
Chapter 3I – PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Major Rob Morrow

Directorate of Military Personnel Strategy (D Mil Pers Strat H.R. 5-4), CAN

morrow.ro@forces.gc.ca

3I.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PERSTEMPO and quality of life (QOL) are important subjects to cover when examining issues that influence recruiting and retention of military personnel. Unlike other factors, these elements have very specific contexts in a military setting that would be different from most non-military environments. This paper examined the relationships between these two factors and their influences on recruiting and retention of military personnel. A majority of the literature reviewed described and explained the consequences of PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and QOL influenced retention directly. The absence of research on how recruiting is influenced by these variables resulted in making many indirect links between these variables by hypothesizing how PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and QOL might influence recruiting. The studies reviewed indicate that the relationship between PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and retention is complex. The type of deployment influences the stay or leave decision. Participating in non-hostile, newer missions seems to be associated with higher rates of retention/re-enlistment than do repetitive or hostile deployments. It would also appear that career progression plans might mitigate the effect that this association demonstrates in terms of the direction of the relationship and how reasons for leaving are measured. A number of individual factors related to quality of life have been associated with recruitment and retention. Only recently have these models been used to assess facets of QOL on organizational outcomes, and they have only been used with specific populations of military personnel (e.g., Navy and Marine Corps). Results to date indicate that these models have been successful in determining that quality of life variables influence peoples' intentions to remain in the military.

3I.2 INTRODUCTION

PERSTEMPO and quality of life are important subjects to cover when examining issues that influence recruiting and retention of military personnel. Unlike other factors that could be examined, these elements have very specific contexts in a military setting that would be different from most non-military environments. The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationships between these two factors and their influences on recruiting and retention of military personnel. The former has been well researched and have examined numerous relationships. It is not the purpose of this paper to provide an exhaustive literature review of all the research conducted, but to limit the review to those aspects that have shown to have a direct or hypothesized influence on recruiting and retention. This review found research on the influence of these topics on retention, but found very little related to recruiting. As such, the paper presents considerable linkages with retention, but very few with recruiting.

3I.3 TOPIC INTRODUCTION – PERSTEMPO

OPSTEMPO research has increased dramatically over the last ten years in response to the increased pace of many countries' military operations. Countries' involvements in such areas as the Middle East, the Balkans, East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan have meant that soldiers have been busier than their predecessors.

3I.3.1 Effects of PERSTEMPO on Retention

Research on retention has examined some of the links between PERSTEMPO, OPSTEMPO and attrition of military personnel. Sticha, Sadaca, DiFazio and Knerr (1999) reviewed the literature to identify (a) definitions and measures of PERSTEMPO, (b) research that links PERSTEMPO to retention, and readiness or quality of life, and (c) sources of existing data that could form the basis of additional analyses. The literature review and additional analyses showed:

- 1) The effects of PERSTEMPO on retention are relatively small;
- 2) The effects of PERSTEMPO are often not linear; and
- 3) Different ways of measuring PERSTEMPO and outcome variables produce different assessments of the magnitude of relationships between them.

At low levels, they found that increasing time away from a home unit was associated with higher retention and greater Army career intentions. As the time away increased, the positive effect was reduced and become somewhat negative. They found that the number of deployments prior to the end of a soldier's term of service was positively related to re-enlistment likelihood, while the average length of these deployments was negatively related. Finally, they found no evidence that the levels of PERSTEMPO at the time of the study were having adverse impacts on a large segment of the Army population.

Specific studies have examined the link between the number and variety of deployments military personnel performed and the extent to which they re-enlisted in or separated from the military. Hosek and Totten (1998) found that having some long or hostile duty had a positive effect on re-enlistment for NCOs, but as the duty lengthened or involved danger it may have caused stress and disrupted personal life, thereby lowering morale and potentially reducing re-enlistment.

A second similar study (Hosek and Totten, 2002) found that non-hostile deployments increased Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps first-term re-enlistment. Navy first-term re-enlistment was higher for one non-hostile deployment than for none, but did not rise further with more deployments. Hostile deployments had little effect on first-term re-enlistment. For the most part, first-term re-enlistment did not decrease with the number of hostile episodes, but remained constant or slightly increased. In one case, for marines without dependents, re-enlistment tended to decline as hostile deployments increased. Navy re-enlistment was slightly lower for one hostile episode versus none, although it was not lower for two or more hostile episodes.

Fricker (2002) examined the link between PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and retention of military officers. This study was designed similar to the above-mentioned studies except that it accounted for the fact that the terms of service for officers are very different from those of NCOs. Fricker (2002) found a clear, positive association between increasing amounts of non-hostile deployment and junior and mid-grade officer retention: Officers who participate in more non-hostile deployments are retained at a higher rate in all services. Hostile deployment generally mitigates this positive effect, but in almost all cases examined, even those with some or all hostile deployment show higher retention rates than do non-deployers. The major differences found by service include the Air Force showing the most pronounced effect of hostile deployment and the Marine Corps and Navy showing the least effect of hostile deployment. In all services except the Air Force, in the late 1990s, the effect of hostile deployment was less for mid-grade officers than for junior officers.

