
1 Workplace Bullying in Military 2 Organizations

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14 Abstract

15 Notwithstanding an increase in civilian tasks and peace missions, (western)
16 armies are considered prone to workplace bullying and sexual harassment inside
17 their ranks. An analysis of military culture reveals the persistence of three
18 intertwined organizational factors, which increase homogeneity, but are also a
19 breeding ground for systematic misconduct: (i) The misuse of power and

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20 bureaucratic regulations in hierarchical structures; (ii) socialization processes
21 with humiliating hazing rituals and demanding trainings which create in- and
22 outsiders; and (iii) the persistent salience of hypermasculine values including
23 physical dominance. The existing empirical studies on workplace bullying and
24 sexual harassment in national armies reveal high above-average victimization
25 rates, especially for female and young soldiers. Results indicate that misconduct
26 is related to a (sexually) hostile work environment in subunits of traditional
27 branches and academies. Overt hazing rituals, but also covert behaviours like
28 spreading rumours have been reported. Victims often do not report the incidences
29 in fear of retaliation or trivialization, or are unsatisfied with the actions taken.
30 Preventive measures include a departure from traditional performance criteria and
31 the mere focus on physical endurance and social cohesion. Moreover, written
32 materials and leadership trainings, which create awareness for diverse types of
33 misconduct and (gender) differences in perception, are crucial. A range of contact
34 points and official chains of intervention are suggested including external con-
35 sultants as well as internal “persons of trust”. Authors recommend more research
36 on effective prevention and intervention, and more comparable cross-cultural
37 studies on awareness and severity of bullying behaviours and sexual harassment
38 in military organizations.

39 1 Introduction

40 **Master Chief John Urgayle:** Pain is your friend, your ally, it will tell you when you are
41 seriously injured, it will keep you awake and angry, and remind you to finish the job and get
42 the hell home. But you know the best thing about pain?

43 **Lt. Jordan O’Neil:** Don’t know!

44 **Master Chief John Urgayle:** It lets you know you’re not dead yet. Quote from the Movie *GI*
45 *Jane* (1997)

46 Military organizations are substantially closed and isolated from the public eye.
47 Nevertheless, most of us conceive military life from the popular discourse: War
48 movies like *GI Jane*, *Full Metal Jacket* and *Jarhead* depict hazing rituals of
49 newcomers and outsiders, physical drill during training, and abusive behaviour
50 from superiors within elite units in military organizations. Eventually, the targets
51 endure all the hardships and become war heroes. Moreover, in most countries, stories
52 from duty service are passed on between generations and often include themes like
53 solemn watch duties and long marches, authoritarian supervisors and bonding
54 experiences with fellow soldiers.

55 Because of these popular associations with the military we may reason that
56 pronounced authority, peer loyalty and physical dominance are necessary ingredi-
57 ents for military effectiveness and success. As organizational researchers, we often
58 use the military as a textbook example for an organizational culture, where violence
59 is normalized and initiation or punishment rituals blur with perceptions of workplace
60 bullying and harassment (e.g. Salin & Hoel, 2011).

61 However, the public at large is frequently shocked by widely published cases,
62 which go beyond harsh training methods and institutionalized rituals. A simple
63 google search on bullying in military organizations 2017 yields various scandals
64 from Western armies. For example, in the US, secret filming of female marines
65 became public in March 2017. Nude photos and videos of the women were shared by
66 thousands of Marine soldiers via Facebook. Marine general Robert Mueller referred
67 to this case as a phenomenon in a defective subculture rather than a general
68 dysfunctional “Marine Culture” (Starr & Cohen, 2017). In April 2017, sadistic
69 training rituals and assaults by instructors of the combat paramedics of the German
70 Armed Forces against young paramedics were revealed. Management had been
71 informed of the wrongdoing before (Gebauer, 2017).

72 The aim of this chapter is to shed light on why military organizations are
73 particularly prone to such severe and collective forms of workplace bullying
74 and harassment, and to provide recent evidence on prevalence, prevention and
75 intervention.

76 To do so, we first review the common organizational tasks, goals and social
77 structure of national armies in the twenty-first century. We will show why there is
78 still an overarching “military culture”—notwithstanding distinct functions, branches
79 and goals of peace-making and peacekeeping armies. In this section, we will
80 also present facts and figures on the participation of women and LGBTQ in
81 national forces.

82 In the second section, we present three structural and cultural organizational
83 features which are believed necessary for homogeneity and military effectiveness,
84 but whose over- or misuse lays the ground for workplace bullying and harassment:
85 hierarchical and bureaucratic structures; harsh socialization processes and training
86 rituals; and hypermasculine values.

87 We point out how these characteristics can increase frustration and aggression,
88 group dynamics against outsiders and feelings of injustice and privilege. These are
89 all features, which are regarded as causes or triggers for workplace bullying in the
90 literature (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2005; Neuman & Baron, 2011; Salin & AU4
91 Hoel, 2011). Importantly, the analysis also gives insight why violence or misconduct
92 by soldiers is rarely reported or even regarded as such.

93 In the third section, we present empirical data on the prevalence of workplace
94 bullying and harassment from different national armies. For clarity, we treat work-
95 place bullying and sexual/gender harassment as overlapping, yet separate phenom-
96 ena. Since most of the literature on military culture and/or bullying and (sexual)
97 harassment stems from the NATO member countries (especially Canada, Norway,
98 UK and USA) and NATO partner countries, allies and dialogue partners (i.e. Austria,
99 Australia, Israel, South Korea, Sweden, cf. NATO-Website, 2015), our review has a
100 focus on these national armies. Empirical studies from military forces such as Brazil,
101 the Philippines, Russia and South Africa will round out the literature review.

102 The fourth section deals with the prevention of bullying and harassment in the
103 military context. Based on the preceding analyses and reviews, we present chal-
104 lenges and key starting points to tackle bullying and harassment in military organi-
105 zations. Also, best practices on prevention and intervention tools are presented in
106 this section.

107 In the last section we conclude our analysis. We present an outlook and implica-
108 tions for future research and the measurement of bullying behaviours and hazing
109 rituals in a military context. We also discuss cross-cultural differences and future
110 challenges for research in both peacekeeping and peace-making armies.

111 **2 Military Organizations in the Twenty-First Century**

112 Traditional military systems have often been characterized as total institutions much
113 the same as monasteries, prisons and asylums (cf. Goffman, 1968). Traditionally,
114 such organizations are enclosed and “greedy”: Total institutions take possession of
115 the whole life of their inhabitants. Uniforms underline the clear distinction between
116 the inside and the outside civilian world. However, there is a clear visible distinction
117 between *staff*, who can have access to the outside world, and *inmates*, who are kept
118 separate from civilian life and values and work, and eat and sleep in the military
119 barracks. Staff controls body and personal life of the inmates through discipline,
120 physical drill and constant monitoring of daily routines (Davies, 1989; Goffman,
121 1968; Hearn & Parkin, 2001).

122 **2.1 The Post-Modern Military Era**

123 Military organizations have undergone change over time and opened up to the
124 external world: After the end of the Cold War, the former mass armies in industri-
125 alized countries became smaller (Carreiras, 2006). For example, in the German
126 Armed Forces, the troop strength was reduced by 60% in the last 25 years—from
127 approximately 465,000 to 180,000 soldiers. By 2016, the US army had 475,000
128 soldiers on active duty and about 548,000 as reserve soldiers who can be called into
129 duty. This total number is the lowest level since before the Second World War (Tice,
130 2016). In this so-called *post-modern military era* (Moskos, Williams, & Segal,
131 2000), ties with the nation state loosen and volunteer missions such as deployment
132 on foreign military engagements as well as on different peacekeeping/peace-making
133 missions increased (Carreiras, 2006, cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014).
134 Also, the art of combat and warfare changed: The miniaturization of weapons as well
135 as the increase in airpower and nuclear weapons reduced the need of individual
136 physical strength (Segal, 1995). Due to these changes, the need for support personnel
137 increased and many soldiers became specialized in civilian tasks like information
138 technology or communications, engaged in different missions on short-term con-
139 tracts and became less affiliated to only one military unit (Gabbert, 2007; Segal,
140 1995). With the new assignments, also the interaction with civil society increased
141 (cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014; Nuciari, 2006; Segal, 1995).

