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# Gender Equity in the Army

*"Diversity is the Force. Equity is the Goal. Inclusion is the Way."*  
*Army People Strategy 2020*

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To my family, I love you and thank you for supporting me during this process. Thank you for your patience and understanding when I would disappear for long periods of time to work on this APP. Thank you specifically to my wife for working harder to take care of our daughter and keep me on track.

## Dedication

This APP is dedicated to my wife, CPT(P) Clarissa K. White, and daughter, Kiana White. I hope this research helps create a safer environment for them and for all women. As a dual-military couple and a woman leader in the Army that perpetuates gendered barriers, I only can respect you more after this research. Your true professionalism in spite of these challenges is just awe-inspiring.

## Disclaimer

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other agency.

## Honor Pledge

On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.

*Aaron M. White*

# Acronyms

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BCAP: Battalion Commander Assessment Program

CCAP: Colonels Command Assessment Program

DACOWITS: Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

DEI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

GO: General Officer

GOCAP: General Officer Command Assessment Program

GS: General Schedule

HRC: Human Resources Command

NDAA: National Defense Authorization Act

NSS: National Security Strategy

SEC DEF: Secretary of Defense

SES: Senior Executive Service

TRADOC: Training and Doctrine Command

USAD&LA: U.S. Army Diversity and Leadership Agency

USAE&IA: U.S. Army Equity and Inclusion Agency

## Executive Summary

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The current Army environment has 485,684 active-duty Soldiers from the grade of E-1 to O-10, and this “Total Force” is closely balanced with civilian demographics for racial diversity. (DMDC, 2021) However, the Total Force is currently far behind American society when it comes to gender equity as women only make up 18% of the Army. Furthermore, women are 7% of the Army's top senior leaders, which is less than half of the junior ranks that they lead. (DMDC, 2021) This lack of representation degrades our ability to compete in the labor market for the limited strong talent and retaining our competitive advantage against our adversaries. The underlying causes stem from masculine-defaults within the organizational culture that drastically impacts women more in sexual violence (SV), family-life planning (FLP), and growth opportunities. (DACOWITS, 2019; GAO, 2020) SV, FLP, and growth opportunity issues must be looked at by a broader policy lens to understand why the existing policies that seek to help and guide Soldiers still allow for an already marginalized population to be impacted more.

Policies are first drafted, approved, and implemented at senior leadership levels. Then after the implementation, the next key factor is the prioritization of a given policy inside the organization's environment. Currently, the prioritization has shifted to a “People First” mindset with the creation of the People First Task Force, the Talent Management Task Force, and executing Project Inclusion. (Office of the Chief of Public Affairs., 2012) The Army must capitalize on these efforts to decrease the gap with American society and stay competitive in the labor market for maintaining an effective force of the future to defend America's national interests.

This Applied Policy Project assesses four options for the Equity and Inclusion Agency to address the persisting equity gaps in the Army, with the ultimate goal of solidifying equity into the policies, programs, everyday work, and personal beliefs within the organization. The courses of action (COAs) are as follows:

**COA 1:** Conduct a Gender Equity Impact Study

**COA 2:** Improve Equitable Recruiting Initiatives

**COA 3:** Establish the General Officer Command Assessment Program

**COA 4:** General Officer Direct Commissioning Program

Each COA is evaluated by the following criteria: Equity, Innovation, Feasibility, and Effectiveness. Based on the assessments of all criteria, this evaluation and analysis recommends a hybrid of COA 1: Gender Equity Impact Study, and COA 3: General Officer Assessment Program. This hybrid COA offers the most equitable and feasible actions in establishing an effective foundation for building an inclusive environment capable of reaching the goal of equity in the Army's environment.

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# Introduction

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The Army People Strategy Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Annex discusses the need to reflect the society that it serves; however, the Army Total Force only consists of 18% women holding only 7% of the senior leadership positions. (Department of the Army (DA), 2015) Women represent 51% of American society and around 20% of senior positions in corporate and political fields. (Wong, 2019; DA, 2020) This vacuum of female representation in the Army reduces the diversity of the force and in senior leadership positions. Without diversity within the Army senior leadership, creating and implementing equitable policies will fall short of being able to reduce the effects of masculine defaults in the Army. (Wong, 2019) The cycle of female absence in senior leadership positions further marginalizes women in the Army. Equitable programs and policies are needed for a more inclusive environment that will lead to better recruitment and retention of women for a more diverse Total Force capable of remaining ready in defense of U.S. national interests in a complex operating environment. The Total Army Force deserves to have both male and female representation to affect policies and thus culture for a more stable force with higher recruitment and retention.

In 2010, the U.S. Army Diversity and Leadership Agency (USAD&LA) was stood up to assist and advise the Secretary of the Army on the development and supervision of programs and policies toward diversity, inclusion, leadership, and equal opportunity efforts. In 2019, the USAD&LA was re-designated to the U.S. Army Equity and Inclusion Agency (USAE&IA) to assist and advise the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. (Massey, 2021) The focus towards equity has proven to be a foundation for building a more inclusive and diverse mission-ready Total Force. The USAE&IA mission has remained:

***“Develop and integrate a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion strategy and program into Army policies, practices and procedures that impact the wellbeing of Soldiers and the employment of Civilians, while attracting, recruiting, hiring, developing and retaining motivated and high performing personnel for excellence in mission accomplishment.” (Massey, 2021)***

The USAE&IA and its mission are critical when looking to guide and assist the Army in reducing the equity gaps within the current organizational culture.

The research on gender issues and organizational culture are topics spanning other areas outside the military, like business and politics, as well as the vast

information of the many contributing problems and potential solutions. To achieve the largest impact on the female population, this research is limiting the scope to the Army active-duty force because the Army is the largest service within the Department of Defense. Moreover, the client's authority and my expertise are within the Army and the resulting research and solutions outside the Army would become too broad for this paper to conduct efficiently. There will be references to foreign militaries and civilian comparable organizations to bolster the lacking research conducted specifically on the effectiveness of Army programs. While the active duty is the largest force within the Army and provides the largest number of senior leaders. Officers will be the focus of this research even though the personnel in the Army are categorized as either enlisted, warrant officers, or officers because officers hold the greatest influence over the Army. Within the officer's group, senior officers are the group that creates, drafts, and implements as well as prioritizes Army efforts, policies, and organizational culture. General Schedule (GS) and Senior Executive Service (SES) are also restricted as they are under contract in the Army and fall under the authority of the senior officers when executing policy changes. Finally, focusing on the difference between making equitable changes versus equality changes. Equality will just add women to the military and will do nothing to fix the masculine-defaulted environment, which will lead to attrition anyways. Focusing on equity, however, will change the organizational culture and environment that breeds these gender gaps that will allow for equality goals to be achieved.

This paper will identify the current environment and organizational culture, and examine the existing gendered barriers and consequences in the Army. Then verifying current methods within the military and comparable organizations seeking to remove gendered barriers will help outline possible avenues to improve the Army's culture and organization. After the review of the literature, four courses of action will be proposed, and each will be evaluated by a set of four evaluation criteria identified later in the paper. Finally, I will recommend a course of action and provide a guide for its implementation. Remembering that changing the Army, or any culture, will take time but taking steps now to increase the representation of women in senior leadership positions and the overall Army will create lasting representation and equitable policy that will benefit overall mission readiness and maintain the security of our nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



# Background

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## Evolution of Gender in the Military

Women have continued to play critical roles throughout the history of the U.S. military, starting with the Revolutionary War in 1777 when women would need to dress and act like men to fight for this country's freedom. During the Civil War, Clara Barton was appointed as "lady in charge" of the hospitals of the Army of the James by Union Maj. Gen Benjamin Butler. Another leading figure in women's history is Dr. Mary Walker, the only female to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. (Women in the United States Army, nd)

In 1941, Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby assumed the leadership role for the newly formed Women's Army Auxiliary Corps which provided vital services in World War I and World War II along with supporting the passing of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948. (Army Women's Foundation (AWF), nd; Women in the United States Army, nd) This integration also removed the "Auxiliary" from the title of WAAC and was then addressed as Women's Army Corp (WAC). Along with the integration of women in the Army, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) was created to assist with the recruitment of women and has since continued to provide support to the military for reaching better inclusivity for women. (Gaddes et al., 2020)

The late 1960s and 1970s saw a host of major changes for women in the military. In 1967, Col. Anna Mae Hays, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, and Col. Elizabeth P. Hoisington, Director of the Women's Army Corps, were promoted after the removal of promotion and retirement restrictions on women officers. (Women in the Army (WA), 2021) Then in 1972, after the removal banning women from commanding units that had men, Commander Elizabeth Barrett became the first female commander in a combat zone, leading 450 enlisted men in Vietnam. (Bonar, 2010) In 1977, basic training and service academies were opened to further the integration of women in the military at enlisted and officer levels. Following this larger integration effort, in 1978 the WAC was disestablished. (WA, 2021)

In 1988, the Risk Rule and its replacement the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule of 1994 (DGCAR) sought to create a guide for how women would be assigned or selected for units concerning direct ground combat-focused mission priorities. (Harrell and Miller, 1997) Despite the restriction of women in direct ground combat units below brigade, the DCGAR did open more combat support positions.

