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A Value Proposition Analysis on the Ideal and Current Recruitment Rhetoric of the Dutch Military

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Executive Summary

The prevalence of war in human society prompts nations to have a prepared and professional military. In order to maintain a professional military, countries need to invest in their military recruitment. One of the main methods of military recruitment is the use of advertisements that are broadcasted on various mediums such as television and social media. The advertisements each have their own “recruitment rhetoric” that reflect a certain theme and image of the military that a country desires to put forward with their recruitment material. Some examples of recruitment rhetorics are Peacekeepers or Warriors. The thesis aims to determine the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military and the ideal recruitment rhetoric that creates the most value for potential recruits. The Dutch military utilises the ‘Generatie D’ advertising campaign in order to promote the armed forces, thus, the campaign was utilised in order to analyse the current recruitment rhetoric. The central research question of the thesis is: What recruitment rhetoric should the non-conscription-based military in the Netherlands pursue for their recruitment campaigns? The central research question is supplemented with three sub questions which include: 1. What is the current sentiment towards the military in general in the Netherlands? 2. Which pains and gains of joining the military are most important to

individuals in Generatie D? 3. What is the current recruitment rhetoric that is employed by the military of the Netherlands? The key findings of the literature review revealed that individual nations have unique recruitment rhetorics that are spread through recruitment techniques closely linked to marketing strategies used by more traditional companies. Furthermore, due to the lack of mandatory conscription and general disagreement with contemporary military actions, the idea of a “civil-military gap” has been found, stating that there is a gap of understanding between people in the military and regular civilians due to the two entities having limited connections. The last finding entails that the Value Proposition framework by Alexander Osterwalder is an effective method in analysing the current recruitment rhetoric and building the ideal recruitment rhetoric. Hypotheses and propositions were made based on these key findings from the literature review, which include: Proposition 1: The main gain to joining the Dutch military will be to experience thrill and adventure, Proposition 2: The current perceived recruitment rhetoric of the Netherlands will be a “peacekeeper” rhetoric, Proposition 3: Social media will be viewed as the most important medium for recruitment, and Proposition 4: There will be a wide “civil-military gap” between the people of Generatie D and the Dutch military. The research methodology was qualitative as nine interviews were used to answer the four propositions. The key outcomes of the research were that the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military is one of an Inclusive Adventurous Force, while the ideal recruitment rhetoric is one of a Prepared Peacekeeper. Furthermore, there was evidence of a wide civil military gap and the importance of social media was stressed. Therefore, Proposition 1 and 2 could be rejected while Proposition 3 and 4 were accepted. The recommendations for the market are to adopt the new recruitment rhetoric of a prepared peacekeeper as it better aligns with the pains and gains of the general population, while continuing to present the advertisements on social media which would enable them to be viewed by and reach the target audience. Recommendations for future research would be to expand the idea of recruitment rhetoric to machine learning models, of which would better determine which recruits best match the ideas of the recruitment rhetoric.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Conflict has been ever present in human history, and especially in the current state of geopolitics, the threat of war is one of the most pressing contemporary issues. 2022 has seen the largest buildup of military spending since the Cold War, as military spending worldwide has increased by 13% to a value of 2240 billion US dollars based on figures by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2022). However, without the use of conscription, the military have to turn to recruitment campaigns to incentivize further enlistment. The primary method utilised for recruitment by militaries globally is promotion of the armed forces via a collection of recruitment advertisement campaigns. The recruitment material can range from posters to recruitment videos or recruiters going from door-to-door to incentivize individuals to join. With advertising employed as a key method of recruitment, it is imperative for marketers to understand how to convince and entice individuals of the general public to join the military. Being a soldier within the military is a job that includes exposure to dangerous environments and a multitude of risks that may deter potential recruits. This aspect further highlights the importance in understanding how to utilise marketing for the military as effectively as possible in order to appeal to the general public in spite of these risks. Nowadays, military recruitment is becoming much more akin to consumer marketing, where the military utilises tactics that marketers would typically utilise in order to sell their “product” of military enlistment (Friesen and Eddy, 2017). The common idea is that all the recruitment material aims to promote is the “recruitment rhetoric”. The idea of the recruitment rhetoric is based on the paper by Strand and Berndtsson (2015) who investigated the recruitment rhetoric of nations in Europe. The nation that will be analysed for the research will be the Netherlands. The Netherlands was chosen as it is a European nation and NATO member that can be effectively compared to the nations in the Strand and Berndtsson (2015) study. Further, the Netherlands has launched a new military recruitment advertising campaign called “Generatie D”. The Generatie D campaign will be utilised in later sections of the research.

1.1 Relevance

The main aim of the thesis is to expand on the research by Strand and Berndtsson (2015) and investigate the Netherlands and their recruitment rhetoric. The thesis will expand on Strand and Berndtsson (2015) by including interviews with the general public. While Strand and Berndtsson (2015) focused on examining the recruitment rhetoric of Sweden and the UK, the thesis will focus on recommending an ideal recruitment rhetoric for the Netherlands. Furthermore, there are very few studies that investigate any factors about the Dutch military. Currently, the topic of recruitment in the Netherlands is especially important due to the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014 and the subsequent invasion of Ukraine in 2022. According to the study by Sperling and Webber (2016), The invasion of Crimea caused NATO to increase their military readiness and prepare their troops for possible conflict with the Russian Federation in the future. NATO conducted a historic amount of military drills, upped the amount of soldiers stationed near the Russian border and new NATO headquarters were established to tackle the issue of the Russian invasion (Sperling and Webber, 2016). As the Netherlands is a member nation of NATO, it too had to increase its military effort and now with the full invasion of Ukraine, NATO has to once again increase its military effort. According to data collected from the World Bank, the Netherlands currently has 41,000 military personnel employed. Recent trends of military personnel employed in the Netherlands highlights the country's struggle in military recruitment, with numbers of 60,000 in 2009 dropping significantly to 41,000 currently, with no significant signs of increase from 2013. The next area of interest is the amount of spending on the Dutch military. According to data from the World Bank, The Netherlands currently spends 1.4% of its GDP on defence which is behind the NATO advised 2% of GDP. Due to the Netherlands currently spending below the NATO threshold, the Dutch government has commissioned a new spending package in order to reach the 2% requirement. According to the Defense White Paper from 2022, the Dutch government aims to spend 5 billion euros in the next 5 years in order to reach the 2% threshold. The share of the 5 billion euros that will be spent on military recruitment is 1.161 billion euros; the second biggest component of the package behind the strengthening of specialisations. However, in the years from 2023 to 2025, recruitment will receive the most funding, indicating that the Netherlands

acknowledges that strong investment in recruitment is a vital precursor to spending on specialising the military.

1.2 Research Question

The prospective central research question that the thesis will aim to answer is:

What recruitment rhetoric should the non-conscription-based military in the Netherlands pursue for their recruitment campaigns?

The research question aims to understand what recruitment rhetoric the Netherlands should currently be pursuing in order to be able to promote their military in the most effective way possible. The key objective of the research and the subsequent analysis is to understand what recruitment rhetoric is effective, and able to resonate with the general population whilst communicating a realistic image of the military.

1.3 Ethical Research Issues

Due to a majority of the research of the thesis being qualitative research there are various possible ethical issues that will have to be addressed. Firstly, interviews will be utilised for a large part of the data collection process. Some of the ethical issues that may arise from the interviews based on the paper by Allmark et al (2009) are: the confidentiality of the interviewees, gathering the proper consent from the interviewees to be interviewed and recorded, and ensuring that the interviewees do not feel pressured to answer a certain way that may not reflect their beliefs. All these issues may lead to inaccurate data and incomplete interviews. The main action that will be taken in the research in order to mitigate these issues will be to delete the recording of the interview once the interview has been transcribed, and ensuring the questions are not directed to push the interviewee to give a particular answer.

1.4 Research Limitations

The key limitation of the research is the reliability of the answers given in the interviews. Interviewees may be impacted by a variety of different variables that may cause them to provide answers they do not truly believe. Interviewees may be inadvertently forced to say answers that they do not agree with due to interviewer pressure or general hesitation in answering the questions. Furthermore, the ideal recruitment rhetoric may be different for every interviewee, making it difficult to construct an ideal rhetoric that is able to encapsulate the ideas of all interviewees.

1.5 Chapter Overview

The structure of the thesis will be split into 5 chapters. The chapters include the Introduction, literature study, research methodology, research outcome, and conclusion and recommendations. The literature study chapter will analyse all the literature surrounding the topic and will provide the key findings relating to the literature. The literature study chapter will also include the sub questions and the hypotheses and propositions that will guide the research in the later chapters. The research methodology chapter will cover the qualitative research methods that will be employed for the thesis while also covering the data collection methods and detailed descriptions about the sample. The research outcome chapter will present the analysis while looking back at the central research question and will present the main key findings of the analysis. Lastly, the conclusions and recommendations chapter will discuss and compare the key findings of the literature and the results while also accepting or rejecting the hypotheses and propositions and answering the central research question.

Chapter 2: Literature Study

Firstly, the key terms of the thesis will be defined. The military in this case can be defined as all the service branches that are contained within the Dutch military, which include: the Royal Netherlands Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Marechaussee. Recruitment can be defined as the process of identifying and bringing people into an organisation. The first term that relates to recruitment is Recruitment Rhetoric which can be defined as the image of the military that is enforced through recruitment material. The second term related to recruitment is recruitment techniques which are

strategies that are used to incentivize recruitment. The final key term will relate to work by Alexander Osterwalder. The main term that will be used is value proposition, a proposition that evaluates the fit between the product and the market's needs.