142 All these changes were also believed to change military culture and the profes-
143 sional ideals of the soldiers (Moskos et al., as cited in Carreiras, 2006; Segal, 1995;
144 Soeters, Winslow, & Weibull, 2006). However, empirical research shows that among
145 soldiers, a so-called “institutional orientation” is more prevalent than in “normal”

146 business organizations (Soeters, 1997; cf. Soeters, Winslow, & Weibull, 2006).
147 Institutional orientation implies a focus on communal life and internal career tracks,
148 an elevated level of intrinsic motivation and role commitment—e.g. to serve the state
149 or the king/queen, or to save civilians in life-threatening situations (Soeters, Winslow,
150 & Weibull, 2006; cf. Zedlacher, 2013). Military researchers suggest that especially in
151 labour-intensive support units, combat units, elite academies and at senior command
152 levels, we are most likely to observe the characteristics and rituals of closed total
153 institutions and a high institutional orientation. In support-oriented functions like
154 logistics, medical care and transportation the interaction with civil society is high,
155 and the culture will be similar to “normal” business cultures (Carreiras, 2006;
156 Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014; Soeters, Winslow, & Weibull, 2006).

157 Another influence on the social structure of post-modern military organizations is
158 the respective civil-military relationship and the political situation of a country
159 (Segal, 1995). Generally speaking, political and societal influence on the Western
160 postmodern military is increasing: This is visible, for example, through plebiscites
161 on conscription versus professional, all-volunteer armies (Nuciari, 2006). In view of
162 the new tasks for soldiers and the very different political and military situation in
163 many countries, the primary goals of national armies today are diverse. These goals
164 range from helping civilians, natural disaster management and border patrolling to
165 ensuring peace and/or preparing for and conducting war (Dandeker & Gow, 1999).
166 However, there is still an overarching military culture (cf. Soeters, Winslow, &
167 Weibull, 2006): All military organizations prepare for life-threatening situations
168 and have the mandate to execute violence to protect civilians (Basham, 2009;
169 Nuciari, 2006). National armies often follow the ideal of a *Prussian Corps* including
170 rigid structures and high discipline (Ben-Ari & Elron, 2001, in Tomforde, 2010,
171 p. 200). Basis trainings and socialization into the military life are important in all
172 military organizations (Tomforde, 2010). Even within peacekeeping armies, military
173 training focuses essentially on preparation for a combat emergency, i.e. high-
174 intensity fighting (Basham, 2009; Dandeker & Gow, 1999; Koeszegi, Zedlacher,
175 & Hudribusch, 2014; Zedlacher, 2013). Tomforde (2010) found in her analysis of the
176 German Armed Forces, that within *multinational* deployments like the NATO-led
177 *Kosovo Force (KFOR)*, identification with the own national army often increases.
178 However, regulations and symbols of the traditional military culture like uniforms,
179 ceremonies and specific vocabulary are often adapted or less rigidly applied.

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180 **2.2 Women, Ethnic Minorities and LGBTQ in the Military Then** 181 **and Now**

182 Women, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and
183 queer people) have held an exposed minority status in national armies worldwide
184 throughout history. In pre-modern times, women were officially excluded from
185 military institutions. This was because sexuality and emotions were ascribed to
186 women as a defining attribute; the inclusion of a female body and the increase of
187 individual sexual desires would thus threaten the collective organizational interest

188 and soldiers' discipline (Burrell, 1992; Gabbert, 2007; cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, &
189 Hudribusch, 2014). Paradoxically, while the expression of sexuality and femininity
190 have been tabooed and feared, the closed nature of total institutions increases the risk
191 of (homo)sexual relationship between inmates (cf. Rastetter, 1999; Zedlacher, 2013).
192 While soldiers should work together closely, overt homoerotic behaviour is not
193 tolerated (e.g. Winslow, 1999).

194 The situation of minority nationals in armies is also shaped by the changes in
195 warfare and the socio-political situation of a country. Throughout history, women
196 have unofficially participated in warfare and have often served as reserve soldiers in
197 many national armies (for an overview see Segal, 1993). After the Cold War and
198 with the introduction of all-volunteer armies and the need for more support person-
199 nel, official participation of women in national armies increased (Segal, 1995;
200 Sinclair, 2009). For example, the German Armed Forces opened all ranks to female
201 soldiers in 2001. In 2011 an all-volunteer army was introduced. Since 2001 their
202 share rose from 1.5% to 12.8%, i.e. roughly 20,000 female soldiers in 2016 ("Frauen
203 in der Bundeswehr", 2017). As of 2015, the rate of active female duty members in all
204 NATO-member and partner countries is approximately 10.8% (NATO-summary of
205 the national reports, 2015). Only in Latvia, New Zealand, Australia and the US is the
206 proportion of female soldiers slightly higher than 15% (NATO summary, 2015).
207 Most female soldiers work in support and medical functions. An examination of
208 national armies of large nations depicts the high horizontal gender segregation. For
209 example, women make up roughly 35% of all medical personnel in the German
210 Armed Forces, whereas in the Army, Air Force and Navy the share of female soldiers
211 is only approximately 7.2% ("So weiblich ist die Bundeswehr", 2016). In the Israeli
212 Defence Forces with conscription service for men and women, only 5.7% of combat
213 positions were occupied by women by 2016. About 10% of military jobs—among
214 them submarine positions—are still closed to women ("By the numbers", 2017).
215 Also in the all-volunteer US army, close combat positions had been closed to women
216 until 2016 when the Obama administration allowed female soldiers to serve in
217 infantry, armour, field artillery and Special Forces (Kimmons, 2016).

218 Comparable to the situation of women, restricting, barring or discharging homo-
219 sexuals and ethnic minorities from service has also been dependent on the respective
220 need of personnel for warfare (Sinclair, 2009). For example, non-whites had only
221 restricted access to the British military up to the 1970s. Until the year 2000 "sexual
222 minorities" were routinely prohibited from service (Basham, 2009). In the US,
223 especially during the Second World War homosexuality was viewed as a mental
224 illness; psychiatric screening procedures with background checks determined if the
225 recruit was homosexual, and, thus, unfit for service (Sinclair, 2009). After the
226 Second World War homosexuals were officially banned from the US military.
227 President Clinton introduced the *Don't ask, don't tell* policy in 1992 to grant official
228 participation to homosexuals in the military by interdicting disclosing or asking
229 about their sexual orientation. This policy was abolished in 2011. In general,
230 political pressures for the inclusion of LGBTQ people increased in the last decades
231 (cf. Nuciari, 2006; Sinclair, 2009). For example, during the Obama administration,

232 the ban against the participation of transgender individuals in the US military was
233 repealed. However, in 2017, President Trump directed the military not to move
234 forwards with the plan (Diamond, 2017).

235 Summing up, the socio-political situation of a country impacts the core tasks of
236 the military and the integration of minorities. However, despite national differences,
237 military organizations worldwide still share common characteristics due to the
238 ongoing salience of combat-readiness. In the following literature review we focus
239 on three related characteristics, which taken together we deem most relevant for the
240 normalization of bullying and harassment in a military environment: Hierarchical
241 and bureaucratic structures, harsh socialization processes and training rituals, and
242 hypermasculine values in subunits.

243 **3 Structural and Cultural Risk Factors for Workplace Bullying** 244 **and Harassment in Military Organizations**

245 **3.1 Misuse of Hierarchical and Bureaucratical Structures**

246 Military systems worldwide reflect features, which Max Weber associated with ideal
247 bureaucracies: Overall, they have a strict top-down chain of command with one
248 single authority, written pre-defined procedures, rules and clear control mechanisms
249 (Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014; Zedlacher, 2013). Soldiers of one cohort
250 are subject to the same tasks and performance criteria. Excessive rules and regula-
251 tions foster self-control and conformity (cf. Davies, 1989). These structural charac-
252 teristics should create a disciplined and homogeneous unit, which will operate
253 effectively in warfare (cf. Titunik, 2000). Moreover, there is a clear formal and
254 informal power distance between the different ranks or service grades. Uniforms
255 display the differences to the outside world and the differences within the ranks.
256 Usually military careers and pay levels are fixed and embedded in a clear system of
257 service grades. To reach a higher service grade and thus, pay, specific formal
258 qualifications for each position must be obtained. However, as Weber noted, such
259 bureaucratic features and the communal character of the military stand in contrast to
260 the wish of single individuals to stand out as war heroes (Titunik, 2000; cf. Koeszegi,
261 Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014).