Dunn and Morrow (2002) conducted focus groups with military personnel to determine peoples' reasons for leaving the military. Of the themes that were identified, the second most commonly mentioned reason for leaving was the workload as it related to PERSTEMPO and OPSTEMPO. The participants consistently

described how their workload was hectic. It was frequently stated that primary duties, coupled with secondary duties and a high deployment tempo, were leading to some members feeling burnt out and to others leaving the military. Members often stated that the high PERSTEMPO and workload were putting people in the position of having to choose between staying in the military or losing their families. It was stated that the amount of time members had to spend away from home due to deployments, exercises, courses, and overtime was in many cases beyond the coping ability of their families.

Discussions surrounding pre-deployment and deployment were common. Many believed the time spent in pre-deployment training (especially for Bosnia) was “*too long*,” “*repetitive*”, and took away too much quality time that could be spent with their families prior to deploying. They also felt that more pre-deployment training should be done locally with a standardized training package. Members felt courses were too scattered and records about qualifications were incomplete. They reported traveling away from home for training to find out that they had already taken courses that were now being scheduled for them.

Other common complaints members had concerning deployments were their length and purpose. It was consistently expressed that the deployments to Bosnia were too long, and boring. Many also felt they were being deployed at the wrong time in their careers and/or life cycle.

On the other hand, Jenkins and Morrow (2003) examined members’ reasons for leaving the military from their responses to an attrition information questionnaire. When asked if “I have been on too many deployments (UN/NATO/other out-of-country taskings)” had any importance in their decision to leave, 72.7% of participants answered that it was “not true or of no importance.” While there was no way to identify participants who had or had not been on deployments during their careers, this result counters the findings of Dunn and Morrow (2003).

A possible explanation for the attrition survey results is the nature of the military career progression plans. One of the more popular leaving points in the military examined in the studies above is after 20 years of service (Currie, 2002). Such people are entitled to draw a pension immediately. It is particularly popular with people who join the military at an earlier age. They can retire as early as age 38 (if they join at 18 years old), draw their pension and are still young enough to start another career. Historically, the most often chosen reasons for leaving are those that talk about being able to enjoy a pension and work in another field. Therefore, if the majority of people leaving the military are leaving at 20 years, those economic reasons may be outweighing other workload issues.

In addition, only a minority of personnel regularly deploy on UN or NATO missions. As such, they represent a smaller number of people who would be leaving the military in any one year. Differences concerning the reasons for leaving between those people who deploy and those who do not deploy needs to be studied to assess if any differences are related to their PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO.

The results of research conducted are not consistent. Huffman et al (2005) examined OPSTEMPO research and have come up with five possible methodological reasons to account for the results. They include:

- 1) Different operational definitions of turnover used in the research. Intentions to leave have been used as a proxy for actual turnover behaviours. While the former has shown to be positively related to the latter, asking people who have actually left the military is the preferred method. However, obtaining information from people who have left the organization is more difficult and time consuming.
- 2) Measuring role overload or subjective perceptions of OPSTEMPO versus workload or an objective assessment of workload. The many different of ways measuring OPSTEMPO could also explain the

inconsistent results. When examined in greater detail, it becomes clear that the differences between the types can be categorized as those that are more self-report, subjective assessments of OPSTEMPO or role overload versus quantitative, archival records of workload. The quantitative, objective measures are better, but are also more resource intensive to collect.

- 3) Different operational definitions of OPSTEMPO. Some research has used specific time away from family, days at sea, or long hours while others have used all of these dimensions. Other research has used these dimensions, but have assessed to what extent the time away is positive (i.e., career enhancing) or negative. The latter uses Equity Theory to hypothesize the balance between the personal cost of workload (i.e., time away) and the personal benefit of workload (i.e., financial rewards, promotion enhancement). Thus, when OPSTEMPO is made up of work that is likely to bring external work-related rewards (deployment, schooling), there is likely a link with decreased turnover. However, if OPSTEMPO is defined by work that brings few external rewards (i.e., time away from family and long work hours), a link with increased turnover is expected (Huffman et al, 2005).
- 4) The lack of control over key demographic and organizational variables. Most studies have not controlled for rank or unit type. Junior enlisted personnel are more likely to report that they plan to leave the service than do non-commissioned officers (NCOs) or officers. Combat arms soldiers are more likely to report they intend to leave than are non-combat arms soldiers (Huffman et al., 2005). These influences are likely to have impacts on overall results if their specific influences are not controlled for.
- 5) The possible curvilinear nature of the OPSTEMPO-turnover relation. Most of the studies assume a linear relationship between OPSTEMPO and turnover meaning that the more OPSTEMPO a soldier has, the more likely that soldier will leave the military. However, Huffman et al. (2005) theorize that these relationships are more complex and should be examined as a curvilinear phenomenon. Specifically, they argue that there is a level of OPSTEMPO that maximizes performance and increases the soldier's intention to stay in the military. At moderate levels of military deployments, training exercises, and garrison duties, soldier and unit readiness are maintained. It is only when OPSTEMPO levels are very high or very low that turnover increases. To complicate the issues even further, they argue that non-career enhancing OPSTEMPO is likely to have a more pronounced effect on turnover in this curvilinear association.