A string of action in the early 2000s led the military towards another large integration of women. In 2005, Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester, a military police sergeant, was the first woman awarded the Silver Star for direct ground combat actions.

General Ann Dunwoody became the first woman to reach the rank of 4-Star General and took command of Army Material Command in 2008. Then, in 2010, Female Engagement Teams (FET) and Combat Support Teams (CST) were officially created to fill a critical gap in combat operations in Afghanistan. (Holliday, 2012) Finally, in 2013 then SECDEF Leon Panetta stated the repeal of the DGCAR's direct ground combat restrictions for women and, in 2015, the Army Directive 2016-01 opened all positions to women. Since the opening, the first women lieutenants graduated from the Infantry Officer Basic Leaders Course in 2016, while OSUT graduated the first women Infantry noncommissioned officers in 2017. (Warner, 2017)

## Current Organization Environment

### Army Mission & Organization

Even with the evolution of women and diversity in the Army, the Army mission has largely gone unchanged:

**"To deploy, fight and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the joint force." (DA, 2021)**

This Army mission is derived from the National Security Strategies and guided through the National Defense Authorization Acts, which are re-evaluated every four years and one year respectively. To effectively execute this mission, the 485,684 Soldier-strong Army, of which only 18% are women, has adopted the Army People Strategy DEI Annex to ensure that the Army retains and improves its competitive advantage through the diversity of its Total Force. The current Total Force has been improving through the years and boasts a racial diversity in parity with the civilian demographics but is 32% behind parity for women in the service. General James C. McConville, Chief of Staff of the Army, stated, "Our diverse workforce is a competitive advantage, and the Army must continue to offer fair treatment, access, and opportunity across the force." (U.S. Army Public Affairs (USAPA), 2020) When coupled with the Army People Strategy's goal of equity and then-Secretary of Defense Mark Esper's statement that, "the Armed Forces should look more like the broader society we serve." (Esper, 2020) We can see that diversity is an essential element to the Army Total Force, while equity is the driving force behind maintaining this force.

### Army Officers

The Army Officer Corp is structured from O1-O10, where an initial entry O1 would be responsible for 16-44 Soldiers, an experienced O6 would be responsible for brigade-sized units of 3,000-5,000 Soldiers, and a senior O10 would be

responsible for 225,000 to the Army Total Force. (DA, nd) In addition, O6-O10 would be described as senior leaders as they have the most experience and shift from tactical unit coordination to strategic actions and policy planning. (Kapp, 2020)

To become an officer a person has four options: ROTC, West Point or other service academies, Officer Candidate School, and direct commissioning. These officers are all assigned an occupational specialty at the beginning of their careers through an order of merit list and accessions process. West Point has increased female enrollment to 24% in 2020, while Virginia Military Institute increased to 12.9%. (Office of Institutional Research Class Profiles, nd; Univstats, 2020) Cadets are early leaders and specifically, cadets enrolled in military academies get indoctrinated more quickly into the masculine-defaulted culture of the military. However, these increases have lacked any type of tangible goal for inclusivity that expresses how many or what percentage of women they need to try and recruit. (GAO, 2020) Though West Point does conduct a separate and internal goal for reaching better diversity recruitment goals. (Lee, 2021)

Around 35 branches and 14 functional areas are broken into 7 different groupings that are managed by Army Human Resources Command. (Officer Personnel Management Directorate, nd) The most critical branches in the Army are those from the Operations Division because they focus on combat, and senior leaders consist of 70% combat arms officers from West Point. (Jackson et al., 2020) Since the 2016 opening of combat arms, or direct ground combat units, women hold only 680 enlisted and 260 officer positions in the active Army serving as infantry and tankers or cavalry scouts. (Beynon, 2020)

After commissioning an officer would take 20-30 years before reaching the ranks of O6-O10, passing through many promotion gates and going through a Battalion Commander Assessment Program (BCAP) and a Colonel's Command Assessment Program (CCAP). However, there is not a special assessment effort for O7-O10 to the likes of BCAP or CCAP. (Cox, 2020) Congressional approval is needed for promoting to O7-O10, but additional approval is needed by the executive office to approve command position appointments. These command position appointments for Army Generals are positions that hold the most influence over the Army through prioritization and policy implementation.

## Army Policy & Programs

Army policies and programs are essential to the functioning of the hierarchy because they create rules and guidelines for the organization to follow and allow for commander's initiative or bottom-up refinement when executing policies in gray zones. These gray zones can be seen when commanders assigned women larger roles in combat zones like Afghanistan and Iraq before

the implementation of the Female Engagement Teams (FET) in 2009. (Long, 2012) Some of these critical policies when discussing gender integration and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will be listed below.

After a full review in 2004 of Army policies on sexual assault, the Army created the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program in 2008. SHARP seeks to reduce and stop sexual violent acts within the Army through providing training to more than 24,000 command-selected unit SHARP personnel and curriculum teaching vignettes for educating and informing personnel. SHARP also seeks the creation of more effective ways to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault and better ways to respond to victims of sexual violence. (G-1, 2011)

Since the 2016 opening of combat arms to women, the Army has created new efforts to address the challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Army's "Leaders First" policy requires women to be in officer's leadership roles in a combat arms unit before assigning newly trained women recruits into these combat arms units. In 2020, this policy was reduced to require only one female leader, E-5 or above, of any military occupation specialty assigned at the company level before assigning newly trained women in combat arms units. (Rempfer, 2020)

Other high-level efforts are the People First Task Force (PFTF) and the Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) which seek to capitalize on the talent within the Army that has been created by a more inclusive environment. The TMTF has already created a more personalized marketplace for talent management, and BCAP and CCAP to ensure promotion and command selections are more equitable while also providing professional development to emerging leaders. (Kimmons, 2020) The PFTF will seek to develop a plan of action to address the breakdowns within the organization that allowed for incidents at Fort Hood and other areas to happen. (Suits, 2020)

Additional policies and programs that must be reviewed to see the effectiveness of Army efforts are SHARP and annual Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys (WGRS), and the Service Academy Gender Relations Survey (SAGR); family-life planning regulations for parental leave, childcare, unconscious bias over pregnancy; and for masculine organizational culture and senior leaders we can review through command climate surveys, 360 reviews, promotion boards, and commander selection policies.