262 Empirical research shows that formal power as well as bureaucratic rules and
263 procedures are often misused. For example, Kimmel (2000) revealed that supervi-
264 sors and second-year cadets in the US Virginia military institute used seemingly
265 random and unnecessary orders for subordination of the freshmen. Pershing (2001,
266 2002, 2003, 2006) observed organizational misconduct at the elite US Naval acad-
267 emy, where midshipmen are trained to become Naval officers after graduation. Most
268 midshipmen reported unrealistic time constraints, close monitoring and excessively
269 regulated schedules imposed by supervisors, as the following quote demonstrates:

270 We were issued book bags to carry to classes because we had to carry all our books to classes
271 every day. I had to walk about a quarter of a mile to class, so I used the shoulder strap that

272 was attached to the bag. However, it was against the regulations to walk using our shoulder
273 straps because it looks unprofessional. I can't tell you how many times I was stopped by
274 officers who asked: 'What are you doing using these shoulder straps. Don't you know it's
275 against the regulations? You're here to obey orders. It's in the rules.' Technically I would
276 have been fined (charged with a violation), and lost 10 days of liberty (permission to leave
277 the Academy grounds). (graduate of US Naval academy, as cited in Pershing, 2002, p. 163)

278 Especially in non-operational times and on peacekeeping missions, a very
279 formalistic organizational design can be perceived as dysfunctional and coercive
280 (Archer, 1999; Soeters, Winslow, & Weibull, 2006). In such situations, lack of
281 opportunity to demonstrate strength, skill and dominance, or dissatisfaction with
282 seemingly meaningless role assignments and monitoring can increase frustration and
283 aggression among soldiers (Archer, 1999; cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch,
284 2014; Zedlacher, 2013).

285 Hierarchical structures promote the striving of individuals to gain power over
286 their subordinates. In (tall) hierarchies, the exercise of power and control, and the
287 associated feelings of dominance and subordination, become routine and normalized
288 (Hearn & Parkin, 2001; Robinson, 1994). Hierarchical structures can induce the
289 so-called *moral disentanglement*, i.e. cognitive processes, which make members act
290 unethically without feeling distress (Moore, Detert, Trevino, Baker, & Mayer, 2012).
291 For example, members may displace the responsibility for their actions to authority
292 figures or to the peers who have tacitly or explicitly granted permission for the
293 behaviour (Moore, Detert, Trevino, Baker, & Mayer, 2012). Vice versa having many
294 hierarchical levels in an organization makes the management prone to be strategi-
295 cally ignorant to bullying and harassment in subunits (cf. Ashforth & Anand, 2003).
296 Moreover, being a member of an organization, department, workgroup or function
297 automatically creates and fosters insider and outsider status (Moore, Detert, Trevino,
298 Baker, & Mayer, 2012).

299 In total institutions like the military the consequences of such an organizational
300 structure are more pronounced. While cadets lack a personal life, and lead an
301 "enclosed formally administered round of life" (Goffman, 1968, as cited in Davies,
302 1989, p. 11), staff members can punish them by using diverse types of sanctions for
303 whatever staff deems *deviant* behaviour. As a form of *nonjudicial punishment*,
304 supervisors can even imprison soldiers. Such discretionary powers of staff members
305 can be a breeding ground for workplace bullying and harassment. Likewise, super-
306 visors can grant rewards and privilege to individual soldiers for obedience and
307 discipline, e.g. by allowing them to break the curfew. By doing so, staff recognizes
308 and fosters adherence to military values (cf. Davies, 1989; Zedlacher, 2013).

309 **3.2 Socialization Processes and Training Rituals in the Unit**

310 Values and norms of a military culture and taught to new members during their first
311 days and months in the military or a new unit. In this socialization phase, recruits'
312 personal life is heavily restricted in order to crush their old identities and to

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313 indoctrinate the new military values (cf. King, 2006; Morris, 1991). Also, recruits
314 learn that they must *earn* their status as soldiers. For entry in elite units, individuals
315 undergo severe physical and psychological admission tests and training phases
316 (e.g. Kimmel, 2000; Pershing, 2002). This usually happens in a company of a
317 large batch with one authority (Davies, 1989). The application of violence and
318 harassment during military training and fitness is regarded as instrumental in
319 non-operational times as a preparation for dehumanizing the enemy. Lukowiak
320 (2000) provides an account of outdoor training for entry into the *Parachute Regi-*
321 *ment* in the British Armed Forces.

322 If I had one major problem during basic training—that is, besides the physical exercise and
323 the weather conditions and the food you could never get enough of and the lack of sleep and
324 the mornings before dawn and the late nights, oh, and the drill and the discipline and the
325 constant cleaning and scrubbing, not to mention the persistent shouting—then I guess it was
326 my aggression. Or should I say my lack of it? If I was to become one of our nation's elite
327 killers, then this was obviously something they were going to have to change in me, and
328 change it they did. (Lukowiak, 2000, as cited in Woodward, 2003, p. 48)

329 The soldier further recounts being bullied by his supervisor during a long march
330 in a chilly morning, pushed into a canal and laughed at. But he, enraged and full of
331 aggression, managed to get back to the barrack. There he was applauded by the
332 supervisor, and, now proud, he eventually felt belonging (Lukowiak, 2000; in
333 Woodward, 2003, pp. 48–49).

334 However, while soldiers need to strive for individual (physical) dominance,
335 emotional control and endurance, they must at the same time learn to protect the
336 fellow soldier and regulate physical aggression; be selfless, trustworthy and loyal
337 (cf. Johnson, 1990). Even after the Cold War, these features of *social cohesion*
338 between peers and between supervisors and peers were regarded as essential for
339 military effectiveness and combat morale. Social cohesion has been considered a
340 prerequisite for *task cohesion*, i.e. cohesion achieved through a common goal and
341 coordination of efforts (cf. Basham, 2009; MacCoun, Kier, & Belkin, 2005, Nuciari,
342 2006; Siebold, 2007). Women, ethnic minorities and homosexuals have been banned
343 from military service mainly on the grounds of social cohesion. They were consid-
344 ered a threat to the homogeneity and combat morale of military units—and conse-
345 quently, heterosexuality was equalled with operational effectiveness, regardless of
346 actual ability (Basham, 2008).

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347 Social cohesion, or *male bonding*, is learned behaviour. To foster the separation
348 from civilian values, recruits are taught values like honour, duty, assertiveness and
349 fairness (e.g. Franke, 2000; Winslow, 1999). Especially *honour* is a recurring theme
350 and often referred to official brochures, speeches and programmes (e.g. Cotter, 2016,
351 McCoy, 1995). McCoy (1995) showed in his analysis of hazing in the *Philippine*
352 *Military Academy*, that the term *honour* is often used by officers and supervisors to
353 indoctrinate or reaffirm values like subordination, control and machismo.

354 Those members, who are either new and must prove themselves, or who are not fit
355 enough and do not conform, are denigrated and punished.

356 They teach you about comradeship and sticking together and stuff; and suddenly they tell
357 you in preparation class (for military academy) that if one lies on the ground, then let him
358 lie there. We said, we need to go there, I mean I can't (...) 'No, leave him there, he's
359 just too weak.' Like this it went all the time (...). (Fanny, Austrian Soldier, as cited in
360 Zedlacher, 2013, p. 170; translated by authors)

