

The Integration of Women in the Military: A Case Study

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7416>

Received: 11 March 2023; Revised: 17 March 2023; Accepted: 24 March 2023;
Published: 26 April 2023

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of female military personnel belonging to the 10th Infantry Division in Davao Province. The key informants were Fearless Rose, Courageous Hijab Trooper, Valiant Valerie, and Dauntless Joan. The data were collected from their experiences, struggles, coping management, and insights as military women combatants. The study employed a qualitative-purposive sampling approach through in-depth interviews, and various themes were generated from the statements gathered from the participants. The experiences they disclosed were Being Viewed as Accepting in the Community, Being an Agent of Change in the Office, Tracing Hardship during Deployment, Making a Difference as a Woman in the Military Community, Becoming a Neutralizer during the Marawi Siege, and Facing fears in the Field. For coping mechanisms, they utilized Observing Transformation for Women in the AFP, Using the Value of Service as Motivation, and Accustoming Hardship as Part of the Job. In addition, Realizing the Value of Women in AFP, Highlighting the Roles of Women in Conflict Recovery, Seeing Roles as Empowerment of Women, and Increasing the Number of Women in the Service were also revealed as part of the insights of women in the military service. Finally, this study implied that integrating women in the military significantly contributes to gender quality and the strength and effectiveness of the military, therefore unraveling the need for updated military policies and training to ensure women's safety and the integration of gender-specific considerations.

Keywords – MPA, Female Military personnel, Women Participation in decision-making, women empowerment, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Historically, women have been participating in the military profession since immemorial, although at first, women started serving as nurses, cooks, and aids. Through the decades, military women were accepted as they evolved and became combatant counterparts to military men. However, it took many decades before women became globally recognized in the military. It was only in the 1970s that women were allowed to have equal opportunities with men to participate as combatants. Countries in Europe like Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are known to have equal offer chances for women in the military. On the other hand, the United States of America has fully integrated women into the armed forces since 1940, but with certain limitations in the positions. Most of the posts are clerical, nurse, and others that would not have direct access to war or armed combat [1].

In addition, the similarity and differences between men's and women's involvement in wars should be considered to understand the effects of these wars on female service members. In addition, limited study has been done on the issues affecting military mothers, notably the distinctions between married mothers and single mothers when it comes to deployment [2]. Female veterans frequently endure different pressures and social duties than male veterans in the military and their home and community contexts. Among these pressures and societal obligations is long-term separation from the immediate family, gender discrimination, sexual assault, difficulty returning to pre-deployment roles and responsibilities at home, financial

limitations, and ignorance about resources and services for women in healthcare [3].

In the Philippines, it was just in 1993 that women were given the right to join and participate in military training through the Republic Act 7192, also known as the Women in Development and Nation Building Act. The inclusion of women as full and equal partners with men in development, nation-building, and other endeavors has been made possible by this act. With these policies, women in the Philippines were granted the to join and become cadets in Philippine Military Academy. However, the Philippine Military Academy imposes a 20-percent quota for females, according to Philippine Chief of Staff General Edgardo Año [4].

In this research, the researcher would like to examine the experiences of military women in Davao Province. This study will also discuss the difficulties women face when working in predominately male jobs. Although new research is beginning to explore gender differences among military servicewomen, more work must be done to understand these women's experiences. Such involvements are crucial for researching and learning for the benefit of military women and understanding the family dynamics and the impact of deploying mothers to the field. Furthermore, more research is also required to fully comprehend the extent to which the problems influence reintegration into the community. In addition, there is no locally conducted study about women's integration into the military. Thus, the urgency to conduct the research is essential. Hopefully, this study will identify points that may help improve the effectiveness and welfare of military women and develop recommendations for the nation's safety.

THEORETICAL LENS

The researcher employed several significant theories in an appropriate explanation of the study to fully understand the experiences and challenges encountered by women combatants and non-combatants. The study will be anchored on the Theory of Factors Affecting Women's Military Participation [5], which states that the role of military women needs to be analyzed through social construction like global, societal, interpersonal, institutional, organizational, and individual. There must be a systematic way to cover how military women build identities and how women change the masculine military culture. Further, different variables may affect women's participation in the military, namely, military, social structure, and culture.

Another method relevant to this study is Feminist Theory, which discusses the concept of feminism [6]. The feminist ideologies are complex and varied, which discuss the gender subordination experiences of women, the origins of women's oppression, how gender disparity is perpetuated, and give various solutions for gender inequality. Liberal feminism claims that unequal access of women to the legal, social, political, and economic systems is causing the exploitation of women. It is an approach that supports equal legal rights for women and participation in the public realms of education, politics, and employment. Radical feminism argues that sexuality originates from exploitation by women.