2.1 Recruitment Rhetoric

Recruitment rhetoric is an idea that has been around for as long as war has been prevalent. Recruitment rhetoric can be seen as the image or idea that is spread through recruitment material. Recruitment rhetoric was used in works as early as Homer's Iliad (Zoido, 2007), where the ideals of dying for your country and god were utilised to incentivize people to fight. More contemporary views on recruitment rhetoric are based on the paper by Strand and Berndsson (2015), where recruitment rhetorics differ between countries and each country aims to promote their own recruitment rhetoric which is based on a plethora of factors. In the paper by Strand and Berndtsson (2015) the United Kingdom and Sweden's recruitment discourse is discussed and analysed. The paper conducts a deep analysis on how the United Kingdom and Sweden conduct their recruitment campaigns and the target audience for these recruitment campaigns. The main conclusion that is taken from the paper is that the recruitment material of both of the nations highlight two different rhetorics. Firstly, looking at Sweden, recruitment campaigns are focused on promoting the idea of being a "world-improver" and military marketing campaigns refrain from mentioning certain words that can be associated with war. The reason for this recruitment rhetoric is to convince prospective recruits that the Swedish military is a career choice where they can play an active role in maintaining world peace, and in turn also develop crucial skills that enrich them as a person. The paper then looked at the recruitment rhetoric in the UK and found a vastly different conclusion. The UK aims to attract recruits by pushing the rhetoric of being a warrior and a thrill seeker that is ready for adventure and challenging situations. The words that relate to war and combat that were mentioned as being absent in the Swedish campaigns play a huge part in the UK campaigns and are actively mentioned. UK potential recruits should be ready to be deployed on the front line and embrace the excitement and adrenaline that comes from it. The idea of recruitment rhetoric is also present in the paper by Tasseron (2020). Tasseron (2020) examines the military discourse of the Japanese armed forces and states that the

Japanese armed forces aim to promote their military by normalising their role within society. Tasseron (2020) states that the Japanese military was called in to help with disaster relief efforts and overall getting more involved with activities within the Japanese community. Tasseron (2020) also mentions that the Japanese military aims to promote their male and female personnel as average citizens thereby hiding their true military function. After analysis Tasseron (2020) states that the Japanese military's recruitment brochures bring forward the rhetoric of equality within the armed forces and escaping the struggles of day to day life. The idea of recruitment rhetoric is also present in the paper by Stengel and Shim (2021). Stengel and Shim (2021) analysed a German web series produced by the German armed forces in order to incentivize recruitment to the military. The recruitment rhetoric of the German armed forces is heavily influenced according to Stengel and Shim (2021) by the anti-militarist culture due to the lasting effects of the second world war. Stengel and Shim (2021) conclude that the web series promotes the military as a job that improves an individual as a person, while also promoting the antimilitarist thought that is prevalent in Germany by including a limiting showcase of violence. Lastly, Wegner (2018) highlights that the Canadian armed forces switched recruitment rhetoric from a peacekeeping rhetoric to a tougher more realistic warrior rhetoric. Recruitment rhetoric is not limited to recruitment material from nations, recruitment rhetoric is also present in militant organisations such as the terrorist organisations Islamic State (IS) and Al-Qaeda (AQ) (Shaw and Bandara, 2018) and (Carriere and Blackman, 2016). Shaw and Bandara (2018) highlight that even terrorist groups like IS are able to utilise recruitment rhetorics in promotional material in order to convince individuals to join the jihad cause. Shaw and Bandara (2018) further compare the recruitment techniques of IS and AQ and find significant differences in rhetoric between the two, highlighting how different recruitment rhetorics can be used by like minded organisations. Lastly, militaries need to ensure that the values they promote in their recruitment material align with the interests of a contemporary society (Tresch, 2008). In order to appeal to individuals with relevant recruitment rhetoric, the military must ensure they are targeting values that are relevant and important to today's generation. According to the study by Tresch (2008), traditional values like tradition, prestige and patriotism that have made the military a popular option in the past do not currently apply and do not lead to the same amount of recruitment

as they did prior. Therefore, it is important for the recruitment rhetoric of the Netherlands not to focus too heavily on traditional values that were prominent in the past.

The main key finding regarding recruitment rhetoric is that it differs per country (Strand and Berndtsson, 2015), (Stengel and Shim, 2021), (Tasseron, 2020), (Wegner, 2018). Countries aim to promote their unique ideal image of the military and to convince individuals to resonate with the recruitment rhetoric and subsequently enlist in the military due to their connection with the rhetoric. Furthermore, recruitment rhetoric seems to stem from various factors that range from military history (Strand and Berndtsson, 2015) and (Stengel and Shim, 2021) to other ideological factors such as religion and extremism (Shaw and Bandara, 2018).

2.2 Recruitment Techniques

There are a plethora of recruitment techniques that a military can utilise. However, recruitment techniques have been starting to become much more akin to how companies utilise marketing to sell their products to consumers (Friesen and Eddy, 2017). The study by Friesen and Eddy (2017) indicates that military recruiters in the US act more like marketing salespeople that implement techniques in order to convince their ‘customers’ to buy into their product of military service. In addition, according to Park et al. (2016), US military advertising has started to use specific messaging strategies. By employing Taylor’s six segment strategy wheel Park et al. (2016) indicate that US military advertisements use a variety of messaging techniques that include focusing on high-involvement strategies, using transformational strategy and that the messaging strategies tended to vary based on what wars the US was involved in. Another key tool for recruiters to make use of is social media. It is well established that social media, especially post-COVID-19 is a crucial factor in marketing (Mason et al., 2021). Additionally, social media is becoming an important asset to militaries within the EU where the overall benefits of it seem to outweigh the costs (Hellman et al, 2016), (Olsson et al, 2016). Subsequently, social media is also a prominent tool that recruiters utilise in order to find prospective candidates for the military and to run advertisements that promote recruitment to the military (Peralta and Caporusso, 2020), (Olsson et al, 2016). Peralta and Caporusso

(2020) highlight that a majority of recruiters in the United States that are working in behalf of the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) made use of social media in order to draft prospective candidates and that a significant number of candidates were exposed to the DEP program through social media. The study by Olsson et al, (2016) indicated that 84% of the EU countries view the advertisement of the armed forces at home as an effective tool for recruitment. Another key issue that plays into the advertising of the military is the choice to advertise all branches of the military together or to advertise each branch separately. Brockett et al. (2004) indicate that advertisement for all branches of the military in the United States performed worse than service specific advertisement in the case of the US Army, indicating that choosing which services to advertise together is an important choice for a military to make.

One of the main key findings is that recruitment of soldiers is starting to share more similarities with traditional marketing strategies utilised by marketers (Friesen and Eddy, 2017), (Park et al., 2016). With recruiters starting to use more traditional marketing methods in an attempt to attract new recruits, it builds the link between marketing and the overall thesis topic of recruitment rhetoric in military advertisements. Furthermore, another key finding revealed that social media is an important asset that the military can utilise for recruitment (Peralta and Caporusso, 2020), (Olsson et al., 2016). As the 'Generatie D' campaign is pushed on the majority of social media, it is vital to establish the link between social media and recruitment and to determine the importance and efficacy of social media as a recruitment tool. The last key finding is that recruitment campaigns that focus on all service branches have a different level of efficiency compared to single branch campaigns (Brockett et al., 2004). Knowing the difference between branch specific and all branch recruitment is important as the 'Generatie D' campaign focuses on all branches of the military and does not have specific advertisements for each branch.

2.3 Military

The military of the Netherlands is the military that will be the focus of the thesis. The Dutch military is an All Volunteer Force (AVF). An AVF is a professional army which consists of volunteers instead

of individuals that have been drafted in through the use of conscription (Bailey, 2007). Traditionally, conscription was seen as a necessary policy in order for a nation to protect itself from the many threats that could face it (Pfaffenzeller, 2010). The Dutch military had a policy of conscription that came to an end in 1997 (Hubers and Webbink, 2015). However, looking at the effects of conscription it can be argued that it was an economically ineffective system that had significant negative effects on the service people that were recruited by it. Conscription in the Netherlands has had tangible negative effects on earnings for the military personnel that were recruited by conscription (Imbens and Van der Klaauw, 1995), (Hubers and Webbink, 2015). The earnings of conscripts after 10 years was 5% lower for the birth cohort that had to complete military service compared to the cohort that was exempted (Imbens and Van Der Klaauw, 1995), while being a conscript during the time of compulsory military service lowered the proportion of university graduates by 1.5% and lowered the chance of earning a university degree by around 4% (Hubers and Webbink, 2015). However, there are also aspects of conscription that are important to the civil-military relationship. Countries that still employ conscription systems seem to have a larger amount of public support for the military (Choulis et al., 2019). Gaining public support is important as the use of AVF militaries can lead to increases in the “civil-military gap” as the demographics between the military institutions and civilian society start to differ (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012). In addition, trust in the military within European nations regarding contemporary operations is at a low point. Both the Swedish and British Public showed low support for the NATO mission in Afghanistan (Berndtsson et al., 2014) and the support for the Dutch military being low due to the consequences of the Srebrinca genocide (Sion, 2006).

The key findings are that the Dutch military has an AVF military force. The use of an AVF force implies a negative impact on educational and earnings factors for soldiers that were conscripted to the Dutch military forces before the end of conscription (Imbens and Van der Klaauw, 1995) and (Hubers and Webbink, 2015). However, conscription does seem to help with building public support for the military (Choulis et al., 2019), which is important as the overall trust of the armed forces in the Netherlands is at a low point due to the actions of the Dutch military in their peacekeeping operations (Sion, 2006). Overall, it is shown that conscription can be a key factor in building trust within a

military organisation and can be used to shrink the “civil-military” gap (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012).

2.4 Value Proposition

The main method of analysis to answer the prospective research question will be built on the methods of Alexander Osterwalder. The main idea of Osterwalder that will be applied to the research is the idea of the value proposition. The value proposition is a tool that is utilised in order to find a fit between the product and the market (Osterwalder et al., 2015). In the context of the research, the product is defined as the ideal recruitment rhetoric and the market are the potential ‘Generatie D’ recruits. The value proposition canvas can be broken up into two elements, which include the value proposition and the customer profile (Osterwalder et al., 2015). The customer profile is made up of customer jobs, gains, and pains (Osterwalder et al., 2015). The value proposition is made up of products and services, gain creators and pain relievers (Osterwalder et al., 2015). The key reason for using the value proposition framework is to analyse the Generatie D advertisements and identifying the pains and gains that the recruitment campaign puts forward. After analysing the pains and gains a successful value proposition can be drafted which in the case of the research will be a recruitment rhetoric, which aims to create the most gain and limit the amount of pain.

The key findings are that the value proposition framework can be utilised in the context of the ‘Generatie D’ recruitment campaign, in order to draft a new recruitment rhetoric that aligns with the ideas that individuals desire from the Dutch military.

