

Conclusion

The differences in attitudes toward the value of culture and the cultural skills discussed above may relate to the nature of the particular missions Marines participated in (type, primary duties, level of interaction with foreign individuals, etc.). A majority of Marines who deployed only to OIF/OEF indicate that their missions were combat-related, while Marines who deployed elsewhere participated in a wider variety of missions, though foreign military training exercises (21%) were the most common. Such variance has implications for CAOCL culture training and education and their tailoring to mission type. In terms of MOS, Marines with ground combat arms MOSs express positive attitudes toward the value and use of culture. Moreover, some Marines with ground combat arms MOSs value or use aspects of culture significantly more than Marines with other MOSs. Further analyses are required to probe these findings and provide insight into such differences.

Overall, regardless of where they deployed in terms of OIF/OEF vs. Non-OIF/OEF, or whether their MOS fell under ground combat arms, Marines illustrate through this survey that they strongly value understanding the impact of culture on an operation, as well as regional knowledge, culture training, and, when dealing with foreign security forces, organizational culture. In addition, they recognize the importance of using cultural skills for accomplishing their mission. These initial findings suggest that CAOCL offers something Marines need, value, and use, both for COIN as well as for more traditional USMC missions.

Notes:

ⁱExcerpted from CAOCL website: <https://www.tecom.usmc.mil/CAOCL/SitePages/Home.aspx> (accessed September 21, 2012).

ⁱⁱCAOCL Culture and Language Survey: Importance of Culture vs. Language (CAOCL Internal White Paper).

ⁱⁱⁱFor the purposes of this preliminary analysis, ground combat arms refers to the following MOSs: 03 (Infantry), 08 (Field Artillery), 13 (Engineer), 18 (Tank and AAV).

^{iv}In order to increase the confidence that our sample accurately reflects today's Marine Corps, we weighted the data we received in terms of the USMC population values for rank and gender. Weighting is a statistical process that balances each case (participant) relative to the proportions of the population you're trying to represent (in this case, the current proportions of rank and gender in the USMC). We also manually compared our sample to the population estimates of age and deployed status (ever deployed vs. never deployed) and found these sufficiently comparable – i.e., typically within a few percentage points. We therefore did not weight those variables. In addition, we excluded the solitary E-1 and 12 E-2s that participated because the weights for those few cases would have been disproportionately large to compensate for their lack of representation in our sample. Hereafter the data are referred to as the weighted data.

^vThe ranks of E-1 and E-2 are particularly underrepresented in the GAL and therefore our survey could not reach many of them.

^{vi}Population based on Task Force Data Warehouse estimates for May 2012 except for gender estimates, which are based on *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts & Programs 2011*.

^{vii}Raw numbers for E-3: 490, E-4: 368.

^{viii}For an explanation of the Mann-Whitney test, see for example <http://academic.udayton.edu/gregelvers/psy216/spss/ordinaldata.htm>

^{ix}Mann-Whitney U test: U = 64358.00, p = .052; U = 68569.50, p = .688

^xU = 19718.50, p = .854

^{xi}Throughout this article, “significantly” refers to a statistically significant difference.

^{xii}U = 65814.00, p = .234; U = 71911.50, p = .974; U = 51336.5, p = .099

^{xiii}U = 139836.00 p = .005; U = 138495.50 p = .003;

^{xiv}U = 51785.00, p = .687; U = 50545.00, p = .486

^{xv}U = 29043.00, p = .000; U = 41367.500, p = .00; U = 32855.00, p = .002; U = 48883.00, p = .035

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Translational Research

at the USMC Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning

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OIF/OEF vs. Non-OIF/OEF Deployments: Is there a Difference in How Marines Value & Use Culture?