Huffman et al. conducted a study in 2005 to address and resolve these discrepancies. The researchers clarified a number of the concerns they had identified. The results seemed to support the curvilinear relationship between OPSTEMPO and turnover. They found that people who were uncertain about upcoming career decisions were more likely to stay in the military than leave. Moreover, they also found that intentions to stay were more accurate than intentions to leave. Other interesting findings were more complex and nuanced. For instance, they found that the workload aspects of OPSTEMPO were less important than the attitudes towards the work, training and deployments. If soldiers felt that the work, training and deployments were meaningful, relevant and challenging, they were more likely to stay. If they held more negative views, they were more likely to leave. Another component to the nature of deployments and their impacts was the context within which it occurred. If soldiers regarded the experience as personally or professionally enhancing, they were less likely to want to leave.

Examining the workload results in more detail, other findings were revealed. Soldiers revealed that aspects such as predictability, task significance and the nature of the deployment were factors that influenced their desire to remain. For instance, they were not as concerned about the long hours they worked as they were about the uncertainty of how long their training, deployment and work schedules would be (U.S. data

collected pre-September 11, 2001). They were also more concerned about the job they were doing than the long hours they spent working. If the jobs they were doing were part of the mission or jobs they were trained to do, then they did not mind the long hours.

3I.3.2 Discussion

The different results from these studies can be reconciled by taking a closer look at the nature of the operations that are completed and the career progression of those participating. In the qualitative research reviewed, the results focused on the idea that the deployments were long and boring. What was not mentioned in the study (Dunn and Morrow, 2001) was a number of participants described a hierarchy of deploying. This phenomenon has shown up anecdotally for a number of years (personal communication J. Dunn). There was a consensus that having the opportunity to serve in the first few deployments of a mission was far more exciting, challenging and professionally rewarding. For Army personnel, they looked forward to putting all their combat skills into use in an operational setting. However, if you serve on deployments after the beginning of a mission, they were generally perceived to be more boring and repetitive because the work was routine. In other words, these military personnel were less concerned about serving on the first few deployments of a mission where there were more unique challenges than they were if they had to serve on subsequent deployments of a mission where everything was routine and predictable.

This discussion is in line with the results of Hosek and Totten (1998, 2002) and Fricker (2002). Participants in these studies reported that some deployment actually increased their likelihood to remain in the military. While those studies did not focus on explaining those relationships, it is plausible that they also felt that such deployments gave them the opportunity to put into use all the training they had received. Thus, as long as they were not persistently hostile, personnel found the deployments to be professionally fulfilling and would want to continue to serve in the military to be able to deploy.

Moreover, with Fricker's (2002) study, their career progression may very well be a confounding factor in assessing these links. The country in which the study took place has a much more competitive promotion system that may require them to participate in more of these kinds of missions in order to be promoted and remain in the military. Thus, the relationship between how retention is influenced by PERSTEMPO and OPSTEMPO is more important than the influence that OPSTEMPO/PERSTEMPO has on retention. The Morrow and Dunn (2001) results also agree with those of Huffman et al. (2005). In both studies, soldiers were more positive about their experiences if they were performing challenging work that they had been given proper training to do and that was part of the mission for which they were sent. Finally, Huffman et al. (2005) support the earlier findings of Hosek and Totten, (1998, 2002) and Fricker (2002) that the relationship between PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and retention was more complex and non-linear. Specifically both studies demonstrate that factors beyond the quantity of time away on deployments influences the retention of personnel on those missions.

3I.3.2.1 Summary

There is a considerable amount of evidence that indicates PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO may play a role in military personnel's decisions to stay or leave. The studies reviewed indicate that the relationship between PERSTEMPO and retention is complex. It would seem that the type of deployment influences the stay or leave decision. Participating in non-hostile, newer missions seems to be associated with higher rates of retention/re-enlistment than do repetitive or hostile deployments. The total amount of PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO seems to be less important than the type completed and under what circumstances it is taken. It would also appear that career progression plans might mitigate the effect that this association demonstrates in terms of the direction of the relationship and how reasons for leaving are measured.

3I.4 QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life (QOL) refers to those non-monetary benefits, such as base housing that impact positively or negatively on the wellbeing and morale of members and their families (NATO HFM-107/RTG-034 Terms of Reference, 2002). The general purpose of research in those areas is to determine their impact on the stay-leave decision of members. Before discussing quality of life as it influences recruiting, attrition and retention, it is important to specify what is being discussed. The concept of quality of life has been in the literature since the mid 1960s. It started primarily in medical research in reference to patients with severe, terminal medical conditions. The intuitive appeal of the term led it to be used in Industrial/Organizational psychology under the term ‘quality of working life’ (Dowden, 2000).

