

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Constructing Social Identity During an Involuntary Organizational Exit: The Case of Civilian Contractors on U.S. Military Bases in Afghanistan

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Civilian contractors play a vital role in supporting military operations, whether for routine operations or in times of war. While the conclusion of deployment overseas, for military personnel, means going back to their military bases in the U.S., and continuing with their assigned duties, for the civilian contractors, the post-deployment period signifies loss of a job and income. Although academic research has strived to answer some of the fundamental questions pertaining to layoffs in traditional settings, there has been sparse literature on downsizing in a different cultural milieu such as a war zone. This study examines how civilian contractors construct social identity during involuntary organizational exit in a war zone.

Keywords: U.S. Department of Defense; civilian contractors; organizational exit