REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*

2. REPORT DATE
June 1994

3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
Commanders' Priorities and Psychological Readiness.

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)
Paul T. Bartone, Ph.D.

DTIC
ELECTE
DEC 1 3 1994
S F D

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
US Army Medical Research Unit-Europe
Unit 29218
APO AE 09102

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
WRAIR/TR-94-0026

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
US Army Medical Research & Materiel Command
Ft. Detrick, Frederick, MD 21702-5012

10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

19941206 034

13. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*

This brief research report summarizes the results of a study by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) on commanders' priorities and psychological readiness. The study confirms some conventional wisdom regarding leadership: that leaders' beliefs and values can influence subordinates' psychological readiness for combat. The study examined 51 Army company-sized units. Results show that leader emphasis on soldier morale or "human dimensions" issues is positively related to soldier readiness indicators. Company commanders who place a high emphasis on soldier morale issues have soldiers in their units who score significantly higher on a range of psychological readiness indicators. The research concludes that leaders' values are related to the mental health and readiness of their subordinates. Leader beliefs appear to influence the perceptions and behaviors of subordinates, which in turn affect overall unit readiness.

(Research Report #21 is part of a series issued by the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit - Europe.)

14. SUBJECT TERMS
leadership; beliefs; morale; values; readiness

15. NUMBER OF PAGES

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT
UNCLAS	UNCLAS	UNCLAS	

Research Report

30 June 1994

Information provided by the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe, Unit 29218, APO AE 09102, a Special Foreign Activity of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

21

Commanders' Priorities and Psychological Readiness

A recently published study by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) confirms some conventional wisdom regarding leadership: that leaders' beliefs and values can influence subordinates' psychological readiness for combat.

The study examined 51 Army company-sized units, and began by asking the company commanders to list, in order of priority, the factors they believed to be most important to unit success in combat. These responses were content-analyzed and then grouped into categories. The top 5 categories mentioned were Combat Skills, Discipline, Decisive Leadership, Soldier Morale, and Centralized Control. Commanders were assigned priority scores that reflected the relative importance they placed on each category. These leader responses were then linked with data from a separate, larger survey that assessed soldier psychological readiness across many Army units. It was possible to match the commanders' data with soldier survey data for 51 different Army companies. "Commanders' values" scores were then correlated with the average scores of soldiers in these companies on several psychological readiness indicators from the soldier survey.

Results show that leader emphasis on Soldier Morale or "human dimensions" issues (e.g., sense of purpose; mental readiness) is positively related to soldier readiness indicators, including company commitment, vertical cohesion, general well-being, confidence in self/weapons, confidence in leaders, and life and work satisfaction (Table 1).

TABLE 1: CORRELATIONS OF COMMANDERS' PRIORITIES WITH SOLDIER READINESS INDICATORS

	COMPANY COMMANDER PRIORITY	
SOLDIER READINESS	SOLDIER MORALE	COMBAT SKILLS
Company Commitment	.27*	-.29*
Vertical Cohesion	.32**	-.20
Horizontal Cohesion	.20	-.13
Confidence in Leaders	.26*	-.30*
General Well-Being	.28*	-.28*
Physical/Mental Health	.19	-.12
Confidence in Self/Weapons	.30*	-.13
Work Satisfaction	.31*	-.31
Life Satisfaction	.32*	-.35**

* Correlation significant at the .05 level of probability
** Correlation significant at the .01 level of probability

Based on 51 cases (Army Companies) with no missing data

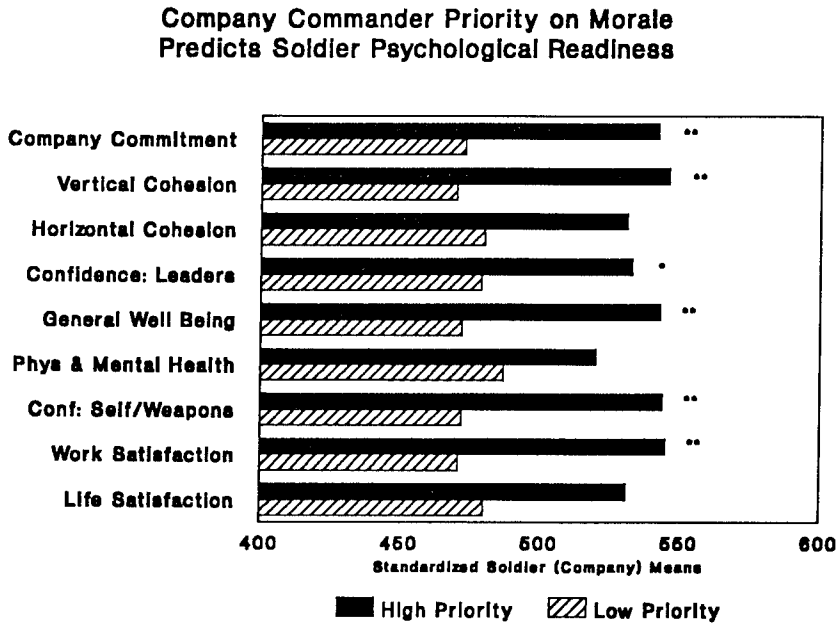
DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 6

It is also clear from Table 1 that commander emphasis on Combat Skills is *negatively* associated with soldier psychological readiness. "Combat Skills" includes such traditional soldier skills as marksmanship, small unit movements, and land navigation. This finding does not mean that Combat Skills are unimportant to unit success in combat. In interpreting this result, it is important to remember that a forced-ranking scheme was used in scoring commanders' priorities; to score higher on one category, a commander had to score lower on others. We feel that the underlying message in the data is that when commanders over-emphasize Combat Skills issues to the detriment of Soldier Morale issues, soldier psychological readiness is likely to degrade.

Figure 1 presents the same data in a slightly different form, showing average soldier scores on psychological readiness indicators for commanders high and low on Soldier Morale values. For this analysis, company commanders were divided into high and low groups based on the priority they put on Soldier Morale or human dimensions issues. As is evident, company commanders who place a high emphasis on Soldier Morale issues have soldiers in their units who score significantly higher on a

FIGURE 1

Accesion For
NTIS CRA&I ☑
DTIC TAB ☐
Unannounced ☐
Justification
By
Distribution /
Availability Codes
Dist | Avail and / or Special
A-1



range of psychological readiness indicators. This study demonstrates empirically that leaders' values are related to the mental health and readiness of their subordinates. Leader beliefs presumably influence their behaviors and policies, which in turn have an impact on soldier mental readiness. Planned multivariate analyses of these data should yield a more clear understanding of how various leader profiles influence soldier psychological readiness.

Prepared by: Major Paul T. Bartone, Ph.D., Commander, U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe

Source: Kirkland, F., Bartone, P. T., & Marlowe, D. H. (1993, Summer). Commanders' priorities and psychological readiness. Armed Forces and Society, 19(4), 579-598.