361 Hazing rituals by supervisors and peers are common in socialization processes. In
362 the *Bahia Military Police Academy* in Brazil, aggressive physical behaviours and AU9
363 also embarrassing tasks like having to eat the dessert before the main plate with the
364 mouths wide open are an institutionalized part of the first week (Albuquerque &
365 Paes-Machado, 2004). Another example is the *Canadian Airborne Regiment*, where
366 group cohesion is considered especially important because members must rely on
367 each other for the appropriate preparation of their equipment before the jump
368 (Winslow, 1999). All soldiers participate in a formal initiation program, where
369 they are indoctrinated into a sense of duty and history of the Canadian Airborne
370 and undergo an intensive training program. When they are finally granted group
371 membership, they receive a coin denoting their new status. Apart from that, there is
372 also an informal initiation rite. In the so-called separation phase, new soldiers are
373 first denigrated and levelled by seniors, i.e. they are all made look alike (e.g. by
374 shaving their heads, having them dig through the mud, by covering black soldiers in
375 white powder), while the seniors stay clean (Winslow, 1999). This phase teaches
376 recruits that before they can rise, they must separate from their old identities and
377 become just like everyone else (Albuquerque & Paes-Machado, 2004). Afterwards
378 they are forced to stand in a row and urinate or vomit on a piece of bread, which they
379 then must chew. In this "liminal phase" they are not yet part of the airborne, but also
380 no more civilians. In this stage, established social norms and taboos are often
381 suspended and behaviours like ridiculing the only black soldier or performing
382 homoerotic dances are performed. Finally, in the re-integration phase life scenarios
383 of airborne soldiers are tested among recruits. For example, they must jump from a
384 table blindfolded. Hereby they learn to do whatever their superiors tell them to do
385 (Winslow, 1999). The recruits who go through these rituals often do not find them
386 harmful, but are proud to have demonstrated self-regulation and physical endurance
387 (Albuquerque & Paes-Machado, 2004; Winslow, 1999). It appears that the more
388 severe the initiation rituals are, the stronger the eventual devotion to the group is
389 (Winslow, 1999). Public denigration of outsiders and those who show weakness
390 reconfirms military values, increases the desire to belong to the exclusive in-group,
391 or rather, the fear of belonging to the out-group. Hence, staff members often tolerate
392 or even promote such group rituals, since they are regarded as functional for military
393 effectiveness and cohesion (Zedlacher, 2013).

394 The harsh training methods, monitoring experiences and rituals foster peer loyalty
395 and the notion of "companions in fate" (e.g. King, 2006; Pershing, 2001;
396 cf. Zedlacher, 2013). Alcohol is a crucial tool for male bonding and is also viewed
397 as a means to relax after intensive training and surveillance in national armies:

398 After a week's work, we get together and have a beer call. That's where we can really talk,
399 we always have something to say to one another. It's a place where we can really relax,
400 because no matter how you look at it, the friction builds up in this work. Here, we can say
401 anything and not worry about who's listening, we don't have to be in uniform, that's good.
402 (Canadian Airborne soldier, as cited in Winslow, 1999, p. 438)

403 Social cohesion has been found to be the result of such stern socialization
404 processes as described above rather than naturally developed in elite military units
405 (King, 2006). Several studies of a variety of national armies show that task cohesion
406 is also positively related to military performance, but social cohesion is not
407 (MacCoun, Kier, & Belkinn, 2005; Kier, 1998; King, 2006).

408 There are costs to such intense cohesion when too close bonds in a subculture or
409 unit outweigh organizational goals. For example, Pershing's (2002) study of the US
410 naval academy found that midshipmen share a tight bond because of exposure to
411 excessive monitoring and regulations. An informal code of silence forbids them
412 to report severe predatory bullying of their peers, despite the official duty for all navy
413 men to report violations of honour (Pershing, 2002; cf. Zedlacher, 2013). Those who
414 exert the official rules too wilfully are regarded as connivers and "honor-nazis"
415 (Pershing, 2002). In highly cohesive groups, peers would ignore or deny even severe
416 misconduct to not to betray the fellow soldier (cf. Winslow, 1999). Thus, peer
417 challenge of aggressive practices and treatment is neutralized.

418 **3.3 Predominance of (Hyper-)Masculine Values**

419 For centuries, military organizations have been male-only societies. Violence, war-
420 fare and guns have been associated with men, whereas women have mostly been
421 portrayed as the weak victim or as war trophy, which can be violated (cf. Baaz &
422 Stern, 2009; Zedlacher, 2013). Female soldiers who engage in violent behaviours
423 generate substantial public interest (for example in the torture scandal in Abu Graib)
424 as they violate traditional gender roles (cf. Gabbert, 2007). Also, homosexuals have
425 been described as "effeminate" and as potential risk for security (cf. Sinclair, 2009).

426 To understand the effect of masculinity on systemic (sexual) violence in the
427 military, the concept of *hegemonic masculinity* is useful. This term denotes the
428 normative embodiment of the ideal man (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It points
429 to the (white) male, heterosexual dominance, which is implicitly considered legiti-
430 mate in most societal and organizational contexts. The concept works through the
431 distinction from women and femininity, and the constant competition between men
432 over "manhood" (cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014). The persistent
433 ideal image of a male soldier reflects this hegemonic masculinity and is associated
434 with a strong physical body through (self-) discipline and endurance, capable of
435 exerting physical dominance and sexual violence. The male penis functions not
436 (only) as instrument of sexual desire, but also represents hegemonial masculine
437 power. The war customs of raping female captives, severing or publicly displaying
438 the penis of enemies, or teasing and forcing lower ranked soldiers to touch one's

439 penis are a way to exerting control over someone's body and to prove the other's lack
440 of (male) power (Kwon, Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2007; Raasch, 2004).

441 The hegemony of masculine values and the control of the soldiers' bodies are
442 inscribed into the organization of military systems. Admission and promotion
443 criteria in national armies are still highly related to physical performance
444 (cf. Cnossen, 1999)—despite a new, less physically oriented art of warfare. Many
445 armies have introduced gender-normed physical training standards with lower
446 admission criteria for women (cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014). This
447 has been highly disputed, since through such a distinction the salience of physical
448 fitness is re-emphasized and cements the hierarchical gender order in the military
449 (Apelt, Dittmer, & Mangold, 2005). If physical fitness is considered as essential for
450 combat effectiveness, women who underwent easier performance tests are very
451 likely not to be regarded as equal fellows and trustworthy comrades (cf. Cohn,
452 2000; Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014). Feelings of injustice, alleged
453 female privilege and threats to operational effectiveness and prestige are triggers
454 for male backlash and aggression against female soldiers (Zedlacher, 2013). This is
455 demonstrated by a quote from a male officer of the Austrian Armed Forces, who
456 recounts a special treatment of women in training and routine marches:

457 Well, they were attended to (...) they did not have to carry so much, rather the load was
458 distributed among men; and then there was the topic of the different sports limits. 'Why is
459 she allowed to run less kilometres than me?' And that led to a bad tension right away (...).
460 (Josef, male officer in the Austrian Armed Forces, as cited in Zedlacher, 2013, p. 171 f.
461 translated by authors)

462 Several well-known military rituals are highly gendered. For example, hazing
463 rituals as described before are also masculinity tests. Those who fail receive nick-
464 names such as "wimp", "wussy", "skirt" or "pussy" (e.g. Cohn, 1993; Kimmel,
465 2000), since failure is equated with femininity or homosexuality. Also, punishment
466 duties like kitchen service or cleaning are stereotypically female tasks. Soldiers also
467 show that they are manlier than others by demonstrating drinking skills, physical
468 fitness, technological expertise and exclusion of others (e.g. Cohn, 1993; Higate,
469 2003; King, 2006; Winslow, 1999). In interviews with male soldiers, Green, Emslie,
470 O'Neill, Hunt and Walker (2010) found that the need to suppress emotions and hide
471 weakness fosters work-related distress. Soldiers buffer distress through homophile
472 tight bonds and friendships in the military, however at the same time they risk being
473 ridiculed as homosexuals.

474 Especially in traditionally male-dominated and highly cohesive subunits, the
475 so-called hypermasculine behaviour, i.e. exaggerated masculinity concomitant
476 with bragging about sexual experiences and even dehumanization, violation and
477 sexual objectification of women, can develop (for empirical evidence see e.g. Rosen,
478 Knudson, & Fancher, 2003). Hypermasculinity may involve sexual assaults
479 because of a feeling of entitlement to regular sex. Women soldiers have been
480 found to feel forced to engage in sexual relationships with their male colleagues

481 (Castro, Kintzle, Schuyler, Lucas, & Warner, 2015). The strong bonds between male
482 soldiers in a male-only unit makes them prone to induce, perpetuate and cover up
483 violence and even rape against women (cf. Castro, Kintzle, Schuyler, Lucas, &
484 Warner, 2015; Harrison, 2003; Kwon, Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2007; Morris, 1996). Very
485 often severe alcohol abuse plays a key role in assaults against female soldiers
486 (Castro, Kintzle, Schuyler, Lucas, & Warner, 2015). Also, male-to-male violence
487 is condoned in such settings, as Kwon, Lee, Kim, & Kim, (2007) reveal in a study
488 from the South Korean Army: Physical violence and sexualized behaviours like
489 forced hugging or touching the penises of recruits often occur in public. Male
490 perpetrators, who usually contest homosexual desires, concede that these behaviours
491 are a means to control the body of subordinates and reaffirm the hierarchical order
492 (Kwon, Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2007).

