this research, negative spillover and effects from one role or domain into another will be referred to as WFC and FWC, respectively.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggest that the work-family conflict theory is caused by three variables: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based conflict. Time-based conflict, perhaps the most common in the military due to deployments and operational commitments, prevents individuals from being actively involved in their other life domains, forcing them to choose between the two—whether voluntary or not. Strain-based conflict occurs as tension, anxiety, fatigue, and irritability created in one role affects performance in the other. In the military specifically, time strain can increase chances of suicide, divorce, and potential attrition from service, impacting the financial and mission readiness of the force. Finally, behavior-based conflict occurs when stereotypical or personal qualities of an individual’s behavior (such as female nurturing, sense of vulnerability, and emotional instability) render an individual unable to adjust his or her behavior to comply with the expectations of his or her role. A female naval officer must have the command presence to lead sailors and to be demanding if need be, even if she is more timid and nurturing in nature.

b. Work-Family Enrichment

Contrary to conflict, studies have shown that participation in one domain will have a positive effect in one’s performance and quality of life in another. This is known as work-family enrichment (WFE). Greenhaus and Allen (2011) suggest that the skills and behaviors obtained at work that lead to utility will translate into the home domain, allowing an individual to be more productive and emotionally fulfilled. The same works in the opposite direction. As a result, the individual will achieve some form of

psychological balance. This is important to the military as it directly translates to productivity. If officers, regardless of gender, are emotionally fulfilled in their home life, their work will be positively affected. Furthermore, these officers can utilize the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired at home, such as patience with children, communication skills, maturity, etc., to positively increase their tactical and leadership expertise, earn more credibility, and enjoy a greater sense of fulfillment. Healthy experiences in the home domain will enrich their work life and vice versa, creating a more successful and valued human experience. The terms “WFE” and “work-family-facilitation” (WFF) were used interchangeably throughout previous literature, as well as “family-work-enrichment” (FWE) and “family-work-facilitation” (FWF). For the purpose of this research, positive spillover and effects from one role/domain into another will be referred to as WFE and FWE, respectively.

c. Work versus Non-Work Stressors by Gender

Numerous meta-analyses by Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005; 2006) find that general work stressors predict work interference with family (WFC) for both males and females. Non-work stressors, however, although positively correlated, do not produce the same profound effect. Though small, Greenhaus and Allen (2011) believe researchers should not discount the impact family situational variables have on WFC. Furthermore, these studies have shown that gender and marital status alone are weak predictors of WFC. Byron’s meta-analysis (2005) concludes that females have slightly larger FWC than males when combined predominantly with their marital status and number of dependents. The women in Byron’s sample had undertaken the traditional stereotypical role of their place in the home as wives and mothers and, therefore, prioritized family over work. Those stressors, however, were also positively correlated with men with dependents. In relation to this research, these studies show that one must account for more specific variables, other than gender and marital status, in order to identify balance factors among naval officers, as gender alone is not an adequate predictor of WFC and FWC. More significantly, Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2006) noted that work-related stressors can be reduced, or at least balanced, if employers understand and implement a family-friendly culture through the institution of work/family policies and

directives (p. 571). This is especially applicable to this study and the military community, as commanding officers and senior leadership foster work culture, directly influencing the morale and balance of subordinates, regardless of their gender, impacting current quality of work and future career aspirations and decisions.

2. Definitions of Life-Work Balance

Before capturing the intricacies of a female's life-work balance psychology, one first must define balance and determine if its characteristics and variables are, in fact, similar to males. Furthermore, a definition that is best applicable to the military must be identified in order to recommend policy changes to positively increase female retention.

a. Absence of Conflict

Frone (2003) describes life-work balance as the absence of conflict and minimal interference between roles and positive effect on one another. This is difficult to translate into military life as roles are continuously changing. In military occupations, specifically for women, as long as individuals value their home life more than work, conflict will always exist. This is a result of mandatory operational requirements and deployment schedules outside the officer's control.

b. Distribution of Time

Kirchmeyer (2000) describes balance as the "well-distributed" personal resources of time, energy, and commitment across all life roles and achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains including work, play, and love. While slightly appropriate, this definition is also difficult to translate into military life as, similar to Frone's (2003) definition, operational environments and demands prevent desired time commitments to other life roles and domains outside work when compared to civilian counterparts. When an individual's presence is required elsewhere, the desired time, energy, and commitment are difficult to allocate.

c. Full Engagement

Marks and MacDermid (1996) describe balance as the tendency to become fully engaged in the performance of every role with an attitude of attentiveness and care. Level of engagement in the military will vary based on the environment and an individual's goals and aspirations, regardless of gender. Life-work balance is also interpreted as achieving high levels of equitable involvement in all an individual's roles, including work and family. One has to weigh accordingly time, effort, and involvement to maintain equilibrium (Marks & MacDermid, 1996). This is true for both men and women.

Marks and MacDermid (1996) conclude that the majority of intrinsic variables related to balance, including role overload, role ease, self-esteem, depression, innovativeness, relational strength, parental nurturance, and work productivity, are not gender discriminate (p. 424). One has to be cautious, however, of the internal personality traits for each individual and determine if there is a favorable bias for work over family and vice versa. Regardless, Aten (in press) notes that given the nature of military deployments it is difficult to apply this interpretation of balance to the military because of the forced deployment schedules and lack of service members' ability to determine their own work hours. Military officers' attitudes, attentiveness, and participation to each domain will differ due to outside factors such as mandatory tour lengths, time in service, or career aspirations. Others put more effort into career progression through high visibility career enhancing jobs, while others prioritize their efforts elsewhere and interpret the military occupation as a means to simply obtain compensation and benefits.

d. Effectiveness and Satisfaction across Multiple Roles

The most appropriate and applicable definition of life-work balance to the military is described by Greenhaus and Allen. They believe balance is "the extent to which effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles are compatible with an individual's life values at a given point in time" (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011, p. 17).

This can be interpreted as the traditionally accepted understanding of work-family interaction. In order to achieve the greatest utility, sense of productivity, and satisfaction in both roles, there must be stability between the two. This specific definition is most

applicable to the military, as roles and responsibilities change as an individual matures or priorities change over time. A single officer has different priorities and interpretation of balance when married. Furthermore, females' priorities may differ from their male counterparts. As officers progress through their careers, they might desire families where previously focus was on their careers. This definition offers the ability to allocate effort and time into all domains based on an individual's priority at that time and to achieve the same internal balance.

3. Female Military Studies

Few military-specific studies have been done to focus specifically on life-work balance and specifically related to gender. Life-work studies, however, that have been conducted will help to lay the framework of the goal of this study: to increase female retention.

a. JAMRS/Naval Postgraduate School

Previous Department of Defense studies by the DOD's Joint Advertising, Market, Research, and Studies (JAMRS) (2014) and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) (in press) have attempted to identify the reasons behind individuals' choices to either serve or not in the military. In a 2014 College Market Survey (January–March 2014) of college students and graduates, individuals were asked to identify their three most important factors in choosing an occupation. In her analysis of the JAMRS' (2014) study, Aten (in press) noted 42 percent of women and 35 percent of men identified "balance between work and family" as one of their top choices. Eighteen percent and 14 percent of women and men, respectively, identified balancing work and family as their number one choice in occupation determination. When asked military-specific questions about their perceptions of the military's commitment to balancing home and work life, 56 percent of women and 54 percent of men voted "a little bit" or "none." Forty-eight percent of women surveyed would not become a military officer because they believed it would "interfere with plans to start a family."

In 2013, JAMRS conducted focus groups in an attempt to identify the life-work imbalances behind women's reservations to serve in the military. In groups consisting of 16 - to 21-year-old females, the JAMRS' study noted the following conclusions:

- The majority of women conveyed their intentions to have a family and work full-time
- Jobs, like the military, requiring extensive time commitments or unusual working hours, rather than the typical '9-5 job,' were viewed less desirable
- Females preferred occupations with levels of flexibility, i.e., "choosing your own hours" and wanted to spend as much time as possible with their family
- Deployments were a major concern and the participants conveyed that it was easier for men to leave their children on a deployment compared to females (Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies, 2014)

b. Personnel/OPNAV/Argus

A 2012 Navy Personnel Research Studies and Technology Report and a 2013 Office of Diversity and Inclusion Women's Strategy and Policy (OPNAV N134W) brief concluded the top influencers for men to leave military service are "impact of naval career on spouse and family" and "lack of balance between personal and home life" (Uriell, 2013). Women, on average, had the same reasons in addition to "impact of naval career on ability to start a family" (Office of Diversity and Inclusion Women's Strategy and Policy [OPNAV N134W], 2013). A 2004 Argus Officer Retention survey concluded that there are varying reasons for an individual's decision to remain in the Navy, based on gender and marital/dependent status. While achieving "balance" was not a major consideration in officers' decisions to remain, married officers or those with children, both male and female, stressed more importance on family as a primary influencer to remain in their occupation (Mottern, 2004). This, according to the civilian literature previously discussed, is a direct influencer of balance, based on an individual's effort. As Greenhaus and Allen's (2011) literature suggest, this landscape in the military can evolve, based on career progression and family attainment. To retain quality personnel, this is another reason why policy makers must acknowledge the variables of its officer ranks.

To continue positive recruitment and retention numbers, these statistics prominently demonstrate the military's need to continue identifying self-improvement programs to cater to individual and family needs and desires. While strides have been made to improve quality of life for military officers to achieve balance through programs such as Career Intermission, maternity/paternity leave, Exceptional Family Member (EFMP), policy makers need to continuously account for family considerations when making strategic manpower decisions that can affect the accession and retention of high-performing personnel. Furthermore, attrition gender reasoning must all be considered to cater policy to suit both males and females. While there is a great deal of academic literature on work-life balance in the civilian world, its definition and recommendations are difficult to translate to the military sector without military-specific studies. Limited research has been conducted specifically focusing on specific gender differences in the military. This paper's study will contribute to the literature by attempting to identify variables, both work and non-work related, one gender might observe over another to achieve balance. This will influence the development and improvement of future quality-of-life policies to support the Navy's constant goal of retention of qualified, high-performing female officers.

B. OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

1. Occupational Choice Factors

Occupational choice has been a topic of research interest since the early 1920s. The topics and areas of interest have evolved over time as our culture has changed. There are even studies that look at how a changing society may influence occupational choice. For instance, a recent study found that socio-cultural factors may influence the development of vocational interests (Bubany & Hansen, 2011). This means that as the roles of men and women change in society, changes in vocational interests will follow.