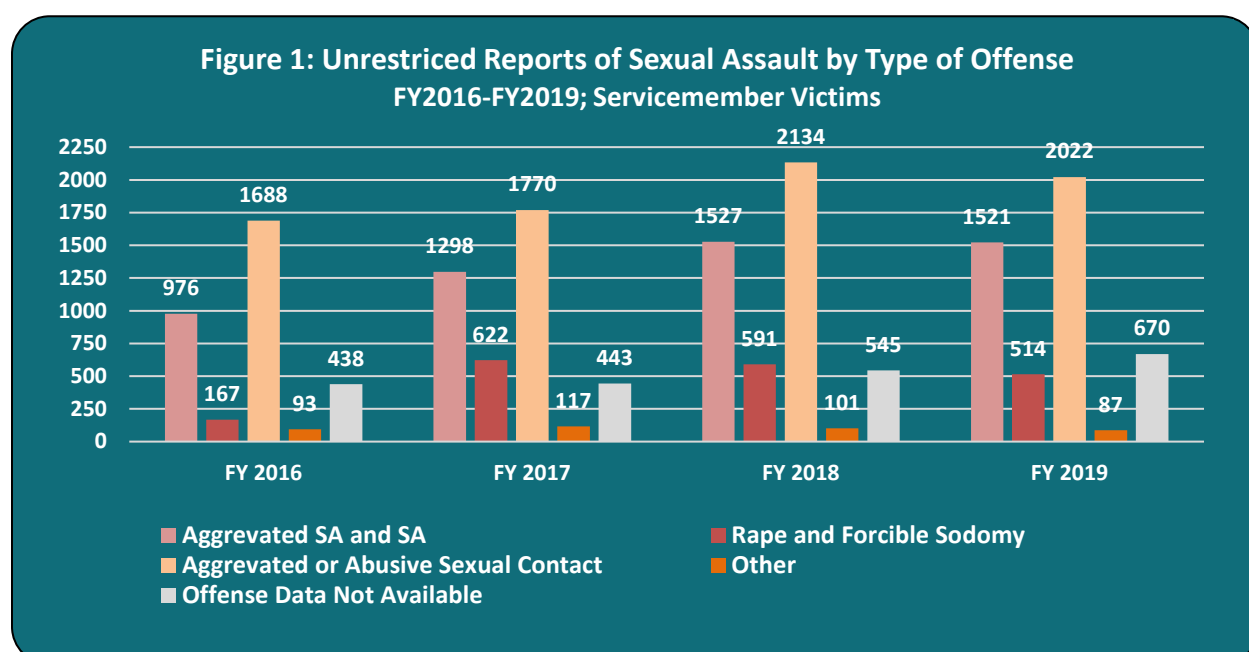
## Persisting Equity Gaps

An effective military organization is one that succeeds in performing the core tasks of fighting and winning conventional wars to defend our national interests.

However, gender diversity and inclusion efforts in the Army remain overshadowed by the unconscious bias stemming from masculine-defaults within the culture and the fact that men make up over 80% of the Army and its senior leaders. (Egnell, 2016) Surveys conducted in 1995 and 2001 showed that equal opportunity, sexual violence, and family-life planning remained prevalent issues in the military. Similar results were also seen in the DACOWITS, Force of the Future, and RAND studies into retention and recruitment issues as recently as 2021. In 2018, women were 28% more likely to attrit and less likely to serve than their male counterparts. This was due to a wide range of categories, but mainly stemming from sexual harassment and assault incidents, family-life planning, and senior leadership. (GAO, 2020; Trobaugh, 2018)

## Sexual Violence

In 2020, after the tragic death of Specialist Vanessa Guillen, the Army directed for an independent review of Fort Hood's command climate and culture. The independent review found that a permissive command climate along with a structurally flawed SHARP program allowed for a culture of sexual violence to persist within Fort Hood. (Swecker et al., 2020) The code of the warrior and the hierarchical rank structure, which are important to the military, have a masculine nature that can lead to the subordination of women and even create a tolerance of sexual violence. (Caprioli, 2005) Figure 1, shows the number of unrestricted reports of sexual assault based on the annual reports to Congress between FY2016-FY2019.



Source: DOD, Annual Reports on Sexual Assault in the Military, Statistical Appendices for FY2016-FY2019

This tolerance diminishes the feeling of safety for females and can lead to reduced reporting of sexual harassment. In a 2015 study by the Training and Doctrine Command, 89% of Army females, 83% combat arms Soldiers, and around 74% of female cadets believe that there will be more sexual harassment incidents occurring with further integration of females in combat arms roles. (Lynette et al., 2015) From 2016-2017, there was roughly a 5% increase in both sexual harassment and gender discrimination at West Point, the Army's military academy. (Davis et al., 2018) However, this report neglects to cover other sources of military officers such as ROTC programs, as well as potential recruiting pools in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Course (JROTC). This fear of sexual harassment and assault has also deterred 38% of females from seeking a career in a combat arms position. (Lynette et al., 2015)

### Family-Life Planning

Family should not be a burden that leads to higher attrition in the Army; however, the two leading factors in the attrition of women for family-life planning stem from pregnancy bias and lack of childcare. 47% of women in the Army are married and another 10% of women are single mothers that rely on the Army family-life policy support to protect their family and continue to honorably serve. (GAO, 2018; DACOWITS, 2019) The 2017 DACOWITS Annual Report stated that between FY 2007 and FY 2016, women represented between 65 and 83 percent of parenthood-related discharges.

Maternity leave has been limited to six weeks until 2016 when the military extended to 12 weeks to allow for women to take care of their newborns during the initial critical moments and to recover in preparation for returning to work. However, multiple studies and interviews across the services have indicated that it has still been a problem, as one enlisted woman stated:

**"I got pregnant when I was a [rank]...; [my unit] hated me. They were mad I got 3 months of maternity leave. They thought they were doing all the hard work while I was sitting at a desk all day . . . ; no one would help me when I got back. . . . I think about it now. If I want to have another kid, I'm scared it will set me back in my career, and I'm afraid the [unit] will hate me again. It makes you feel guilty about wanting to have a family." (DACOWITS, 2019)**

Another method available to women is the Career Intermission Program (CIP) which allows a limited number of Soldiers to apply for a break in service. However, this program has rarely allowed for women or men to utilize CIP especially for giving birth or taking care of newborns, and if taken would changing a woman's promotion timeline leading to reintegration issues upon re-entering the workplace. (Keller et al., 2018)



Military Child Development Centers (CDCs) operate at more than 300 locations, offering service members and families childcare for children from birth through 12 years of age on a range of time options. (DoD, 2015) However, 10% of military families report unmet child-care needs, 22% reported unmet preferences over forms of child-care available, and 53% of parents using a CDC for their daycare needs reported having to find additional support to meet their duty obligations. In addition, some families can wait up to a year to receive a spot at their preferred CDC location. (DoD, 2015) This coverage gap predominantly impacts single parents and dual-military couples, but women are more likely to separate from the service than their partners. (DACOWITS, 2017)

## Growth Opportunities

Currently, women only populate 7% of senior leadership positions and only Ret. General Ann Dunwoody, a logistics officer, and Lieutenant General Laura Richardson, an aviation officer, have achieved command positions influential in the Army. (Women in the United States Army, 2021) The now redacted Risk Rule and the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule of 1994 limited women from direct combat units, and women today are facing a glass ceiling when trying to achieve key senior leadership positions that have been predominantly held by male direct combat officers. (AWF, nd) More than 70% of the officers promoted to general officer/flag officer are from tactical or operational backgrounds and have attended West Point. (Jackson et al., 2020) In contrast, women outside the military have made greater progress in their senior leadership positions. Women comprise approximately 20% of the House of Representatives and the Senate, 25% of state legislators, and 17% of Fortune 500 board seats. (DoD, 2015)

Other limitations in growth opportunities of women come from the limited pool of available women to grow into senior leaders along with a lengthy 20-30 year timeline for women to reach the senior leadership levels. Only 29% of the US population meets the strict standards for recruitment, and even fewer are interested in joining the Army as the JAMRS study shows women having a lower propensity to serve than men. (OPA, 2018; USAREC, 2020) The current recruiting drive for women in ROTC and West Point has shown some success with equality by having women be 24-25% of newly commissioned officers each year. (Lee, 2021; USACC, 2021) These numbers have slowly risen by only two percentage points over the last five years because of a lack of DoD or Army-directed diversity goals. Specific diversity goals and directives would support the prioritization of inclusive efforts in recruiting and retaining women. (GAO, 2020; DACOWITS, 2019)

The underrepresentation of women in Army senior leadership was bred from a systemic culture of combat orientation the overwhelmingly selected males for command positions of greatest influence. This lack of representation degrades the ability of the Army to influence organizational change to maintain our competitive advantage by improving the diversity of the force through inclusive efforts. The organizational change must focus on addressing these problematic and persisting gendered barriers that disproportionately affect women in the military. While the prioritization by senior leadership should focus on reducing the equity gaps within the organization.