493 Female soldiers in male-dominated branches are highly visible and thus at risk to
494 be stereotyped. Therefore, they often assimilate into the existing (hyper-)masculine
495 culture and are likely to strive for high physical fitness and assertiveness to be
496 regarded a full member of the group (e.g. Cnossen, 1999; Zedlacher, 2013). King
497 (2006) found that women in the British Army are only accepted as fellow soldiers,
498 when they participate in drinking rituals and severe alcohol abuse. Similarly, a recent
499 study from the South African army reveals that female soldiers feel they must “hide”
500 their femininity and sexuality and are not respected in the army as much as male
501 soldiers (Heinecken, 2016). A Russian soldier describes the pressure like this:

502 In order to show what you're capable of, that you are suitable, that you are no worse than
503 your competitor, a woman has to invest much more. But not by charming the supervisor, but
504 through work related issues or skills (. . .). (Russian female soldier in Eifler, 2001, p. 128,
505 translated by authors)

506 Often, women who occupy masculine functions in male-dominated combat-
507 related units and academies tell misogynistic jokes or discriminate against other
508 “weaker” women to prove that they are loyal to the male group and equal to their
509 male peers (e.g. Sasson-Levy, 2003). These coping strategies do not challenge the
510 overall masculine culture of the army. At the same time, female soldiers risk being
511 denigrated because of a masculine demeanour. For example, in the US army, a make-
512 up requirement was imposed on female soldiers (Williams, 2006). In the Russian
513 military, beauty contests of female soldiers reconfirm gender stereotypes and put
514 women in sexualized positions (Eifler, 2001). Balancing these contradictory gender
515 expectations proves a dilemma for female soldiers and a constant, often unconscious
516 stressor at work.

517 To sum up, organizational characteristics like rigid chain of commands, social
518 cohesion and training for physical dominance have been considered functional for
519 military performance in wartime and combat, and have thus become institutional-
520 ized. Each of the features essentially builds on the claim that *homogeneity* is crucial
521 for performance. Consequently, (violent) exclusion of “weaker” members and
522 minorities is condoned or even promoted.

523 **4 Prevalence Studies of Workplace Bullying and Harassment** 524 **in Military Organizations**

525 **4.1 Workplace Bullying in National Armies**

526 Workplace bullying is often characterized by subtle, covert negative actions (e.g.
527 withholding information, spreading rumours behind one's back, etc.). If these
528 behaviours are repeated over time, they make targets feel increasingly powerless
529 and unable to defend. Exposure to bullying is considered slightly higher for women
530 than for men (Zapf, Escartin, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2011). However, women tend
531 to rate many bullying behaviours as more severe than men, and they often feel
532 more harmed by social exclusion and manipulation (Escartin, Salin, & Rodriguez-
533 Caballeira, 2013; Salin, 2003; cf. Zedlacher, 2013).

AU10

534 In the European tradition, two types of workplace bullying are distinguished.
535 *Dispute-related bullying* is a result of a normal work conflict that escalates because
536 of tit-for-tat actions by both conflict parties. However, Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and
537 Cooper (2011) contend that within male-dominated organizations such as the mili-
538 tary, *predatory bullying* is common. Predatory bullying denotes a form of bullying
539 where the reason or trigger for escalation is not an unsolved interpersonal conflict or
540 a provocation, but rather the mechanisms described before. Here bullying serves as a
541 mechanism to socialize into or to sanction the violation of a hypermasculine military
542 culture (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011; cf. Zedlacher, 2013).

AU11

543 This conceptualization suggests that predatory bullying is a (group) phenomenon
544 of its own and more related to the original definition of *mobbing* as social exclusion
545 of a single *deviant* co-worker. Predatory bullying also overlaps with hazing, since
546 public denigration is usually characteristic for hazing rituals. However, bullying and
547 hazing are—theoretically—distinct phenomena: Hazing implies that a cohort mis-
548 treats another cohort, e.g. the new members (cf. Ostvik & Rudmin, 2001), even if the
549 ritual is only performed against one member. The feeling of being singled-out is
550 pervasive in bullying cases and contributes to the feeling of victimization. In
551 contrast, hazing eventually increases social identification with the group. Moreover,
552 hazing is ritualistic, i.e. the same behaviours are performed to newcomers with minor
553 change, while bullying usually has no predefined procedure and end (Ostvik &
554 Rudmin, 2001). Bullying research is characterized by placing the experiences of
555 bullying targets central (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011). Therefore, the
556 question arises if and why empirically targets of bullying *perceive* a difference
557 between hazing rituals and workplace bullying. Ostvik & Rudmin (2001) find that
558 soldiers, who are asked about their experiences with bullying, often confound
559 bullying with hazing. A study of bullying during socialization within UK police
560 forces shows that new members perceive the experienced bullying acts as a “harm-
561 less” ritual, if, and only if they have eventually made it into the group (Miller &
562 Rayner, 2012).

563 The literature review suggests that collective predatory bullying dynamics is
564 especially prevalent in elite academies and combat-oriented units (e.g. Ostvik &
565 Rudmin, 2001; Pershing, 2003, 2006; Winslow, 1999). Ostvik & Rudmin (2001) cite

566 various severe incidences of public hazing (in the Philippines, the former Czecho-
567 slovakian Republic, etc.), which sometimes result in death or suicide. In 2006, a
568 young recruit in the Russian army lost his arms and legs from a collective hazing
569 ritual. He was beaten, tied between the two chairs and made to squat. The Russian
570 army tried to hide the scandal, before it became public. Then the case was treated as a
571 single unfortunate exception (Lowry, 2008). In 2011, the Australia Armed Forces
572 announced an external review of allegations of abuse (“Report on Abuse in
573 Defence”, 2014). In the so-called “Piper Report” an external law firm collected
574 more than 2240 allegations, which have occurred during the last decades. Almost
575 half of incidences were about physical abuse, but between 2000 and 2011
576 reports of covert bullying behaviours have also increased (“Report on Abuse in
577 Defence”, 2014).

578 Few studies of military organizations measure the distinct phenomenon of work-
579 place bullying with established instruments. A rate of 3–4% of severe bullying,
580 i.e. long-term exposure to bullying at a weekly basis or more, is considered average
581 in European organizations (Zapf, Escartin, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2011). In the
582 study on bullying and hazing in the Norwegian army ($n = 696$), the bullying rate was
583 12% (Ostvik & Rudmin, 2001). However, exposure to bullying was measured only
584 with a self-labelling method (“Have you been bullied”) without a definition of
585 bullying. As such, bullying might even be underreported, since identifying oneself
586 as a victim is hardly desirable within this organizational context of the military. Fifty-
587 three percent of respondents reported witnessing bullying in the Norwegian army.
588 Respondents are exposed to a variety of bullying behaviours, including both phys-
589 ical and psychological assaults, person- and work-related bullying. Young soldiers
590 were more likely to report having been bullied. Mageroy, Lau, Riise and Moen
591 (2009) measured bullying in 97 Norwegian Navy departments ($n = 1604$) with a
592 self-labelling method including definition. Two and half percent of respondents
593 reported being bullied and 9% witnessed bullying. The results also indicate that
594 a lack of fair leadership, innovative climate and unfair treatment as well as a low
595 mean age accounted for the occurrence of bullying at the departmental level.

596 Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch’s, (2014) study of different units of the
597 Austrian Armed Forces also found a higher risk for younger soldiers and a rate of
598 6.5% of severe bullying measured with the *Leymann Inventory of Psychological*
599 *Terror* (LIPT; Leymann, 1996). All reported bullying cases were collective phenom-
600 ena with at least two perpetrators, which points to predatory bullying/mobbing.
601 Academies and schools as training centres were highly affected by incidents of
602 severe bullying, followed by combat units and, to a much lesser degree, support-
603 units. Moreover, women were 2.5 times more likely to experience severe bullying
604 acts than male soldiers. Male soldiers and female victims of bullying have been
605 found to be more likely to conduct aggressive acts against female soldiers (Koeszegi,
606 Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014; Zedlacher, 2013). In contrast to the propositions of
607 predatory bullying (cf. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011), most of the reported
608 bullying behaviours ($n = 254$) were not overt and not physical (e.g. “Innuendos
609 without direct communication”, “assignment of meaningless tasks”, “spreading
610 rumours” and “constant criticism of one’s work”). The least cited acts were

611 “violent threats and violence”. Few incidences of sexual harassment and only one
612 sexual assault were reported (cf. Zedlacher, 2013).