The role of a supportive figure/mentor in an individual's life can have an influence on that individual's decisions and future success. A study among African Americans noted parental and teacher support had a positive effect on career decision-making self-efficacy (Gushua & Whitson, 2006). The same study also noted important

people in a student's life had a positive impact in countering racial and cultural-based occupational stereotypes (Gushua & Whitson, 2006). When comparing mentored versus non-mentored individuals, an increase was found in compensation, promotions, satisfaction, and commitment to career for the mentored individuals (Allen, Elby, Lentz, Lima & Poteet, 2004).

Lack of knowledge is an obstacle in career decision-making outcomes (Blau, Gustad, Jessor, Parnes, & Wilcock, 1956). A lack of knowledge may prevent an individual from choosing the career that is the best fit. There may be different ways to combat this lack of knowledge, but the studies on mentorship mentioned earlier are beneficial to transmitting accurate knowledge (Allen et al., 2004; Gushue & Whitson, 2006).

Individual interests play a role in occupational choice and performance. One may suggest that the interest influences education direction. Dolten, Makepeace, and Van Der Klaauw (1989) find that men's degree subjects influenced their occupational choices. Van Iddekinge, Roth, Putka, and Lanivich (2011) noted that a useful tool in predicting job performance and turnover is an individual's interests.

Personal characteristics cover many different aspects of occupational choice. Dolton, Makepeace, and Van Der Klaauw (1989), Fouad (1994), Gianakos (1999), Blau, Gustad, Jessor, Parnes, and Wilcock (1956), and Paglin and Rufolo (1990) all examine how different characteristics relate to occupational choice. Different characteristics range from broad categories like gender and race to the specific factors such as mental ability and personality type. These are important in looking at ways to achieve the Navy's desire of increased diversity. Paglin and Rufolo (1990) looked at some of these specific personal characteristics. They analyzed individuals' undergraduate degrees (and post-graduate, if available) against their SAT and GRE standardized test scores. They found direct relationships between the areas individuals excelled in and the degree types they pursued. They theorized that individuals will maximize their production of human capital in areas they had higher abilities versus lower abilities.

Fouad and Byars-Winston (2005) looked at the differences of race/ethnicity and occupational choice. They acknowledged two previous studies, which stated there seemed to be little relation between race or ethnicity and career aspirations. They found however, that while race/ethnicity did not affect aspirations, the perceived differences amongst racial groups and their career opportunities or barriers were consistent with geographic cultural statistics in society. This study supports the previous discussion of how a lack of knowledge can impact career choice.

Gender is the broadest personal characteristic utilized in studies on occupational choice. Many studies compare men and women to try to identify the differences (Croson & Gneezy, 2000; Fouad, 1994; Paglin & Rufolo, 1990; Polachek, 1981). Croson and Gneezy (2000) looked at gender differences in decision-making and summarized that women are more risk adverse than men, have different social preferences than men, and prefer less competitive situations compared to men. Paglin and Rufolo (1990) looked at earning differences between men and women and noted that men had higher concentrations in the upper bands of mathematical reasoning tests, while women had higher concentrations in the lower bands. They suggested this difference explains why women are less representative in the technical employment fields. Polachek (1981) hypothesized that a woman's occupational choice is associated with the time in and out of the labor market. This suggests women either prefer the ability to spend more time at home while employed or are penalized less for taking a break from employment. Fouad (1994) summarized many different studies on gender occupational choice. She referenced a study by Langan-Fox (1991) that analyzed goal differences among men and women between the ages of 18–20 in a two-year longitudinal study. It was found there was no gender difference in goals such as occupation, family, attaining a degree, or leisure. There is a lack of studies addressing the different gender effects of LWB on occupational decisions. This study aims to help address this deficiency and provide the groundwork for expanded future research.

2. Gender Representation

Representation of a specific gender can have influences on occupational choice. Similar to the findings by Helms and Piper (1994) that an individual's perception of an occupation's racial climate affects career choice, the perception of an occupation's attitude to a certain gender may affect career choice. This perception of influence may change as the proportion changes. The military is susceptible to this, as it has had barriers to women in certain occupations for long periods of time. A Rand Corporation study by Harrell, Beckett, Chien, and Sollinger (2002) discussed that the slow increase in female representation to newly opened fields may be caused by the personality type of the women entering these new fields. They suggest that the initial applicants may either leave at higher rates or have a stronger determination to succeed than those that follow. While no time limit was discussed for a newly opened occupation to equalize, it would seem that designators, which have been available to women for a fairly long period of time, like SWO and Aviation, should no longer be affected by this issue. Another study by Shatnawi (in press) identified via a survey of Navy officers that female officers stated they were more likely to separate in designators that were primarily staffed by men. Another issue analyzed is the preference to work for a man or a woman. Powell and Butterfield (2015) studied this theory and found that, while the majority of those surveyed did not have a preference of working for a man over a woman, those that did have a preference preferred working for a man over a woman.

3. Gender Differences

As the Navy wants to understand why more women are not choosing to make the Navy their career, gender difference is a major focus of this study. As mentioned in the previous section, there have been many studies that examined the differences between men and women. Yet how can these studies relate to the military or, specifically, the Navy? One study by Delaire and Levy (2001) looked at occupational gender differences with respect to risk of death. They found that while both men and women disliked fatal risk, women disliked it more than men. Croson and Gneezy (2000) noted that women were more risk adverse than men as well as more adverse to competition compared to

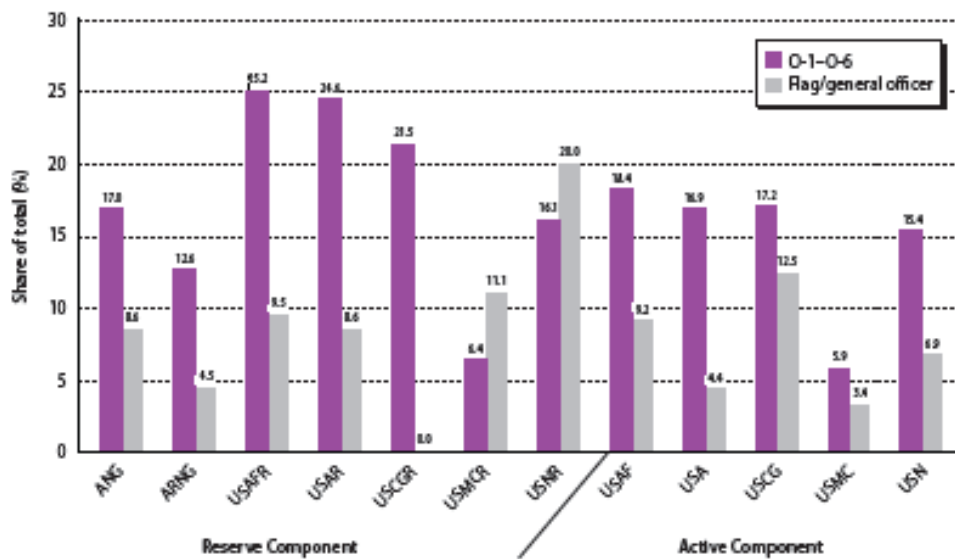
men. Both of these studies may be applicable to the Navy as the Navy has varying degrees of risk associated with different occupations. Further, every occupation within the Navy is competitive because this is how performance is measured and how promotions to the senior ranks (O-4 and above) are implemented. If these two studies accurately predicted a female's aversion to risk and competition, this may help explain a small portion of why such a small number of senior officers are female.

4. Military Studies

There are limited military studies on occupational choice of women in the military. The majority of these studies have tried to identify why women do not make the military a career. The Rand Corporation study (Harrell et al., 2002) recommended that further research be conducted “into the role of individual experiences and decision-making processes in occupation selection, assignment selection, and retention” (p.12).

Shatnawi (in press) and Ceralde & Czepiel (2014) attempted to look at the impact of proportional representation and “critical mass” within the Navy to identify possible decision variables for a woman's choice to continue on active duty. These studies did identify proportionality and “critical mass” did have an association with retention across certain fields within the Navy. The Military Leadership Diversity Commission Report (MLDC) (2011) did conduct specific research on military members and provided statistics concerning women in the military and cited other research projects that may have identified causal factors. One interesting statistic cited was the disparity of percentage of female officers in the reserve component compared to the active component of the military, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 4.5. Female Shares of Officers, by Service and Grade, September 2008



SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center, 2009.

Figure 1. Gender Officer Breakdown by Service Component (from MLDC, 2011)

Figure 1 depicts the number of females in lower ranks compared to those in the higher ranks. The number of Flag officers in the Navy RC is opposite of female officers in the Navy's AC. Considering 87 percent of reserve component comes from transitioning active component members, this may be a reason to examine this statistic. This research will look to see if life-work balance may contribute to this. Another interesting idea discussed by Blau et al. (1956) is that individuals, for various reasons, tend not to stay with their first career choice and that experiences in the labor market can change an individual's preferences and expectations.

Many factors pertaining to occupational choice have been discussed in this section, but there are more contributing factors. A common thread among them is the importance of life-work balance and its influence on an individual's decision-making model. De Hauw (2014) studied the varying degrees of life-work balance levels and their influence on occupational choice direction such as upward, downward, or lateral movements in the job market. Using the model De Hauw (2014) presents, this paper's authors would like to expand her analysis to differentiate life-work balance issues between men and women in the Navy and their effects on occupational decisions.

C. SUMMARY

In summary, this study will research individuals' work-life balance career decisions and the psychological framework behind them, utilizing the context and models discussed in the literature. The authors believe life-work balance varies in importance differently for every individual in different phases of his or her life. The researchers will incorporate these concepts into the survey and interview questions of this study in an attempt to identify gender-specific attitudes, motivators, and considerations when making career decisions; also, to identify how to balance home life with the work place to increase retention and achieve better balance.

III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

A. DATA COLLECTION AND DESCRIPTION

This chapter describes the data, variables, and methodology used to analyze individuals' definitions and attempts at life-work balance, as well as their factors for selecting their occupational specialties. The data collection was performed through two medians: personal interviews and an online survey. These two data sets are analyzed separately in Chapter IV, but the results synthesized to identify and explain common trends and themes.

1. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted as to ascertain any gender-specific trends with respect to officers' personal definitions and interpretations of life-work balance and the means to achieve the latter. The goal was to identify an individual's priorities in life, as well as interpret roles within the life-work domains.

a. Approach

The interviews were conducted between January 6 and January 9, 2015 in a private room at the Dudley Knox Library, located at the Naval Postgraduate School Campus, Monterey, California. The researcher digitally recorded the responses which were later transcribed for ease of reference. Interviews lasted from approximately 25 to 55 minutes. This study's researchers interviewed 15 naval officers, 8 males and 7 females, ranging in rank from Ensign to Lieutenant Commander. These participants represented various designators and sub-specialties, years of experience, and professional achievement. The age range of the interviewees was between 27 and 36 years old. All of the interviewees were students assigned to the Naval Postgraduate School. Table 2 provides a demographic breakdown of the interviewees. In order to determine trends and themes within specific communities or by other demographics, it was important for the interviewees to have varying degrees of experiences and diverse life domain/role situations.

Table 2. Interview Demographic Breakdown

CHARACTERISTIC	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
GENDER		
Male	8	53.33%
Female	7	46.67%
RANK		
ENS	1	6.67%
LT	6	40.00%
LCDR	8	53.33%
DESIGNATOR		
1310 - Pilot	1	6.67%
1320 - NFO	4	26.67%
1110 - SWO	2	13.33%
1200 - Human Resources	4	26.67%
1800 - Meteorology	1	6.67%
2900 - Nurse Corps	1	6.67%
3100 - Supply Corps	2	13.33%
DESIGNATOR CATEGORY		
Unrestricted Line	7	46.67%
Restricted Line (Information Dominance)	1	6.67%
Restricted Line	4	26.67%
Staff Corps	3	20.00%
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	2	13.33%
Single/Previously Divorced	1	6.67%
Married	10	66.67%
Married/Previously Divorced	2	13.33%
PRIOR ENLISTED		
Yes	3	20.00%
No	12	80.00%
LATER TRANSFER		
Yes	3	20.00%
No	12	80.00%

To foster an open environment of trust and honest responses, prior to the interview, the researcher made every effort to build a rapport with the interviewee. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning an open dialect, permitting latitude for the interviewee to be open and honest about personal experiences and opinions of time in the naval service. Appendix A provides the interview questions.

2. Survey

A survey was designed to get input from naval officers on several topics of interest. These topics included: importance of life-work balance, Navy programs influence on life-work balance, factors influencing the decision-making process in

designator selection, overall job satisfaction, and the importance of gender representation. These general topics were then analyzed to determine if there were any differences between age groups, sexes, commissioning source, and designator.

a. Approach

The source utilized to conduct the survey was LimeSurvey website through a Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) account. An invitation email was distributed to 630 naval officer students attending NPS on January 30, 2015 with a follow-up email sent on February 5, 2015. The survey remained open until February 11, 2015. The survey contained 61 questions broken into seven different categories consisting of demographic, designator, life-work balance, turnover intention, job satisfaction, identity, and occupational choice questions. Of the total recipients, 197 submitted complete responses resulting in a response rate of 31.2 percent. A specific breakdown of different characteristics of the respondents is shown in Table 3. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

Table 3. Survey Demographic Breakdown

CHARACTERISTIC	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
GENDER		
Male	165	83.76%
Female	26	13.20%
No answer	6	3.05%
RANK		
ENS	2	1.02%
LTJG	3	1.52%
LT	135	68.53%
LCDR	49	24.87%
CDR	6	3.05%
No answer	2	1.02%
AGE		
22-30	58	29.44%
31-40	125	63.45%
41-50	13	6.60%
No answer	1	0.51%
DESIGNATOR		
1310 - Pilot	21	10.66%
1320 - NFO	18	9.14%
1110-SWO	40	20.30%
1120-SUB	9	4.57%
1130 - SEAL	8	4.06%
1140 - EOD	2	1.02%
14XX/15XX - EDO	22	11.17%
1200 - HR	13	6.60%
3100 - Supply	19	9.64%
2XXX - Medical/Dental/MSC	5	2.54%
18XX - IW	28	14.21%
Other	12	6.09%
LATERAL TRANSFER		
Men	49	29.70%
Women	13	50.00%
No answer	4	20.30%
YEARS OF SERVICE		
0-5	27	13.71%
6-10	68	34.52%
11-15	60	30.46%
16-20	36	18.27%
>21	5	2.54%
No answer	1	0.51%
COMMISSIONING SOURCE		
OCS	57	28.93%
ROTC	60	30.46%
USNA	56	28.43%
Direct Commission	10	5.08%
No answer	14	7.11%

B. DATA ANALYSIS

Both transcriptions of the interviews and the survey data were qualitatively analyzed in this study.

1. Interviews

The researchers read all of the transcripts to get an overall sense of the data. Collective findings were agreed upon and annotated in memos. Answers were compiled and entered into dropdown menus in Microsoft Excel, permitting filtering by demographics of the researcher's choice. The purpose was to identify specific trends and themes of life-work balance, specifically WFC and WFE by gender, and specific views on the Navy's policies to permit balance and increase morale, thereby positively affecting retention. Recurring themes were noted and incorporated into the development of the survey, which was disseminated to a statistically significant sample population. Patterns were compared across various demographics including gender, designator, and marital status. The specific noted themes and analysis are discussed in Chapter IV with supporting explanation and specific quotations from the interviewees themselves. To determine what themes are prevalent between genders or gender-specific, the interpretation of life-work balance is compared to each individual's roles.

2. Survey

Data retrieved from LimeSurvey was exported to Microsoft Excel for analysis. All responses were reviewed to address any inadvertent discrepancies, such as lateral-transfer response for non-lateral transfer individuals. Once the data was verified, it was organized to identify trends and common themes amongst respondents of different groups consisting of designators, sex, age, commissioning source, and lateral transfers. This allowed the researchers to identify any differences in the role life-work balance influenced the groups, as well as how these groups viewed the importance of gender representation. The survey was also utilized to identify if certain navy programs, which may affect life-work balance, were being utilized.

C. DATA LIMITATIONS

The small sample sizes of both interviewees and survey respondents at NPS prevent statistical conclusions and predictions about the consensus and opinions of all officers in the Navy. The number of participants, however, in both mediums conceptualizes the framework and exploratory value of personal attitudes and behaviors of naval officers of varying degrees of experience and specialties.

1. Interviews

While recognizing this small dataset of 15 officers would not produce statistically significant results, its exploratory value will allow the framework and foundation for future research if warranted. The goal of this research was to identify overall trends that can be linked, specifically, to gender and their respective roles within their life-work domains, in hopes of improving female retention by identifying commonalities of opinions expressed.

2. Survey

Naval officers attending NPS are a small specialized group. This group of 630 officers is merely a fraction of the 53,400 total number of officers in the United States Navy (Office of Management and Budget, 2015). The survey group has also agreed to obligate more time in the Navy in exchange for attending NPS. Important opinions missing are those from individuals that have separated, have decided not to obligate any more time to the Navy, or those not able to attend NPS. While these limitations prevent us from answering questions from the missing demographics, it does not prevent us from analyzing the thoughts and opinions of the career-orientated demographic attending NPS.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. LIFE-WORK INTERVIEWS

This section of Chapter IV presents findings from this study's semi-structured exploratory interviews in relation to the topics of WFC and WFE discussed in Chapter II, as well as service members' definition and interpretation of life-work balance and the means to achieve the latter. The interview responses are synthesized into common trends and themes to identify the most pertinent framework to naval personnel.

1. Trends and Themes

The analysis of the interviews generated four predominant themes and trends:

- Similar interpretations of life-work balance regardless of gender and demographic differences
- Flexibility of time management, among the female respondents specifically, was an important factor in achieving balance
- Command culture, fostered by commanding officers and command leadership, was the most prominent influencer of morale and life-work balance amongst all interviewees
- The perception of the Navy's commitment to balancing other domains in an individual's life, other than work itself, varies among designator and sub-specialty, rather than gender

2. Interpretation of Balance

All respondents observed similar definitions of balance; quality time management and allocation between work and home life, with minimal conflict between the two and achieved emotional ease and fulfillment.

I think ideally our life-work balance in the Navy would be like you see in the business world. You know, your typical 9 to 5 or 8 to 4 job where you can get up in the morning, go to work, come back home from work, and be able to spend time with your family without worrying about being recalled or being asked to come in and stay late more often than usual people and our contemporaries in the business world. That's what I would define as the ideal work-life balance. There's going to be long days and there's

going to be short days, but it all averages out in the end. (URL male interview with author, January 6, 2015)¹

I'd say, you know, not having to work overtime necessarily all the time to keep up. There's certainly times in the Navy when you have to do that, especially on deployment. I mean, the rules don't even apply on deployment, but certainly when we are home on shore duty and with a few exceptions, of course, once again. Like recruiting duty, there was definitely after hours there or early hours, but otherwise being able to maintain a fairly normal work day, you know, 8 to 5, that kind of thing, and not having to take a ton of stuff home necessarily. Like I said, depending on your responsibilities that can change, Like I said, that normal work being able to have my weekends to me and my family. (RL female interview with author, January 7, 2015)

Making sure that you are contributing enough time to your work and your life to be successful in both. (URL female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Spending the same amount of quality time with my family as I'm spending at work. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Work-life balance is for me at least it is identifying [sic]—keeping your work separated from your family life. It is minimizing the intrusion on family and as well as family issues coming into the workplace. (RL male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

Making sure there is an adequate amount of time with my family and personal life. It is not necessarily equal hour distribution, but an emotional balance internally. (Staff Corps male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

All of the interviewees interpreted the definition of balance in similar ways. Greenhaus and Allen's (2011) definition of balance as the "effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles are compatible with an individual's life values" appears the best interpretation amongst this naval officer demographic (p. 17). All agreed that successful effectiveness in both the work and home domains encompass personal development, overall utility, and enrichment in personal lives. Time allocation, in itself, was the

¹ Due to confidentiality, the names of the interviewees have been omitted from this study. Reference to interviews will be annotated by "interview with author" and date conducted. Every effort was made to identify specific demographics, but not to the extent of breaching the anonymity of the participants.

predominant theme in determining life-work balance, not strictly from an equal time distribution, but quality time management.

While there were similar definitions of balance, all officers personally achieve balance differently. Different variables, based on individuality, personal interests, hobbies, and marital/dependent responsibilities, all play a factor in determining their activities and balance within their life domain.