In addition, A Model for Femininity and Military Leadership is adapted from an instrumental study of multiple cases of female military officers in a male-dominated setting. The model is based on four fundamental dimensions: femininity, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and teamwork (F-SET). This model has a feminist appeal, as it includes the theory of leadership from many innovative angles. For example, the F-SET leadership theory addresses ways for women in the military to influence the behavior of efficient and successful leadership in areas traditionally dominated by men [7].

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This portion of the study will present related literature and education to provide a basis for a theoretical lens, further in-depth analysis, comparison, and support of the phenomenon under inquiry.

Gender Integration

Women's integration into an organization is challenging, especially in the military. Traditionally, the military unit is where men dominate more than women, making the integration scheme quite challenging. Furthermore, it was uncovered that those military commanders and social scientists considered the possibility that integrating women into the military would undermine the unity among the military crew. Accordingly, the U.S. military has held this conservative tradition wherein the "macho" culture has been embodied while being one of America's most progressive institutions. Since the military is an institution where members experience and face extreme difficulties, women are therefore considered to be no less befitting to join harsh conditions [8].

Gender integration (or mainstreaming) is the order to identify how any strategy for men and women will affect them, including laws, regulations, and initiatives in all industries and at all stages. It is a method to ensure that the requirements and viewpoints of both men and women are considered while creating, putting into practice, observing, and assessing policies and programs to ensure that everyone benefits equitably and that inequality is avoided. In addition, integrating gender into policies and programs can advocate for women to become equal partners with men [9].

Gender Stereotyping

It is an extensive experience among women in the military to be treated with gender stereotyping. Gender stereotyping is the practice of assigning specific roles or attributes to a man or woman based on his participation in a social group. According to the international human rights law framework, gender stereotypes and stereotyping are prohibited as it damages fundamental freedom and human rights. In addition, wrongful gender stereotyping is usually the root cause of discrimination against women and one of the factors in violation of other reasons—for instance, political participation and representation, freedom of expression, and an adequate standard of living. Female Soldiers in the Cameroon army encountered different gender stereotyping experiences. Indirect threats and resistance are just common gender harassment women encounter in the military. Due to these experiences, some feel unsafe because they know or either has heard of the different sexual harassment incidents or verbal and physical sexual abuse. Sexual Harassment is a non-sexual form of discrimination that seeks to enhance traditional gender roles when they are perceived to violate, or women's leadership is dismissed as illegitimate [10]

Participation of Women in the Military

In the Cameroon Army, no law restricts or prescribes quotas for the participation of women in the military from independence up to the present. There is also no rule that hinders women from any military specialties like combat or war. Admission into Military Academies for all levels of training and equal opportunity is open to both sexes. The same goes with South Africa, where the Minister of Defense has called for full and equal opportunity for women's participation in the military, including military operations. To continue the expansion of the South African National Defense Force in promoting peace and stability in Africa [11].

On the other hand, men and women in the Israel Defense Force continue to be conscripted, as men and women trained together in today's Israeli Army. Studies have revealed that most women serving in the IDF do female roles, but their service is not as valuable as that of men. Israeli female officers are over-represented among junior officers, representing 56 percent. Though female officers in the IDF usually do not advance beyond the rank of major, representing only 14 percent of officers in the position of colonel and above; contemporary changes in the IDF structure have provided opportunities for female junior officers to be promoted and serve in command positions in a variety of roles. Women junior officers experience power and authority in their military jobs, based on detailed retrospective consultations with 25 female Israeli army

officers. Considering the gendered structure of the army, these junior officers often exhibit indifference about their power as personnel. On one hand, the women who served as junior officers were too ashamed to exercise their powers. Many identified the potential they had experienced in the army and enhanced them in other aspects of living long after they had left the military [12].

METHODOLOGY

This chapter dealt with qualitative methods and procedures of the study, which are carefully studied to achieve the goals of the investigation. In order to guide the research in the right direction, to emphasize the observation and interpretation, and to help get maximum efficiency and reliability, it used research methods and design.

Research Design

In order to better understand the experiences of military women, this research study made extensive use of case studies in qualitative research. The essay emphasizes how crucial it is to choose the right participants, data collection and analysis techniques, as well as the researcher's role in the study. Purposive sampling, in-depth interviews, thematic analysis, and cross-case analysis are all heavily emphasized in this study. The necessity of secrecy and anonymity in preserving research participants' identities is also highlighted in the research [13].