Glaser (1996) reviewed the literature on the effects of quality of life on turnover and performance in the private sector. He found that family and economic conditions may influence turnover. Causation was difficult to establish because much of the research completed to that point focused on the influence of work on QOL rather than the reverse relationship. For example, one of the cited family conditions associated with turnover was that women with young children viewed the family impact upon work as negative. It resulted in absenteeism, tardiness, inattentiveness and inefficiency. Glaser (1996) also reported that role conflict (family/work) and work scheduling played a role in family conflict and that led to higher rates of turnover. The economic factors Glaser (1996) discussed were pay related. The extent to which expected salary levels met achieved salary reduced the inclination to withdraw.

While pay has not shown to directly influence peoples’ decisions to leave the military, it was certainly a significant influence on recruiting. In regions in which economies were very strong at the time the military was interested in attracting people to join, competition amongst employers for personnel increased. Syed and Morrow (2003) found that signing and recruitment bonuses have and continue to be used to compete for personnel, especially in occupations for which the military cannot compete with the private sector on salaries (i.e., doctors, technical and IT occupations). The amount of money offered depended on the occupation and on the level of experience or academic level the applicant held. For the most part however, this method of increasing the attractiveness of the organization to those targeted occupations has not been systematically studied to evaluate its effectiveness in terms of attracting the quantity and quality of personnel desired, nor the extent to which those personnel stay in the military (Syed and Morrow, 2003).

Across a number of studies, family factors have been found to influence retention. For instance, in a study of Army families, Rosen and Durand (1995) found that the main predictor of retention for junior enlisted families was the spouse’s unrealistic expectations of what the military could provide as resources for families of deployed soldiers. The main predictor of retention for senior enlisted couples was the spouse’s wish that her husband stays in or leaves the Army. Schumm, Bell, and Resnick (2001) found that family factors were more strongly related to retention than military readiness factors. In both studies, only family factors were examined as variables influencing retention.

A number of approaches have been used study QOL. In earlier research, a debate emerged about whether objective indicators (i.e., salary, education level) were more useful to study QOL than subjective indicators (i.e., subjective judgments of individuals’ cognitive and affective experiences) (Dowden, 2000). A combination of both is seen as the preferred method. Researchers have also examined global QOL (satisfaction with life as a whole) as well as domain measures of QOL (satisfaction with a particular domain of life) (Dowden, 2000).

In addition to the difficulty of finding research that examines the desired direction of the QOL – turnover relationship, the quantity of research examining that relationship is small. Most of the QOL research has

focused simply on describing the quality of life of different populations or of trying to develop models of how different components of quality of life are related to one another. Even with a number of models that include organizational outcomes in them, less emphasis has generally been given to exploring those relationships.

A number of different models have been developed to measure and evaluate quality of life (Kerce, 1995; Rice, McFarlin, Hunt, and Near, 1985; Ventegodt, 1996; Hart, 1999). One of the most used models developed has been Kerce's 1995 model of quality of life. It has been used to study military personnel (Kerce, 1995; Kerce, 1996; Wilcove, Schwerin, and Wolosin, 2003) to examine a number of organizational outcomes, including re-enlistment.

Kerce used the life domain approach to evaluate QOL and examined the underlying structure of life needs among Marines. QOL was evaluated in 11 life domains identified in interviews with Marines and a review of the civilian literature. In the conceptual model (Figure 3I-1), domains were related to overall QOL, which in turn was related to several organizational outcomes, one of which was re-enlistment. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted separately for several family/marital status groups (i.e., married Marines with children, married Marines without children, and single Marines without children). Support was only found for the married Marines without children model in which satisfaction with life domains was positively related to re-enlistment. In other words, higher ratings of quality of life were associated with a greater likelihood of re-enlisting.