Maintaining an active physical fitness routine throughout the week, to me that's actually more than three times a week. If I can get a little bit in every day, personally, that's a happy place. (RL female interview with author, January 7, 2015)

We have been able to travel, been able to visit some of the local sites, do wine tasting or go hiking. My wife has a really good job of getting us involved in civic activities and I guess like parties and stuff like that. So she is really my social calendar, as it were. So I would say you know, my wife is the driving force in ensuring that we go out and do things. I try to set a routine of like I am going to work from this time to this time. (URL male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

If I'm happy at home, I'm more productive at work. If my family unit is satisfied and we're happy and we're able to spend quality time with one another, then I'm more productive and able to focus and concentrate at work. When work—I mean, it goes the same way for work. You know, when everything is fine and we're meeting our deadlines and everybody is working together, there's no cultural conflicts, then, you know, going home it's easy to leave work at work. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 9, 2015)

Understanding and recognizing individual personalities and preferences are instrumental in the Navy's pursuit of improving morale, specifically when creating policies that affect the life-work dynamic. Within that spectrum, allocating time to mission accomplishment is a key factor to enrichment and success within their work domain. This includes mandatory career demands and expectations, including leadership responsibilities of subordinates, earning sub-specialty warfare qualifications, and preparations for command evolutions.

3. Flexibility of Time Management

All of the officers, on average, appeared to be consistently unbalanced during operational time commitments/underway because of operational tempo (OPTEMPO) requirements and more balanced during shore rotation. Common hindrances to balance, other than specific time allocation to home, include limited communication with family while underway, ship schedule changes, unnecessary mandatory working hours, and perception of needing physically to be present at work to be interpreted as “productive.”

All of the women and two males, with the exception of one female staff corps officer, felt most balanced at NPS. This statistic encompassed individuals of different marital statuses and number of dependents. This can be attributed to their personal choices and their flexibility of time management and priorities, regardless of designator. The idea of managing and being “in charge of your own schedule” with minimal micromanagement was appealing to the female demographic. The 2014 JAMRS’ study discussed in Chapter II noted similar results. It appears that women’s WFE is directly linked to their ability to have more direct control over their means to achieve their mission, rather than the demands of the mission itself. The male demographic, overall, was difficult to isolate trends of balance. While their definitions of balance were similar, job satisfaction and productivity were more of a factor in achieving balance for males than females. As time commitment to family was the primary consideration, the consensus included general balance during some form of home cycle, with quality time and ability to achieve satisfaction and utility at both home and work as the critical factors.

I think a big piece of it is also some of the flexibility with your work and being able to—maybe through flexible hours or from when you come in to when you can or shifting your obligations so that you can meet the needs of both your work and your family. Well, from my previous jobs, I think that here I have a lot of flexibility to be able to make the time that I need for the things that are important to me and my family more than in other place [sic] and I don’t think the stress level is as high. (RL female interview with author, January 6, 2015)

Just that flexibility of being able to tailor your hours. Just as an example and not to say that this is the balanced way of doing it and not the way I routinely do it, but if you want to, you know, get a paper written within 24 hours and stay up all night an [sic] do it and then the next day, you know,

if your work is done, as long as everything is done and everything is turned in, you just need to sleep and grin that you don't have classes or something. You know what I'm saying? Like being able to really flex around whatever you need to do whenever. Not having to—once again, if you don't have class, being able to take your kids to the doctor or something in the middle of the day, you know, as long as you're not missing any classes, that's really awesome. (RL female interview with author, January 7, 2015)

Common themes were not necessarily isolated by gender, but by designator, age, and years of experience. None of the officers had considered life-work balance as a factor upon their initial decision to enter naval service. All had chosen their specific designator for their own interpretation of quality of life, potential for intellectual growth and development, and personal reasons of patriotism and interests. None had considered life-work balance, as defined in this study, with respect to military service. This can be attributed to the young age of the individuals at the time of designator selection, none of whom were married, with the exception of two prior-enlisted officers. Some, however, selected their designators, platforms, and duty locations based upon their interpretation of life-work balance in addition to their interests and skills. All participants, with the exception of one prior enlisted officer, believe they would have made the same career progression decisions; this is because these decisions have molded and shaped who they were outside of work, positively affecting their home balance and achieving WFE, providing greater utility within both domains. The URL officers unanimously agreed that their specific platform selection and subsequent duty locations were directly influenced by life-work balance tradeoffs.

In flight school, I chose maritime. You had the choice of keep going jet or go maritime, which was P-3 or E-6. I chose maritime because I had heard a lot of stories about being on the boat and, you know, there's—a jet is not necessarily very safe. I mean, there are a lot of guys who lose their life out in the jet community. So I chose what I deemed to be, based on the information I had, a pretty much safer and much friendlier family environment. And, yes, the P-3 deploys just as long as the F-18 community, but being land based [sic] has its privileges over being sea based [sic] and that's why I chose that. The quality of life was definitely a consideration and then that even went further a couple of months—about six months later when I got the chance to choose between E-6 and P-3. I based it on two decisions. One, an eight month deployment or a one month

deployment. You're gone just as much, but you get to come back a lot more often. (URL male interview with author, January 6, 2015)

I think the P-3, the secondary reason was about being able to have a little bit longer home cycle and be home with friends and family, but the primary in picking the P-3 was mission based [sic]. The carrier aviation community is interesting, but not what I wanted to do. I like the P-3 because of the multi-mission capability that we have and it's jack of all trades, master of none. Everything stays very interesting in the plane. You have a ready-made group of friends wherever you're ready to go, at least one person. I think the other part of it is it's an exciting job. It's a fun, exciting job. It's something that you enjoy doing. I love flying. I love being in the air and doing the job of the P-3 community. Those are the benefits for me in the work place. My wife and I make all our decisions as a team now, especially with the kids around. For example, coming into the Navy [sic] Postgraduate School with the option of either coming here for post-grad or to become an admiral's aide or interview for an admiral's aide position and we decided that this would be best for family and our own sanity to come here. Even though I'm working quite hard in my degree program, I get to go home every night at my—you know, after class. I don't have to really answer to anyone except myself and my studies. (URL male interview with author, January 6, 2015)

Again, I did a cruise on a carrier and I really didn't like it, so I really didn't feel like I wanted to go Super Hornets, although I did have a choice. Like when we were going through primary, they said you can choose P-3s or Super Hornets. You were there with me. So the fact that P-3s had shore base, better communication with your family, better time to see your family because you're not on a carrier, and then you also get some more flexibility in the places you get to go. And from a career perspective, I felt it would be more rewarding to go into a P-3 than F-18, because there's a lot better leadership potential there. (URL male interview with author, January 8, 2015)

I did—well, part of it is for us at flight school, most of the instructors are P-3 guys because the jet instructors don't seem to go to fly T-34s. It is not good for them, so you are stuck with mostly helo guys and P-3 guys, so you learn their lifestyle. The P-3 lifestyle seemed more family oriented [sic]. You are not on a ship—or no matter where you are, you are always—you have access to a phone and a beer. So that led into my decision quite a bit, was that it was going to be quality of life and quality of family life, which is why I wanted P-3s—and my grades were horrible, so jets weren't going to happen anyway, but I wouldn't have wanted that. (URL male interview with author, January 8, 2015)

As individuals gained more experience within the Navy, their career choices with respect to life-work balance were more apparent. Family considerations became more of a factor with respect to subsequent duty selections and location preferences. As they garnished more experience and matured, some having families, they all agree that, while their definition of life-work balance has not changed, their proactive approach to achieve balance is more of a consideration, thereby affecting career choices. All acknowledged that skills and traits acquired from their specific designators have positively influenced balance at home. Similarly, home life is positively correlated to productivity at work. Their WFE showed that an improvement in their performance at work was a direct result from improvement in their home life and vice versa.

Patience at home dealing with screaming kids will potentially help me be more patient at work when dealing with people and frustrations, or, you know, something like that. Or from what I learn at home, I learn—at work I learn how to talk, because I interact more with adults at work. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 6, 2015)

I think sometimes work or life experiences, especially being a parent and a husband now, I think that helps me in the work environment, especially in a leadership position, talk to young sailors. I'm 34 now and I know how to buy a car. I know how to take care of my finances. I know how to take care of my wife and my kids. All of that goes into being a leadership role. (URL male interview with author, January 6, 2015)

Hard work is satisfying. So you feel adequate and responsible and like a—you feel like you are providing. Then the nurturing side of home plays a big role in how you treat people at work, which is huge. It is really important actually in our relationships. Otherwise, we would have computers doing everything. So having those two things separately balanced, balances each other too. (RL female interview with author, January 7, 2015)

Learning patience, because I was not always the most patient person, and having to deal with, you know, young kids, you know, 17 or 18 years old, first time being away from home, and, you know, they're just knuckleheads sometimes and you look at them and just like look at my two year old now and what were they thinking. And it's just so funny that I can see parallels of how, you know, I had to manage my guys and how I have to manage my child. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Work will give you a recharge to go back and be engaged with your family because you are happier to see them, you are not stuck in like a rut of somebody who's misbehaving and you can't get away from it. You got a break from it. But, at the same time being at home can recharge you for work because like the fun compassion you share with your family, you might take that to work with your sailors and treat them better. If you learn to be a good parent, you learn to be a good leader, too. So I think those go hand in hand. (URL male interview with author, January 8, 2015)

The discussed “flexibility” offered individuals control over their decision-making process. Officers have the ability to allocate time, effort, and attention into areas they deem worthy at the time. As time-sensitive obligations vary, these individuals can then focus attention on other demands. This control allows naval officers, regardless of gender, means to achieve balance between their home and work life. Stringent schedule dictation, with no decision flexibility, removes this control from an individual, creating psychological strain and inability to willfully choose to dedicate time to a responsibility or task the individual interprets as important or a priority.

4. Command Culture and Climate

The interviewees unanimously agreed that it is critical for an individual's immediate chain of command to foster a culture of balancing work and home, through implementation of policies and vision statements. While all interview participants recognized that the nature of naval service involves time away from home and inevitable unbalance with respect to time, the command culture induced by the commanding officer was the most prevalent cause of balance among his/her subordinates, filtering to the most junior personnel.