613 4.2 Sexual Harassment and Assaults in National Armies

614 You all know that we are looking at allegations that Marines, specifically female Marines,
615 have been subjected to cyberbullying and non-consensual sharing of images, disrespectful
616 comments made about them presumably by other marines. These allegations are in contrast
617 to everything we stand for as Marine corps, as Marines; discipline, honour, professionalism,
618 and respect and trust amongst each other; for those Marines that are watching this or
619 listening or who may have been involved in this: (. . .), you are not helping the marine
620 corps. (. . .) you know that we claim that being a Marine is a special title and something that
621 you earn (. . .). that there is no honour in denigrating a fellow Marine in a way, shape or form.
622 (Marines General Robert Nueller at a press conference, cf. Starr & Almasy, 2017)

623 Schneider, Pryor and Fitzgerald (2011) distinguish between two forms of sexual
624 harassment: (1) Unwelcome sex- or gender-related behaviour that creates a hostile
625 work environment (unwanted attention like uninvited requests for dates, secret
626 filming, gender harassment like misogynistic jokes) and (2) *Quid pro Quo* harass-
627 ment, i.e. promising employing benefits depending on sexual favours. *Sexual assault*
628 denotes unwanted sexual contact and can range from touching and attempts to
629 commit a sexual action to rape (Castro, Kintzle, Schuyler, Lucas, & Warner, 2015;
630 Cotter, 2016; Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014). *Gender discrimination* refers to
631 incidences in which a person is unequally treated based on his/her gender category
632 membership in a manner that affects his/her employment conditions (Morral, Gore,
633 & Schell, 2014).

634 While workplace bullying is often (falsely) characterized as gender-neutral,
635 sexual misconduct carries a clear gender component (cf. Zedlacher, 2013). Like
636 workplace bullying, women tend to perceive a broader range of sexual behaviours as
637 harassing than men (Rotundo, Nguyen, & Sackett, 2001). While sexual harassment
638 can be constituted by one act, measurement usually considers the type/severity
639 of behaviour and whether the behaviour occurred repeatedly (e.g. Morral, Gore,
640 & Schell, 2014).

641 Sexual misconduct is more frequently surveyed in (western) military organiza-
642 tions than workplace bullying. Especially in the US, many surveys and reviews on
643 the relationship between military culture, environmental factors and health correlates
644 exist (e.g. Sadler, Booth, Cook, & Doebbeling, 2003; Turchik & Wilson, 2010, to
645 name just a few). Often studies from the (US) military are restricted to one group
646 of soldiers, e.g. reservists (e.g. Firestone & Harris, 2009; Street, Stafford, Mahan,
647 & Hendricks, 2008). Also, we did not find representative studies on the prevalence
648 of harassment against LGBTQ people.

649 In the following we review recent large-scale studies from various national armies.
650 However, since terminology and measurement of negative sexual experiences in
651 military organizations is not consistent across studies, the comparison of results must
652 be treated with care. In the US, a large-scale study (n = 560,000) by the *National*

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653 *Defense Research Institute* (Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014) on sexual harassment,
654 assault and gender discrimination was conducted among active force members and
655 reservists. In the Canadian Armed Forces, a survey on *sexual misconduct* including
656 most of above behaviours was distributed among active force members in 2016
657 (n = 43.000).

658 Twenty-six percent of female and 7% of male active duty members of the US
659 Airforce, Army, Navy and Marines report having experienced sexual harassment or
660 gender discrimination in the prior year, more than half of them on a regular basis.
661 Most of the reports by female victims point to persistent, i.e. repeated exposure, and
662 do not point at sexual coercion, but to a (sexually) hostile work environment
663 (Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014): The most frequently reported behaviours were
664 sexual jokes, trying to establish romantic relationships, sexual comments about
665 one's appearance, suggesting that one does not act like a man/woman. In Canada,
666 17% of regular force members were exposed to sexual harassment or discrimination,
667 with women being twice as likely as men to report harassment (Cotter, 2016).
668 (Repeated) sexual jokes were also the most frequently reported form of harassment
669 in the Canadian survey, and Quid pro Quo harassment was considered rare in both
670 studies. Moreover, in both studies more than half of respondents reported that their
671 supervisor or unit leader was one of the people who engaged in the harassment
672 (Cotter, 2016; Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014).

673 Reports of sexual harassment and assaults in the US sample correlate with each
674 other, which confirm other studies (e.g. Harris, McDonald, & Sparks, 2017). The
675 rates for sexual assaults in US army were 1% for men and 4.9% for women, which is
676 very similar to the rates in the Canadian Armed Forces (1% for men, 4.8% for
677 women). In the US sample, male victims were often sexually assaulted by two or
678 more offenders at work. However, men more than women defined the experiences as
679 a means of hazing and denigration rather than behaviour with sexual intent (Morral,
680 Gore, & Schell, 2014). Assaults against female US soldiers were often related to
681 alcohol abuse. Significantly more assaults against women were reported in the US
682 Marine Corps and Navy than in other branches. The US Airforce disclosed low rates
683 of assaults. Junior enlisted members in the US army have the highest risk of sexual
684 harassment and assaults. Also in Canada, younger regular force members, especially
685 young female soldiers, reported more assaults and harassment (Cotter, 2016). Among
686 US reservists, rates of harassment and assaults against men and women were signif-
687 icantly lower than for active duty members (Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014).

688 A recent survey study of Harris, McDonald and Sparks (2017) among US soldiers
689 shows that a sexist environment (measured at the organizational level from an
690 independent sample) in a unit is related to exposure to sexual harassment and assault.
691 This points to the existence of sexist subcultures prone to the acceptance of even
692 severe violations. In this study, the experiences of harassment and assaults were
693 independent of race, gender or unit cohesion, but related to a general tolerance of
694 sexist comments in the department. In contrast, Buchanan, Settles and Woods'
695 (2008) study of 7000 female US soldiers found that white women reported higher
696 rates of gender harassment, and black women reported higher rates of unwanted
697 sexual attention and sexual coercion.

698 There is evidence of sexual harassment in other national armies. For example, in a
699 study in the Swedish military ($n = 324$), 84% of women reported experiencing
700 unwanted sex-related behaviours in the past 24 months (Estrada & Berggren, 2009).
701 This study revealed very different results, when women were asked directly
702 whether they were exposed to sexual harassment; in this case, “only” 31% reported
703 exposure. The “Piper Report” of the Australian Defence Forces reveals that 38% of
704 all 2240 cases received by the taskforce were about sexual abuse (“Report on Abuse
705 in Defence”, 2014). Typically, there was a single perpetrator and women were more
706 affected by the assaults. Also, qualitative studies of national armies, e.g. Russia and
707 Israel (Eifler, 2001; Sasson-Levy, 2003), show that female soldiers suffer from
708 misogynistic jokes, denigrating glances, but sometimes also from open sexual
709 assaults to reaffirm the traditional gender order.

710 To sum up, sexual harassment and assaults have been considered a major problem
711 in the military context and have—so far—received more research attention than
712 workplace bullying. For the US army, various scholars (e.g. Firestone & Harris,
713 2003; Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014) contend that overall, incidences of sexual
714 harassment have decreased over the last years. In-depth results indicate that the
715 awareness for the damaging effect of covert and private bullying behaviours has
716 increased. However, victims of both phenomena still face a culture of denial in
717 most national armies, which is the major obstacle for effective prevention and
718 intervention.

719 **5 Tackling Workplace Bullying and Harassment in Military** 720 **Organizations**

721 **5.1 Empirical Evidence on Reactions to Workplace Bullying**

722 In the representative study of the US military (Morral, Gore, & Schell, 2014), only
723 14% of victims of sexual assaults in the active component report to have filed an
724 official report. Of those who reported the problem to superiors, 41% were unsatisfied
725 with the actions taken. In the Canadian survey, 23% of victims of sexual assaults
726 reported the incidence to an authority, most often their military supervisor. Less than
727 7% reported their victimization to the military police or the *Canadian Forces*
728 *National Investigation Service* (Cotter, 2016). Moreover, only 5% of victims of
729 “less severe” forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. unwanted touching) reported the
730 misconduct. Thus, it can be assumed that there are high numbers of unreported
731 experiences of workplace bullying and sexual harassment. Reasons for not disclos-
732 ing sexual harassment and gender discrimination include trivialization, especially of
733 “minor” incidents, as well as worries about retaliation and stigma in a culture where
734 unit loyalty and endurance are regarded as essential and where commanders often
735 promote hypermasculine behaviour (cf. Firestone & Harris, 2003; Morral, Gore, &
736 Schell, 2014).

