

IMRF Research Summary Report:
Developing a Capacity for Social Resource Management Scale
for use in ROTC Programs

Principal Investigator

Kayla Reed-Fitzke, Ph.D., LMFT
Assistant Professor

College of Education
Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations
Couple and Family Therapy Program
361 Lindquist Center
319-335-5285
kayla-fitzke@uiowa.edu

Co-Investigator

Alexus Hamilton, M.A.
Doctoral Student

College of Education
Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations
Couple and Family Therapy Program
361 Lindquist Center
319-335-5942
elizabeth-watters@uiowa.edu

Summary Report

The following report will surmise the activities of the *Developing a Capacity for Social Resource Management Scale for use in ROTC Programs* project, which was funded by an IMRF faculty research grant for the 2020-2021 academic year. The primary goal of the project was to develop a Capacity for Social Resource Management for use among ROTC programs.

Specifically, we proposed to collect pilot data from University of Iowa (UI) ROTC cadets via focus groups and use the identified themes to operationalize the construct and derive scale items. Additionally, we aimed to conduct an initial examination of scale with UI ROTC cadets.

Due to ROTC scheduling constraints, focus groups did not begin until mid-October (vs September). Five focus groups and one make-up interview were conducted, with a total of 16 cadets who were primarily non-Hispanic White (87.5%), cis-female (56.3%) and aged 18-23 ($M = 19.8$). Nine participants were enrolled in Army ROTC and seven were enrolled in Air Force ROTC. Participants ranged from 1st year to 4th year cadets. Focus group transcription was completed in November. Although coding of the transcripts would have only been delayed by approximately a month, we were further delayed by unforeseen technological challenges associated with not being on campus and pauses in communication with IT during the winter break. Thematic coding began in January. One final event further delayed the project – the PI began maternity leave in mid-March. Given the above-mentioned unforeseen obstacles to timely progress on the project, we shifted our timetable of tasks to continue to be productive and to ensure the RA was continuing to complete work commiserate with her funding throughout the remainder of the Spring semester. Additionally, a second RA (assigned to PI through department) was brought onto the project while the PI was on leave.

All thematic coding was completed in the Summer of 2021. The main themes that emerged were aptitude for leadership, leadership readiness, barriers to seeking resources, emotional support, interpersonal openness, ability to recognize red flags, and stigma tolerance attached to mental health. We utilized the main themes, as well as the words of the cadets, to craft a draft of the instrument questions. The instrument was finalized and sent out to the PI's peers for feedback in the Fall of 2021. It is currently being reviewed by several content experts. Finally, we aim to collect data to pilot test the instrument in the Spring of 2022.

Given the shift in timelines, we developed a conference proposal and draft of a manuscript earlier than projected. The proposal and manuscript focus on the operationalization of the construct (as opposed to the developed scale). Our conference proposal was accepted to the *Society for Study of Emerging Adulthood* biennial conference, which was presented in November of 2021. Findings indicate the construct of Capacity for Social Resource Management is multi-faceted and intertwined with how cadets perceive effective leadership. Although cadets indicated they believed there is not a stigma around seeking help during crisis, implicit concerns regarding stigma informed their decision-making process around seeking help for themselves and their peers/subordinates in crisis. We look forward to continuing this project and thank the Iowa Measurement Research Foundation for its' support.

Scholarly Products

*Hamilton, A., Reed-Fitzke, K., *Koons-Beauchamp, D., & *Goslin, A. (2021, November). *A framework analysis of emerging adult ROTC cadet leadership development and capacity for social resource management* [Paper Presentation]. Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood Biennial Conference, virtual.

Reed-Fitzke, K., *Hamilton, A., *Koons-Beauchamp, D., & *Goslin, A. (in progress). A framework analysis of emerging adult ROTC cadet leadership development and capacity for social resource management.

*indicates graduate student