My command, even though I was forward deployed [sic], they were really onboard about family and taking care of families. We had a really strong ombudsman program and CO, XO, and chain of command in general for even the CMC were all very involved in everybody's—making sure everybody was taken care of back home especially. (RL male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

When you are in port you know, then the CO is like hey, do your job, but after that having—spending time with family or just having downtime is important. So he definitely did promote like to have a life off the ship. (URL female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

I think that the Navy needs to make these things an actual priority in what they're saying and that means instilling those values into the culture that is the Navy and into their command teams, because I think that those people have a lot of influence and can make or break the command culture which leads to the quality of life and more life balance that you're able to have at a command. (RL female interview with author, January 6, 2015)

If a CO is very strict and kind of doesn't give his crew the leeway to get that work/life balance, to miss major life experiences and so on, you are going to see morale go down, you are going to see retention rates go down, people getting out, all that kind of stuff. So the command leadership had [sic] direct tie to morale and retention. (Staff Corps male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

In my personal opinion, the Navy values mission first. I have heard people specifically say the Navy didn't issue a wife and a kid in your sea bag, so you deal with your personal issues on your own time, we are not going to make time for you to fix that. I think that is a horrible mentality, but that is mostly because I am a family guy too, and some of those guys that have that mentality get awesome results and they look great on paper, but everybody—nobody respects them and nobody wants to work for them. So it is kind of you might get results, but everybody else suffers for your results and I don't believe in that kind of theory of leadership. (URL male interview with author, January 8, 2015)

And the COs that I had, because I went through two COs during that tour, and both of them were amazing when it came to that sort of stuff. And I've—even as a single person, I saw that and I think maybe it's the culture of the supply corps [sic]. Because when I was at Fleet Industrial Supply Center, Pearl Harbor, the department heads and the XO and CO were still that way. They had that like, "Hey, look. If you need family time, you take your family time." You know, I saw that, so it was pretty cool. So basically I see a common trend here in the fact that you're more balanced when the COs and bosses actually live what they preach and that kind of thing. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Highest morale and balance was observed when the member's chain of command consistently enforced and emphasized mission accomplishment as the priority—not the number of hours to achieve it. Commanding officers based performance evaluation on the efficiency and success of job accomplishment—not the appearance of work through longer working hours.

My fiancée's XO is a geo-bachelor so his whole family is gone for six years on the east coast, while he is in Hawaii living on the sub as an

executive officer. I think that poorly gives sailors a feeling that they have to be at work all the time, they can't have a life, they don't have to care about their family. He may love his family and be supporting them and doing all those things, but that is not a good role model. It doesn't look good. It doesn't promote a healthy home life for others, even if he has a healthy home life. (RL female interview with author, January 7, 2015)

Well, I guess directly our officer in charge of us, the air boss, he was definitely a family guy so he wasn't the kind of leader or boss that said, "You will have working hours." It was kind of get your job done and then go home. So he fostered an environment for us to spend time away from work if we did not need to be at work, which helped considerably to that. (URL male interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Because one ship can have like this awesome CO who is all about balancing work and life or home and work, then there is a CO that is just like work, work, work, work. Like if your CO lives onboard, like let's say he is a geo bachelor [sic] and he lives onboard, like that has to probably do—I am sure things are going to be different because there is some COs who have families and come 1600 you hear the CO departing the ship, whereas you never—like you always feel iffy about when we have those geo bachelor [sic] COs. It's like, oh, no, he is going to know that I left this early, so you kind of like are waiting for the time to be—alright, maybe 1800 is appropriate to leave now. (URL female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

Within the realm of WFC, the female officers, specifically, acknowledged a perception of double standard compared to their male counterparts. Women face sexism and discrimination if their life-work balance is not in line with the perceived expectations of the Navy.

But there's also the perception that people place on you. So if you do get pregnant during a certain time, you have to plan it out so you get pregnant when you're on shore duty. If you get pregnant while you are on a ship, then you are looked negatively upon. Therefore, you really have to plan your career, but then you are looked at very differently. I think it is complete double standard. I mean, and there are reasons for that, because the female would have to be removed from the ship and it causes a manpower issue which is understandable, but I think it goes beyond that. Therefore, basically, in the surface warfare officer's career, you have a two-year break when you are on shore duty. Here is when you're supposed to have a baby. And then if you don't have a baby then, then you need to wait until after you've gone to department head school and you've done your two department head tours. Now you are 30 years old plus and the

risks are higher and now this is the time for it. Therefore, I think there is a lot with the career path of the surface warfare officer, there is a lot with the jobs that just do not align to meet the needs of people that want to have families and pursue that line of work. And more power to the people that can do that. I knew I was not one of those people. That's a sacrifice that I was not willing to make. (RL female interview with author, January 6, 2015)

Some people are much more work oriented [sic], workaholics, and don't mind being there all the time. Females I would caution even more so, because they do not have that freedom to just start a family whenever they want based on their career. I cannot give you a blanket statement that says a female should be able to start her family three years into her time in the service, you know. It just depends on her career. It depends on her actual job or whatever she is doing. Perception is probably the number one problem with women getting pregnant in the military and preventing military members from starting a family is perception. They are always worried about what everybody else is going to think and 95 percent of the time they're right. There is always a negative perception. Where is the positive? When is having a family right? Is it based on what the military wants or is it based on what you and your family personally wants? (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 9, 2015)

So timing is critical. If you were to have a baby during your SWO career, I guess, as a female. If for whatever reason you got pregnant—because once you get pregnant you have to—you get orders to go onshore and you don't fulfill your requirement, then yes I think a lot of females just—even for the enlisted personnel, I think they get looked down upon because it's like either A, oh they just didn't want to go on deployment so they got themselves knocked up. Or B, great now this person is pregnant. We don't know if we are going to have a person to replace that person. So it might—you know, it adds additional work. The next person who does replace that person—it is always a worry. So that is kind of when they are looked down upon. (URL female interview with author, January 8, 2015)

These interviews suggest peers and supervisors view women unfavorably if they begin a family at a time contrary to the Navy's traditional timeline of shore duty. As such, upon becoming pregnant, women are removed from the operational environment and a billet is gapped, affecting the detailing/manpower allocation process and mission readiness. This billet is in need of new personnel, thus increasing training costs, with no guarantee of performance level. Little consideration is given to the original service member—commitment to her life domain—other than mandatory transfer. This fosters a

culture of resentment, hesitance, and unwillingness to select particular career paths for fear of personal dissatisfaction, sexism, and discrimination. The Navy needs to address these particular issues to continue improving quality of life programs, accession efforts, and retention or risk losing highly skilled officers to lateral transfer or attrition.

5. Perception of Navy's Commitment

All respondents had, somewhat, varying degrees of confidence into the Navy's promotion of official policies of life-work balance. The interviews concluded that women were more educated as to which DON programs were available, and they seemed more willing to utilize them. This includes programs such as maternity leave, OMBUDSMAN, Fleet and Family Support Centers, Child Development Centers, and the Career Intermission Pilot Program. It was recognized that use of these programs are dependent on unique situations such as requiring support upon starting a family, marital support, and personal development.

I definitely think the Navy needs to shift away from being the talking heads about work-life balance and actually make it happen and develop some policies that will actually prevent commands from taking advantage of their people in saying, you know, we need you here 16 hours a day. I don't need you, you know, at home floating around with your family. I need you here to work on our mission. Yeah, our mission is important, but we're not ever going to accomplish our mission if military families are not happy and fulfilled at home. And if they can't ever spend that quality of time with one another, look at the divorce rates in the military. You know, is that part of the military culture and you're on call 24/7? Is that reflective of our leadership's policies or lack of policies on work-life balance? I just don't know. They can talk about it all they want, and I do, I hear about it, but I don't see it. I don't see the work-life balance the way they say it should be from the top of the chain. (Staff Corps female interview with author, January 9, 2015)

I would say it is hard to catch up to somebody if you are both going the same pace and you are already ten yards behind. So for women's equality it hasn't for centuries hasn't been that way [sic]. So for us to narrow that gap we do need to give some preferential treatment. Preferential is maybe not the right word. We do need to provide some policies that would encourage them to stay in. (URL male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

Sometimes there's too much information out there, but I think like, for example, with Navy One Source, knowing there's kind of one spot to kind of come in for information, it's very helpful. But then, on that same note, there is so much information that you get lost. Just for a quick example on that coming back to the pregnancy stuff, I remember trying to search, excuse me, for certain pregnancy information that I had heard through the grapevine was out there, finding the documentation was horribly difficult. And, you know, I don't know if there's necessarily a great answer to that. I think if everybody realizes how much information there is, instead of trying to add and just stack policies on policies, that if people try to reduce it a little bit and not as cumbersome, however we could do that, would be awesome, because there's just a lot of information and conflict in policy. (RL female interview with author, January 6, 2015)

The Navy as a whole I think it's lip service. I think there is [sic] policies passed, not always implemented very well, and I think that they want to be able to say that it is families first, but is it executed that way from the Navy—the branch Navy? I would say probably no. I think the responsibility kind of to make sure it happens, to make sure you take care of your sailors happens and the commanding officer, department head level. Kind of like the senior leadership of a ship. (Staff Corps male interview with author, January 9, 2015)

All felt commanding officers need to reiterate and emphasize program availability in a positive way and to encourage individuals to utilize these programs—all to achieve balance and enrichment within individuals' life domain. This would directly and positively impact the fighting force morale and produce better performers on the job. As such, the Navy must always constantly be proactive in recognizing and determining methods to appeal to all demographics under a variety of circumstances, including marital status, gender, number of dependents, and personal interests. That way, there is less perception of bias toward one demographic over another and a true commitment to gender and demographic equality.

B. SURVEY

The final section of this chapter analyzes the information received from completed survey questions. Three major categories were identified: life-work balance effects on decision-making, Navy programs/instructions which accommodate life-work balance, and factors affecting designator selection. These categories were looked at to

determine if there were differences between genders, designator, and rank. Differences between the following categories are discussed and, also, some unexpected similarities are addressed.

1. Life-Work Balance and Decision-Making

The first area examined was the likelihood an individual would sacrifice life-work balance for possible improved career progression. Each community is different, but there are duty assignments for each that are generally identified as more beneficial to promotion than others. To determine those who would choose to sacrifice life-work balance, we began with the following question:

- *How important is life-work balance when negotiating follow-on orders?*

The level of importance was ranked on a five-point Likert scale with 5 having the most importance. Of those who responded with a four or five, 81 percent of men and 65 percent of women, respectively, we analyzed their responses to the following question:

- *How likely are you to accept a billet your community values at the expense of your own life-work balance?*

Of those who responded “somewhat likely” or “very likely,” we found 36 percent of men and 47 percent of women who viewed life-work balance as important in negotiating follow-on orders and were likely to sacrifice that balance for community-valued jobs as shown in Figure 2.