737 Related to this, the inertia of military systems prevents victims of harassment or
738 assaults from reporting their experiences. For example, in the South African Forces

739 only 26% of female victims of sexual harassment reported the incidents (Heineken,
740 2016). The reasons for not reporting were that victims felt no action would be taken
741 (17%), or that the complaint would take a long time to process (49%). These
742 obstacles for effective formal grievances have also been found in studies of sexual
743 harassment in the US and Canadian Defence Forces (e.g. Cotter, 2016; Firestone &
744 Harris, 2003; Pershing, 2003). In the review report from the Australian Defence
745 Forces, only one quarter of victims, who had filed a formal suit, were satisfied with
746 the official defence management by army officials (Rumble, McKean, & Pearce,
747 2011). If complaints are raised only informally and discussed off the record with the
748 supervisor, it is easier for management to keep the problem quiet. Moreover,
749 ignorance, trivialization or denial of the incidences can lead to feelings of “second-
750 ary victimization”, i.e. additional trauma for the victims of bullying and harassment
751 because they are not believed, ignored or blamed for what has happened.

752 Another challenge is the trivialization of “minor incidences” by the targets
753 themselves. The high value of endurance and the acceptance of a (sexually) hostile
754 environment might contribute to the normalization of sexual assaults in the unit.
755 Women as minority members might condone the assaults to not cause “gender
756 trouble” or be ridiculed as “hypersensitive”; they might even act aggressively against
757 other women who feel threatened by hostile comments (e.g. Koeszegi, Zedlacher,
758 & Hudribusch, 2014; Sasson-Levy, 2003). The study of sexual violence in the South
759 Korean Army showed that also men tend to trivialize the incidence (Kwon, Lee,
760 Kim, & Kim, 2007).

761 **5.2 Recommendations for Prevention and Intervention** 762 **in National Armies**

763 There are only few studies on the effectiveness of prevention and intervention tools
764 in military environments (e.g. Firestone & Harris, 2003). Therefore, we have
765 additionally interviewed practitioners from the Austrian Armed Forces about their
766 experiences and recommendations.

767 Our analysis suggests that, first and foremost, a profound change of cultural
768 values is needed to effectively reduce systematic bullying and harassment. Obsolete
769 beliefs about military effectiveness must be revised. Modern warfare, peace missions
770 and “civilian” functions require a broader range of skills than physical dominance
771 and high role-commitment. For example, soldiers engaging in peacekeeping mis-
772 sions need to possess stereotypically feminine skills like language and cross-cultural
773 skills as well as strategic thinking (cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014).
774 For soldiers on deployment in Kongo or Afghanistan, “culturally-sensitive” interac-
775 tion with civilians is crucial to receive information on planned terror attacks,
776 government opponents, etc. (cf. Tomforde, 2010). Female soldiers are crucial, not
777 least for interaction with female victims of violence. These new requirements for
778 soldiers need to be incorporated into admission and performance criteria. This
779 measure will over time potentially change the ideal image of soldiers and eventually
780 reduce hypermasculine dynamics and harassment against members perceived to be

781 weak by those standards. It can also attract more women to the military and increase
782 their acceptance since the new criteria carry less gender bias. Moreover, rather than
783 having gender-normed physical admission or training standard which undermine a
784 gender hierarchy, some national armies have levelled the standards for physical
785 performance for all genders (cf. Koeszegi, Zedlacher, & Hudribusch, 2014;
786 Zedlacher, 2013). However, downward-levelling might induce severe organizational
787 resistance since many soldiers will assume that operational performance and prestige
788 will decrease. As such, comprehensive information and communication is essential.
789 The US army has recently published “gender-neutral” fitness criteria for each of the
790 specific branches. Combat functions have the highest physical demands and fitness
791 criteria, whereas fitness limits for cyber functions are lower (Vergun, 2017).

792 Another persistent belief is the importance of social cohesion and male bonding.
793 Supervisors need to be made aware that there is no causal link between social
794 cohesion and military performance. Soldiers do not necessarily have to like each
795 and be alike to perform well. Apart from that, bonding often happens through
796 common stress and common experiences independent of race, gender and sexual
797 orientation (MacCoun, Kier, & Belkin, 2005). To foster cohesion, Albuquerque and
798 Paes-Machado (2004) recommend promoting positive celebrations and ceremonies
799 as a future substitute for institutionalized hazing rituals. In this context, leaders and
800 commanders need to be made aware, that the traditional affiliation to one small
801 military unit is still important in combat positions, but less so in peacekeeping
802 missions. These requirements for the post-modern military will potentially facilitate
803 the full inclusion of women and LGBTQ people. Rather than presuming a tension
804 between operational effectiveness and diversity, leaders and soldiers need to be made
805 aware and educated that it is harassment rather than a heterogeneous work force that
806 eventually destroys cohesion and productivity.

807 In Norway, where conscription for both men and women has been recently
808 introduced, soldiers sleep in mixed rooms and relationships are officially allowed.
809 While no evaluations of such measures exist at this point of time, we consider
810 tackling the tabooing of (homo)sexuality in Armed Forces as important for the
811 prevention of harassment and assaults. In this context, the sexist environment in
812 traditional branches and subunits needs to be tackled. In particular, subunits of
813 traditional military units and branches (e.g. the Navy) need to be monitored closely,
814 including the behaviour of the respective supervisor. Women or male members in
815 marginalized positions might feel harmed by specific “cultural” behaviours, but
816 might also fear that other members and organizational officials will not regard the
817 behaviours as harmful. This might be also true for collective ritualistic harassment
818 and hazing. To reduce fear of reporting, we therefore recommend including and
819 labelling hazing rituals as possible incidences of workplace bullying or harassment
820 and present them through *various* channels (e.g. brochures, policy papers and
821 websites). Practitioners of the Austrian Armed Forces claim that targets often
822 confound workplace bullying with negative performance evaluation or “normal”
823 conflicts. To create more awareness for the distinct features of workplace bullying,
824 examples and comparisons of bullying to “normal work situations” should be
825 described during leadership trainings as well as in all written documents.

826 Importantly, also practitioners need to be made aware that men and women might
827 perceive different acts of bullying or sexist remarks as not equally damaging. Typical
828 experiences of female victims also need to be assessed and described in official
829 documents as bullying. Military officials also need to consider that a lot of indirect
830 and subtle behaviours and new forms of cyberbullying like secret filming are part of
831 the bullying experience. These bullying behaviours are (yet) not commonly associ-
832 ated with the military culture, but are—if they are repeated over and over—as
833 harmful as overt bullying and assaults, but harder to detect.

834 As our analysis has shown, a general hostile climate can contribute to severe cases
835 of bullying and assaults. Thus, the persistence of “minor” incidences of bullying and
836 harassment need to be closely monitored, evaluated and tackled. An *external* agency
837 or taskforce, as installed in Australia after allegations of systematic misconduct
838 (cf. “Report on Abuse in Defence”, 2014), can guarantee independent evaluation
839 of prevalence and incidence rates and increase legitimacy of results. The detailed
840 measurement procedure of the *National Defense Research Institute* (Morrall, Gore,
841 & Schell, 2014) included a pre-definition of the behaviours as crimes under the
842 *Uniform Code of Military Justice* or as violation of *Equal Opportunities* legislation
843 and regulations. As such, findings cannot be easily trivialised, but need then to be
844 tackled by officials.

845 Firestone and Harris (2003) argue that zero-tolerance policies adopted by the
846 military may improve the military image, but do not necessarily reduce the fear of
847 reporting and social ostracism. Rather, it is recommended to display strong public
848 statements by military leaders like Marines General Nueller that bullying and sexual
849 harassment have no place in the military, but all allegations are taken seriously and
850 are thoroughly investigated, and bullying is prevented with policies and procedures
851 along with educational programmes (cf. Firestone & Harris, 2003).