2.5 Summary of Key Findings

In summation, nations attempt to drive recruitment to their militaries in the form of recruitment campaigns. Within these recruitment campaigns nations have varying recruitment rhetorics (Strand and Berndtsson, 2015), (Stengel and Shim, 2021), (Tasseron, 2020), (Wegner, 2018). The recruitment rhetoric can be defined as the image or idea that the military wants to spread through their recruitment material. Recruitment rhetorics are not limited to professional militaries as militant extremist groups like Al-Qaeda and IS also make use of recruitment rhetorics (Shaw and Bandara, 2018) and (Carriere

and Blackman, 2016) while the idea of recruitment rhetoric has been mentioned in works as old as Homer's Iliad (Zoido, 2007). Furthermore, the techniques of military recruitment have started to shift towards contemporary marketing techniques (Friesen and Eddy, 2017), (Park et al., 2016). With the recruitment campaigns including more marketing techniques, the use of social media has become vital in military recruitment (Peralta and Caporusso, 2020), (Olsson et al., 2016). With the military recruitment campaigns shifting to have more marketing techniques, the type of military recruitment has also shifted from conscription to countries mainly utilising AVF militaries. The shift from conscription to AVF has led to some benefits as conscription caused negative impacts in terms of earnings and educational attainment for Dutch soldiers (Imbens and Van Der Klaauw, 1995) and (Hubers and Webbink, 2015). However, conscription does lead to a higher level of public support for the military (Choulis et al., 2019), while the move to AVF's also leads to a higher "civil-military gap" (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012). The presence of the "civil-military gap" can be seen with the low support towards the Dutch military (Sion, 2006) and the disagreement with the participation of the British and Swedish militaries in Afghanistan (Berndtsson et al., 2014). With the military including more marketing techniques in the recruitment material (Friesen and Eddy, 2017), (Park et al., 2016), the recruitment campaigns can be analysed using the value proposition framework (Osterwalder et al., 2015) in order to find the pains and gains of the recruitment campaign and how to address them by developing a new recruitment rhetoric.

2.6 Sub Questions

The first sub question is: **What is the current sentiment towards the military in general in the Netherlands?**

The sub question arises as it is important to understand what the sentiment towards the military is in general. If the population perceives the military in an overwhelmingly negative way, then it might require a recruitment rhetoric that focuses more on peacekeeping instead of a warrior rhetoric as people currently disagree with the actions of the military. On the other hand, if the military and their operations are generally liked, then a recruitment rhetoric that focuses heavily on engaging in conflict may be more appropriate.

The second sub question is: **Which pains and gains of joining the military are most important to individuals in Generatie D?**

The sub question arises as it will be important to understand the pains and gains that people in the target market of Generatie D experience when considering joining the military. By analysing the pains and gains it will be possible to propose an ideal recruitment rhetoric that is able to minimise the pains and maximise the gains.

The third and final sub question is: **What is the current recruitment rhetoric that is employed by the military of the Netherlands?**

The third subquestion is important as the current recruitment rhetoric needs to be analysed for effectiveness and comparison to the ideal recruitment rhetoric. The ‘Generatie D’ advertisements contain the current recruitment rhetoric and will be used as the primary point of analysis for subquestion three.

2.7 Propositions

Based on the literature review and the key terms; propositions will be drafted in order to be examined after the data collection procedure. The propositions will aim to address the key findings of the literature review.

Proposition 1: The main gain to joining the Dutch military will be to experience new thrill and adventure.

As seen by Tresch (2008), the traditional values that incentivized individuals to join the military are changing. The traditional values of patriotism, tradition, and prestige were shown to gradually become more ineffective in recruiting people to European militaries (Tresch, 2008) and furthermore with the rise of the civil military gap (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012) and the negative attitudes towards the Dutch military and military intervention on the whole (Sion, 2006) and (Berndtsson et al., 2014), a whole new set of values will need to emerge in order to convince people to join the Dutch military. As

shown by Strand and Berndtsson (2015), the UK has a recruitment rhetoric which is focused on being a warrior and seeking the thrills of battle. Furthermore, according to Wegner (2018), Canada switched to a warrior rhetoric. Since Canada and the UK are both NATO countries that operate the same missions as the Netherlands, civilians in the Netherlands may be swayed to join the military by the prospect of being a warrior and seeking new thrills.

Proposition 2: The current perceived recruitment rhetoric of the Netherlands will be a “peacekeeper” rhetoric.

Despite being a member of NATO and having participated with NATO forces in a variety of different operations, the Netherlands is still a small nation militarily. According to the Global Firepower Index the Netherlands ranks only 39th in the world which is far off other nations in NATO like the US and the UK. Furthermore, the Dutch military has had significant blunders during operations such as the Srebrenica Genocide (Sion, 2006) and stayed neutral during World War I. These factors will most likely lead to the recruitment rhetoric to be closer to a nation like Sweden who follow the recruitment rhetoric of a peacekeeper and less like the recruitment rhetoric of the UK who focus on a recruitment rhetoric of warriors that have the experience of combat (Strand and Berndtsson, 2015).

Proposition 3: Social media will be viewed as the most important medium for recruitment

The prevalence of social media in military recruitment has been shown to be very strong (Peralta and Caporusso, 2020), (Olsson et al., 2016). Furthermore, social media as a tool for marketing has been shown to be very effective and an emerging choice for marketers to exploit due to its ability to build a brand and build a connection with customers (Andzulis et al., 2012). Therefore, military recruiters will see the importance in social media and utilise it extensively.

Proposition 4: There will be a wide “civil-military gap” between the people of Generatie D and the Dutch military.

Conscription in the Netherlands has had certain tangible negative factors like lower earnings and educational attainment (Imbens and Van Der Klaauw, 1995) and (Hubers and Webbink, 2015).

Furthermore, the Netherlands has not been at war with any other nation since World War II which will lower the appetite for conscription to return. With the appetite for conscription being at a low point it subsequently leads to a larger “civil-military gap” (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012) as the demographics of the general population and the military are separated to a high degree.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The research will make use of qualitative research methods. The reason for the qualitative approach is due to the measurement goal of the research. The central research question aims to understand what the ideal recruitment rhetoric for the Dutch military is. The central research question is one that could be interpreted in a variety of different ways and does not seek to find numerical answers. Therefore, the central research question will be analysed in a qualitative manner as qualitative studies are more appropriate for questions that may have multiple realities, have a lot of inductive reasoning and contain subjectivity (Mulisa, 2021). In contrast, quantitative methods are most appropriate to be chosen when there is a single reality, deductive reasoning and objectivity (Mulisa, 2021). A mixed approach is most appropriate when multiple dimensions of reality are studied and there is a balanced approach between objectivity and subjectivity (Mulisa, 2021). Based on the information above the most appropriate method to use for the research will be the use of qualitative methods as the topic of recruitment rhetoric is one that is heavily subjective due to the plethora of opinions that people may have on the military. Looking at subquestion 1, the sentiment towards the military is a subjective point that can be influenced by a multitude of factors that depend on the person. Therefore, using qualitative methods is more appropriate to properly analyse sentiment. The second sub question about pains and gains is based on the ‘Generatie D’ advertisements which may elicit varied responses from interviewees as there is not one single dimension of reality that the advertisements can be viewed from. The third sub question about the current recruitment rhetoric is once again related to the ‘Generatie D’ advertisements which are subjective and best analysed through qualitative methods. Ultimately, due to the nature of the study, qualitative methods are the most appropriate for the data collection.

3.1 Data Collection

The data collection consists of interviews that have been conducted with 9 individuals. The interviews were conducted over a period of two weeks and were conducted in person. The interviews were semi-structured and were based on a set of 13 questions. 13 questions were used as enough questions were needed to cover all the topics in the interview while also not tiring out the interviewee with too many questions, as that will lower the reliability of the answers. The questions were set up by taking the sub questions and breaking them up into smaller keywords that led to the creation of interview questions. The questions were structured into two parts, with the first set of questions aimed at discovering the positives and negatives to joining the military and the second set of questions focused on the reception to the ‘Generatie D’ advertisements. A semi-structured approach for the interviews was chosen as it allows for more flexibility in follow up questions and to allow the interviewee to be less rigid in their answers (Kallio et al., 2016). The interviews also contained examples of ‘Generatie D’ advertisements that were played to the interviewees. The complete interview question base is listed in Appendix A.

3.2 Research Sample

The research sample for the interviews comprises 9 individuals where 4 are female and 5 are male. The ages of the individuals in the sample range from 17-22 as it corresponds to the prime age group that the ‘Generatie D’ ads are meant to target (Boerman, 2022). All the interviewees are Dutch university students, as university students fit the ideal age group of the ‘Generatie D’ advertisements. Under theoretical circumstances the interviews should continue until saturation is achieved (Guest et al., 2006), due to time constraints however the amount of interviewees is set at 9.

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

The method of qualitative analysis that will be used is Thematic Analysis which will be based on the work by Braun & Clarke (2006). The Thematic Analysis approach starts with familiarising yourself with the data, followed by a transcription of all the interview data that has been collected, generating codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and lastly generating the

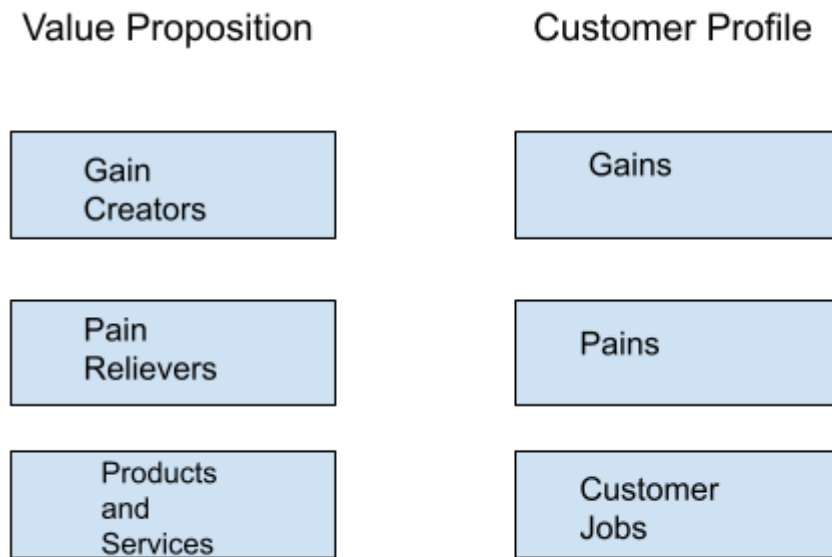
report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). An area to expand on is how the codes will be generated. Codes will be generated by analysing the interview transcripts for latent ideas that are present (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The codes that contain interesting latent themes will be put into a data table and then transformed into a collection of codes that represent a greater theme. The overall approach to the thematic analysis will be one based on inductive reasoning as the themes are linked to the data itself (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 1. Coding Table Example

Theme	Code	Quote
Theme 1	Code 1	Quote 1
	Code 2	Quote 2

After the coding process has been completed, the next step of the analysis will be to determine the themes, which will then be analysed through the Value Proposition framework based on the work by Osterwalder et al., (2015). The Value Proposition Framework will be structured as follows.