Research Participants

The informants of this study were four military women personnel. They belonged to 10th Infantry Division in Davao Province and served the institution for more than five years at the time of the interview. They were identified and qualified military women who were able to give authentic information needed to answer questions essential to the study. They were either credible stakeholders or involved and had full knowledge and experience in the institution. These criteria may help ensure that the participants have a rich experience as women combatants in the military. This study claims to recommend a worthy depth of information with regard to the plight of female combatants in a male-dominated profession.

Informant's Profile

Pseudonyms	Length of Service	Rank
Fearless Rose	20 years	Lieutenant Colonel
Courageous Hijab Trooper	21 years	Sergeant Major
Valiant Valerie	15 years	Captain
Dauntless Joan	8 years	Corporal

Data Analysis

Before the data were analyzed, all interviews, observations, and documents were transcribed and translated into English. The transcription process has let the researcher get acquainted with the data. In this study, a multiple case study design was followed in which the data are evaluated case-by-case by thematic review and a cross-case analysis. The interviews, findings, and records were assessed on a case-by-case basis to generate themes. Such themes were used to conduct the cross-case analysis. Through cross-case analysis, prominent themes were kept and those that were different [14].

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

This chapter shows a cross-case analysis in which interview themes are evaluated across four individual respondents. The summary of the cross-case analysis is presented in a template at the end of the section. These were realized by employing three research questions with subheadings: the experiences of military women, the coping and management style of military women, and the insights of women in the military service as combatants.

Experiences of Women in the Military

Six major themes were generated from the personal experiences of women who are serving the military, namely: being viewed as accepting in the community, being an agent of change in the office, tracing hardship during deployment, being a neutralizer during the Marawi siege, facing fears in the field and making a difference as a woman in the military community. All four research participants have experienced being viewed as accepting in the community, while only three among the participants experienced being an agent of change in the office, and two of the participants traced hardship during deployment. Meanwhile, one of the participants experienced being a neutralizer in Marawi Siege, facing fears in the field, and making a difference as a woman in the military community

Being viewed as accepting in the community.

Among the themes presented, the participants shared two common themes. All of them were viewed as accepting in the community. First, all of them feel regarded as being acknowledged in the community. Fearless Rose stated that she grew up being community-oriented, which made her easy to get along with the civilian. She observed that the community is overwhelmed seeing a commander who happens to be a woman. Further, it made her realize the purpose of her existence since she felt valued as a woman in conflict areas.

In addition, Courageous Hijab Trooper observed that it was a big deal when the community saw female soldiers since it was unusual. As a result, she was very mindful of their actions in the community. In addition, she felt that the community respected women more than men during her deployment in Marawi.

Likewise, Valiant Valerie stated that she feels accepted in the community because women like her help with the community's recovery. Unlike men, who were viewed as stiff and terrifying, women, on the other hand, were soft and calmer in dealing with the community.

Lastly, Dauntless Joan claimed that most community members are more comfortable with military women and are even amazed to see women in uniform. Also, she considered herself an instrument to elevate the community situation, where people could easily approach a military woman like her.

Being an agent of change in the office.

Another theme that the three participants shared is the experience of being an agent of change in the office. For Fearless Rose, the image of AFP has softened because of the military women's presence inside their field, making her job more engaging. The troops created change inside their unit that represented the staff and opened their voices and suggestions. Also, she observed that few women had proven themselves, and some were ready to show authority and eloquent groundbreaking thoughts. She firmly believed that a woman could be among the military's most impressive and awakening agents.

On the other hand, Courageous Hijab Trooper realized that female soldiers have changed the community's perspective on the military and impacted the harmonious relationship in the camp. Women are capable and have been believed to have a considerable effect due to their determination. Likewise, they are responsible for enhancing and proposing a healthier environment inside the camp.

Lastly, Dauntless Joan also saw the same changes in the workplace that have been perceptible when a woman is in the field serving her best in work. Further, she believed that women are mainly intended for office work and greatly help operations, especially in community healing.

Coping and Management Style as Military Women

Five major themes were generated from the coping and management style of women serving the military. These include observing transformation for women in the AFP, accustoming hardship as part of the job, using the value of service as motivation, being true as self-motivation, and making the family as motivation.

Four participants highlighted observing transformation in AFP and three participants revealed using service value as motivation, while two used accustoming hardship as part of the job. One participant experienced being true as self-motivation and making her family as motivation.

Observing transformation for women in AFP.