By Wendy Chambers, PhD and Basema Maki

Introduction

The Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL) provides culture and language training and education to ensure the Marine Corps can effectively navigate culturally complex operating environments and meet mission requirements.ⁱ In 2010 CAOCL supported the deployment of its first large-scale survey through the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) to better understand attitudes toward Marine Corps-wide culture and language training as well as preferred resources and methods of instruction. Over two thousand Marines participated in this voluntary survey and most expressed that culture and language are important for military operations. In addition, those who had received culture or language training in the four years since CAOCL's inception indicated that they regard culture training as more important than language training for operational effectiveness. The bulk of the participants in this first survey participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).ⁱⁱ

As the Marine Corps transitions away from OIF and OEF and re-engages steady state activities, CAOCL leadership has decided to take a closer look at the value and use of culture in non-counterinsurgency (COIN) USMC missions and operations. To this end, in 2012 CAOCL deployed a second large-scale survey through MCCLL to 20% of all Marines listed in the Global Address List (GAL) by proportions of rank as reflected in the USMC population. In this survey, CAOCL intentionally designed the questions to focus on deployments in addition to or other than OIF and OEF in order to answer the following overarching question: **Would Marines who had deployments in addition to or other than OIF/OEF value and use culture as much as those who deployed only to OIF/OEF?**

In addition, CAOCL designed the survey to capture whether other key factors, such as whether or not a Marine has a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) associated with ground combat arms,ⁱⁱⁱ makes a difference in how Marines value and use culture.

This short article will primarily address initial findings on a subset of the survey questions related to the value and use of culture for OIF/OEF vs. Non-OIF/OEF deployments.

The Survey Sample

The sample was weighted to better reflect the USMC population.^{iv} A total of 1,654 Marine participants represent the weighted sample size. All ranks participated in the survey save for General Officers, but Privates (E-1s) and Privates First Class (E-2s) were excluded in the final analyses due to their small numbers.^v As reflected in the USMC population,^{vi} the bulk of the weighted ranks fell in the Lance Corporal (E-3) and Corporal (E-4) categories (~30% and ~22%, respectively, or ~52% total).^{vii} All MOSs were represented except for “Navigation Officer and Enlisted Flight Crews.”

Research Notes

Basema Maki

In September Basema provided training in Egyptian Operational Culture to the 15 MEU

Blagovest Tashev, PhD

In September Blago attended the Minerva Initiative Meeting which convened grant awardees, DoD and DoS officials, academics and national security experts to discuss ongoing Minerva projects in social science.

Kristin Post

In August Kristin was a non-governmental organization (NGO) role player in an Afghanistan civil affairs field exercise and in September she played an NGO role in a Philippines Information Operations scenario involving members of the US Marines and Army as well as the Canadian Army.

Wendy Chambers, PhD

In August Wendy created and supported delivery of Ethics Training for CAOCL with Major Ross and attended the latest in a year long series of Small Unit Decision Making Conferences.

Overall Conclusions about the Value and Use of Culture

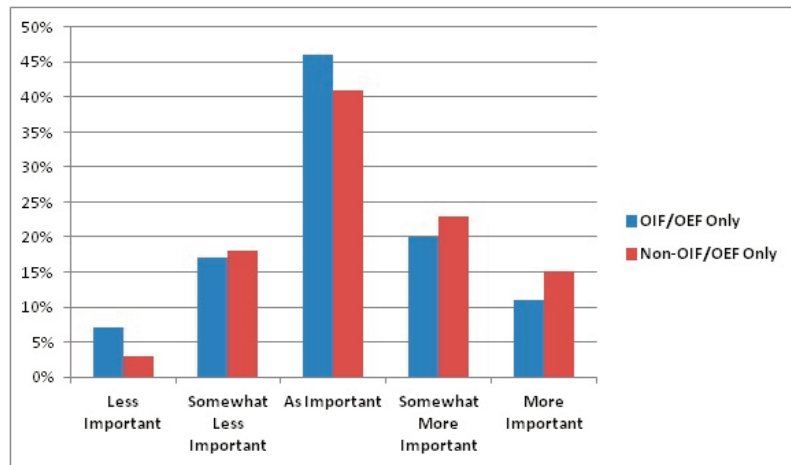
Regardless of whether participating Marines deployed only to OIF/OEF or had deployments in addition to or other than OIF/OEF, **initial survey results illustrate that today's Marines strongly value**

- **Understanding the impact of culture on an operation, regional knowledge, the organizational culture of a foreign security force, and culture training.**
- **Using various cultural skills while deployed.** Details of these findings are below.