# Literature Review

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## Limitations and Gaps in Literature

The available literature on gender equity and senior leadership is predominantly based on the civilian sector such as businesses and political organizations and does not address the status of military women. The most current studies from RAND, which has conducted studies on recruitment and retention issues for the Air Force and Coast Guard, use limited interviews and focus groups of women in the services being studied. (Keller et al., 2018; Curry et al., 2019) Supporting studies into gender integration, recruiting and retention, and inclusion are the 2015 Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Gender Integration Study and the 2019 DACOWITS Report. Most of these studies address some of the challenges through limited recommendations that require further research into possible implementation strategies and even more into the effectiveness of past policies. The Congressional Research Service Report in 2019 was the only report, outside the Annual Reports on Sexual Assault in the Military, that assessed the effectiveness of past Army programs. The report still had a limited scope on program successes for diversity equity and equal opportunity in the armed services. (Kamarck, 2019)

There is also a gap when looking at the effectiveness of leaders through analyzing the command climate data from the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS). Additionally, HRTec's contract ended for supporting DEOCS, and the Army switched survey providers for DEOCS. (HRTec, 2021) These changes may lead to a loss of complete access to the historical data for future studies on the effects of the 2016 integration of women into the combat arms positions. This command climate data set is crucial in identifying the necessary changes in inequitable policies to enable the further integration of women to build a diverse force.

## Gender Equity around the World

As other countries' societies seek diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity it will be good to understand and compare implementation strategies and methodologies used in more integrated and equitable militaries. Studies have been conducted comparing military forces across the by NATO in the 2008 *Improving the Gender Balance*, the 2004 Canadian military study *Gender and Diversity Issues* and *Foreign Military Strategies to Recruit and Retain Women* 2017, which was in response to DACOWITS RFI 3. (Pinch, 2004; CWINF, 2008; Turcano et al., 2017) Some of the key methods to improve diversity would be to raise awareness and remove negative stigmas about military service, establishing equity for both genders, and improving the representation of women for

recruitment and boards.

Foreign militaries are facing the same challenges as the U.S. on how to better facilitate the integration of women in their militaries. While the estimates for women in the military for China is 5% and Russia is 10%, our allies are doing better in integrating women into the military. (Women in the Army: The Percentage of Females in the World's Biggest Armies, 2018) Israel has seen a surge of women into combat positions reaching 18% and has set a quota for increasing women in senior leadership by 50%. (Hayom, 2020; Gross, 2021) Canada and Norway have also implemented quotas for women in combat arms positions but still only consist of approximately 13% of their total forces. (Trucano et al., 2017) The United Kingdom still bans or restricts women from combat positions and has only 9-11% of women in their military. (Randazzo-Matsel et al., 2012) The European Union has also identified that several factors contribute to the women still being under-represented in the security sector, despite research suggesting that gender balance in higher positions, both in management and in operational roles, improves business performance. (Gender Mainstreaming Team, 2020) When comparing to our allies there is a concern for applicability to the US Army due to other countries' smaller army sizes and the different preoccupations stemming from individual cultures.

## **Lesson 1: Improving Gender Equity Drives Gender Equality**

Due to personnel ceilings dictated by Congress, seeking gender equality in the Army - or 240,000 women - would create a zero-sum environment where 169,000 positions once held by males would be filled by women. Equity changes are not a zero-sum environment because the focus is on the policies and programs that deter women from recruiting or continuing to serve. These equitable policies and programs would allow for the most qualified personnel to serve regardless of gender. However, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) has identified that women are still prevented from demonstrating their full abilities as leaders by inequitable policies, stemming from masculine-defaults even though many democratic and governance programs seek to increase the equality of women in political leadership levels. (Hubbard, 2020)

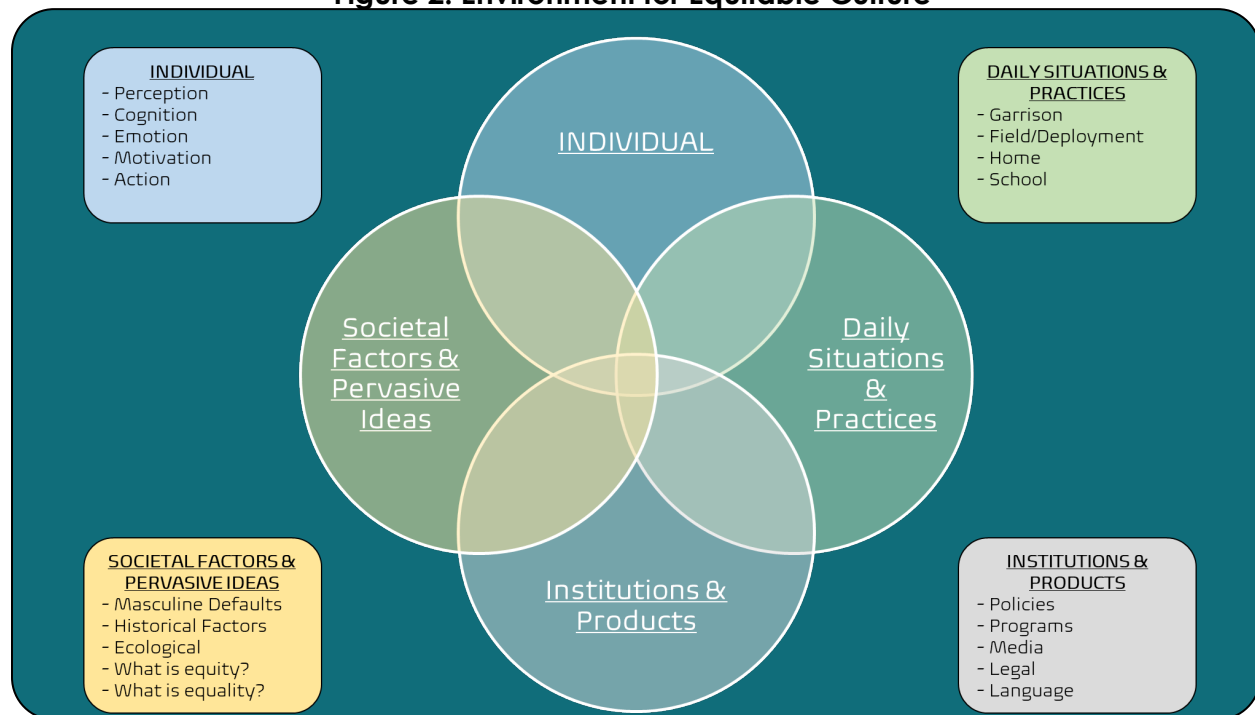
Focusing on equality without equitable policies and programs can allow for backsliding in units that lose the female presence. Removing the female presence would revert the once diverse units to old masculine-defaults. However, focusing on equitable policies that seek to reduce the persisting equity gaps would create a safer environment for women to choose to join or stay in the Army. (Potter and Volden, 2021) Moreover, with an increasing number of females, a habit of grouping occurs, which may lead to homogeneous all-female units rather than a diverse gender-integrated unit. (Harrell, 1997; Robles, 2018) After fully identifying and addressing the gendered

barriers causing a lack of recruitment and increased attrition of military women, senior leaders will then begin to eliminate the persisting equity gaps within the organizational culture. (Wong, 2019)

## Organizational Culture Change Framework

While the Army has made progress towards the inclusion of women, there is still work to be done. National Democratic Institute outlines that changes need to occur at the individual, institutional and socio-cultural levels for women to achieve true progress towards equality within an organization. To go even further, Markus and Kitayama's model for "The Mutual Constitution of Cultures and Selves" outlines that the interaction and interplay between the self and the culture are ever-changing and need to be accounted for to achieve real change in both. This framework is broken down into four essential elements: Individual, daily situations and practices, institutions and products, and societal factors and pervasive ideas. (Markus and Kitayama, 2010) Figure 2, provides easy visualization of this framework and the interplay that happens.