All respondents have shared the same theme wherein they are inspired as they see changes for women in the AFP. Consequently, they are determined to work even harder in their chosen profession. Fearless Rose and Valiant Valerie expressed that transformation in the facility for women is truly remarkable. In the past, billeting and facility for women are not visible inside the camp, but it has become a priority of the institution nowadays. In addition, Valiant Valerie conveyed that the facilities were made only for women, and seeing the military system being obliged to have and build facilities for women's use had been a great motivation for her.

On the other hand, Courageous Hijab Trooper and Dauntless Joan observed that military men are now more respectful to women. In fact, policies that protect women's rights and dignity in the institution are now in place. Courageous Hijab Trooper also added that she could compare military men's behavior in the past towards women with today's generation and setting. Furthermore, military men are now getting accustomed to having a female leader. This is manifested in how Men in the military now accept that capable military women can also become leaders, realizing that women can likewise succeed in their particular manners as each man can.

Using value of service as motivation.

Three participants shared the same coping style and used the value of service as their motivation. The primary goal of Fearless Rose, Courageous Hijab Trooper, and Dauntless Joan on why they joined the military is to serve the country, community, and institution. Whenever Fearless Rose is asked about the valid reason for joining the AFP, she confidently addresses how the service inspired her. She has her motivation to be a military woman and seek to serve the country. Serving the country was a piece of her dream and desire throughout everyday life. She understood how significant her responsibility was to the local area and that her life had a reason.

Courageous Hijab Trooper added that despite the troubles and difficulties inside and outside the camp, she still considered having obligations to serve the institution. She believed the challenges have inspired and transformed her into motivation to continually serve the country despite the troubles and conditions she went up against and will experience moving forward.

Dauntless Joan has also enjoyed her military service by serving people, typical female soldiers. She saw and felt that the troops had contributed to her enjoyment and fulfillment while in the service. She was inspired because it encouraged her to continue in military service despite the far-reaching area and monetary issues.

Accustoming hardship as part of the job.

Courageous Hijab Trooper and Fearless Rose have shared this theme, where both were accustomed to the challenges and found great satisfaction in the performance and fulfilling their duty as female military. Courageous Hijab Trooper believes that every challenge has a purpose, which she turned into her inspiration in serving the country despite the difficulties and conditions she had encountered and will be facing moving forward. At the same time, her job incorporates difficulty, risk, and complications inside and outside the military field. On occasions, she makes herself blissful and considers her family her inspiration to keep serving the nation while always remembering to keep praying. Despite the anticipation of the difficulties and things getting complicated, Courageous Hijab Trooper accepts that they must always protect the citizen at all costs.

For Fearless Rose, hardship and challenges are never a hindrance in delivering her duties, for she considers these as part and parcel of the job. One must cope with the other debacles encountered, including family problems and others that may come along the way. She also added that one must have a stable, physical, emotional, and spiritual mind because it will affect decision-making in whatever situation. She copes with different hardships by fully accepting fate without crying over spilled milk because things have already happened. She learned and moved on from it.

Insights of Women in the Military Service as Female Military Personnel

Four major themes were generated from the insights of women in military service. These include realizing the value of women in the AFP, highlighting women's roles in conflict recovery, seeing roles as empowerment of women, and increasing the number of women in the service.

All four shared the same insights of realizing the value of women in the AFP and increasing the number of women in service, while three participants believed in seeing roles as empowerment for women. In addition, two participants shared common insights on highlighting women's roles in conflict recovery and increasing the number of women in the service. Meanwhile, three participants shared their insights on seeing roles as empowerment of women.

Realizing the value of women in AFP.

All participants have shared the theme of realizing the value of women in AFP. All agreed that the AFP values the presence of women in the military, especially its participation in decision-making, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Fearless Rose believed that AFP has transformed through appropriate consideration of women in operation. Women are now given an equal chance to participate in the institution's operation. Additionally, she expressed that everything in AFP is an opportunity for women; it only depends on how one explores and grabs it. On the other hand, Courageous Hijab Trooper observed that the AFP values women and was even encouraged to participate in nation-building. The AFP, as an institution, sees the outright responsibility of women and continues to pursue approaches and tasks that will help propel women

to reinforce the association and the country in general.

Moreover, Valiant Valerie believed that the AFP acknowledges women as crucial actors in stabilizing the community. Women are organized in many aspects and areas. Aside from stabilizing the community, women have the closest hearts to the community, especially the children and mothers.