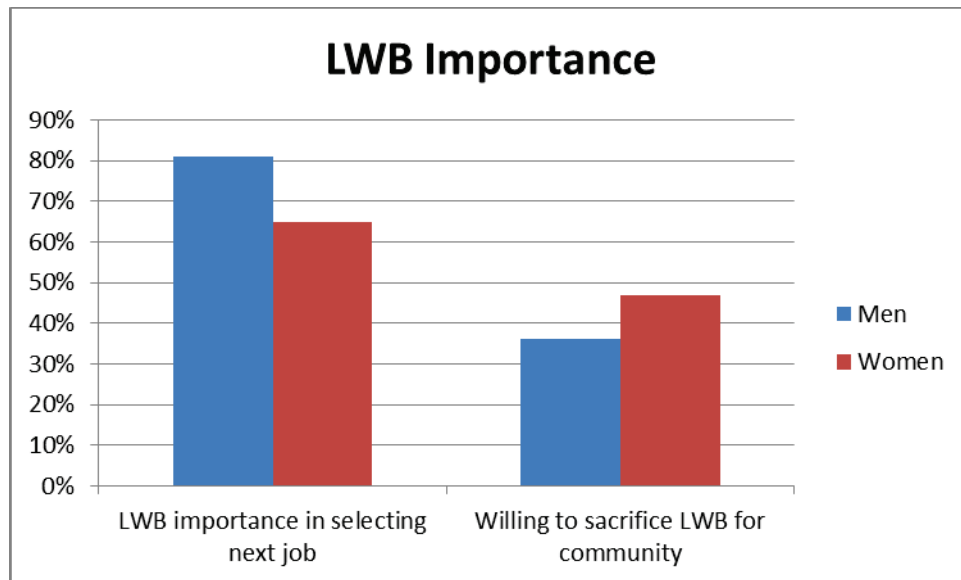


Figure 2. Differences in Importance of LWB and Compromise of LWB

We were intrigued to see that women did not view life-work balance as important as men when choosing their next duty assignment. Why is there such a difference? Is it that women can manage life-work balance issues better than men and, thus, this issue is not as influential? Or are there other, more important factors? The fact that more women were willing to sacrifice their life-work balance compared to men was interesting. A possible explanation for this may not only be their desire to advance within their community, but that they feel the need to take those community-valued billets in order to advance.

The ability to balance family life and work is an obvious factor in achieving life-work balance. To determine if there was a gender difference in the sample group, the responses to the following question were analyzed:

- *Am I able to balance the demands of my work and the demands of my family life?*

The survey results showed that 65 percent of men and 50 percent of women stated they agreed with this statement. This difference may be explained by what a McKinsey & Company report (Desvaux, Devillard, & Sancier-Sultan, 2010) identified as the “double burden syndrome” (pg. 8).

To identify potential differences between genders or designators, the study compared the balance at NPS with a home cycle period on a previous sea/operational tour. In this regard, the following question was asked:

- *Overall, to what extent do you feel your life is balanced?*

After looking at the responses to this question from men and women, we found that 77 percent of men and 72 percent of women responded with “somewhat balanced” or “very balanced.” This feeling of balance contrasts with the feeling of balance while home on a previous sea/operational tour. Then the participants were asked the following question:

- *During a previous sea/operation tours, to what extent was your life balanced during home cycle?*

Of those who responded as “somewhat balanced” or “very balanced,” the balance dropped to 31 of men and 24 percent of women. These differences between genders, while small, does corroborate the interview findings discussed previously in this chapter.

Since there are inherent differences between designators, thus different stressors affecting balance, examples of balance differences between designators on shore duty and home cycle during a previous sea duty are provided in the next section and in Figure 3.

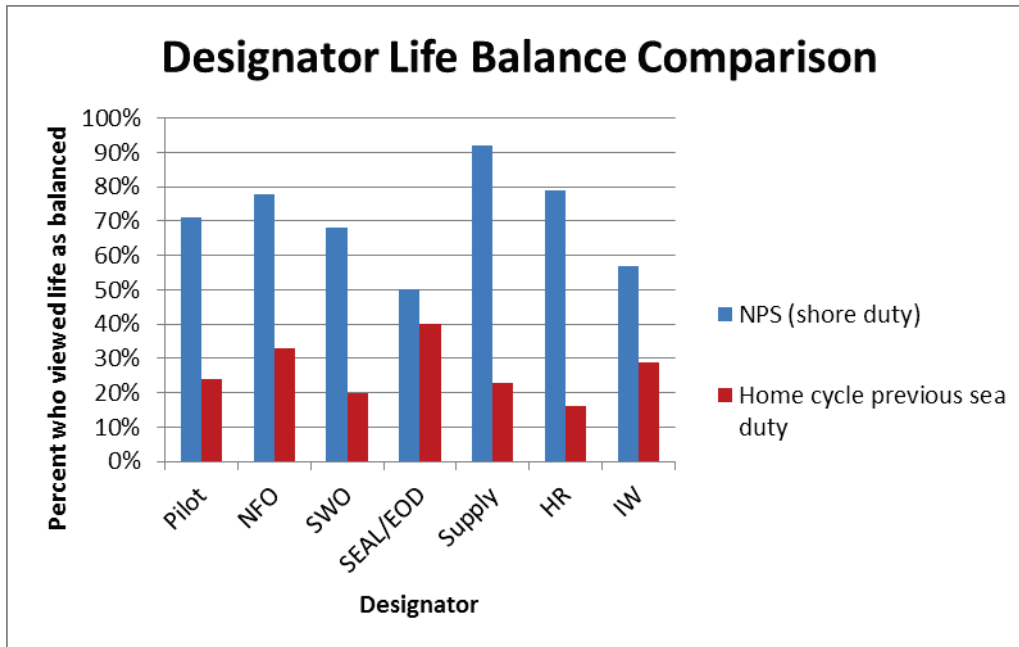


Figure 3. Designator LWB Difference between NPS and Previous Sea Duty

Figure 3 shows the common trend is high balance at NPS and low balance during home cycle on sea duty. While NPS is a shore duty, this trend cannot be assumed to be similar for all shore duty, as there are wide differences between them all. It is important to note, however, that for all designators compared, which include RL and URL, all have fairly low numbers of feeling balanced while home on sea duty. This area of feeling unbalanced during home cycle may be a good starting point for further research on ways to raise these numbers and to increase retention.

Life-work balance influencing lateral movements within the Navy was identified while looking at those officers who were lateral transfers. Officers may request lateral transfers for different reasons. It may be they no longer meet the eligibility requirements for their designator, or they can voluntarily transfer if allowed by their community manager. It was noted that more women than men were lateral transfers in this study group. Compared to 50 percent of women, 30 percent of men fell into this lateral-transfer group. While the researchers did not ascertain if the lateral transfer was voluntary or forced, it was noted that life-work balance was a major influence in their decision (whether to transfer or which designator was selected). Of those stating that life-work

balance factors influenced their decision to lateral transfer, 92 percent were female and 80 percent were male.

A similar lateral movement difference between sexes was noted in the perception of life-work balance in the Reserve Component. In this regard, the following question was asked:

- *I believe my life-work balance would increase in the Reserves.*

When responding to the question, 25 percent of men and 50 percent of women responded with “agree” or “strongly agree.” The fact that such a higher percentage of women feel their life-work balance would increase may support the statistic mentioned in Chapter 2 regarding the increased number of female officers in the Reserve Component compared to the Active Component.

Various programs were looked at to see if any were deemed more accommodating to life-work balance than others. The programs included short periods of time off (special liberty, leave, etc.) and a new program to enable a long break-in service (CIPP). Participants were asked to rate how these Navy programs and instructions accommodate life-work balance with the following responses:

<i>Unfamiliar with program</i>	<i>No effect</i>	<i>Little effect</i>	<i>Some effect</i>	<i>Large effect</i>
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Analyzing the responses, it was noted that the program with the highest overall responses of “some effect” and “large effect” in accommodating life-work balance was regular leave, with 82 percent of men and 88 percent of women in that category as depicted in Figure 4. This positive response highlights the importance in allowing members to utilize their available leave to the maximum extent possible.

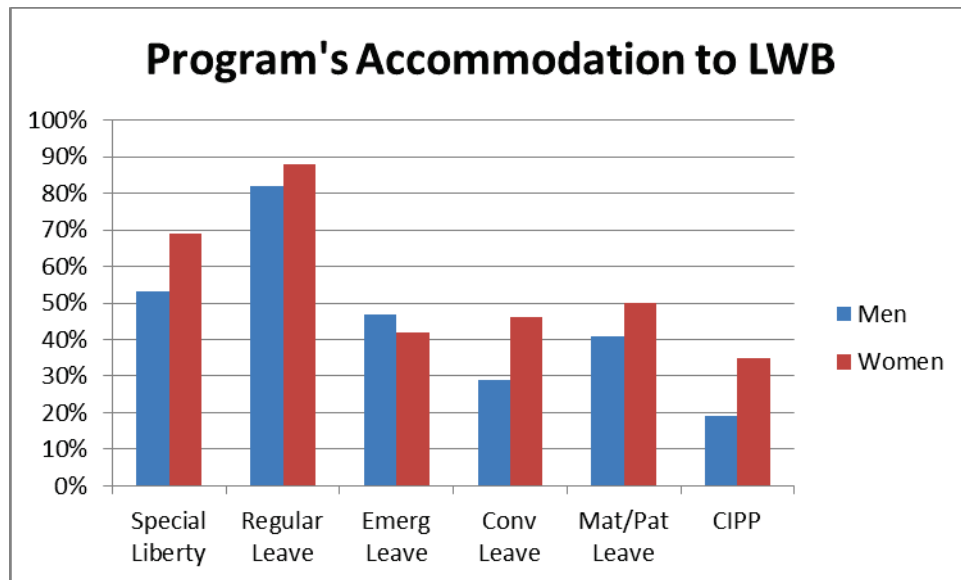


Figure 4. Men/Women Perception of Various Programs Influence on LWB

The CIPP results were not unexpected, but they did identify an area for the Navy to address. The primary responses for both sexes were either the program had little to no effect on their life-work balance or they were unaware of the program altogether. Of the participants, 42 percent of both men and women felt this program had little to no effect on their life-work balance, but 39 and 23 percent, respectively, were unaware of the program. These are not good numbers for a program established to address life-work challenges. Either the information is not reaching all members, or the program is not viewed as effective. This may explain why out of 200 available opportunities from 2009 2013 there were only 66 applicants (Klimas, 2013).