852 Moreover, compulsory briefings on bullying and ongoing (!) leadership trainings
853 are often recommended. Practitioners from the Austrian Armed Forces state that
854 highly experienced military leaders often refuse to seek help from experts and
855 coaches if confronted with bullying cases. For workplace bullying, leaders need to
856 be made awareness of the features, escalation dynamics and negative consequences
857 of late or inadequate intervention (e.g. implementing “soft” mediation in highly
858 escalated stages of bullying). In the case of sexual harassment, increased awareness
859 through anti-sexual harassment policies and trainings might have contributed to a
860 better handling of cases and the slight reduction of victimization rates.

861 For intervention, intervention chain and a clear formal process with roles and
862 responsibilities increase perceptions of procedural justice (Hoel & Einarsen, 2010).
863 Although procedures for formal complaints are written down in many national
864 armies, official channels are often not trusted. Therefore, Firestone and Harris
865 (2003) recommend individual, informal responses to harassment (e.g. discussing
866 the allegations with the supervisor) to be accompanied or followed by organizational
867 formal complaints. Various organizational contact points, which victims can choose
868 from, should be established (e.g. *Equal Opportunities* Office, health services,
869 call centers). In the Austrian Armed Forces, an anonymous, 24/7 anti-bullying-
870 helpline has been implemented after results of the study of Koeszegi, Zedlacher, &

871 Hudribusch, (2014) were published. To date, an evaluation of the effectiveness of
872 intervention procedures is still in progress. Practitioners report in interviews that the
873 helpline has been considered helpful by targets of bullying. Targets are usually
874 offered further legal or psychological advice by the helpline. They often opt for
875 legal rather than for psychological advice in the first place. If they want to proceed
876 with the allegation, they need to give testimony in front of an internal committee
877 including psychologists and internal legal consultants. Practitioners also report that
878 targets often withdraw their accusations when the problem becomes public,
879 e.g. when their subunit leaders must be informed, or the victims need to collaborate
880 in witness questioning. This reaction is very common for victims, since they fear
881 reprisals, ostracism and victim-blaming. To reduce feelings of secondary victimiza-
882 tion, the Austrian Armed Forces plan to install the so-called *persons of trust* or
883 spokespeople, who also accompany the victims to interrogations by the committee.
884 Also, Austrian practitioners plan to introduce Case Management methodology,
885 which should help comprehensively monitor each bullying case even after the
886 bullying case was “solved”.

887 The formalization and evaluation of internal prevention and intervention pro-
888 cedures in military organizations as well as the involvement of all parties in
889 intervention is crucial. However, we also regard the participation of external con-
890 sultants as essential for impartial investigations of allegations.

891 **6 Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research**

892 This chapter on bullying and harassment in the military forged a bridge between
893 different topics. It covered an outline of the social and gendered structure of
894 postmodern military organizations, a theoretical analysis of systemic violence in
895 military organizations as well as recent empirical findings on the prevalence of
896 workplace bullying and harassment in national armies. Taking a gender or feminist
897 perspective in bullying research proves useful, as it uncovers taken-for-granted
898 social norms, which condone inequality and harassment.

899 Overall, our review suggests that both covert and overt aggressive behaviours are
900 pervasive in military organizations. However, the type of harassment and the risk for
901 increased exposure also depends on the branch, function, subunit, tenure and gender.
902 Higher exposure rates for young soldiers, cadets of (elite) academies and women
903 relates to their weaker position in the military culture. The example of the military
904 shows the decisiveness of the organizational context in bullying incidences. Targets
905 appraise and label their bullying experiences (e.g. in hazing rituals) depending on
906 how they make sense of these behaviours *retrospectively* and whether they eventu-
907 ally are regarded as full members of their working group.

908 These observations have implications for future research in the military. Access to
909 military organizations for research on bullying and harassment is difficult. Often
910 researchers are employed by military research departments, which might influence
911 the way they address thorny issues like bullying inside the ranks. Increased collab-
912 oration with practitioners and between members of international associations like the

913 *European Research Group on Military and Society* (ERGOMAS) can help fostering
914 scholarly research on bullying and harassment in different military organizations.

915 It is remarkable that—while sexual harassment in the US army is widespread—
916 the study in the peacekeeping Austrian Armed Forces did not reveal similarly high
917 rates of sexual harassment. Comparative studies across peace-making and peace-
918 keeping armies with the same measurement tools might provide more detailed
919 insights; e.g. to what extent soldiers in peacekeeping armies are exposed to harsh
920 training, hazing rituals and hypermasculine dynamics. In this context, it would be
921 also interesting to assess the impact of national culture on bullying and harassment.
922 For example, in Latin American countries like Costa Rica, workplace bullying is still
923 considered a physical phenomenon (Escartin, Zapf, Arrieta, & Rodriguez-
924 Carballeira, 2011). Provided access to military systems, it would be interesting to
925 compare results on factors like leadership style, awareness, prevalence and types of
926 bullying, and integration of ethnic or sexual minorities between different countries;
927 for example by contrasting individualist, “feminine” low power distance cultures
928 like the Scandinavian countries with samples from under-researched armies of high
929 power distance, masculine and collectivist countries in Asia, Africa or Latin America
930 (e.g. China, Japan, or Argentina). Apart from the study by Heineken (2016), there
931 is—to our best knowledge—a lack of research on workplace bullying and harass-
932 ment within African national armies. Sexual violence by soldiers against civilians
933 during war has been studied (e.g. in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, cf. Baaz
934 & Stern, 2009) and is worth of a detailed analysis in combination with workplace
935 bullying research.

936 Apart from valuable in-depth qualitative studies, quantitative approaches with
937 established instruments can also deliver new insights. The *Negative Acts Question-*
938 *naire* (e.g. Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009) considers the difference between the
939 subjective perception of victimization and objective exposure to negative acts. Also,
940 research on the persistence as well as perceived severity and health effects of
941 different bullying or hazing behaviours (cf. Escartin, Rodriguez-Carballeira, Zapf,
942 Porrúa, & Martin-Pena, 2009; Hoel, Cooper and Faragher, 2004) in the military
943 culture can deliver detailed insights. Likewise, in sexual harassment research, a
944 combination of direct and indirect methods, i.e. self-labelling and behavioural
945 checklists, is recommended to reduce bias (cf. Estrada & Berggren, 2009). Also,
946 measuring behaviours of both workplace bullying and sexual harassment within *one*
947 study could provide interesting insights into overlaps of the two phenomena. More-
948 over, future studies should investigate in detail the retrospective sensemaking pro-
949 cess and the difference between ritualistic hazing and bullying from the perspective
950 of the victims.

951 We also suggest empirically testing whether bullying and/or sexual harassment
952 are related to sexist (sub)units with hypermasculine dynamics where predatory
953 behaviours with multiple perpetrators potentially evolve. In this respect, unit- or
954 departmental level analyses including the impact of leadership behaviour can deliver
955 new insights into triggers and correlates of misconduct. It is also important to further
956 study the situation of ethnic minorities and LGBTQ in national armies—provided
957 that anonymous data collection is possible.

958 Finally, we strongly recommend setting a research focus on the investigation of
 959 effective intervention and prevention procedures and its challenges. Including the
 960 views and experiences of third parties and practitioners is essential to reduce
 961 the existing literature gap.

962 We conclude our analysis with a reference to the title of this book chapter—
 963 *Bullying Inc.? Military organizations indeed incorporate traditional structural fea-*
 964 *tures and cultural values, which are a fertile ground for the normalization of bullying*
 965 *and harassment. However, the overemphasis or misuse of organizational features,*
 966 *group norms and discretionary powers is why systematic harassment occurs and is*
 967 *promoted. Thus, even in the “violent” military culture, individual perpetrators are to*
 968 *be held fully responsible.*

969 7 Cross-Reference

- 970 ▶ Dark Behaviours and Shadowy Places: Bullying, Emotional Abuse and Harass-
- 971 ment as Linked to Hidden Organizations
- 972 ▶ Whistleblowing and Workplace Bullying
- 973 ▶ Workplace Bullying in the Public Sector
- 974 ▶ Workplace Bullying, Emotional Abuse and Harassment in Fire Departments
- 975 ▶ Workplace Bullying, Emotional Abuse and Harassment in the Field of Corrections
- 976 ▶ Workplace Violence

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