Lastly, Dauntless Joan stated that women are useful in the office. She believes that engaging women in military activities or office work is imperative. A woman in the field has a job to ensure that the area is in peace and harmony. It is a huge impact. In office matters, women are helpful, especially when they have visitors. In her view, it becomes attractive when a battalion is membered by some women. Moreover, women decorate and give leis to the visitors. So, women are handy. Dauntless Joan believes that men have no skills in decorating, wherein a woman can do anything, such as decorating and landscaping.

Seeing roles of women as empowerment.

Three participants employed the same theme of seeing roles as women's empowerment. Fearless Rose, as a female, accepts that being in military service is an empowering position. She was not reluctant to assume that women could work hand in hand with their male counterparts and perform well. For Fearless Rose, rumors about having no opportunity for women inside the military are a hoax and that everything inside the AFP is an array of opportunities that depends on how military women push themselves to achieve things.

In the same manner, Valiant Valerie has the same insight as a female combatant, where she added that women are effectively empowered and can go along with men in numerous perspectives. Valiant Valerie could not imagine a more remarkable improvement inside the assistance because the actual AFP has given it. Through this, she feels that the framework has changed over the long run and advances women, wherein they can coexist with and associate with men. All things being equal, they ought to invigorate themselves in the field as an empowered woman.

Likewise, Dauntless Joan shared the same insight as Fearless Rose and Valiant Valerie. She emphatically concurs that women's empowerment is evident in the institution, where military women served in positions such as platoon, company, and battalion commander. These inspired other women in the service to work hard and show their potential in serving the country and helping the institution in nation-building.

Highlighting the roles of women in conflict recovery.

Another theme that the two participants shared is highlighting women's roles in conflict recovery. Courageous Hijab Trooper considered that a woman's role becomes critical to peacebuilding and harmony during conflicts because she can assist in neutralizing situations like terrorism. Military women are tasked to work together with men in securing the land and protect the community's people. While men are active in conflict battles, women are in charge of neutralizing the area where innocent people are being affected. In addition, women were trained to extend psychological and moral support to civilians to help them process their emotions during a conflict.

Valiant Valerie also claimed that no female would be assigned in the actual battle. However, women play a vital role in conflict recovery. They are tasked to assist the community in recovering from the devastation of war and ensuring the affected families that the government will protect and save lives.

Increasing the numbers of women in service.

All participants shared the theme of increasing the number of women in service. Courageous Hijab Trooper and Dauntless Joan believed that increasing the number of women in the military is essential. Courageous Hijab Trooper highlighted that The Armed Forces of the Philippines is known to be a male-dominated

institution. Although it is now in the transformation process of accepting women, it is still noticeable that women are only a few by number. Few military women excel in performing significant battle tasks as they are genuinely and intellectually strong and can adapt to the brutal circumstances in their field of assignment. As observed, women are effective in dealing with the community as it significantly helps the institution if there is an increased quota for women in the field. Increasing the number of women will also prove that women are fully empowered and capable of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Moreover, Dauntless Joan exemplified that the number of women in military participation is shorter compared to men, despite its importance in the institution and community. Therefore, increasing the number of women in service is one of the solutions. Also, she highlighted that the recruitment of female soldiers must focus on far-flung areas so that youth like women will be encouraged to join the institution rather than the leftist group. In addition, increasing the troops of ROTC in college as a subject should also be upgraded to invite more youth, especially women, to join the institution.

On the other hand, both Fearless Rose and Valiant Valerie disagreed with the increase of women in the service. Fearless Rose stressed that the Armed Force of the Philippines is not yet ready to have an equal number of women to men because the country is still facing internal and external conflict. And with these wars, there is a need for more men than women, although she also added that there are few women now who served as front-liner during the war. Valiant Valerie also added that the increase of quota for women in the service should be based on the judgment of those who are in the ground, for they determine how much utilization of women the institution needs.

DISCUSSION

This chapter exhibits the discussions, implications to future research, and concluding remarks based on the emerging themes developed during data analysis. Before the discussion proper, it is realistic to duplicate the essential fundamentals of the study. The primary purpose of this study was to understand and explore the personal experiences, struggles, coping strategies, and insights of women engaged in different roles for government services. It also focuses on the effect and challenges of women's integration into a military institution. Lastly, it analyzes and assesses the existing policies and issues that hinder women from serving the institution. The researcher employed an in-depth face-to-face interview to collect data from all four informants: Fearless Rose, Courageous Hijab Trooper, Valiant Valerie, and Dauntless Joan.

The inquiry's key findings were presented and broadly discussed with the existing significant theories and studies that may support or contradict their claim of validity and conclusiveness.