Figure 1. Value Proposition Framework



The Customer profile will be utilised in order to answer subquestion 2 and 3 and visualise the current recruitment rhetoric that is implemented by the Dutch Military. The customer profile will make use of the themes found from the thematic analysis to identify the pains and gains that the interviewees have identified and therefore answer subquestion 2, and the customer jobs can be defined as the needs that individuals from Generatie D are trying to satisfy from joining the military. The overall Customer Profile will identify the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch Military. The Value Proposition will be used in order to answer the central research question as it will represent the ideal recruitment rhetoric that the Dutch military should adopt. The main idea of the value proposition will be to bring forward ideas that will create gain and minimise the pains of a new recruitment rhetoric.

3.4 Possible Research Bias

In order to minimise researcher bias, the questions in the interview have been designed in a way so that they can be answered neutrally. The participants of the interviews will not be led into answering a certain way that may be biased by the researcher. The complexity of the questions has been kept relatively low in order to not confuse respondents and during the interviews clear instructions were given on how to answer the questions that required the analysis of the 'Generatie D' advertisements.

Chapter 4: Research Outcome

4.1 Results

The analysis in this chapter will be based on the analytical idea of Thematic Analysis which is based on the work of Braun & Clarke (2006). The analysis of the results will aim to provide the answers to the central research question of: What recruitment rhetoric should the non-conscription-based military in the Netherlands pursue for their recruitment campaigns? All the analysis will be based on the coding table in Appendix C. The first section of the analysis will focus on the interview questions targeted to identify the view of the interviewees on the military in general and the second section of the analysis will focus on the analysis of the interviewee's responses to the 'Generatie D' advertisement campaign. An example of the coding process used to analyse the results will be highlighted. The first step is to identify a quote from the transcribed interview. The example quote is: "Sometimes the Dutch forces look like amateurs compared to other nations, since they don't have that much sophisticated equipment, so if we get attacked I don't think we can effectively defend ourselves". Then the keywords of the quote are highlighted in order to generate a code. The keywords for the example quote include: 'amateurs', 'don't have that much sophisticated equipment', and 'effectively defend'. From the keywords an appropriate code is generated which in this case is Amateuristic Force.

Firstly, one of the main themes that was identified from the interview was lack of quality in the Dutch military. Various interviewees stated that the Dutch military seemed amateuristic compared to other European militaries due to the relative lack of sophisticated equipment and technology. Furthermore, interviewees indicated that it seems that the Dutch military has limited capability and is unable to project power around the world except for missions that include special operations, international relief, and natural disaster aid. Lastly, the funding of the Dutch military was called into question as interviewees did not believe that there was an adequate budget to train personnel and acquire cutting edge military technology. Furthermore, the negative view towards the military can also be linked to the papers by Sion (2006), which describes the failure of Dutch peacekeepers during the Srebrenica Genocide. The aftermath of the Dutch peacekeepers failures heavily tarnished the view of the military

(Sion, 2006) and therefore can be playing a significant part in the Dutch military not being seen as an effective force by the interviewees. The effect of this negative view of the capabilities of the Dutch military in the Value proposition framework can be seen as a factor that will need to be addressed as a pain reliever in order to build the ideal recruitment rhetoric.

The next relevant theme is the questionable actions of the Dutch Military. Interviewees stated that one of the main negatives of the Dutch military has been their involvement in overseas conflicts. Certain interviewees stated that the decision for the Dutch military to join the conflict in Afghanistan was a major negative factor and was described as “meddling by outside forces”. While the importance of having a military was recognized by the interviewees, it was more seen as a vehicle to maintain political and strategic interests. The results link to the paper by Berndtsson et al., (2014), which showed the disagreement by the Swedish and British public to the decision of their respective armed forces to join the conflict in Afghanistan. While some interviewees indicated that overseas wars like the one in Afghanistan were positive, the overwhelming rhetoric towards the war in Afghanistan was negative. Furthermore, there were further negative sentiments towards the Dutch military with some of the interviewees stating that the Dutch military is glorifying violence and is promoting the idea of violence and killing in a positive light. The negative view of the Dutch military’s participation in Afghanistan, the perceived promotion of violence, and the negative view of the operational capability of the Dutch military all link to the idea of the “civil-military gap” (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012) as it shows that certain members of the public are starting to develop strong negative sentiment towards the military and are dissociating from the military in general. The idea of the Dutch civil-military gap is one of the aspects that will have to be handled in the “pain relievers” section of the ideal recruitment rhetoric.

Another theme identified from the analysis is the fitness and discipline incentive of joining the military. Almost all interviewees stated that fitness and discipline were some of the main positives they saw in the military. Interviewees stated that the work of the military is physically tough and requires a strong and clear level of discipline in order to carry out the role of a soldier effectively.

Interviewees stated that maintaining this level of discipline and fitness can lead to individuals developing very disciplined lifestyles where a diverse range of general and survival skills can be acquired. Additionally, another connected theme is the altruistic nature of the military. Certain interviewees stated that some of the main positives they see in the military is the fact that they are able to aid people and nations that really need it. Interviewees stated that being in the military allows you to participate in actions that are selfless in nature as you are assisting individuals that are stuck in combat zones, are suffering from natural disasters, and are aiding in overall humanitarian assistance. The results connect to the paper by Tresch (2008) who states that traditional values like patriotism, tradition, and prestige are outdated values that fail to adequately increase recruitment. Even though the traditional values are still present, it is clear that based on the interviewees' responses, the values of discipline, altruism, and fitness are the clear positive drivers of the military. However, altruism on a nationwide level was a point of disagreement with interviewees as certain interviewees saw the participation of Dutch military personnel in other nations as aid to nations that needed help, while other interviewees saw it as unjustified meddling with other nations. Regardless, the findings that fitness, discipline, and altruism are important positives linked with the military will be important in constructing the ideal recruitment rhetoric as these will serve as the main “gain creators”.

The next theme of interest is that interviewees highlighted the importance of social media as a tool for recruitment. Interviewees stated that social media is an important tool for the military to utilise as it is one of the primary tools to connect with the current generation. Interviewees mention the current popularity of social media services like TikTok and Instagram and stress that it is important that the military should be present on these services. These findings link to the papers by Peralta and Caporusso, 2020) and (Olsson et al., 2016) which shows the importance of social media in military recruitment. Another area that the military may be able to utilise for promotion are video games. Certain interviewees stated that a significant amount of interest in the military was generated due to the exposure of the military in video games. Furthermore, certain interviewees also indicated that their interest in the military was driven by observing military vehicles and personnel through military bases that were close to the interviewees home. The overarching idea that prevails is that the military is best

able to promote themselves through visual mediums. The importance of visual mediums relates to the Products and Services section of the Value Proposition as the visual mediums will be important services for the recruitment rhetoric that create gain and relieve pain. The next theme of interest is the negative view on conscription. Interviewees stated that conscription is acceptable but only when it is necessary. Therefore, indicating that the way conscription is currently handled in the Netherlands to be the right approach. The view on conscription is significant as recruitment campaigns that push a certain recruitment rhetoric will only be applicable to an AVF military that needs to make use of marketing techniques to recruit personnel, as a conscription force removes the choice that people have in picking the military as a career.

The next set of themes will relate to themes identified from interviewees after they had watched 'Generatie D' advertisements and were asked to comment on the recruitment rhetoric that they had perceived.

The first major theme that interviewees identified was the Inclusivity of the Military. Firstly, interviewees pointed out that the 'Generatie D' advertisements included a strong presence of women alongside men. Interviewees pointed out that involvement of both genders was a strong positive as the presence of women would likely encourage more women to consider the military as a possible career choice. However, the idea of societal gender roles was still present as certain interviewees stated that they still felt that the advertisements had a lot of male influence and found that the idea of joining the military to be more something for men. Furthermore, interviewees pointed out that they observed a wide variety of age presented in the advertisements, from young individuals to some slightly older, indicating that the military is a place for everyone regardless of age. In addition, interviewees noted that by using actors of different races and ethnic backgrounds, the advertisement catered to a wider audience and presented the military as an option for all. By analysing the thoughts of the interviewees it's clear to see that the 'Generatie D' advertisements have a strong focus on inclusivity and diversity and aim to push the message that everyone is welcome and that no one should feel that they do not

belong in the military. Inclusivity is therefore a key component of the current recruitment rhetoric and can be seen as a gain in the customer profile of the value proposition framework.

The next significant theme is the theme of adventure. Upon watching the advertisements interviewees pointed out that one of the clear goals of the advertisement was to appeal to people that seek adventures and new challenges. Interviewees stated that the advertisements accomplished the idea of adventure by showing that the military operates in a multitude of different places around the world where you would undertake experiences that one is unlikely to be able to do as a civilian.

Further, strong personal values was an main underlying theme of the 'Generatie D' campaign mentioned by the interviewees. Interviewees stated that the attempt of the advertisements to paint the current generation as one able to solve problems by thinking differently to others, smarter and better. The toughness of the generation was also mentioned as the interviewees stated that the advertisements showed that the current generation is one that is able to handle the various challenges that come with joining the military and that the generation was being complimented by the advertisements due to their ability to step up and face the various challenges that would be presented to them in the military. Interviewees also mentioned that the advertisements showed that the military is full of people that have a very clear and determined mindset accompanied with an equally clear and sharp vision. Lastly, interviewees stated that the advertisements bring forward the idea that everyone is valued in the military and that the military will focus on the individual qualities of every recruit that enlists.