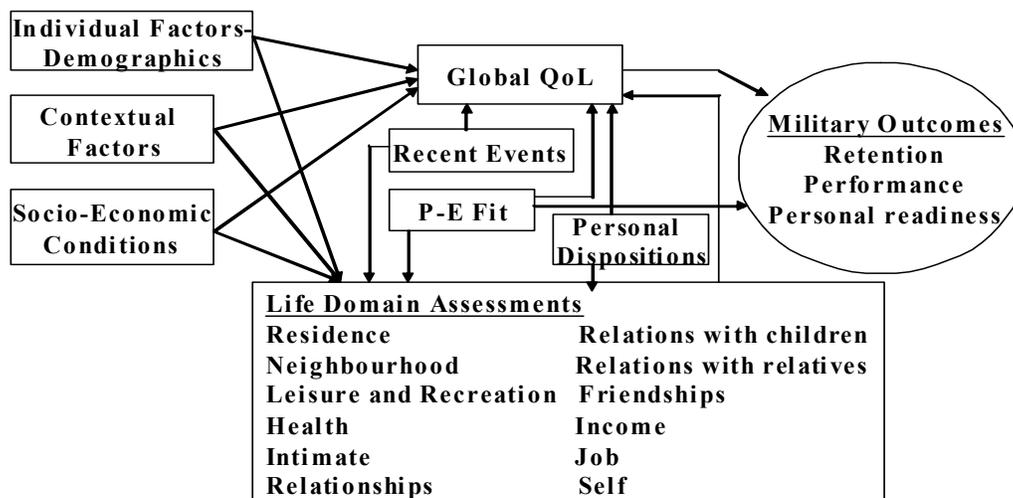


Figure 3I-1: Kerce Quality of Life (QOL) Model.

Dowden (2000) developed a theoretical model (Figure 3I-2) of QOL that examined impacts on retention and recruiting. The latter was accomplished by including a factor called anticipatory QOL into the model (Dowden, 2000). While not a new concept (Rice et al., 1985), this factor was developed in an attempt to explore what effect, if any, the anticipated QOL in the military had on new recruits joining the organization. Dowden (2000) used SEM to develop a military QOL model that could be used in future policy and experimental research. As such, the links between anticipatory QOL and recruiting were not specifically tested.

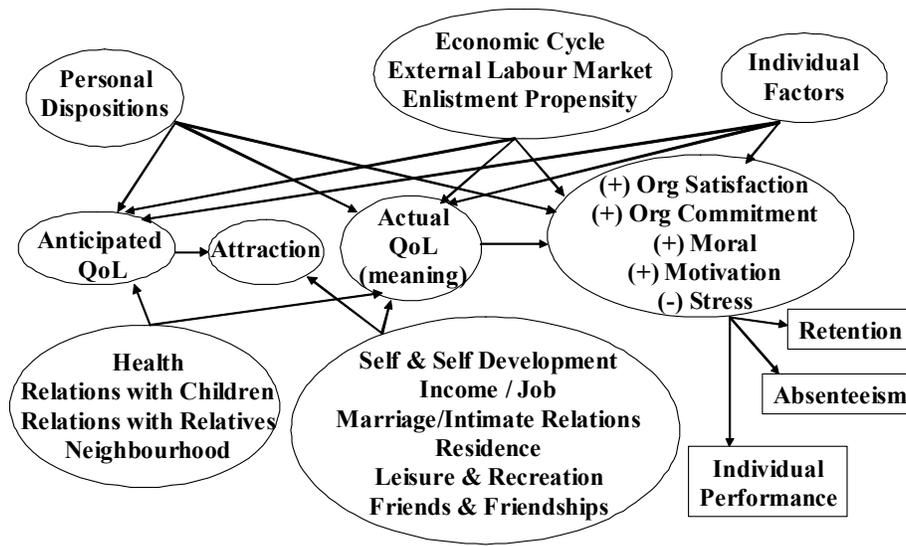


Figure 3I-2: Dowden Conceptual Quality of Life (QOL) Model.

Dowden’s (2000) model was influenced greatly by the Kerce model and included measures of organizational outcomes such as retention and absenteeism. Unfortunately, the links between QOL and retention were not specifically examined for two reasons. Firstly, just as the links between recruiting and anticipatory QOL were not specifically examined in the SEM modeling, the links between QOL and retention were not examined for the same reasons. Secondly, the overall focus of the research was to address very specific recommendations from government hearings on military quality of life, none of which were specifically targeting recruiting and retention. Specifically, Dowden (2001) reported responses to a QOL questionnaire that asked respondents about their satisfaction with their overall QOL, as well as their satisfactions with several life domains such as residence, neighbourhood, health, relationships with children, job, etc. Finally, several questions were asked that were much more specific to which involved assessing the impact of QOL on recruiting and retention. As such, the results of the research describe the QOL of military members and their spouses. Finally, several questions were asked that were much more specific to the experiences of the members in the military (e.g., rating the military as a preferred employer, feelings about senior leadership, etc.). Respondents were asked five questions about their intentions to remain in the military. The results are listed in Table 3I-1 below and illustrate a range of responses from “neutral” to “somewhat disagree” with remaining in the military for an extended period.

Table 3I-1: Overall, Mean Level of Agreement with Each of the Retention Items Asked

Statement	Mean
I will stay in the CF as long as I can	4.22
I will leave the CF as soon as I complete my actual contract	3.77
I will leave the CF if another job becomes available	4.29
I will leave the CF as soon as I put in 20 years for pension eligibility	3.98
I will leave the CF as soon as I complete my obligatory service	3.29

Responses on the scale included: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = Strongly agree.

In terms of their global QOL, the data show that military members were relatively satisfied overall. Interestingly, female military members reported a significantly higher global QOL than male members. Participants reported being most satisfied with their marriage-partner relationship and their relationship with their children whereas the most commonly voiced dissatisfaction came from the income and standard of living and career domains. Although respondents as a whole were moderately satisfied with their residences overall, several striking and significant between-group differences emerged when respondents were separated into those who lived on bases in military housing versus those who did not. In each case, military members living in base housing were much more dissatisfied with aspects of their residence than those not living there.

