Chapter Three
Research Methodology

Ultimately, the findings of this study will be critical to determine the relationship between hegemonic masculinities and sexual harassment and assault. This chapter is divided into three sections to describe the research methodology. As outlined earlier, the construct of this study focuses on a case study analysis of the Report of the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee, which will serve as a reflection of broader Army culture.

Schein’s definitions of organizational culture serve as this study’s research framework to identify and create an understanding of the formal culture as it relates to sexual harassment and assault within the Army. Using Schein’s levels of culture, the analysis creates an initial understanding of the formal systems and policy within the Army dedicated to preventing sexual harassment and assault. A foundational understanding of Army formal culture lays the groundwork to identify and frame informal and formal culture misalignments observable within the Report of the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee.

Next, drawing from Schein’s model of organizational culture, this study frames the influence of hegemonic masculinity at the underlying assumption level of formal Army culture. Connell and Messerschmidt’s definition of hegemonic masculinity described previously informs this analysis. The link between hegemonic masculinity and the underlying assumption level of culture creates the initial understanding necessary to analyze informal culture in greater detail within the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee’s (FHIRC) report. Connell’s Hierarchy of Masculinities serves as the analytical lens to identify and interpret any norms and social mechanisms associated with hegemonic masculinities observable within the informal culture of Fort Hood as described by the FHIRC.

Sexual assault and harassment, the associated norms and language, and the social mechanisms of hegemonic masculinity are most visible within informal organizational culture. Treviño and Nelson’s Multisystem Ethical Culture Framework serves as an additional analytical lens to describe the relationship between the norms, language, and social mechanisms of hegemonic masculinities and sexual harassment and assault observable within the informal culture described in the FHIRC report. Lastly, Treviño and Nelson’s framework helps identify and frame any observable misalignments between formal and informal culture within the Fort Hood case study.

This study uses a multifaceted, integrated research methodology consisting of a descriptive and explanatory case study analysis of the FHIRC report to answer the research questions. Descriptive case study methods serve the primary purpose of de-
scribing a phenomenon or case in a real-world context. Subsequently, explanatory case studies focus on explaining how or why some condition came to be.\textsuperscript{71}

To answer the primary research question, this thesis first employs the descriptive case study method and analytical lenses to identify patterns of hegemonic masculine ideology within the culture and climate identified at Fort Hood to provide readers with a real-world context of the phenomena. Next, this thesis explains the effects of hegemonic masculine ideologies on observable patterns of sexual harassment and assault at Fort Hood using the explanatory case study methodology. It then uses the same methodology and analytical lenses to address the secondary research question to identify cultural themes related to sexual harassment and assault that prevent leaders from identifying the signs and symptoms of sexual assault and harassment. This analysis aims to bring deeper cultural issues into the forefront of Army leaders’ shared consciousness and provide a cursory explanation of the phenomena. Further, this analysis provides observations and identifies cultural themes within the FHIRC report to inform thematic analysis for future qualitative research studies.

This study’s final research question intends to provide Army leaders with viable recommendations to mitigate and eliminate dangerous organizational behavior that contributes to sexual harassment and assault and undermines trust. Identifying how cultural ideologies and biases affect Army leaders’ ability to see dangerous problems such as sexual harassment and assault sets the stage to propose recommendations they can act on immediately to eliminate organizational behaviors that undermine trust and contribute to sexual abuses. Additionally, this analysis provides Army leaders an opportunity to identify other installations struggling with systemic sexual harassment and assault and lack of trust in leadership.

**Data Analysis**

To address the research questions, the case study analysis of the FHIRC report focuses on the report findings that address the keywords of *command climate*, *climate*, *culture*, *gender*, *male*, *female*, *trust*, *confidence*, and *sexual assault and harassment*. This coding plan narrows the analysis to the following report findings:

Finding #1: The implementation of the SHARP Program at Fort Hood has been ineffective due to a command climate that failed to instill SHARP Program core values below the brigade level.
Finding #2: There is strong evidence that incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment at Fort Hood are significantly underreported.
Finding #3: The Army SHARP Program is structurally flawed.
Finding #5: The mechanics of the Army’s adjudication processes involving sexual assault and sexual harassment degrade confidence in the SHARP Program.

Finding #8: The criminal environment within surrounding cities and counties is commensurate with or lower than similar sized areas; however, there are unaddressed crime problems on Fort Hood, because the installation is in a fully reactive posture.

Finding #9: The command climate at Fort Hood has been permissive of sexual harassment/sexual assault.

After analyzing the FHIRC’s findings, this study organizes and presents major observations applicable to each of the research questions posed in chapter 1.

**Research Feasibility**

As previously discussed, this study employs a descriptive case study analysis of Fort Hood’s command climate and culture to understand the role of hegemonic masculinities in perpetuating a culture and climate tolerant of sexual harassment and assault as a representation of the broader Army culture. Different installations within the Army may have variances in how culture and climate contribute to sexual harassment and assault. Further research will be required to validate if the aspects of culture and climate contributing to sexual harassment and assault at Fort Hood are systemic across the Army.

**Selection of Research Material**

The events at Fort Hood in 2020, specifically the alleged sexual harassment and brutal murder of Specialist Vanessa Guillén, prompted a #MeToo movement within the U.S. military, capturing global news headlines. Congressional leadership quickly directed an independent, congressionally mandated investigation into the culture and climate of Fort Hood. The investigators published the *Report of the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee*, which lists the culture and command climate observations and proposed recommendations that serve as the case study for this thesis. This report contains the most relevant and current data on sexual harassment and assault within U.S. Army culture and climate. The severity of the situation at Fort Hood and across the Army concerning systemic sexism and racism most certainly warrants a more in-depth examination and explanation of the report’s observations on culture and climate.

The proposed research methodology, feasibility, and selection of research material are broad enough to enable holistic research while also focused enough to answer this study’s research questions. At a minimum, the methodology identifies cultural themes and patterns contributing to sexual harassment and assault at Fort Hood to inform thematic analysis for future qualitative studies of U.S. Army culture.

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72 Steinbauer, “#MeToo Moment Emerges for Military Women After Soldier’s Killing.”