The Value of Culture: Type of Deployment

While most of the time a Marine's attitude toward culture does not vary with his/her deployment history, a Mann-Whitney test indicates that **Marines who only had deployments other than OIF/OEF assigned a higher average rank in evaluating the importance of culture training (392.21) relative to Marines who only deployed to OIF/OEF (355.87), U = 62936.5, p = .016.**^{viii} In terms of solely OIF or OEF or solely Non-OIF/OEF deployments, deployment type does not make a significant difference in how Marines

Figure 1: Frequency of Marine Value of Culture Training Compared to Other PTP Requirements



feel about understanding the impact of culture on an operation or having knowledge of different regions;^{ix} the majority agrees or strongly agrees that these issues are a valuable component to operational readiness. In addition, when isolating those Marines who had worked with a foreign security force, there is no significant difference between Marines' attitudes toward culture based on a history of OIF/OEF only or Non-OIF/OEF only deployments;^x again, the majority agrees or strongly agrees about the importance of understanding organizational culture when dealing with foreign security forces. However, those Marines who had deployments other than OIF/OEF rate culture training as significantly^{xi} more important relative to other PTP training requirements in comparison to Marines who deployed to OIF or OEF only (see Figure 1).

The Use of Culture: Cultural Skills and Type of Deployment

When Marines focus on a single deployment in their history, whether they refer to an OIF/OEF deployment or to a deployment in addition to or other than OIF/OEF makes no significant difference in the importance they assign to building rapport, using or interpreting body language, or negotiating with foreign locals.^{xii} Specifically, the majority rate these skills as important or very important.

Marines focusing on a deployment in addition to or other than OIF/OEF, however, rate behaving according to local cultural norms as needed (468.16) and using basic words or phrases in a foreign language (459.37) as significantly more important than those Marines who only deployed to OIF/OEF (390.94, 406.46, respectively), U = 61180, p = .000; U = 64548.5, p = .006, respectively (see Fgs. 2 & 3).

Figure 2: Frequency of Behaving According to Local Cultural Norms as Needed with Foreign Individuals or Groups to Facilitate Mission Accomplishment