However, the interviewees also mentioned that the 'Generatie D' advertisements have a negative point; the lack of freedoms when signing up. Interviewees mentioned that the advertisements have to convey the idea of joining the military without mentioning the amount of freedoms you will be giving up, highlighting that the interviewees are aware of the freedoms that one loses when joining the military. Furthermore, interviewees expressed that one of the negatives that the advertisements displayed was leaving family and limited visitation. Certain interviewees also stated that they felt that the advertisements did not make clear which environments you would be heading to, and that the

focus is on other countries instead of focusing on national issues. The issue of losing freedoms and being away from home are the main pain in the customer profile section of the value proposition framework.

4.2 Key Findings

The key findings are split into two parts. The first key findings relate to the pain relievers and the gain creators that individuals identify about the army and will aid in creating the ideal recruitment rhetoric. The main gain creators were the themes of fitness and discipline being the main drivers that interviewees considered important when joining the military, which indicates the shift in values that cause people to join the military. The next gain creator is the idea of altruism, interviewees perceive as a major positive when joining the military as one is able to help people in need. The quality of the Dutch military was the main pain that interviewees identified would need to be relieved in the ideal recruitment rhetoric. Interviewees found that the military seemed below standard compared to other nations. The next pain that would need to be relieved is the nature of the engagements that the Dutch military participated in. Certain interviewees found that the Dutch military should not have intervened in certain conflicts, especially Afghanistan.

The next key findings relate to the pains and gains of the current recruitment rhetoric which will aid in determining what the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military is. The main gains of the current rhetoric were the inclusivity of the military. Interviewees communicated that the 'Generatie D' advertisements conveyed that the military consists of a very diverse group that is open to bringing in people from any background, race, or gender. Another gain of the current recruitment campaign was the idea that the military is a place of adventure that will allow personnel to gain new life experiences and travel to places they would not likely go to if they did not join the military. The last gain observed was that the military has strong personal values and seek people from the current generation due to them being smarter and able to face challenges. The current recruitment rhetoric also had a pain which was identified as being the loss of personal freedoms, having to leave family and a comfortable,

familiar environment with limited visitation opportunities enforced by the requirement to be on operations in foreign nations.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

The chapter will aim to compare the key findings of the literature to the key findings of the research, while also answering the propositions, hypothesis, propositions and central research question. The end of the chapter will present recommendations to the market and for future research and the last section will cover the limitations of the research.

5.1 Central Research Question

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the value proposition framework will be employed in order to identify the ideal recruitment rhetoric.

Figure 2. Value Proposition Framework for the Current and New Recruitment Rhetoric

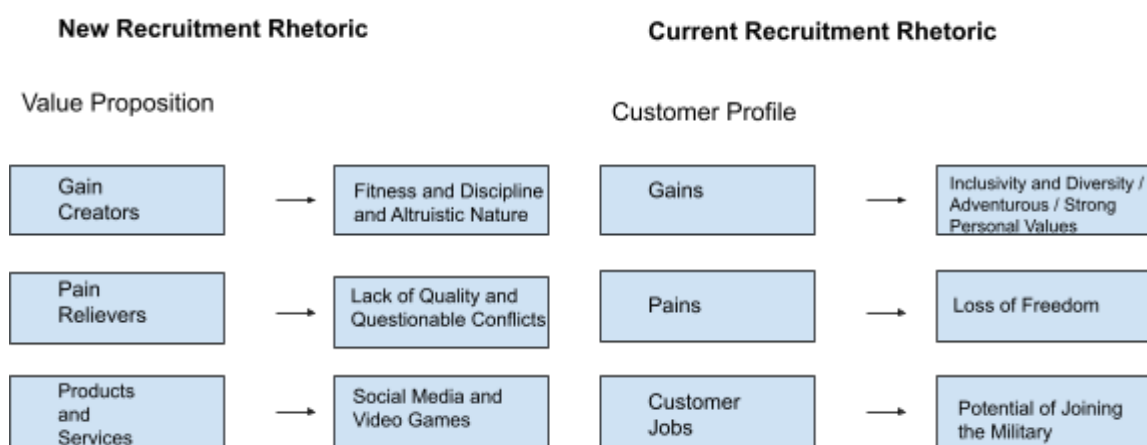


Figure 2 highlights the construction of the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military and the construction of the ideal recruitment rhetoric. Firstly, to analyse the current recruitment rhetoric, the customer profile section of the value proposition framework is used. The gains indicate the aspects that the people of 'Generatie D' see as positives and benefits from the 'Generatie D' advertisements. These gains include the inclusivity and diversity of the advertisements, the adventurous themes, and the strong personal values that are shown in the advertisements. The pains represent the negative aspects of the 'Generatie D' advertisements. The pain that was identified was the loss of freedoms that

were shown in the advertisements. The customer jobs section describes the goals of the customer segment which in the case of the research is the potential of the ads in getting the people of ‘Generatie D’ to join the military. The combination of the pains, gains, and customer jobs creates the current recruitment rhetoric. Based on the analysis in Chapter 4 and the combination of the aspects of pains, gains, and customer jobs, leads to the current recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military to be described as an ‘Adventurous Inclusive rhetoric’. The next step will be to determine the ideal recruitment rhetoric and answer the central research question. As mentioned earlier, the ideal recruitment rhetoric will be constructed from the gain creators, pain relievers, and products and services. The ideal recruitment rhetoric will be constructed based on the thematic analysis conducted in Chapter 4. As seen in Figure 2, the main gain creators are the fitness and discipline of the military and the altruistic nature of the work you do while you are employed in the military. The aspects that cause pain and would need to be addressed and turned into pain relievers are the perceived lack of quality in the Dutch military and their involvement in outside conflicts. In order to make the pains into pain relievers, the ideal recruitment rhetoric needs to show that the Dutch military does indeed have sophisticated equipment and only intervenes in conflicts that require peacekeeping. Lastly, the products and services indicate the ideal products or services that will aid the people of ‘Generatie D’ to join the military. The importance of social media was stressed as mentioned in the analysis of Chapter 4, therefore, the most effective medium for the individuals of Generatie D to be exposed to the ideal recruitment rhetoric will be social media. Based on the gain creators and the pain relievers the ideal recruitment rhetoric needs to be shifted towards a ‘Prepared Peacekeeper rhetoric. The interviewees mentioned that the main pains about the military relate to the lack of quality and the questionable interventions the Dutch military has participated in. Therefore, in order to tackle the lack of quality the ideal recruitment rhetoric needs to include that the Dutch military is significantly prepared to tackle conflicts. However, the main shift that needs to be incorporated in the rhetoric is the shift towards a peacekeeper rhetoric. One of the main pains was that the Dutch military has engaged in controversial conflicts like the conflict in Afghanistan and a way to relieve the pain would be to move to a peacekeeper rhetoric that encourages the military to only intervene in conflicts that require peacekeeping. In addition, one of the main gain creators was being able to engage in altruistic actions

as a military personnel, which further stresses the need for a peacekeeper rhetoric, where the Dutch military can indicate that one of the main reasons to join is to help people in need across the world. The prepared peacekeeper rhetoric also addresses the other gain creator of the discipline and fitness nature of the military, as a prepared peacekeeper rhetoric indicates that the military is strong and prepared and still has the same fitness and discipline requirements it had before. Ultimately, going back to the central research question of: What recruitment rhetoric should the non-conscription-based military in the Netherlands pursue for their recruitment campaigns? The recruitment rhetoric should be switched from the current adventurous inclusive force rhetoric to a prepared peacekeeper rhetoric as it is able to create the most value for the people of ‘Generatie D’.

5.2 Comparison of Key Findings

Looking back at the literature, there were a set of key findings. The key findings were that countries tend to have a unique recruitment rhetoric that is influenced by a plethora of factors. Furthermore, one of the key findings was that military recruitment is very much comparable to contemporary marketing techniques. In addition, it was shown through the literature that the effect of conscription on the Netherlands was mainly negative, even though conscription led to a smaller “civil-military gap”. Lastly, it was shown through the literature that the value proposition framework developed by Alexander Osterwalder was able to be utilised in order to formulate the ideal recruitment rhetoric for the Dutch military. Based on the research conducted in the thesis, the Dutch Military did indeed have its own unique recruitment rhetoric which was that of an inclusive adventurous force. While the ideal recruitment rhetoric was determined to be a prepared peacekeeper rhetoric. Furthermore, the idea of conscription was not favoured as the current Dutch system of conscription only when it was needed was much preferred. While the “civil-military gap” was present as some of the interviewees did have significant negative feelings towards the military.

5.3 Hypothesis and Proposition Review

Proposition 1: The main gain to joining the Dutch military will be to experience new thrill and adventure.

The proposition can be rejected as the majority of interviewees mentioned aspects like physical fitness and altruism as the main gains to joining the military. While experiencing new adventure was mentioned by interviewees it was mentioned to a significantly lower degree compared to values like fitness and altruism. Traditional values like tradition, prestige and patriotism were also mentioned, however values such as fitness, disciplined lifestyle, and altruism were mentioned by almost all of the interviewees. Furthermore, certain interviewees had strong negative feelings towards the Dutch military and therefore showed little connection to values like tradition and patriotism and an overall negative view towards joining the military.

Proposition 2: The current perceived recruitment rhetoric of the Netherlands will be a “peacekeeper” rhetoric.

The proposition can be rejected as the current recruitment rhetoric was one of an adventurous inclusive fighting force. The proposition was based on a combination of the history of the Dutch armed forces having some failures that heavily impacted the public view on the military (Sion, 2006) and the fact that the Dutch military in general is a minor fighting force compared to other nations within the NATO umbrella (Global Firepower Index). However, the recruitment rhetoric that was utilised by the Dutch military in the Generatie D advertisements was a rhetoric that stressed the importance of adventure and maintaining strong personal values while also being a very inclusive diverse force.

Proposition 3: Social media will be viewed as the most important medium for recruitment.