Experiences of Women as Military Members

The most notable theme in research question one that the four informants shared was **being viewed as accepting in the community**.

All four participants shared two classic pieces from their experiences among the themes presented. First, all of them feel regarded as being acknowledged in the community. It is remarkable to see a woman on the battlefield with full battle gear in the military field. The community can see that women are progressing and showing how they ultimately serve the nation like each man in the troop. The community appreciates how the military workforce has evolved and continuously adapted to the inclusion of women in the military.

Additionally, some fear approaching those who work in such occupations as the community sees the military as daunting and intimidating. Even so, people now have another option or alternative due to the integration of women. The community sees women as more hospitable and friendly than men, which makes the community feel comfortable approaching and communicating with them. Females were perceived as

more approachable than men due to their dimorphism, making them approachable [14]. It was further revealed that females are identified as more “communal” and “affiliative,” which makes them more approachable. In addition, The position of women in the service is a reflection of their social standing everywhere [15].

The community saw female fighters who were not applying. They did not intend to succeed because the local area did not admire them very much like how they appreciated male warriors. However, this perception has changed after some time. Today’s women play out with complete certainty that similar errands the military men can do are slowly progressing and showing up in the military service.

Another theme in women’s experiences as military members is **being an agent of change in the office**. Women are chosen to join the military, and frequently they are in command of both men and women in such never-ending conflicts [7]. The participants shared the same theme: they believe a woman makes a difference in the office. Women are skilled and believed to have a critical effect in light of their constancy. Women have a tremendous impact since they can assist men with preparing before the battle and during recovery. Women can present different capacities and perspectives of genuine worth and consistently approach issues surprisingly. The participants have validated themselves to be prepared to show authority and special expressive considerations in military service. Notably, the soldiers had to make a change in the military field to address the staff and open their voices and ideas,

In addition to the two themes mentioned, **Tracing hardship during deployment** is another theme generated in women’s experiences as military members. Two of the four participants, Fearless Rose and Valiant Valerie, shared the same theme: they experience trouble during deployment. As it is known, men and women have different body compositions. On sex-based differences in physiology, men tend to have more bone and muscle mass than women, while women have more body fat than men [16]. Due to these differences in body proportions, women experience more hardship in training. There are also claims that military training should prepare combatants to enter a difficult way and perform physical and mental tasks at the highest possible proficiency levels. The discipline in the military began during the preparation, which first and foremost centered on the actual field of the officers, and visiting staff in essential regions is an unquestionable requirement to empower and inspire them. That experience was also the most significant turning point in Participant’s leadership and made her realize her life’s purpose [17].

The next theme created on women’s experiences as military members is **Making Difference as a Woman in the Military**. Bringing a difference in military service is nongender specific. Reference [18] considered that a woman is necessary for the functioning of modern military forces. A woman can be a manager, a leader, a commander, and everything she wants to be for her purpose and boost her self-confidence. Fearless Rose experienced having a commander who did not wish to see children in the camp. As a result, she made a difference by allowing soldiers to bring their families inside the center and encouraging bringing their children with them.

Additionally, **Becoming a Neutralizer during Marawi Siege** is another theme to be discussed in women’s experiences as military members. Women’s contributions in peacekeeping operations and during times of war, and in combat have been seen by everyone [19]. Through the intercessions of the female fighters, children and their mothers had the option to show love and empathy that settled the struggles during that time. The Siege acquired different difficulties during the period of military life as clashes at that time were extraordinary. However, they could get everybody silenced. This has made a great life experience for Courageous Hijab Trooper during her time in the Marawi Siege. Ultimately, she realized that a female soldier was the best while the community respected the female soldiers more than the males.

Facing fears in the field is the last theme generated on women’s experiences as members of the military. Women proved that they are intelligent, independent, and able to take on complex tasks without cracking

[20]. A woman encounters numerous things and is shaped by difficulties in her military administration, particularly during the principal long stretches of her service in the field. For instance, a woman in the battalion earnestly served the local area and was entrusted to watch the regions promptly toward the beginning of the day. They expected to stroll for a long time with their Commanding Officer. These activities have shaped Dauntless Joan by facing her fears in the field.

Coping and management style as military women

Five major themes were generated from the coping and management style of women who are serving the military, namely: observing transformation for women in the AFP, using the value of service as motivation, accustoming hardship as part of the job, and being true as self-motivation and making family as motivation.

Observing transformation for women in AFP.