**Figure 2: Environment for Equitable Culture**



Source: *The Mutual Constitution of Cultures and Selves* by Markus and Kitayama

## Lesson 2: Senior Leaders Change Organizational Culture

"More than ever before, organizational (command) climate has become an increasingly significant prerequisite for unit effectiveness and combat readiness." (S., 2014) Former Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy stated, "leaders are responsible for ... the culture of their organization..." during the

briefing on the results from the Fort Hood independent review. (Rempfer, 2020) Persisting equity gaps show that the organizational culture needs to change through updating the policies and programs that continue to affect women at drastically higher rates than men. (Devaraja, 2012)

The Fort Hood senior leadership prioritized the mission above all else, which allowed other programs like SHARP to lose support from junior leaders. (Swecker, 2020) A 2008 NATO study identified failures at senior leadership levels in prioritizing gender integration and reducing gendered barriers that ultimately cause women to be deterred from joining and/or separating from the force. (CWINF, 2008; Lape, 2016) The NATO study also concluded along with many other US studies that improving the equality of women at senior leadership levels will improve the perceptions of the Army's handling of diversity and inclusion, which can lead to improving equity in recruitment and retention of women. (Martins, 2020) Senior leaders' direct engagement and prioritization provide the necessary momentum for changes in organizational culture to be made towards diversity and inclusion. For organizational statements and plans to become actionable items, they must have the support of a diverse population of senior leadership. (Wong, 2019; Davis, 2019; DACOWITS, 2019)

### **Lesson 3: Diversity Drives Effective Organizational Culture Changes**

For senior leaders to make effective equitable policies they must also have representation from the marginalized groups they seek to include. (Wong, 2019) Providing a woman's perspective through her personal experiences and knowledge during policy creation or reformation would provide a better understanding of how the social, economic, political, and cultural implications would impact women. Air Force Ret. Lt. Col. Jessica Ruttenbur helped shape equitable policies that ended masculine-default cockpit height restrictions for pilots and decreased pregnancy-based discrimination. (Pawlky, 2020) Additionally, firms with women CEOs or gender-diverse boards are associated with stronger business and equity practices. (Glass and Cook, 2017)

Outside of policies, there has been more of a shift in strategic military operations to focus on humanitarian and partnership building operations. This shift has shown friction from the masculine-defaults of the military when coordinating with humanitarian organizations. More inclusive and safe environments have been shown to increase the effectiveness of female participation, and improving this bilateral voice in strategic military operations would increase the effectiveness of coordination and mission success. (Egnell, 2016; Potter and Volden, 2021)

The improvement of representation will also directly influence the recruitment of women in a positive direction. A study on electoral quotas in India showed that increasing representation of women in senior leadership levels increased

recruitment of women. (Bhavnani, 2009) Women such as General Ret. Ann Dunwoody, Lt. General Laura Richardson, Lt. General Nadja West, Brigadier General Diana Holland, Major Chrissy Cook, Captain Kristen Griest, and Captain Shaye Haver are important representatives in identifying and creating equitable policy changes and improving senior leadership diversity goals. (Army, 2021) However, this should not be just a women-led operation, but a rather joint effort, as men should also assist in creating a safer environment for gender integration to succeed at a faster pace within the Army. This positive direction could potentially influence the rest of the DoD, and become a beacon of success for gender equity to the population that we serve to protect. (Reddy, 2020)

# Evaluative Criteria

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The final recommendation of this policy project will seek to decrease gender equity gaps while promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the Army. To evaluate the wide range of COAs striving towards this goal this section will establish four criteria: equity, innovation, feasibility, and effectiveness.

The evidence and benefits of each policy option according to the above criteria are measured on a qualitative scale of High – Moderate – Low. Given that the following policy options are not mutually exclusive, the purpose of these evaluative criteria is to determine which option(s) the Equity and Inclusion Agency should prioritize.

## Equity

The Army People Strategy DEI Annex labels equity as a goal to be achieved, while also defining equity as:

***The fair treatment, access, opportunity, choice, and advancement for all Soldiers and Civilians while striving to identify and encourage drivers and identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of the total force. (DA, 2020)***

For a COA to accel in equity, it must address policy barriers and leadership or personnel biases that limit women's ability to fully participate within the Army. The focus can be specific to large-scale programs or policies. The implementation of a COA should not increase barriers limiting the full participation of other genders or races, nor should the focus be diverted towards non-gender equity issues.

## Innovation

In the past, scholars have defined innovation in terms of battlefield formations and victory, while specifically excluding administrative changes. (Grissom, 2006) This definition is outdated with the Army's shift towards people. Talent management and organizational culture reform require true innovation because the fight now is for talent, not tanks and technology. (Plummer, 2021) We can only win on the battlefield if we accept a wider definition of military innovation. A course of action should seek to provide unambiguous impacts on the functionality of military formations towards reaching greater effectiveness. In addition, categorizing successful policy innovation would be the drafting or redrafting of gendered policies improving women's ability to recruit and be retained in the Army.

## Feasibility

Feasibility is a two-part criterion as there is the first issue of what policy is feasible to initiate by the client and the Army. While the second would be the feasibility of the client or Army in maintaining a chosen course of action. Feasibility will be maximized when the client's authority authorizes the direct implementation of a COA and the client and Army have the resources organically to sustain the implementation of a chosen COA. If new funding or resources are needed through the NDAA or internal adjustments along with outside coordination from the client or Army then feasibility will be minimized.

## Effectiveness

Effectiveness seeks to ensure a chosen COA will decrease gender equity gaps within a reasonable timeframe. This timeframe is adjusted on the level of ability of the client and Army to execute a COA along with the scope or size of a chosen COA. The effectiveness may be different between a short-run effort and a long-run program for improving gender equity in the Army. Maximizing effectiveness would be seen from the scale of the impacts, whether short- or long-run. When considering changes to persisting gender gaps a short-run effort may fix a specific policy or provide a short fix like improving the representation of women at senior leadership levels. A long-run effort may be a new or revised program that continues to assist the Army into the future like an evaluation and assignment program for removing bias in the general officer population.



# Proposed COAs to Reduce Gender Equity Gaps

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## COA 1: Gender Equity Impact Study

The Army is committed to reaching a goal of equity across the force as outlined by the Army People Strategy and from former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper's DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion, the Army's Project Inclusion, and to the newly appointed Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's ordering to pursue solutions to the sexual violence in the Army. (Altman, 2021) Currently, the Army People Strategy is being carried out by the Talent Management and People First Task Forces, having been stood up within the last few years and are still working on solving diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. (ADO Army Diversity Goals, 2021) While the Army Equity and Inclusion Agency and the Inspector General conduct listening sessions with Soldiers and civilians worldwide to converse on race, diversity, equity, and inclusion. (USAPA, 2020) However, past research efforts to identify the challenges women face have been qualitatively based and had small sample sizes or used focus groups to mitigate sample size errors. Moreover, the focuses have been on creating inclusive environments and has labeled equality as a driving force in inclusion and that equity is a goal and not a problem to be solved.

The Equity Impact Study would seek to address the current gaps in research on the success or effectiveness of policy implementation, policy changes, or newly initiated programs in the Army on equity. (Braun et al., 2015; Reis, 2020) To close this gap, first, a review of policies affecting recruitment, retention, sexual harassment and abuse, parental leave, pregnancy, childcare, and other gendered policies must be conducted through the proponents in charge of these areas. Second, an evaluation of effectiveness on existing programs like SHARP, recruitment, retention, and other programs will provide feedback to improve these programs to meet the intended goals. The Army should get a better sense of the current equity gap through three major steps:

- 1) Coordinating for external support of an internal review of all policies and regulations for gendered language and standards that detract from Soldiers serving to the best of their ability. This can be seen by Army G-1's efforts in the newly published grooming standards allowing women more feminine choices or new helmet harnesses to better fit women's heads. (Boling, 2018) This can also bring new light to past failures like the Army's continued promise of body



armor that functions better for women, which is more crucial than ever with women in direct-action combat arms units.

- 2) Identifying the reasons for attrition in the Army would be another measure under which the equity impact evaluation would be able to assess internal sources putting female Soldiers at a disadvantage in seeking long-term careers within the Army. (Clearinghouse Technical Assistance Team, 2017) To do this, HRC may include a survey of all Soldiers seeking to separate from the Army voluntarily or involuntarily, while the SFL-TAP program and Veterans Affairs department can assist in collection. The risk of duplication should be negligible if HRC creates a standard survey for all organizations supporting effort to use. Another aspect would be to conduct interviews or surveys of Soldiers that are recently separated as they would not have been asked why they left the Army due to a lack of systems to do this and they would have fewer restrictions that would limit their honest response.
- 3) Lastly, an evaluation of effectiveness for overarching programs and policies with persisting incidents that have perpetuated the inequitable treatment of women. GAO has been asked to conduct a review of SHARP by the Army as an external evaluator and could again assist with evaluating other programs and policies. (Rempfer, 2020) TRADOC conducted a limited evaluation of SHARP and other gendered programs seeking to understand the impact of women's transition into combat arms. (Lynette et al., 2015) It is seen that when women operate under inequitable policies then they are more likely to leave the service. (DACOWITS, 2019)

My review of the literature referencing equity and women in the Army found little research into the overall impact of a lack of gender equity within the Army outside the scope of increasing diversity. Similar in framework to the 2014 Women in Combat Symposium, this COA emphasizes the need to evaluate the significance of the equity gaps and their impacts to support the establishment of a timeline for future goals the Army can achieve. (Victoria et al., 2016)

### Equity

This option is evaluated as **high**, as the study focus is on better identifying the gaps for how the Army is inequitable. The focus should be limited to gender equity issues as the broader scope has been seen to favor racial equity issues. This study would outline the next steps for most policy and program actions to take place. By reviewing and researching quantifiable figures for the effectiveness of programs and the extent to which women are under the standards of men the Army will be able to ensure 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order effects

remain equitable and not just the surface of the regulation.