Dowden (2001) completed another study that asked the spouses of military members to rate their own QOL. An additional measure of the support for the spouse's military career was included. This measure offers another domain of studying QOL factors and their influence on retention even though it is not directly linked to the extent to which the military member would remain in the military. Military spouses reported the highest satisfaction with their relationships with their children and their marriage/partner relationship. The lowest satisfaction scores were found in the leisure, recreation, income and standard of living QOL domains. Interestingly, military spouses were more satisfied with each of these QOL domains than were the military members.

Wilcove, Schwerin, and Wolosin (2003) developed exploratory models of quality of life for Navy personnel that were based upon the Kerce model. Similar to Kerce (1995), SEM models were developed for different groups. In this study, models were developed for married, enlisted sailors with children, unmarried, first-term sailors without children and a target group of sailors at a key point in their career decision-making process. The SEM model was made up of two factors called personal and job. The personal factor was made up of domains of marital/intimate relationships, relationships with children, personal development, health, standard of living and shipboard life. In addition to global QOL, both levels of satisfaction with one's military job and the impact of one's military job on plans to remain on active duty loaded on the job factor.

For the first model, this personal factor was related to re-enlistment intentions, accounting for 22% of its variance (parameter estimate = .47). In the second model with unmarried first-term sailors without children, the personal factor (relationships with children not included) accounted for 10% of the variance in re-enlistment (parameter estimate = .31). The model for the last group demonstrated that personal factors accounted for 17% of the variance in re-enlistment (parameter estimate = .41). All of these results were significant. The authors concluded that the personal factor was the best predictor of re-enlistment. In addition, they found that the personal factor was directly associated with re-enlistment intentions whereas the job factor influenced re-enlistment indirectly through organizational commitment.

Hindelang, Schwerin, and Farmer (2004) tested the generalizability of the Wilcove et al. (2003) model using Marine Corps data. The results suggested that the Navy model provided an acceptable fit to the Marine Corps data for each of the subgroups considered. They concluded that this model extended the military QOL research literature by providing further support for a work/non-work dichotomy, in which personal factors bear direct influence on service members' re-enlistment intent, and organizational commitment mediates the relationship between job factors and service members' re-enlistment intent.

A component of the Kerce (1995) QOL model that may play a factor in recruitment is person-environment (P-E) fit. The degree to which members react to positive and negative experiences from military life may be due in part to how well their personal qualities match the demands and opportunities in the situations they find themselves. If there is a close match of abilities, interests, and motives of a person with the program of a behavior setting (i.e., if the setting engages members in ways that allow them to use their skills and abilities, and to participate in ways that interest them and that satisfy their motives) there is a good person-setting fit.

However, it has not been examined in detail in the model. Wicker (1996) highlighted the need to develop this component more specifically by proposing that Navy members be asked to make their own assessment of how well their abilities, interests, and personal needs are suited to Navy life. He also suggested that married members could also be asked to make the same assessment of their spouse and of their children. Wicker (1996) recognized that this approach would be a rather simplistic attempt to deal with a complex concept. Moreover, he was only looking at how this concept would be relevant to outcomes such as attrition and performance. However, knowledge of any systematic determinants of QOL P-E fit would assist in the recruitment, selection, and classification process.

Some research has attempted to examine how aspects of OPSTEMPO influence quality of life. Britt and Dawson (2005) studied the extent to which workload, job attitudes, group attitudes and health predicted work-family conflict (WFC). They found that workload was a strong predictor of WFC, as well as health related variables of morale and physical symptoms. Specifically, soldiers who worked more hours in a day, slept less, and spent more days training over the previous six months were more likely to report high WFC. In addition, soldiers with more physical symptoms and lower morale were also more likely to report higher WFC. Moreover, those who were more satisfied with their jobs and felt recognition from leaders for their hard work reported less WFC. Finally, while not conclusive, results indicated that strong leadership may buffer soldiers from factors related to increased WFC. While this research clearly illustrates links between OPSTEMPO and quality of life, the results do not specifically predict or explain why people join the military or why they may leave.

3I.4.1 QOL Summary

A number of individual factors related to quality of life have been associated with recruitment and retention. Different levels of complexity of models have been developed to describe and assess quality of life. Only in the last number of years have these models been used to assess numerous facets of QOL on a number of organizational outcomes, and they have only been used with specific populations of military personnel (e.g., Navy and Marine Corps). Results to date indicate that these models have been successful in determining that quality of life variables influence peoples' intentions to remain in the military. Studies to date have been able to show that QOL variables account for 10 – 20% of the variance in peoples' stay leave decisions over and above the influence of other variables. This research has also highlighted a number of personal and work factors that influence retention and may influence recruiting more than others.