In the past years, Women were able to fill a wider range of military vocations because of changes in military rules and practices, which were primarily impacted by the overall environment of fair job chances for women in the community [18]. Inside the Armed Forces of the Philippines, there has been a noticeable change for women in the system. For Fearless Rose, the issue of billeting has been changing over time. For Valiant Valerie, change inside the field is profoundly observable. For Dauntless Joan, when a unit is membered by women, it becomes appealing, enchanting, and beautifully pleasant. Therefore, change inside the field is profoundly observable in different areas through the intervention of women.

Using value of service as motivation.

Employee management is the driving force behind every successful organization, and each employee's dedication is the result of their motivation and level of job satisfaction [21]. Employees are motivated toward organizational goals by this energy. Without engagement, the organization won't be able to produce success. Serving the nation was the participant's dream and aspiration in life. That being exemplified, the inconveniences and hardships inside and beyond the field were considered a piece of their commitments, and recalling the previous strength made them who they are today. The service they offer to the country has been already implanted inside them, and they seek to serve the country for more years. Dauntless Joan was propelled basically by the encounters she once rehearsed in her first years in the military field. One of her coping strategies in adapting to the difficulties was the prospect of continuously being ready for what was ahead. Although tiring, she considered it an encounter and a chance to work on herself daily Hence, daily work experiences positively and significantly affect employee performance [22].

Accustoming hardship as part of the job.

The necessity to embrace hardship has become obvious in the modern military, a sizable, bureaucratic, and comprehensive institution with a clear structure and instructions that operates in a socially constructed, cultural, and rapidly changing environment [23]. Being a military woman is not as easy as putting on clothes that will signify who they are; It is a job that needs to face every challenge and every difficulty they can overcome. Their job includes hardship, trials, and challenges inside and outside the military field, where things might get complicated and critical challenges will surely come, but they believe their responsibility is to protect the people. Hardship inside the area was never out of place. It was always there, ready to attack someone's life.

Being true as self-motivation.

The capacity to love oneself is a complex combination of qualities that enables individuals to look at themselves and their world realistically yet positively [24]. Self-love differs from narcissism, includes but

transcends self-knowledge, and encompasses personally defining insights. Courageous Hijab Trooper has experienced discrimination because of being a female combatant, yet it made her more confident in reaching her goal. The more she carried on to do all that had been paid. She is satisfied with herself and subsequently acknowledges her authentic self, believing that the only person one can rely on is herself.

Making her family as a motivation.

Family happiness and motivation are interlinked to each other and directly affect an employee's performance at work [25]. We believe that having compassion for a family provides an essential source of inspiration that can improve performance in the workplace, having important implications for future research on motivation and the components of work and family commitment. When the task is interesting, employees are motivated to function better. For Valiant Valerie, her children are the main reason she remains inspired to play out her obligations in the military field. Although being a soldier was neither her desire nor her best option, her dad's example inspired her.

Insights of women in the military service as combatants

Only four major themes were generated from the insights of women in the military service as female military personnel: realizing the value of women in the AFP, highlighting women's roles in conflict recovery, seeing roles as empowerment of women and increasing the number of women in service.

Realizing the value of women in AFP.

There are various scenarios where female service members may be embroiled in combat operations [26]. The changing substance of the fight incorporates the way that ladies are essential for achievement. If conflict incorporates winning hearts and brains, that will incorporate the heart and brain of a woman. Improvement is seriously upset when ladies are excluded. Women in the military will stay in the combat zone as long as they want. In that capacity, they ought to be as combat zone prepared as their male partners. Women are esteemed and have the privileges and opportunity that she needs to seek. As an affiliation, the AFP sees women's outright responsibility and continues pursuing approaches and tasks that will help propel women to reinforce the association and the country. The present military is substantially more incorporated along orientation lines than before, where Ladies are not excluded from a battle mission.

Highlighting the roles of women in conflict recovery.

The current military is significantly more integrated along direction lines than at whatever point previously. Women are not commonly kept away from a fight mission [27]. The current military is more integrated with direction than at any previous point. DauntlessJoan believes that the presence of a woman is an inviting signal while Fearless Rose believes that sending ladies to the field would greatly assist men. Accordingly, Valiant Valerie claims that no female would be assigned in the actual battle, while Courageous Hijab Trooper considers that a woman's role becomes critical to peacebuilding and harmony during conflicts.

Seeing roles as empowerment of women.

Regardless of the cultural effort women do to define themselves as self-determined and empowered, women's knowledge of their identities, connections with males, and positions within the gender system are maintained [28]. They say that women in military service are effectively empowered and can rival men in numerous perspectives. However, it is evident that empowered women are there to stand on their own and should eliminate the notion that they are for home purposes only. Ultimately, having female authorities, female leaders, and female combatants in the workforce is empowerment for all ladies.