### *Innovation*

This option is evaluated as **moderate**, as the study itself will not change the functionality and effectiveness of the force, but the outcomes once substantiated and fixed through other focused recommendations have the potential to improve the effectiveness of the force. The future results coming from Equity Impact Study will have formation changing effects because of the quantitative studies on programs and their prioritization amongst the force.

### *Feasibility*

**Feasibility** for the Equity and Inclusion Agency to recommend and conduct is **high**, however, the responsibility to carry out the full review and study may need to be delegated to units within the Army or external organizations like RAND. The ability of the Army to carry out the study would be high as the study itself would be short but could be conducted on a bi-annual or every 5-year basis to identify the Army's efforts toward continually achieving equitable goals set by the Army People Strategy.

### *Effectiveness*

**The effectiveness** of the Equity Impact Study is **low** considering the focus of an impact study is to identify and better clarify the equity gaps in policy, regulations, implementation, and unit culture. The immediate results could be seen from the prioritization of seeking to improve gender equity in the Army. DACOWITS and GAO have successfully requested analysis and research studies but have lacked effectiveness when it comes to seeing recommendations acted upon after research.

## COA 2: Equitable Recruiting Drive

Since the opening of combat arms positions to women, there is still a lack of women seeking to join the Army to fill these newly opened positions. (Harrel and Miller, 1997) Women in the Army have increased by only one percentage point between 2008 and 2018. (GAO, 2020) In addition, recruiting efforts have failed to meet personnel goals in 2018 with the FY18 recruiting data shows that 79% of recruits come from the limited pool of military families, making up 1% of the US. (Philips, 2018; USAREC, 2021) Even though the Army has been able to meet their FY19 and FY20 personnel goals the pool of eligible recruits is getting smaller as time continues as competition increases from major industries like tech, medical, education, and others. An Army Recruiting effort focusing on widening recruitment outside 22 major cities has increased recruitment and marginally for women. However, this may not be applicable for officers as they are limited geographically due to college locations. (Cox, 2019) Additionally, adding a diversity manning quota for end strength could create an inclusive mindset amongst recruiters and create an equitable strategy to recruit a more diverse population.

This course of action will focus on improving the rate at which women are being recruited, and more specifically for officer positions. Officer accessions are divided into four categories: Reserve Officer Training Corp providing over 70% of Army officers with 25% being women, the U.S. Army Military Academy providing approximately 20% of recruits are women, OCS and direct commissioning make up the final 10%. (USACC, 2021; Lee, 2021) Officers get recruited from youths seeking to enroll in and to attend a college through direct outreach and strategic marketing from ROTC and West Point recruiters and marketers. Moreover, there is a better marketplace for recruiting women since they are 29% more likely than men to enroll in college. That combination of effort and marketplace has allowed the Army to achieve a recruiting pool that is 24-28 percent women each year. (USACC, 2021; Lee, 2021) The Army Recruiting Command increased in women in recruiter positions to increase representation and recruitment of women. This effort has shown that women recruiters were 23% more successful at recruiting women than men. (Cox, 2019) This could also be expanded to US Army Cadet Command when trying to maximize recruitment in the college marketplace for new officers.

To improve the foundation of women in service seeking long careers and future senior leadership positions, we must initiate a recruiting effort focused on equitable access to information, connection to family that is the Army Total Force, and the accession of women to join the Army. Three lines of effort can be distinguished in this COA:

- 1) Cadet Command and West Point should widen recruiting efforts to outside military families and regions, like Texas, D.C., and California. Early marketing by identifying potential quality officer candidates can be conducted in all regions of the US and utilizing USAREC as a potential promoter for high school students to attend college. Casting a wider net through improved access to information of gender representation in the Army would seek to improve connectedness with women either enlisted or commissioned. (Brown, 2007)
- 2) Recruiting Command's successes after the increase of women in recruiter positions may be replicated by Cadet Command by increasing women in instructor or PMS positions. Another option might be to connect senior women cadets with potential women recruits to connect better with the younger women. (Brown, 2007) In addition, this COA seeks to also leverage the Joint Advertising Market Research & Studies (JAMRS) survey results to adjust recruiting pitches and media efforts towards improving the equitable outreach towards women and strategies to support the growth of a more diverse recruiting pool to include ROTC, OCS, and academies.
- 3) The last effort would be to apply a scalable goal for recruiting efforts to reach. The proposed goal would be 25% women in recruiting numbers by the end of five years, 35% women in 10 years, or any combination of years and percentages that reach toward improving gender equality. This would provide a scalable, but a clear path toward increasing the foundation of women in the Army. DACOWITS and the GAO have recommended for the military services to set recruiting goals with push back from the services.

### Equity

**Equity** in recruiting initiatives would be **moderate** with the focus on increasing the recruitment of women. Women in recruiters' positions have shown to allow for more representation and would increase the ability to recruit women, but by increasing the number of women then the number of men would also decrease due to the end strength caps that limit the number of recruits. Another focus would be on improving the number of women in the Academies as women seek higher education 29% more than men.

### Innovation

**Innovation** is **high** as recruiting more women would increase the diversity of thought and experience within the force. This would also change the way

recruiting command conducts recruitment by adding the inclusion goals for ensuring the diversity of the force, which has been fought against with previous recommendations by DACOWITS and GAO.

### *Feasibility*

**Feasibility** for implementing a Recruiting Equity Initiative would be **high** as the changes will be minimal to existing regulations and adjusting recruiting strategy to diversity targets, but require time to find, train, and deploy the female recruiters. With new female recruiter positions, it would be readily filled with women seeking to improve the force, but like their male counterparts, there could be some issue of being voluntold to be a recruiter and being taken away from their actual job and mission. The Army would be able to sustain this effort as the slating for recruiter assignments is conducted by HRC and the regulations once identified to change can be executed immediately upon issuance of the OPOD from Army HQ.

### *Effectiveness*

**Effectiveness** is assessed at **moderate**, as the impacts of recent equity efforts have shown some minor successes, and scaling up efforts could produce major successes in the increasing of women being recruited. This COA will require enough women to volunteer or be selected by HRC to assume recruiter roles which will take time along with training to start seeing possible effects of recruiting efforts.

## COA 3: General Officer Command Assessment Program (GOCAP)

The general officer (GO) population is missing out on 70.6% of the Army's diverse officer pool as over 30% of O-7s and up to 80% of O-10s come from combat arms occupations. The exclusion of other occupations has created a glass wall that has limited only 8% of women achieving key command positions that prioritize efforts and shape the culture of the Army. (Jackson et al., 2020) Creating a General Officer Command Assessment Program would mirror the Army's new Battalion Commander Assessment Program (BCAP) and Colonels Command Assessment Program (CCAP), but would be used on the GO population. Setting up these promotion boards with the diversity of gender, race, and branching specifically for O-6 to O-10 would improve equity through inclusive standards. The current challenge to achieving this diversity is the lack of women in combat arms positions as only 22 women are O-6 from the aviation and engineering occupations. (COMO, 2021) It will be another 10-15 years before women in infantry, armor, and field artillery occupations reach O-6 to start improving the gender diversity in GOCAP.