3I.5 LINKS TO OTHER TOPICS

While there is some empirical evidence that QOL and PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO are only causally linked to the individual differences and later turnover chapters, these two factors are certainly related to the chapters on realistic information during recruiting, the psychological contract, advertising and marketing, and transition.

The chapter on individual differences variables and later turnover are most closely linked to QOL and PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO influences. In the former chapter, four broad categories of factors relevant in military turnover are described. These are unmet expectations, work-family concerns, job related attitudes, and person-environment fit. A number of the QOL influences discussed in this chapter are the unmet expectations and work-family concerns described in individual differences chapter through the work of Kerce (1995), Dowden (2000), and Dunn and Morrow (2002).

Realistic information is related to QOL and PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO during recruiting and retention for very obvious reasons. If military applicants are not given accurate information about the amount of and type

of time away from home they will experience or are not given an a reasonable understanding of services and programs available to maintain a certain quality of life, recruiting and retention efforts may be diminished. Therefore, the QOL and PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO information should be part of the realistic information given to potential military applicants.

Advertising and marketing are usually linked very closely to recruiting activities. These become the means by which the realistic information about the quality of life to anticipate in the military and the types and frequency of PERSTEMPO and OPSTEMPO that will be expected of military personnel can be accurately described to potential applicants.

The psychological contract is related in a similar manner as the realistic information. To the extent that potential applicants see a certain quality of life as one of the obligations or conditions of employment they expect an employer to maintain, making those psychological contracts more “explicit” is important. Military organizations should communicate these obligations clearly to all members so that they are aware of what the organizations will provide for their quality of life in return for their military service.

QOL research has included, at various times, pay into its definition, but has not produced conclusive results to indicate a clear association. Just as there was very little research on how these two topics are related to recruitment, there is also very little research that directly links them to the other TG topics.

3I.6 LINKS TO THE MODELS

3I.6.1 Turnover Model – How QOL and PERSTEMPO Fit

PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and quality of life have complex, indirect effects on turnover in this model. Both influence turnover through their effects on job satisfaction, continuous commitment, and turnover intentions. Specifically, job and organizational characteristics such as PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO mediate the effects of on job satisfaction and continuous commitment through quality of life. At low to moderate levels of operational PERSTEMPO, job and organizational characteristics do not seem to precipitate negative quality of life. In fact, they seem to enhance quality of life factors. In addition, they enhance continuance commitment, job satisfaction and affective commitment, leading to a decrease in turnover intentions and turnover. However, at high levels of dangerous, operational PERSTEMPO, the relationship reverses. Job and organizational characteristics lead to negative perceptions of quality of life. This leads to decreased continuance commitment, job satisfaction, and affective commitment, which is associated with higher levels of turnover intentions and higher turnover is predicted.

The above description looks at the influence of organizational factors on members overall quality of life including their home life. Some evidence is available to suggest that a service member’s quality of home life will influence their work life as well independent of the job and organizational characteristics that the member is experiencing. However, much of evidence comes from non-military populations and thus, cannot be used in this context.

Alternatively, the PERSTEMPO and other instrumental factors may not negatively influence quality of life, or may not reduce it enough to overcome the continuous commitment. People in these situations may still feel they do not have other alternatives and will continue to serve. Positive non-instrumental factors may also offset negative instrumental factors to prevent members’ quality of life or job satisfaction from being reduced. They may also serve to increase affective commitment, reducing both turnover intentions and actual turnover.

3I.6.2 Recruitment Model – How QOL Fits

QOL fits in this model describing Perceptions of Job and Organizational Attributes and under Job and Organizational Attractiveness under the concept of anticipatory quality of life. The factor was developed in an attempt to explore what effect, if any, the anticipated QOL in the Canadian Forces had on new recruits joining the organization. Therefore, if the anticipated QOL is high, it is expected to positively influence perceptions of job and organizational attributes as well as job and organizational attractiveness.

Another component of the Kerce (1995) QOL model may play a factor in recruitment is person-environment (P-E) fit. The degree to which members react to positive and negative experiences from Navy life may be due in part to how well their personal qualities match the demands and opportunities in the situations they find themselves. If there is a close match of abilities, interests, and motives of a person with the program of a behavior setting (i.e., if the setting engages members in ways that allow them to use their skills and abilities, and to participate in ways that interest them and that satisfy their motives) there is a good person-setting fit.

However, it has not been examined in detail in the model. Wicker (1996) highlighted the need to development this component more specifically by proposing that Navy members be asked to make their own assessment of how well their abilities, interests, and personal needs are suited to Navy life. He also suggested that married members could also be asked to make the same assessment of their spouse and of their children. Wicker (1996) recognized that this approach would be a rather simplistic attempt to deal with a complex concept. Moreover, he was only looking at how this concept would be relevant to outcomes such as attrition and performance. However, knowledge of any systematic determinants of QOL P-E fit would assist in the recruitment, selection, and classification process.