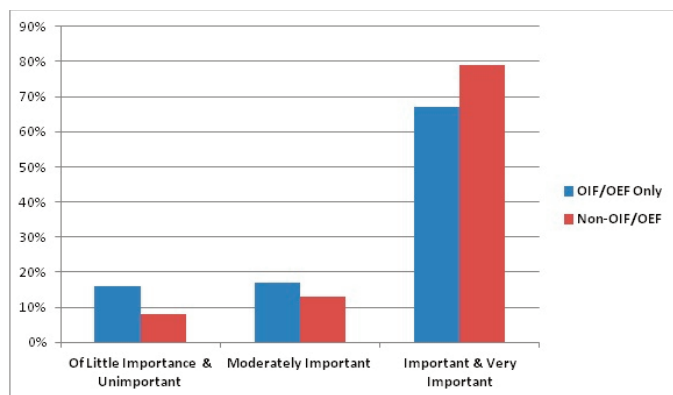
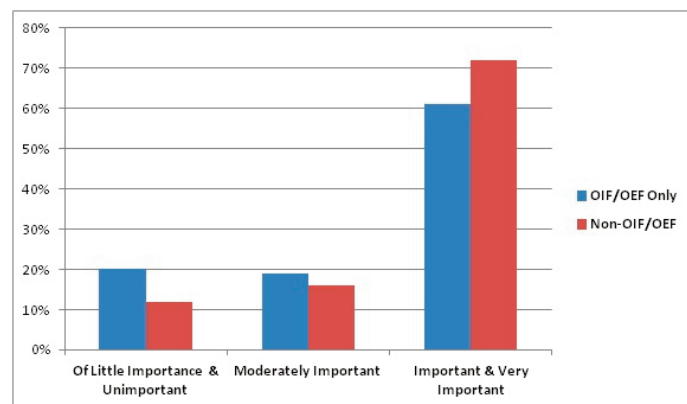
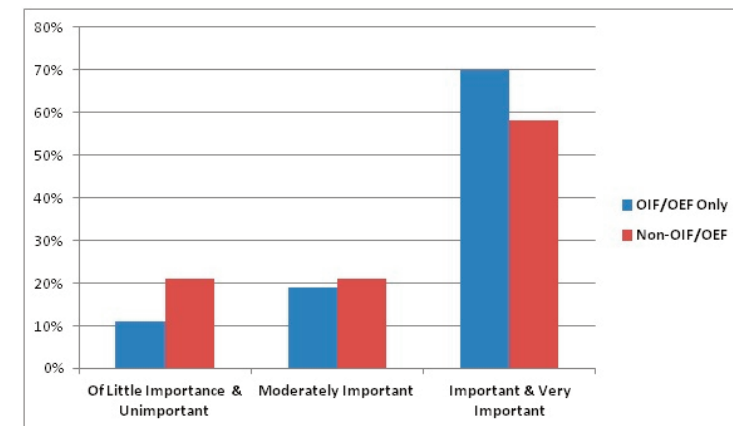


Figure 3: Frequency of Using Basic Words or Phrases in a Foreign Language with Foreign Individuals or Groups to Facilitate Mission Accomplishment



Marines who deployed to OIF/OEF rate influencing or persuading as significantly more important (403.06) than those Marines who had deployments in addition to or other than OIF/OEF (355.86), U = 44970.500, p = .006 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Frequency of Influencing or Persuading Foreign Individuals or Groups to Facilitate Mission Accomplishment



Additional Factors: MOSs Associated With Ground Combat Arms vs. Other MOSs: The Value and Use of Culture

While there is no significant difference between the high value placed on culture training and organizational culture by Marines with MOSs associated with ground combat arms and Marines with other MOSs, **Marines with ground combat arms MOSs value understanding the impact of culture on operational readiness and regional knowledge significantly more than Marines with other MOS's.**^{xiii} (See figures 5 and 6).

In terms of cultural skills, Marines with MOSs associated with ground combat arms and Marines with other MOSs either feel similarly positive toward cultural skills (behaving according to local norms as needed; using or interpreting body language)^{xiv} or **Marines with ground combat arms MOSs value the skills significantly more than Marines with other MOSs** (influencing and persuading; building rapport; negotiating; using basic words or phrases in a foreign language).^{xv}

Figure 5: Frequency of Marine Value of the Impact of Culture on Any Given Operation as a Key to Operational Readiness

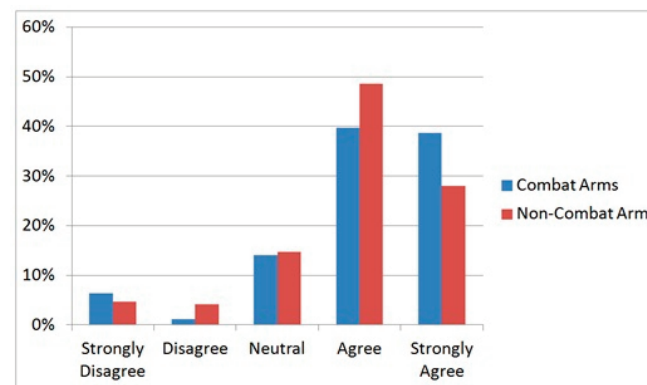


Figure 6: Frequency of Marine Value of Knowledge of Different Regions of the World for Operational Readiness