Specific changes would be to include the opening of operations support branches for key command, congressional double-blind interviews, and the removal of the need for a command select list. The GOCAP program would conduct the promotion, assignment location, and command selection in a two-week process. This will allow for ample time to conduct interviews and assessments of all individuals in the rank range for and movement eligibility window. BCAP and CCAP also offer further professional development and leadership coaching to prepare the newly promoted officers. GOCAP could also facilitate this professional development on equity through the framework of the Men, Power and Politics Program from the NDI. (Hubbard, 2020)

### Equity

**Equity** is assessed at **high**, as the predecessor programs, BCAP and CCAP, have been focused on eliminating bias and placing quality leaders that would be ready to command. GOCAP would seek to extend this diversity effort by making it more equitable for women and non-combat arms officers to achieve key command positions that can set priorities for the Army.

### Innovation

**Innovation** is assessed to be **low** as there will be little change from the functioning of the Army as a whole, but the changes will be large enough at senior leadership levels to create equitable promotions and selections for key positions across all GOs. The GOCAP would be more effective at achieving a

diverse and quality group of senior leaders that will be able to conduct future policy changes when adapting to future national security challenges.

### *Feasibility*

**Feasibility** is **moderate** due to the changes requiring congressional review and approval. The Equity and Inclusion Agency would be able to recommend this option to the Under Secretary of the Army and even provide info-graphs and information pamphlets to inform congress on the benefits of this change towards a better selection process for General Officers. Upon successful implementation, the program would follow similar CCAP efforts and meet annually as traditionally by the HRC and GOMO offices.

### *Effectiveness*

**Effectiveness** in the creation of GOCAP would be **moderate** in providing immediate and future changes in gender equity gaps. The immediate effects would be seen from the opening of all branches to take key command positions, as most women are non-combat arms, and the few that are combat arms still have another eight to ten years before reaching GO levels. The future effects will be seen as a more diverse senior leadership according to gender, younger women will see a better future through representation and policies will be more equitable from the diverse experiences and knowledge from marginalized populations.



## COA 4: General Officer Direct Commissioning

For the Army to begin to accrue the benefits from gender diversity women would need to hold at least 30% of senior leadership positions. (International Labour Organization, 2019) Currently, women make up 7% of the senior leadership in the Army, and it would take another 20 to 30 years for women in combat arms branches to rise to GO levels and assume key command positions.

A direct commissioning program is used to shorten the gap for technical and specialties occupations like medical, legal, and cyber, to reach higher ranks quicker. The FY19 NDAA outlines the current direct commissioning program's ability for a limited number of occupations and for only O-6 and below, which makes up around 10% of the total Army Officer pool. (U.S. Army Talent Management, 2021) "In the exercise of its constitutional authority over the Armed Forces, Congress has enacted an array of laws that govern important aspects of military officer personnel management, including appointments, assignments, grade structure, promotions, and separations." (Kapp, 2019)

The direct commissioning of Brigadier Generals up to General, O-7 to O-10, would need approval through the next NDAA or seek alternative expansion to existing policies. It should then be recommended to Congress to authorize the Army Deputy Chief of Staff G-1 to draft a direct commissioning program to fill the personnel gap at GO levels. The potential applicants would follow a priority list starting from SES, GS, and then civilian equivalent positions. This would be a stopgap as the Army grows its leaders from within. The GO direct commissioning program seeks to increase the equity in the direct commissioning policy and quickly improving the equality at senior levels for greater improvements to the diversity of experiences and knowledge towards solving the Army's problems in a strategic and complex environment.

### Equity

**Equity** from the GO direct commissioning program would be **high** from the ability of any civilian to seek to join the Army to be reviewed for acceptance into the Army through direct commissioning. As the Army is seeking quality and not just quantity, civilians must meet certain standards that would be commensurate with a GO's responsibility at a strategic level.

### Innovation

**Innovation** is assessed as being **high** as the program would drastically alter the flow of Army talent management for an officer by immediately being able to fill senior ranking positions within the Regular Army. Increasing women in the civilian SES and GS positions would be a continuation of the status quo and seeking to draw women at strategic levels as a Regular Army GO would increase



representation through streamlining a 30-year process. (Jackson et al., 2020).

### *Feasibility*

**Feasibility** is assessed as being **low** for the Equity and Inclusion Agency's inability to directly implement a direct commissioning program, but a recommendation for increasing direct commissioning at O-6 or higher would be possible. The feasibility for the sustainment of direct commissioning would be based on the need of the Army and Congressional GO limits.

### *Effectiveness*

**Effectiveness** would be assessed at **low** for the limited scope of improving women at senior leadership levels. The ability to directly commission would be effective at addressing a short-term need, while the long-term fix would be an equitable effort to be able to recruit and retain enough women to internally staff the Army and senior leadership.

# Outcomes Matrix

The below outcomes matrix, Figure 1, visually portrays the impact of the possible courses of action according to each of the evaluation criteria. With Army resource constraints this visualization will also assist in prioritizing COAs as they are non-mutually exclusive and can be conducted simultaneously. The “+” denotes a positive or greater impact, the “/” denotes impact is balanced between positive and negative results, while the “-” denotes low impact or no change to the status quo.

FIGURE 3: Outcomes Matrix					
		Evaluation Criteria			
		Equity	Innovation	Feasibility	Effectiveness
Courses of Action	Equity Impact Study	+	/	+	-
	Recruiting Equity Initiative	/	+	+	/
	GOCAP	+	-	/	/
	GO Direct Commission Program	+	+	-	-

Figure 3 shows that Option 2, the Recruiting Equity Initiative, is the best COA when addressing the status quo in inequity for the Army by seeking to increase the number of women in the force. However, just increasing the number of women would not solve the systemic gendered barriers that will inevitably disadvantage most women and force them to attrit from the force. COA 1 is close behind as it offers one of the most equitable outcomes and would have the longest-lasting benefits while its disadvantage would be its upfront costs and the delayed effects in changing the Army inequities. Options 3 and 4 are tied in the last place for being solutions that would provide modest changes to the inequities in the Army and would require drastic changes requiring congressional approval.

## Recommendation

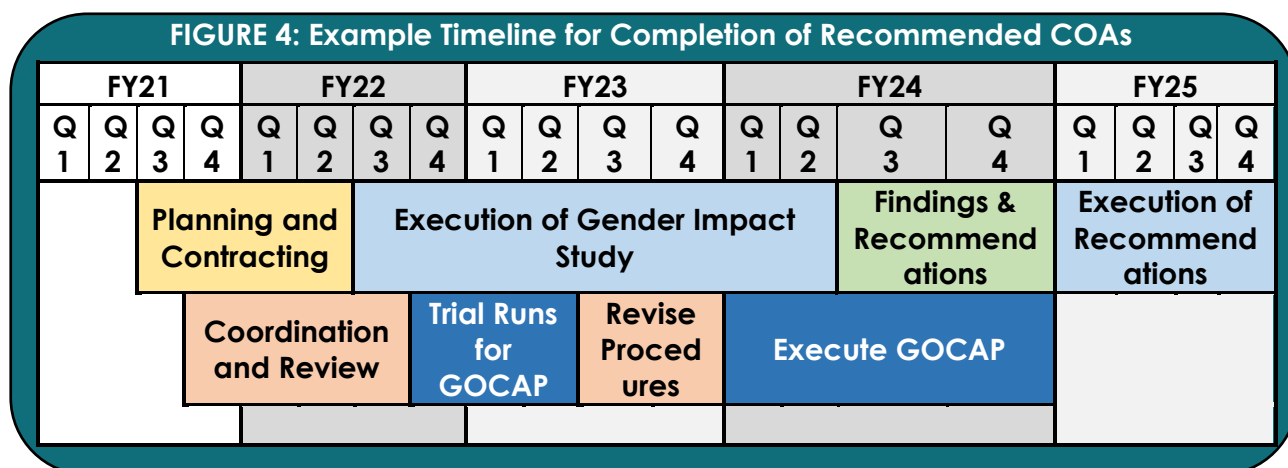
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After the analysis of previous research and predicting trends in the Army, I would recommend a blending of courses of action 1 and 3. This would be the best single course of action to achieve short-run and long-run effects within the Army. The Army needs better research to quantify equity gaps and the effects of women in senior leadership, but this has faltered due to the recent opening of combat arms positions to women and the masculine organizational culture that has existed in setting standards for the force. Conducting the Equity Impact Study early will allow for more effective and efficient strategies to be drafted to decrease the equity gaps detracting from force readiness and achieving the Army People Strategy goals. However, the immediate action to be taken is the creation of a more equitable senior leadership board to assess and identify the future Army senior leadership. This will allow for the Army to build a more diverse GO group that can better manage organizational change in coordination with the results from the Equity Impact Study.