The proposition can be accepted as various interviewees stated that social media is key in promoting the recruitment rhetoric. According to the studies by Peralta and Caporusso (2020) and Olsson et al., (2016), social media was shown to be an important factor for military recruitment. Interviewees stated that they would be best exposed to military recruitment advertisements on social media and stressed

the importance for the Dutch military to be active on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok.

Proposition 4: There will be a wide “civil-military gap” between the people of Generatie D and the Dutch military.

The proposition can be accepted as there were various instances where interviewees stated their discontent and disconnection from the military. The proposition is based on the paper by Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., (2012) which states that the gap shows the disconnect between civilian and military life. Furthermore, aspects like having a conscription based military help to shrink the gap (Choulis et al., 2019). Interviewees stated that they felt that the Dutch military was amateuristic in nature and lacked the ability to project military power, while certain interviewees disagreed with the conflicts that the Dutch military has participated in, leading to significant civil military gap.

5.4 Recommendations to the Market

The main recommendation to the market is to implement the switch from current to new recruitment rhetoric. The newly defined ideal recruitment rhetoric of a prepared peacekeeper better matches the needs of the potential ‘Generatie D’ recruits and will create the most value for the recruits. The advertisements with the new recruitment rhetoric can continue to be pushed on the mediums that the ‘Generatie D’ advertisements are already presented on. As social media is the main and current medium utilised for the existing advertisements and interviewees stated that continuing to advertise on social media is an important factor in appealing to their target audience. In addition, the Dutch military should remain with maintaining the current AVF model for military recruitment as a return to conscription is currently not favoured by the individuals of ‘Generatie D’.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

One of the main avenues for future research is to explore the success of the new recruitment rhetoric. The new recruitment rhetoric could be tested by bringing back interviewees and asking for an evaluation to see if it fully suits their needs and creates significant value. In addition, a way to expand

the research would be to apply big data and machine learning models on the findings of the research. The machine learning model that could be implemented would be based on the work by Bryce et al., (2021) who utilises machine learning models to rank the Canadian postcodes that best match the ideal recruit. Big data models will be able to evaluate which potential candidates best fit the recruitment rhetoric of the Dutch military and how likely they are to join the military.

5.6 Limitations

The main limitation of the research is the number of interviews. Nine in-depth interviews were conducted in order to gather data. However, with only nine interviews it leads to lower reliability of the results as there may be some conclusions that were missed by the interview process. Therefore, a clear improvement would be to conduct more interviews to the point of saturation in order to improve the reliability of the study. Another limitation is that the study is only conducted on a qualitative level. In order to broaden the results of the study, quantitative research could have been utilised in order to make conclusions about aspects like public support for the military and effectiveness of the Generatie D advertisement campaign.

5.7 Reflection

The following section will reflect on the research and document the knowledge gained from conducting the research. The main area of knowledge that was strengthened through the writing process of the thesis was to create a robust theoretical framework which would act as a base for the research. Writing the theoretical framework allowed me to conduct the research based on a strong academic base which resulted in more informed and deeper scope of analysis. One of the main challenges was to find sufficient papers that covered the topic of the thesis. The topic chosen for the thesis was not covered extensively in the Netherlands and required a degree of subjectivity as the idea of recruitment rhetoric may differ heavily between different individuals who share differing ideals. Lastly, one of the main challenges was to adapt the Value proposition framework to a topic that would normally not make use of it. The framework needed to be adapted in order for it to suit the research and be effective in answering the central research question. This proved to be a challenge but also a

vital point of learning as it will allow me to use methods and frameworks for a more diverse range of topics.

Appendix

Appendix A (Interview Questions and Responses)

P1: Interviewer

P2: Interviewee

Interview 1

P1: Right, so the first question is what is your view on the Dutch military in general?

P2: I do not know much about them, I know you have to sign up for it so that is good. My view is neutral but they do advertise a lot.

P1: What are the main benefits of joining the military?

P2: I think it gives you experience if you do not want to go to university and it allows you to protect your country. However, since you are young you may get taken advantage of in the military since it is such a dangerous job.

P1: What are the limitations of joining the military?

P2: It is dangerous and I think its too casual in ads since they make it seem like an honourable deed but they do not show the dangers that come with it.

P2: I also think there is a big disconnect between people who are in the military and regular citizens as the experiences in the military are very unique and people who are not in the military will struggle to understand that.

P1: Did you ever consider joining the military?

P2: I am not opposed to it, but I would like to go to university directly, but I believe that I would benefit a lot from it as I could fulfil a role like a medic which would be interesting to me.

P1: Have you heard of the Generatie D advertisement campaign

P2: Yes, but I do not know what it stands for

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so based on those 4 advertisements what is the main message or theme that they are trying to bring forward

P2: Having control over your life and choosing what you want to do, they are showing how everyone is connected and part of a community that everyone can be part of without any pre-requisites.

P1: What were the positives of the videos?

P2: Sense of community and you do not need to be a specific type of person and is very inclusive

P1: What were some negatives?

P2: The inclusivity can be seen as a negative as it may put pressure on the viewer to be a part of the organisation. The activities shown in the videos were very normal activities which may cause people to think they are not normal if they do not join. Also the advertisements are shown on social media platforms like Snapchat which is primarily used by young people and they take the advertisement at face value without a range of points of views resulting in an inability to make an informed decision.

P1: Ok so an extra question is do you see social media as a potential tool the military could use for recruitment?

P2: I think its the only way they can reach an audience, since I have only seen the Generatie D ads on Tv and Snapchat, which I think is on purpose as they know it is the best way to reach young people. While they say Generatie D spans all generations, they really only want to recruit people from Generation Z and beyond who can be approached best by social media.

P1: Thank you for your time

Interview 2

P1: Right, so the first question is: what is your opinion on the Dutch military in general?

P2: I think they are quite bad. Since we currently have no tanks or helicopters and the ones that we had we gave away only to loan them back from countries like Germany. Also the Dutch military in general is falling behind other European nations.

P1: Right, so do you see any positives in joining the Dutch military

P2: I don't think so

P1: What would you say the main negatives of the military are?

P2: I think the fact we are so far behind other countries and that we gave away our equipment to Germany

P1: Did you ever consider joining the military?

P2: Yes, but I decided to stick to school and some friends of mine did not have great experiences when they decided to join.

P1: Right so have you ever heard of the Generatie D advertising campaign

P2: Yes, I get the ads all the time

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so based on those 4 advertisements what is the main message or theme that they are trying to bring forward

P2: That you have to be strong and do not give up, and that you have to push through any challenges that you may face.

P1: Did you see any specific positives or negatives to the videos?

P2: Nothing that I can think of in particular

P1: Right and then the last question is, do you believe that our current conscription model is the best model we can have?

P2: Yes, as people who can handle the military can choose to join if they want to

P1: Thank you for your time!

Interview 3

P1: Right so the first question is, what is your opinion on the Dutch military?

P2: I honestly find them quite weak as they are overall not that strong. They do not have strong weapons and do not have tanks and the level of funding and technology is low

P1: Ok perfect, so what do you see as the main benefits of joining the Dutch military?

P2: I think the benefits would be that you get to defend your home country. Also you get to help people in need while living a very disciplined lifestyle

P1: Right, so what do you see as the limitations to joining?

P2: I feel that the job you have to do is tough but also has moral issues.

P1: Ok, so have you ever thought of joining the Dutch military?

P2: I have thought about it many times

P1: What reasons made you think about joining?

P2: You get to defend your country and you learn to live a disciplined life

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so based on those 4 advertisements what is the main message or theme that they are trying to bring forward

P2: It shows that the generation does not give up and that they are able to accomplish a lot, and that you help a lot of people.

P1: Ok perfect, what did you think were the positives of the videos?

P2: I feel like they will really motivate people to join and show them that joining the military is worth it.

P1: Did you see any negatives regarding the videos?

P2: I feel like they made the military look really fun but that in reality that is not what it is.

P1: Ok so I have a few more closing questions

P1: Do you believe that social media plays an important part in military recruitment?

P2: I think it does as it is important for spreading the advertisements and it is how I learned about the Generatie D advertisements

P1: Lastly, what is your opinion on the system of conscription that is currently used in the Netherlands?

P2: I think its good as people get the choice if they want to join or not

P1: Ok thank you for your time!

Interview 4

P1: Right, so the first question is: what is your opinion on the Dutch military in general?

P2: I think they are cool and strong as they protect the country

P1: Right, so what are some positives about joining the military?

P2: You get to be in a lot of action which could be interesting

P1: What about the negatives of the military?

P2: You are essentially playing with your life and can get stuck in dangerous situations

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so based on those 4 advertisements what is the main message or theme that they are trying to bring forward

P2: I think it mainly focused on young people that were placed in situations filled with action and they tried to show that they can handle it.

P1: What other positives about the videos did you see?

P2: That the videos were well made and all carried the same theme

P1: Any negatives about the videos?

P2: I believe that it was still too calm and did not show what operations the real military participates in

P1: Right and the next question is: do you see social media as an important tool for military recruiters?

P2: Yes, I think its a good way to connect with the current generation

P1: Lastly, what is your opinion on the current conscription system that the Dutch military employs?

P2: I think its good as some people would not be able to handle the pressures of the military if they were forced to join

P1: Thank you for your time!

Interview 5

P1: Right so the first question is, what is your study and your living situation?

P2: I do pedagogical science in Nijmegen, where I lived with friends but now I live with my parents at home.

P1: Right, so the next question is: what is your personal view on the Dutch military?

P2: I don't really know too much about them, but I think positive as its often in the news that the Dutch military is helping other nations in need.

P1: Perfect, so the next question is, what do you see as the positives of joining the military?

P2: The main one for me is having a good fitness condition, because it is very tough, but a more important fact is that it is selfless work as you are helping others as you will be in conflict areas very often where you can help locals there to have a better life. The work is also very diverse as you are not just sitting in an office all day, you are usually busy all day with a bunch of other things, every day is different which seems very interesting to me.

P1: Is that work that appeals to you? The fact that you are always doing different things?

P2: Yeah, I would find it quite interesting, but I personally would not want to be with the military due to it being very dangerous and being far from family. But a job where every day would feel different would be something that I enjoy.