The final area examined were factors affecting occupational choice. The researchers wanted to begin the process to identify why individuals chose specific designators. First, it is important to identify that 79 percent of men and 88 percent of women got their first choice of designator. Participants were asked the following question:

- *What is the major reason you chose your designator or ranked your designator preference?*

Table 4 shows the results for all given options for both men and women.

Table 4. Men/Women Influences in Designator Selection

	Interest in Field	Relation to Previous Education/Tmg	Similarity to Previous occupation	Skill Translation to Civilian Job	Promotion Potential	Deployment Length/Frequency	Special Pay/Bonuses	Random Choice	No Answer
Men	56%	8%	5%	11%	4%	7%	1%	3%	4%
Women	38%	27%	8%	15%	4%	4%	0%	0%	4%

The results in Table 4 show that the most important influence for both sexes was their interest in the field associated with their designator. We also begin to see that women's responses are more distributed than men. To see if multiple influences exist for men and women, all participants were asked that, on a five point Likert scale with one having no influence, to what degree did the following influence their designator choice:²

- Interest in the field
- Relation to previous education/training
- Similarity to previous occupations
- Ease of translating military to civilian job skills
- Promotion potential
- Deployment length/frequency
- Special pay/bonuses
- Randomly chose

For men, the only response of a four or five greater than 50 percent was "interest in the field" (56%). The majority of women, on the other hand, listed multiple influences, such as interest in the field (81%), relation to previous education/training (65%), skill transition to civilian job (54%), and deployment length/frequency (50%) as shown in

² Respondents were able to rank each influence on a scale of 1 to 5. Answers of 4 or 5 are displayed for the ranked influences which were above 50 percent. This is why added totals do not equal 100 percent.

Figure 5. This highlights that women may value more things when making career decisions compared to men.

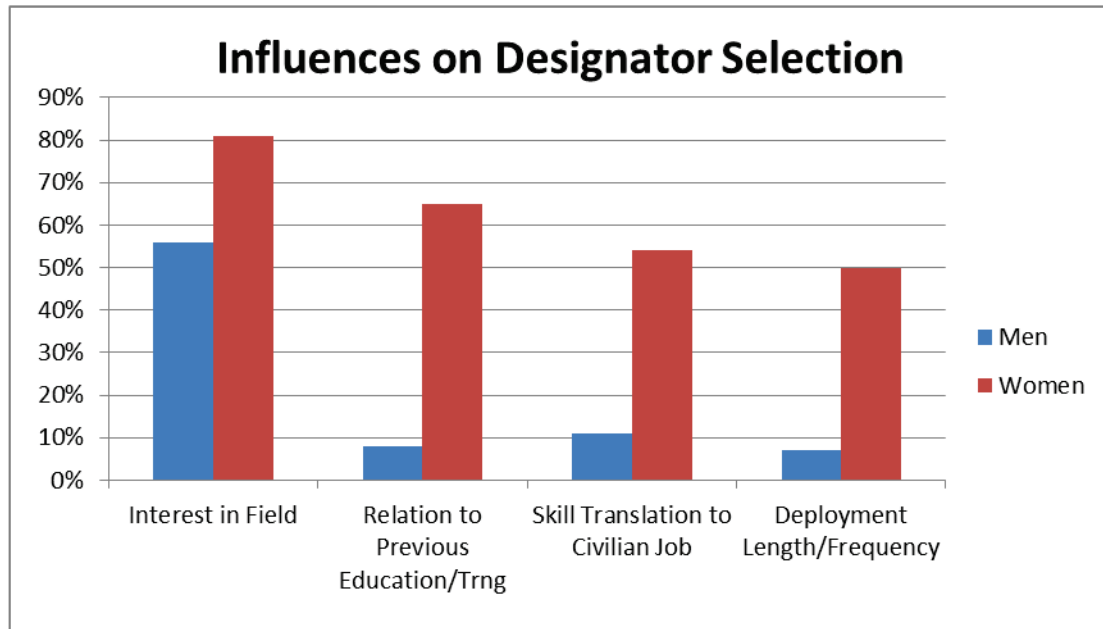


Figure 5. Men/Women Influence on Designator Selection

Gender representation was studied to observe if this influenced either sex's occupational choice. Since men make up the majority of officers, it was not surprising to see that men were viewed as being over-represented and women as under-represented in most designators. The HR designator was the only one where this was reversed: Women thought they were over-represented and men thought they were under-represented. The majority response for all designators and both sexes, however, was that this did not influence their designator selection. The fact that this sample was so small, and became even smaller when looking at specific designator, it is hard to expand this impact beyond the sample group.

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V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SUMMARY

Increasing retention of experienced, high-performing individuals is critical for the Navy's strategic principles. There are many factors that influence retention decisions among male and female Navy officers. This study specifically explored occupational choice and LWB. Chapter IV presented findings from this study's exploratory interviews and survey. In particular, findings were synthesized into the themes of common interpretations of conflict and tradeoffs within the life-work domain, time flexibility to maintain balance, command culture, and occupational choice. This chapter summarizes the findings and provides concluding remarks and recommendations on ways to increase the Navy's awareness of factors that influence accession and retention. This research shows that there are commonalities between men and women within their life-work domains, but it also shows gender differences among specific occupational influencers.

B. CONCLUSIONS

Both males and females interpret and achieve balance in similar ways, yet women are more susceptible to increased conflict within their life domain. This is attributed to professional consequences and repercussions of starting a family contrary to the perceived Navy appropriate timing, as well as tradeoffs of life-work balance made for their career. Life-work balance importance is the same between genders; however, life-work balance decisions appear to be more influential in women's rather than in men's decision-making. It appears that these life-work balance decisions females make are not limited to ones that increase their balance. They may also tradeoff that balance to achieve other goals, such as promotions. These tradeoffs, while made voluntarily, may eventually exceed their ability to compensate for the life-work imbalance. As such, the Navy is in danger of losing highly qualified female personnel to attrition or different sub-specialty selection, based on their perception of that specific community. Addressing the root conflicts influencing the life-work balance mismatch will assist the Navy with improved female retention.

While this analysis indicates it is not important for proportionate gender distribution amongst designators, commands need to be more proactive in fostering a non-sexist work environment. Based on this research, the belief is that exact representation is not as important as equality in choice and treatment. This may increase their commitment to the organization.

The need to communicate and promote quality of life programs to maximize the program's intended effect was also identified. Programs that are well established and known amongst members, such as regular leave, are viewed as positive influences in life-work balance. New programs, such as CIPP, require more communication than message traffic and periodic articles. It is imperative for commands to push this information to its leadership for further distribution down to all members. Doing this will positively affect the Navy's ability to implement quality-of-life programs and accurately test new programs' effectiveness in achieving its intended results.

This research suggests that women view multiple aspects as important when making career decisions, specifically initial selection of their designator and sub-specialty. This view may also explain the difference in women's life-work balance choices compared to that of men. With multiple factors viewed as important, there may be a higher probability that one or more of those may change—either from external or internal changes—thus affecting that balance. Acknowledgement of this will lead to increased enrichment, productivity, and achievement within both work and life domains, positively affecting the Navy.

One goal of this research was to identify how these life-work balance and occupational choice decisions and tradeoffs influenced retention. Due to the limited and very specific population of this study's interviews and survey, this was not possible. The majority of Navy students at NPS are here voluntarily as attendance requires an extended service obligation after leaving, even if an individual does not graduate. Most are at their career midpoint or beyond as well. This self-selection results in a career-oriented group with intentions of service to at least the current retirement requirement of 20 years of service. Therefore, this sample is not representative of Navy as a whole. The researchers, however, believe that this research sheds light on some of the issues related to LWB and

occupational choice. Furthermore, this study provides a framework for establishing a larger scale study in the future.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study begins to provide the groundwork for further expanded research, there was collectable information left out of this research. Information not obtained in this study, but may have assisted in further conclusions, include marital status and number of dependents in the distributed survey. This may have provided insight on how dependents can change LWB and occupational choice. Also, interviewing new students direct from a sea duty and then again prior to graduation would allow for an analysis of how LWB conflicts may change after removal from those stressors.

Due to the limited exploratory qualitative nature, small number of interview subjects, and isolated sample size of the survey respondents, the Navy would benefit from conducting similar research on a much larger scale, specifically where detailed econometric and statistical analysis can be conducted, to confirm or disprove the findings in this study. Longitudinal information on individuals as they advance in the Navy would be beneficial. Determining how LWB definition and importance changes over time as rank increases, dependents are gained, and experience and responsibilities increase with respect to males and females, designators, etc., will allow a more detailed analysis and, thus, recommendations to increase female retention. Similar data collection of those departing the Navy will allow for a more complete analysis of these positive and negative LWB impacts influencing decisions to separate. Further research and constant evaluation of service members' morale and study of the perception of their work environment is critical from a force perspective, but also from a human capital point of view, to ensure highly skilled and valuable personnel are not lost due to attrition.

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APPENDIX A. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Naval Postgraduate School Consent to Participate in Research

Introduction.

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled *Gender Differences in Life-Work Balance and its Impact on Female Occupational Choice and Retention*. The purpose of this research is to examine the differences between gender life-work balance tradeoffs and its impact on female occupational choice and retention. We will explore if officers' occupational choice changes beyond their initial commitment, and determine whether life-work balance influences that decision. The goal of this research is to study how life-work balance differs between gender and its impact on a woman's methodology when making career and life decisions.

Procedures.

If you agree to participate, we will ask you a series of semi-structured questions about your life and experiences in the military. The interview will be an open dialogue and you will be encouraged to express and describe your personal experiences related to life-work balance. The interview will last approximately 30-40 minutes. *Approximately 20 individuals will be asked to participate in this portion of our research. We will use your responses to guide additional aspects of this study and future research. If you consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed to allow us to refer back to your answers for analysis. If you prefer not to be recorded, we will take detailed notes.*

☐ I consent to being audio-recorded.

☐ I do not consent to being audio-recorded.

Location.