A key consideration to the future research and execution of recommendations is the fact that DoD's diversity organizations not only have fewer resources and lesser authority than organizations that manage military and civilian personnel; they also cannot directly bring about changes in personnel policies and practices. (Lim, 2013) The Assistant Secretary of the Army (ASA), Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA), Equity and Inclusion Agency (E&I) still has the power to inform other key senior leaders with the power to affect change at a pace more suitable for recognizing the changes being implemented during their time of service.

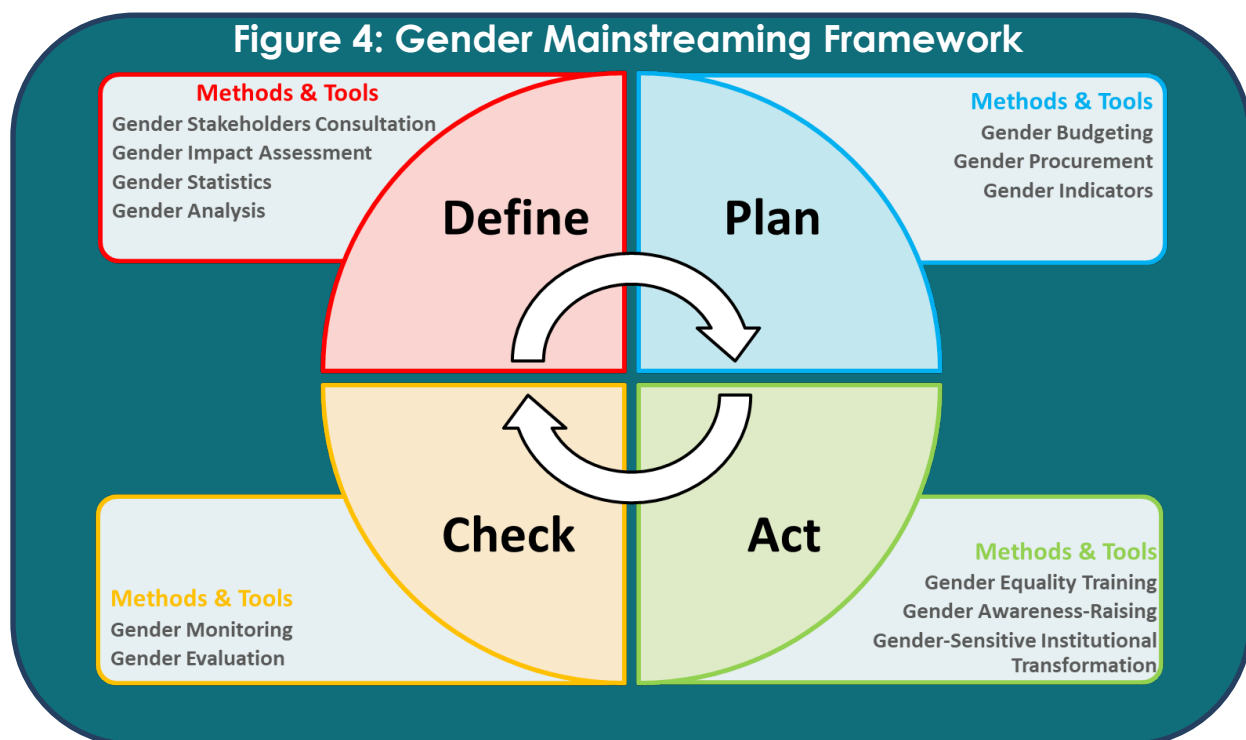
# Implementation

By 2028, the Army seeks to have built a diverse talent pool capable of executing the newly drafted multi-domain strategy for 21st-century competition. The Gender Equity Impact Study and the GOCAP should be implemented prior to the 2028 deadline to build a better foundation in order to sustain this new diverse force. Figure 4 provides an example four-year timeline which could be modified or extended to complete the COAs by 2028, if necessary. However, no equity effort should be waiting on the backburner because actions can be taken now to improve the inclusivity of the Army environment. The implementation would require little human capital on behalf of the Equity and Inclusion Agency although some human capital will be required up front to initiate the planning and coordination for the execution of both courses of action. This coordination will also require approval from a certain set of stakeholders while informing a different set of stakeholders to ensure support for future equity initiatives.



The Under Secretary of the Army would be the first approver for representing these courses of action. Externally, discussions with the Chief of Staff of the Army as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should also be sought out as they are the highest-ranking Army officers and hold influence outside the Army. (Torreon, 2020) Internally to the Army, coordination with the offices of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower and Readiness, Cadet Command, TRADOC, and Army G1 would prove to streamline future efforts. The study while allowing for a better understanding in the GO promotion and command selection process to shape a more equitable process. (U.S. DA, 2011) Additional key stakeholders would include the President and the Senate as they nominate and confirm 3-Star and 4-Star Generals. (Jackson et al., 2020)

To initiate action the Equity and Inclusion Agency must prepare by drafting a warning order and a brief to outline for the critical steps to execute in timeline format. Figure 5, Gender Mainstreaming Framework, provides a process to identify what the equity impact study should cover and over what timeframe should each section take to complete. Combined with the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) planning method would allow for a thorough strategy at identifying the full scope of gender equity gaps in the Army.



Source: Gender mainstreaming Sectoral Brief: Gender and Security, 2020

A contract for support must be initiated to identify an outside organization to conduct evaluations of programs and review of policies. Set a deadline that would be feasible to accomplish and coordinate for a follow-on working group to work on a future recommendation based on the outcome of the Gender Equity Impact Study. The GO Commander Assessment Program would need to have coordination with the GO Management Office for discussions in assessing their process for inclusion during promotions and selection of command billets. Establish a timeline for review and support in redrafting policies and regulations. Some efforts may require Congressional action and so providing more quantifiable benefits to persuade changes may need to be provided. This could be coupled with the Equity Impact Study on command climates.

The Gender Equity Impact Study would need to be initiated first as the contracting and approval process could take up to a year to finalize. Once

finalized the Equity and Inclusion Agency team would be conducting minimal check-ins and assistance when requested by the GEIS team. During this time initial coordination with the GO Management Office would start in identifying a process for reviewing their standing equity and inclusion policies.

Hierarchical organizations like the Army will always be resistant to change, especially rapid changes at such high levels like in the GO Management Office. Such a tight-knit and well-educated community of senior leadership may delay or resist such changes to how command positions and promotions get selected. However, the current nomination for Lt. General Laura Richardson to assume South Command and the implementation of the new BCAP and CCAP programs show that there is less resistance to this shift. (U.S. DoD, 2021) There will be little resistance and even a moderate amount of support for an equity review of policies and programs. This lack of resistance would be due to the more behind-the curtains actions instead of creating changes off the bat. There are also multiple task forces working in the same way that have had little resistance and a lot of support for acting.

When looking out the possible resistance in the Army organization, an internal review conducted by Army personnel would be too biased and burdened with other tasks to perform such a thorough review. This issue would be cleared by using an outside agency like RAND or CSIS to conduct an impartial review and either would have the requisite knowledge and experience with the military to conduct such a review. For changes to the GO promotion and command selection, it could be opposed or denied by the Chief of Staff of the Army or even the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Changing the overall strength or position of 3-Star and 4-Star Generals would require coordination and approval through Senate and Executive Branch. In a worst-case scenario, a derailment of these equity efforts would take either a drastic budget cut from Congress, which is under suggestion by 50 Democrats or a war breaking out with China. (Kheel, 2021) However, neither is likely from historical trends of Congressional budgeting for the military and war with China is also decreased with President Biden's emphasis on diplomatic and moral standing in the international community.

The current wave of effort in the Army is an organizational change towards modernization for the future operational environment as well as building a stronger foundation in the Army through better a diverse and inclusive force. The diverse and inclusive force will be doomed to fail if the Army does not fix the organizational culture and environment that perpetually deters recruits and pushes Soldiers to attrit from the force. The most common-sense effort would be to quantitatively evaluate the current Army programs and policies since there is such a lack of quantitative research and analysis to recommend effective and detailed strategies that would decrease or remove the gender equity gaps. However, this will not be enough to just speak of change for the future but rather

we should create a better representation of women in the current senior leadership to address these equity issues alongside their male teammates for lasting change.

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