Increasing the number of women in service.

Women's empowerment and increasing integration into all fields of work and professions within societies go hand in hand with the process of implementation, which also enables the opening of professional positions for women in the military services in the absence of population or national crises [29]. Expanding quantities of ladies who are serving in the military like past conventional jobs like nursing, organization, and interchanges, and as the sexism, provocation, and disparity in the military is overall all the more exceptionally exposed, women researchers are starting to resolve issues encompassing the job of ladies inside the military. Only Courageous Hijab Trooper shared this insight wherein she stated that women are genuinely and mentally solid and can adjust to the brutal conditions in their commitment field. The authorities are growing the degree of women in strategic harmonies. For this reason, the military field needs to empower and engage more women, and the world requires more female troopers in the military.

Implication to Future Research

This research contains limited information about the experiences of four women participants as military members, the coping and management styles of military women, and insights into military service as combatants. It is practical to encourage further research on the integration of women in the military to promote or advance policies and laws that may benefit those women who work in the military and those who plan to enlist in the military sector.

Additional research studies for integrating women in the military may include more accounts from other participants. The researcher has observed an insufficient number of local research studies regarding the integration of women into the military. As this research focuses on only four participants, it would be valuable and instrumental for other researchers who may invest and engage further in studies that pertain to the integration and inclusion of women in the military service. Furthermore, as these studies continue to increase, so shall the community and government's attention to women who work in this sector and those who will enlist in the future.

In addition, further research may forward stagnant views and biased preconceptions of those who disagree with the inclusion of women in the military. As widely known, despite the introduction of some laws and policies such as the Republic Act (RA) 9710, also known as the Magna Carta of Women, and the Republic Act (RA) 6725, also known as An Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination against Women with Respect to Terms and Conditions of Employment there are still those who disrespect it and remains prejudiced. Nevertheless, we may reach the ears of those who are willing to listen and persuade those who are still reluctant if we further promote and create research studies on the integration of women. It may also provide more information to women inclined to join the military while raising awareness of certain experiences and insights that will provide meaningful information for future research studies.

CONCLUSION

In the past, women joining the armed forces was inadmissible, resulting from the preconceptions of those in higher positions in the military and society. One of the most common bigotry was that women were less masculine than men, making them unqualified and unfit for the military. Another is the ingrained patriarchal mindset in the heads of the people, where women belonged in the workforce's domestic section and should stay and take good care of the children while the men were to work and provide for the family. In most cases, several more preconceptions have served as a reason why women were not qualified for the military.

However, as society evolved, so has the rationality of the people in attesting the immense capability of women to join the military through several types of published research and studies rationales and grounds which consequently introduced laws allowing women to enlist.

Women's optimum potential was undervalued for many years with the limited job opportunities, especially

in the military sector. Nevertheless, windows of opportunity have opened as decades passed, and more women gained the chance to enter different jobs and even enlist in the military. Still, it was no easy feat for women in society. Women's unique physique and physical change compared to men have drastically contributed to their continuous hardships and countless obstacles during employment and training. Even so, the participants of this research never allowed these obstacles to hinder them from becoming exemplary soldiers. They were eventually promoted and ascended from their ranks through their effort and hard work during their training and employment. This research concludes and supports that women are equally capable and qualified to join the military and serve the country despite the contraries with men.

Additionally, this research amplifies the effectiveness and efficiency of women in the community and the military workforce, as demonstrated by their outstanding service in their field of work. While they have experienced countless hardships due to their gender, it cannot be denied the advantages it has contributed. Notably, becoming a woman by nature has contributed significantly to establishing and radiating a safe and comfortable space for the people in the community compared to their gender counterparts, as exemplified from the documentation provided by the investigation and interview with the participants of this study. The public was much more relaxed talking to the women officers because their gender represents compassion and empathy more than men officers do.

Furthermore, this study also emphasizes the significance of the integration of women in the military armed forces. Despite the obstacles caused by gender differences, women's opinions and viewpoints are as important as men. Women did not allow gender differences to affect their performance in the field. Instead, they used these impediments as their stepping stone to continually improve themselves and further prove their worth as women in the armed forces through constant rank promotion and leadership in their unit. By integrating women into the military, we have comprehended various significant experiences and perspectives in strategic planning, decision-making, and leadership, palpably breaking gender stereotypes in the military, the current society, and the new generation.

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