The interview will take place on the Naval Postgraduate School campus in an academic building or the Dudley Knox Library.

Cost.

There is no cost to participate in this research study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study. You will not be penalized in any way or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled if you choose not to participate in this study or to withdraw. The alternative to participating in the research is to not participate in the research.

Potential Risks and Discomforts.

The potential risks of participating in this study are *minimal and limited to a risk of breach of confidentiality, which is an accidental loss of control of your interview responses or record of participation in the research.*

Anticipated Benefits.

Anticipated benefits from this study include findings that may influence future policy decisions to positively affect life-work balance for men and women and specifically facilitate women's retention in the Navy. You will not directly benefit from your participation in this research.

Compensation for Participation.

No tangible compensation will be given.

Confidentiality & Privacy Act.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by law. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. All identifying information will be removed from transcripts, which will be stored on a secure, password protected NPS server. Individuals will not be identified in any reports by name but will be described broadly by discipline and/or rank, (for example, "fire chief").

Points of Contact.

If you have any questions or comments about the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Marco DiRenzo 831-656-2966, msdirenz@nps.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the Naval Postgraduate School IRB Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck, 831-656-2473, lgshattu@nps.edu.

Statement of Consent.

I have read the information provided above. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and all the questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been provided a copy of this form for my records and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that by agreeing to participate in this research and signing this form, I do not waive any of my legal rights.

☐ I consent to participate in the research study.

☐ I do not consent to participate in the research study.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Administrative/Demographic Questions:

- What is your age?
- What is your rank/paygrade?
- What is your marital status?
- How long have you been in the Navy?
- If retired, how long did you serve?
- Do you have any dependents?
 - If so, how many?
 - Ages of dependents?
 - At what point in your career did you start a family?

Defining Balance

- How do you define life-work balance?
- What does the idea of life-work balance mean to you?
 - What would the ideal life-work balance look like in a Navy career?
 - Tell me about a time when you felt balance (felt the least conflict)?
 - Did any Navy policy, resource, person, etc... assist with this?
 - Tell me about a time when you felt unbalanced and were unable to balance home vs. work
 - How did Navy policies, resources, personnel, etc. contribute to the difficulty?
 - Do you have any suggestions on how the Navy could minimize this conflict for you?

Achieving Balance

- How do you achieve work-life balance in your career?
 - What do you do to balance work and life roles in your career?
 - How do you manage the conflicts between the two?

Career Considerations

- Did interest or concerns about work-life balance play a role in your decision to pursue a career in the Navy? How?
- After your initial decision to join the Navy, did work-life balance play a role in selecting your designator or sub-specialty?
- How has your perspective about work-life balance changed over time?
- Given what you know now, would you have evaluated your choices differently? (joining Navy and career choices within)
- Given what you know now, what advice would you give to someone considering a Navy career?

Personal Experiences

- What resources or policies of the Navy support your work-life balance?
- What have leaders or the organizations you work for done to support your work-life balance?
- What conflicts exist between work and home?
- Are there any benefits between work and home life?
- What about your work and life help you do a better job with the other?

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APPENDIX B. OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE SURVEY

Gender Differences in Life-Work Balance and Its Impact on Female Occupational Choice and Retention

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation is sincerely appreciated.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

There are 61 questions in this survey

Consent

Demographic questions

[]What is your age?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 18-21
- ☐ 22-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51 or over

[]What is your gender?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

[]What is your rank?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ O-1/O-1E
- ☐ O-2/O-2E
- ☐ O-3/O-3E
- ☐ O-4
- ☐ O-5
- ☐ O-6

Designator questions

[]What is your designator?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Pilot
- ☐ NFO
- ☐ SWO
- ☐ SWO(Nuke)
- ☐ Sub
- ☐ SEAL
- ☐ EOD
- ☐ Information Dominance
- ☐ HR
- ☐ Supply
- ☐ Medical/Dental
- ☐ LDO
- ☐ PAO
- ☐ Other

[]Did you get your first choice of designator?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

[]If "no" what was your first choice?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ PAO
- ☐ Pilot
- ☐ NFO
- ☐ SWO
- ☐ SWO(Nuke)
- ☐ Sub
- ☐ SEAL
- ☐ EOD
- ☐ HR
- ☐ Supply
- ☐ Medical/Dental
- ☐ Information Dominance

[]Are you a lateral transfer?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

[] If yes, what was your previous designator?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ PAO
- ☐ Pilot
- ☐ NFO
- ☐ SWO
- ☐ SWO(Nuke)
- ☐ Sub
- ☐ SEAL
- ☐ EOD
- ☐ HR
- ☐ Supply
- ☐ Medical/Dental
- ☐ Informational Dominance
- ☐ Other

[] If yes, to what extent did life-work balance factors influence your decision?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ No effect
- ☐ Little effect
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Some effect
- ☐ Strong effect

Life-Work Balance

[] How likely are you to accept a billet your community values, at the expense of your own life-work balance?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Somewhat Unlikely
- ☐ Neutral / Uncertain
- ☐ Somewhat Likely
- ☐ Very Likely

[]

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 having the least importance:

How important is life-work balance when negotiating follow-on orders?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

[]

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 having the most effect:

To what extent does life-work balance factor in your decision to separate at your next opportunity?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

[]

Please rate how the following Navy programs and instructions accommodate life-work balance for you:

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Unfamiliar with this program	No effect	Little effect	Some effect	Large effect
Special Liberty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regular Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emergency Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Convalescent Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maternity/Paternity Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Career Intermision Pilot Program (CIPP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reassignments for Humanitarian Reasons (HUMS)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[]At your last command, how likely were they to approve the use of the following programs?

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	No way	Unlikely	Somewhat likely	Fairly likely	Extremely likely	Yes, absolutely	Unknown
Special Liberty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regular Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emergency Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Convalescent Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maternity/Paternity Leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Career Intermission Pilot Program (CIPP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reassignment for Humanitarian Reasons (HUMS)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[]

How important was life-work balance when choosing designators?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 1 Not Important at All
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 Neutral
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Extremely Important

[]Overall, to what extent do you feel your life is balanced?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Unbalanced
- ☐ Somewhat unbalanced
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat balanced
- ☐ Very balanced

[]During a previous sea/operation tours, to what extent was your life balanced during home cycle?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Unbalanced
- ☐ Somewhat unbalanced
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat balanced
- ☐ Very balanced
- ☐ N/A

[]

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no conflict:

To what extent does deployment create conflict?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

[]

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no conflict:

To what extent do dependents (spouse, children, etc...) create conflict?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

[] It is important to me that I am effective in many different parts of my life (e.g., family, friends, community, leisure activities, career)

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ 1 Not Important at All
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 Neutral
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Extremely Important

[] Before making a career-related decision, I think about how the decision would affect many other parts of my life.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I strive to be successful in many different parts of my life.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] It is important to me that I am satisfied with my experiences in many different parts of my life.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I make work-related decisions based on the effects the decisions have on many other parts of my life.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I participate in activities outside of work because they help me feel more fulfilled in life.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I am able to balance the demands of my work and the demands of my family life.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I am satisfied with the balance I have achieved between my work and family life.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] Overall, I believe that my work and family lives are out of balance.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I can balance my work and family responsibilities so that one does not upset the other.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I experience a high level of work-family balance.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I feel successful in balancing my work and personal life.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Affiliation/Turnover Intention

[] I plan on transitioning to the Reserve Component to better my life-work balance.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I believe my life-work balance would increase in the Reserves.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I intend to leave my community (lateral transfer) at my next opportunity.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I plan to leave the Navy at my next legal opportunity.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I will quit the Navy as soon as possible.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I do not intend to stay in the Navy beyond my obligation for attending NPS.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Job Satisfaction

[] I enjoy being in my current designator.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] All in all, I am satisfied working in the Navy.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] In general, I like my job in the Navy.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] My life would be more balanced in a different designator.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I would be more satisfied as a different designator.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Identity

[] Being in my designator is an important part of who I am.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] If I were no longer in the Navy, my life would not feel complete.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] Being in the Navy has a great deal of personal meaning to me.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] Belonging to the Navy fulfills a sense of purpose in my life.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I strongly identify with being a Naval Officer.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

[] I am emotionally attached to the Navy.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Occupational Choice

[] What is the major reason you chose your designator or ranked your designator preferences?

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Interest in the field
- ☐ Relation to previous education/training
- ☐ Similarity to previous occupations
- ☐ Ease of transitioning military to civilian job skills
- ☐ Promotion potential
- ☐ Deployment length/frequency
- ☐ Special Pay/bonuses
- ☐ Randomly chose

[]

One a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 having no influence:

To what degree has the following influenced your designator selection?

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	1	2	3	4	5
Interest in the field	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relation to previous education/training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Similarity to previous occupations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ease of translating military to civilian job skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Promotion potential	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deployment length/frequency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Special pay/bonuses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Randomly chose	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[] In your opinion which designators identify more towards men?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ PAO
- ☐ Pilot
- ☐ NFO
- ☐ SWO
- ☐ SWO(Nuke)
- ☐ SEAL
- ☐ EOD
- ☐ HR
- ☐ Supply
- ☐ Medical/Dental
- ☐ Information Dominance
- ☐ Other

[] To what degree do you feel your gender is over or under-represented within your designator?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 1 Significantly under-represented
- ☐ 2 Slightly under-represented
- ☐ 3 Neutral
- ☐ 4 Slightly over-represented
- ☐ 5 Significantly over-represented

[] To what extent did this influence your designator selection?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Not at all relevant/important
- ☐ Minimally relevant/important
- ☐ Somewhat relevant/important
- ☐ Very relevant/important
- ☐ Absolutely essential

[]

Would you have been more or less likely to choose a designator where gender proportionality was higher?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ More likely
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Less likely

[]Is gender proportionality influencing your decision to retain or seperate?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly influencing decision to retain
- ☐ Slightly influencing decision to retain
- ☐ No influence
- ☐ Slightly influencing decision to separate
- ☐ Strongly influencing decision to separate

[]Is lack of gender proportionality influencing your decision to retain or separate?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly influencing decision to separate
- ☐ Slightly influencing decision to separate
- ☐ No influence
- ☐ Slightly influencing decision to retain
- ☐ Strongly influencing decision to retain

[]

Seeing my gender equally represented across all designators is important to me.

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Strong Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Thank you for taking the time to assist us with our thesis research.
02-10-2015 – 23:32

Submit your survey.
Thank you for completing this survey.

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