P1: Right, so the next question is what do you see as the main negatives of joining the military?

P2: The main one is being far from family. Like you see in America, when the troops go to Afghanistan, they are far away from their families and there is a chance that they do not come back since it is dangerous work. So those two together are a big negative point for me.

P1: Right, so did you ever consider a career at the military?

P2: Not the military, but I would really enjoy working at the police or as a detective and then eventually move on to Mobiele Eenheid (ME) which has its operations in the Netherlands. Working there would have the same idea that every day is different and that you are working to ensure the safety of people. So something like that would appeal to me but not working at the actual military.

P1: Right so what do you see as the main difference that the police has from the military that does entice you?

P2: You are closer to home and its a job where you usually do make it home. Also the military seems physically a lot more challenging and maybe later in life its a more feasible option but not when I'm this young.

P1: Right, so the next question is: have you heard of the Generatie D advertisement campaign?

P2: I think I have, I think I have seen it on tv

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right, so those were the advertisements, do you see an underlying theme that they may all share?

P2: Yeah so I think they are trying to show that you are able to experience a bunch of new things, and are able to discover new places in the world. They make it much clearer by using the imagery and video as that is much more effective than just saying that you can experience a lot at the military. They also say that Generation D should continue the effort of the previous generation as they showed images of the past, and I think by using that they are trying to stimulate this generation to also join the military. Also, I think they are trying to give compliments to our generation by saying that we take action and that we can do it and I think by doing that they are trying to convince us to join the military.

P1: Right that's perfect, do you think that you learned anything new about the military from those advertisements?

P2: Yeah you do get a good look at what the military does, as it's not only being in areas of conflict but that you also get close with your co-workers and I believe in the last video they showed them engaging with their families even though they have been off on deployment. So I learned that there is a lot of aspects to the military instead of just fighting and I do find that quite interesting.

P1: Right, so do you see any negatives concerning the advertisements?

P2: Not really, but I did see the part where they had to say bye to their family but for the rest I did not see much that seemed negative.

P1: Right, but do you think they deliberately make it very positive?

P2: Yes, since that's marketing it's how it works, but I did not think it was overly positive. Like the military does have a negative connotation due to its portrayal in the news, but I feel they showed the military well and brought it forward in a nice way.

P1: Ok perfect, did you find that the theme carried through all four videos?

P2: I did, but I did find the first one the best as it showed images of a son, father, and grandfather which I liked, but the other three videos focused more on the discovery of new places and experiences.

P1: Right, so do you think if you saw advertisements like this earlier that it maybe would have worked in convincing you to join the military?

P2: I think it would, but I'm a girl and I think it's more common for guys to join the military. But I do think that if this was shown at a younger age like at school for example for like kids at 15-16 years old, I think you would be able to motivate a lot of people to join. Guys would love to do something physical and I think it would be a good motivator at a young age.

P1: Ok so that connects to the next question, do you think that the split between male and female in the advertisements was appropriate?

P2: I think I did see women but I think it was more dominated by men. I think it is something that is more for men and that it interests them more.

P1: Right so do you think it would have helped for them to show more women in the advertisements in order to make it more appealing for women?

P2: Yeah I think so, its a good example for women to see themselves on tv. Also if you see that a lot of women are in the military then its more motivating for women to join, compared to advertisements that show that it is more male dominated.

P1: Ok perfect! Thanks for your time!

Interview 6

P1: Right so the first question is: How long have you been living in the Netherlands? What is your living situation, and what university do you go to?

P2: 5 years, I live with one roommate and I study at the University of Amsterdam

P1: What do you study?

P2: I study politics, psychology, law, and economics

P1: Right, so the next question is, what is your view on the Dutch military, in the terms of if they act in the interest of the Dutch citizens.

P2: I don't really know what the military does day to day

P1: Ok more focused then on the operations that they conduct in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq along with NATO forces, do you think that it is necessary for the Dutch military to be involved in these conflicts?

P2: No, I dont think its necessary for any militaries to be involved in those operations, especially in Afghanistan. Where its obvious its just meddling from outside forces. But I guess politically it does make sense for the Netherlands to be involved, so they can say that they contributed.

P1: So would you say that the military should be abolished? Or do we still need it for national defence?

P2: Who are we defending from? Luxembourg? Belgium? We don't need it, but to stay part of the global politics game we should still have a military.

P1: So the next question is do you see any benefits from joining the military?

P2: I would be really fit, I guess it is also a very disciplined lifestyle but at the cost of learning how to kill someone which I cannot get behind.

P1: Right, what are the main limitations of joining the military?

P2: Training to kill and enticing violence is not necessary, its outdated, its barbaric.

P1: Right, so I am assuming that you never considered a career in the military?

P2: No, I did not. I do not want to learn how to kill someone and be desensitized to that.

P1: Right, the next focus of the interview is on the advertisement campaigns that the military utilizes. So are you familiar with the Generatie D advertisement campaign?

P2: No, I am not familiar.

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so based on those 4 advertisements what is the main message or theme that they are trying to bring forward

P2: That the Generatie D thinks different, that they are inclusive.

P1: Did you see a common idea or theme across the four advertisements?

P2: Yeah like definitely adventurous, they show a lot of scenes with scenarios that can be seen as adventurous. But, I feel that they really focus on the idea that Generatie D is different and that they think smarter and better. I also saw a big focus on inclusivity for women, which I feel is interesting for the Military.

P1: Right, so what did you see as the positives of the advertisements?

P2: The inclusivity for Women mainly, I may not like the military but its cool that they focus on women heavily.

P1: Do you believe that they portrayed the military well?

P2: No, I believe they did the opposite, they seemed to glorify it and say that its good and happy and cool that you are taking people's lives, I feel like it was complete glorification.

P1: Do you then think the advertisements should be more honest about the nature of the military?

P2: I understand that it would never work for getting people to join but I do feel like its lying to make it out to be such a cool thing. I don't know how I would want them to show that since you cant say: "Oh join this you are going to kill people", but making it seem cool is wrong when you have to kill people.

P1: Right, are there any other negatives you picked up from the videos?

P2: They failed to show that it is mainly abroad, which I think is also important since most of your deployments will be abroad, so instead of appealing to nationalism they should mention it is mainly in other countries like Afghanistan.

P1: Right so the last question is, even though you are against the military do you think that the current system of voluntarily joining the military is a good system compared to conscription?

P2: I like how the Netherlands does it since conscription only comes in when it is absolutely necessary. Since pacifism only works if all participate.

P1: Thanks for your time!

Interview 7

P1: Alright! So the first question is, what is your view on the military? Do you see them as a positive? Like do they have an overall positive view or a negative view? What is your personal opinion on them.

P2: Pretty neutral, I think its important for the country's political and strategic interests, but you know there is also some controversy naturally I think in some of the wars the military might have participated in. But personally im quite neutral on that subject. But in my opinion the Dutch military defence budgets shrunk quite a bit I think since the Cold War. I honestly don't think outside of special operations or like international relief or like natural disasters that we don't have a strong military capability.

P1: So would you say that they should increase spending and make it more comparable to other European nations?

P2: Yeah a little bit, but it depends on how they raise the funds. You know, it's like, if they take it away from social budgets like education, health care, etc, then I wouldn't agree with it. But if they raised taxes on large corporations or whatever, then I wouldn't mind.

P1: Right, so what do you see as the main benefits of the military, like if you were to join what would be the positives that come from it?

P2: Well you know you wont get fired unless you mess up really bad. So I think thats one positive, you get a lot of tax breaks and stuff, government benefits, other than that I don't think theres that much. I mean I guess for some people its the experience, its a very different world compared to the normal life that we live. So for some people it can be a really positive or life-changing experience due to the structure, discipline, and you learn a lot of valuable life and survival skills.

P1: To complement that, what are the main negatives or limitations from joining the military?

P2: I think you have very little flexibility while you are working in the military, you have a contract that you have to work out of. Also your personal freedoms are quite restricted. Yeah I would say mainly that

P1: Right, so have you ever considered a career in the military.

P2: Yeah I have, a few years ago. I think I ultimately decided against it, due to not having flexibility to do my own thing.

P1: Are you familiar with the Generatie D advertising campaign?

P2: Partially yeah.

P1: So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P2: The older ads were so much more corny.

P1: So those were the 4 ads, so what did you see as the underlying theme behind the advertisements?

P2: Main theme is values like personal values, they were trying to show that the military is full of people that are forward thinking, hands-on, and have a clear vision and mindset. You know I feel like everyone understands what they are trying to do with the Generation D thing, we are like generation Z now right? It's clever, it's catchy.

P1: Would you say that the theme was consistent across the advertisements?

P2: I think the theme was consistent through the interviews.

P1: What would you say are the positives of the videos, what did they portray well?

P2: I think it was well produced, the production quality was good. Even though they are a bit corny you do have to realize that it is a difficult selling point, you are trying to get people to give up their life and freedoms and put it all on the line. Obviously the videos are exaggerated because I don't think we have the budget to train that much, but yeah honestly they were not as bad as I thought they would be, definitely compared to the older ones.

P1: Do you see any negatives or areas they did not portray as well?

P2: No not really.

P1: Maybe the risks that come with joining?

P2: Yeah but it is an advertising campaign, they want people to join not to warn them. I may have my personal opinions on the military but the ad campaign is well put together.

P1: So one of the last questions is, do you think that it was good that all branches of the military were put in one advertisement or that it should have been separated?

P2: No, I think its fine and it's something they can do in the future but it is more important to drill the generatie D message into people's heads and then later focus on service specific advertisements.

P1: The last question is, do you think if you had seen these advertisements when you were younger that it would have changed your mind about joining?

P2: No, it wouldn't. But I think this campaign will get more people than previous campaigns

P1: Why do you think that?

P2: The previous campaign was a lot more action focused and corny and you capture a different type of people with that type of ad. But with this one it is more focused on individual character.

P1: Thank you for your time!

Interview 8

P1: So the first question is, do you live at home and what study are you currently following?

P2: Right, so I live at home with my parents and I study International Business Administration in Tilburg at the University of Tilburg and its my last year.

P1: Right so what is your opinion on the military in general?

P2: I see them quite positively. It may impact my opinion as the Volkel air base is near my house so I see them quite often and its always quite interesting. I have never considered joining the military as I wanted to do university and it is quite a stereotype that lower educated people join the military.

P1: What do you see as the biggest positives of joining the Dutch military?

P2: The main benefit of the military is defending the Netherlands, not that it is really needed at the moment and aiding other nations in the world that cant defend themselves. For example, Afghanistan since they cannot solve that issue on their own, so then its good that outside militaries come and help.

P1: Right, so then what do you see as the main negatives of the Dutch Military?

P2: Sometimes the Dutch forces look like amateurs compared to other nations, since they don't have that much sophisticated equipment, so if we get attacked I don't think we can effectively defend ourselves.

P1: Right, so you believe the quality is quite low?

P2: Yes, a lot of old equipment and a lack of newer more advanced technologies.

P1: Right, so the next question is, have you ever considered joining the military?

P2: Uhm, well a friend of mine joined the military academy and he said that it was a good experience, so I thought about it a bit then but never really made an effort to join, but if I had to choose I think the marines or the air force would be more fun than the other branches.

P1: Why were you more attracted to those branches?

P2: Yeah the air force due to the air base that is close to my house and marines due to their presence in media on the internet like social media, video games and marines.

P1: Right, so do you think its important then for the military to be active on social media?

P2: Yeah, especially with the current generation as a lot of people are active on TikTok and Instagram, so its important to be present there.

P1: Right, so have you ever heard of the Generatie D advertisement campaign?

P2: Maybe, but cant really recall.

P1: Right, So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so from the commercials did you see an underlying theme?

P2: I think the main idea is that all types of people are present in the military, its not just young male people but also a lot of girls and older individuals. However, the main focus is on young people like the new generation. They also seem like they look at every individual and don't generalize people that join but really focus on the individual qualities that people have.

P1: Did you see that theme be present in all 4 videos?

P2: I think the first one was the best, but the last one was not as strong.

P1: Do you think its important then that they really focused on the diverse nature of people that can join the military?

P2: Yes, as it lowers the hurdles of joining the military, especially for girls, people with color, and others to join. Because, if you just see white people in the commercials it may put other people off from joining.

P1: So overall, how did you perceive the advertisements?

P2: I found it very positive and I think it would really cause people to join the military. Also the campaign looked very professional and well put together.

P1: Ok, and did you see any negatives about the campaign?

P2: No, I don't think I saw any

P1: Right, so do you think if you saw advertisements like this earlier, that you would have thought of the military as a more realistic choice?

P2: I think if I had not chosen to go to university, then yeah it would have been quite a serious option, but for me the first choice is university but as a second choice the videos would have definitely made the military an interesting choice. Otherwise, without the videos it would be very unclear about what it's like in the military and what operations you would be on.

P1: Thanks for your time!

Interview 9

P1: Right so the first question is what is your view on the Dutch military?

P2: I am quite neutral on them as I don't see many news articles that mention them or any of the stuff they are doing

P1: Ok, do you see any benefits to joining the Dutch military?

P2: I think that it is a good career path for some people especially if you have the mental strength to handle it as it will really test your abilities

P1: Perfect, and do you see any negatives about it?

P2: You are not at home very often and you will have to learn to live without your friends and family for extended periods of time

P1: Right, so have you ever considered a career in the military?

P2: No, since I lived abroad for a while it never really was an option for me

P1: Right, So what I am looking at for the research is something called the recruitment rhetoric, which is basically the theme or the underlying image that the military is trying to pursue through their advertisement campaigns. So I am going to show videos of some of the Generatie D commercials to get your opinion on them.

P1: Right so, from the commercials did you see an underlying theme?

P2: I feel like the main theme is to live life to the fullest and taking on the barriers that come along the way.

P1: Ok perfect, what did you find positive about the videos?

P2: I think that it was able to convey a very positive message in a creative manner as some of the scenes did not look like typical military activities

P1: Was there anything negative about the videos?

P2: Maybe that they showed less of the fighting and the tough situations that you will be in.

P1: Thank you for your time!

Appendix B (Coding Table)

Theme	Code	Quote
Lack of Quality in the Dutch Military	Amateuristic Force	“Sometimes the Dutch forces look like amateurs compared to other nations, since they don't have that much sophisticated equipment, so if we get attacked I don't think we can effectively defend ourselves”
	Lack of Technology	“Yes, a lot of old equipment and a lack of newer more advanced technologies.”
	Limited Capability	“I honestly don't think outside of special operations or like international relief or like natural disasters that we don't have a strong military capability.”
	Limited Funding	“Obviously the videos are exaggerated because I don't think we have the budget to train that much,”
	Falling Behind	“I think they are quite bad. Since we currently have no tanks or helicopters and the ones that we had we gave away only to loan them back from countries like Germany. Also

		the Dutch military in general is falling behind other European nations.”
	Lack of Strength	“I honestly find them quite weak as they are overall not that strong. They do not have strong weapons and do not have tanks and the level of funding and technology is low”
Main Incentive for Joining the Military being Fitness and Discipline	Fitness due to Toughness	“The main one for me is having a good fitness condition, because it is very tough”
	Positive Lifestyle	“I would be really fit, I guess it is also a very disciplined lifestyle”
	Strong Discipline	“So for some people it can be a really positive or life-changing experience due to the structure, discipline, and you learn a lot of valuable life and survival skills.”
	Breaking Barriers	“I feel like the main theme is to live life to the fullest and taking on the barriers that come along the way. “
Altruistic Nature of the Military	Aiding Nations	“The main benefit of the military is defending the Netherlands, not that it is really needed at the moment and aiding other nations in the world that can't defend themselves. For example, Afghanistan since they cannot solve that issue on their own, so then its good that outside militaries come and help.”
	Selfless Actions	“but a more important fact is that it is selfless work as you are helping others as you will be in conflict areas very often where you can help locals there to have a better life.”

	Helping Others	“I think the benefits would be that you get to defend your home country. Also you get to help people in need while living a very disciplined lifestyle”
Importance of Social Media	Portrayal in Social Media	“Yeah the air force due to the air base that is close to my house and marines due to their presence in media on the internet like social media and video games.”
	Presence in Social Media	“Yeah, especially with the current generation as a lot of people are active on TikTok and Instagram, so its important to be present there.”
	Connection to New Generation	“I think it's the only way they can reach an audience, since I have only seen the Generatie D ads on Tv and Snapchat, which I think is on purpose as they know it is the best way to reach young people. While they say Generatie D spans all generations, they really only want to recruit people from Generation Z and beyond who can be approached best by social media.”
	Youth Exposure	“Also the advertisements are shown on social media platforms like Snapchat which is primarily used by young people and they take the advertisement at face value without a range of points of views resulting in an inability to make an informed decision.”
	Spreading Information	“I think it does as it is important for spreading the advertisements and it is how I learned about the Generatie D advertisements”
Questionable Actions of the Military	Intervention in other Nations	“No, I dont think its necessary for any militaries to be involved in those operations,

		especially in Afghanistan. Where its obvious its just meddling from outside forces. But I guess politically it does make sense for the Netherlands to be involved, so they can say that they contributed.”
	Lack of Necessity	“Who are we defending from? Luxembourg? Belgium? We don't need it, but to stay part of the global politics game we should still have a military.”
	Violence	“Training to kill and enticing violence is not necessary, it's outdated, it's barbaric.”
	Glorification of Violence	“No, I believe they did the opposite, they seemed to glorify it and say that it's good and happy and cool that you are taking people's lives, I feel like it was complete glorification.”
	Controversial Wars	“Pretty neutral, I think it's important for the country's political and strategic interests, but you know there is also some controversy naturally I think in some of the wars the military might have participated in.”
	Civil Military Gap	“I also think there is a big disconnect between people who are in the military and regular citizens as the experiences in the military are very unique and people who are not in the military will struggle to understand that.”
Inclusivity of Military Personnel Recruitment Rhetoric	Inclusivity for Women	“The inclusivity for Women mainly, I may not like the military but it's cool that they focus on women heavily.”
	Gender Roles	“I think I did see women but I think it was more dominated by men. I think it is something that is more for men and that it

		interests them more.”
	Positive Diversity	“I think the main idea is that all types of people are present in the military, its not just young male people but also a lot of girls and older individuals.”
	Lowering Hurdles	“Yes, as it lowers the hurdles of joining the military, especially for girls, people with color, and others to join. Because, if you just see white people in the commercials it may put other people off from joining.”
	Community	“Having control over your life and choosing what you want to do, they are showing how everyone is connected and part of a community that everyone can be part of without any pre-requisites.”
Adventurous Recruitment Rhetoric	Discovery	“Yeah so I think they are trying to show that you are able to experience a bunch of new things, and are able to discover new places in the world. They make it much clearer by using the imagery and video as that is much more effective than just saying that you can experience a lot in the military.”
	Adventure Scenarios	“Yeah like definitely adventurous. They show a lot of scenes with scenarios that can be seen as adventurous.”
Strong Personal Values Recruitment Rhetoric	Strong abilities	“Also, I think they are trying to give compliments to our generation by saying that we take action and that we can do it and I think by doing that they are trying to convince us to join the military”
	Thinking Different	“But, I feel that they really focus on the idea that Generatie D is different and that they think smarter and better.”
	Clear Values	“Main theme is values like

		personal values, they were trying to show that the military is full of people that are forward thinking, hands-on, and have a clear vision and mindset.”
	Individual Focus	“They also seem like they look at every individual and don't generalize people that join but really focus on the individual qualities that people have.”
Loss of Freedoms Rhetoric	Loss of Freedom	“You are trying to get people to give up their life and freedoms and put it all on the line.”
	Away from Family	“But I did see the part where they had to say bye to their family”
	Away from Home	“They failed to show that it is mainly abroad, which I think is also important since most of your deployments will be abroad, so instead of appealing to nationalism they should mention it is mainly in other countries like Afghanistan”
Negative Views towards Conscription	Necessity	“I like how the Netherlands does it since conscription only comes in when it is absolutely necessary. Since pacifism only works if all participate.”
	Fit for Service	“Yes, as people who can handle the military can choose to join if they want to”
	Unable to Serve	“I think its good as some people would not be able to handle the pressures of the military if they were forced to join”

Appendix C (References)

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