3I.7 OVERALL SUMMARY

OPSTEMPO and QOL have shown to be issues at the heart of retaining personnel. These two variables have such a large influence because they are the natural by-products of military service. Military personnel conduct operations at home and abroad and they require extensive training to complete this work. All of these activities take them away from home. They are issues that intersect between a soldier's professional life and his/her private or family life.

The relationships with recruiting are more indirect. There has not been extensive research that conclusively links OPSTEMPO and QOL with recruiting. Specifically, it suggests that research needs to be done to establish those links. All that can be said now is that there are potential areas in which OPSTEMPO and QOL may influence the effective recruiting of applicants.

Table 3I-2: Practical Recommendations of the Research Reviewed

Topic	What the research says	Practical explanation of the research	Recommendation(s) to address the issue
PERSTEMPO	<p>A curvilinear relationship exists between OPSTEMPO and turnover. Significant negative relationship between OPSTEMPO and retention at very high and very low levels of OPSTEMPO.</p> <p>Relationship between OPSTEMPO and retention varies by the context of the OPSTEMPO.</p> <p>There is a positive relationship between OPSTEMPO and retention when the OPSTEMPO is meaningful, relevant and challenging.</p> <p>There was also a positive relationship between OPSTEMPO and retention if the work was considered personally or professionally enhancing.</p>	<p>The quantity and nature of OPSTEMPO influence military members' decisions to leave. At very low or high levels of OPSTEMPO, personnel are more likely to leave or say that they are going to leave.</p> <p>Within these extremes, there is an optimal level of OPSTEMPO that maximizes performance and reduces turnover. The type or nature of the OPSTEMPO will reduce or increase turnover.</p> <p>Workload aspects of OPSTEMPO are less important than the attitudes towards the work, training, and deployments. If soldiers feel that the work, training, and deployments are meaningful, relevant and challenging, they are more likely to stay.</p> <p>Another component to the nature of deployments and their impacts was the context within which it occurred. If soldiers regarded the experience as personally or professionally enhancing, they were less likely to want to leave.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Monitor the duration and quantity of deployment that personnel complete. 2) Focus attention on the nature and context of deployments as much as the actual quantity of deployments. 3) Make the work that personnel conduct on deployments more meaningful, relevant, and challenging. 4) Re-align policy, tasks and missions (where required) to ensure that deployments are personally and professionally rewarding for those who participate.

PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Topic	What the research says	Practical explanation of the research	Recommendation(s) to address the issue
	<p>Poor work predictability, low task significance, and mission non-specific tasks are positively related to higher turnover.</p>	<p>Aspects such as predictability, task significance and the nature of the deployment are factors that will influence the desire to remain. There is less concern about the long hours personnel work than there is about the uncertainty of how long training, deployment, and work schedules would be.</p> <p>They were also more concerned about the job they were doing than the long hours they spent working. If the jobs they were doing were part of the mission or jobs they were trained to do, then they did not mind the long hours.</p>	<p>5) Ensure that personnel know how long they will be deployed and (whenever possible), do not lengthen that time commitment.</p> <p>6) Ensure that personnel are trained properly for the missions for which they are sent and that the tasks they perform are related to that mission.</p>
Quality of Life	<p>Personal factors are the best predictor of re-enlistment.</p>	<p>The more satisfaction personnel have with such personal factors as marital/intimate relationships, relationships with children, personal development, health, and standard of living, the more likely are people to re-enlist.</p>	<p>7) Military personnel policy should support family relationships, especially as it relates to OPSTEMPO.</p> <p>8) Military personnel policy should support personal development, health and an adequate standard of living.</p> <p>9) Military personnel policy should support leisure and recreation, income and standard of living aspects of military life for spouses and family.</p>

Topic	What the research says	Practical explanation of the research	Recommendation(s) to address the issue
Quality of Life	Job factors influence re-enlistment indirectly through organizational commitment (Affective and Continuance).	The more satisfaction personnel have with such job factors as global QOL, their military job, and the more commitment they felt to the organization, the more likely they are to re-enlist.	10) Military culture should instill and reinforce commitment to the organization. 11) Ensure that work is structured to maximize job satisfaction.
	Anticipatory QOL needs to be studied in more depth. It offers the possibility of contributing positively to military recruiting.	Applicants likely have an impression of what their quality of life will be like should they become a military member. This impression may be more positive or negative than the actual experience turns out to be. If there is a gap that needs to be addressed so that applicants do not have an overly negative view of what life will be like nor should they have an overly positive impression either.	12) Realistic expectations of the quality of life that military members should be included in realistic job previews.
	Workload, morale, and health symptoms are strong predictors of work-family conflict (WFC).	Personnel who work longer hours, sleep less, and spend more days training are more likely to report higher levels of WFC.	13) Where possible, as part of balancing operational effectiveness, workload and working conditions should be augmented to decrease the risk of WFC.
		Military personnel with more physical symptoms and lower morale are also more likely to report higher WFC.	14) Physical fitness, optimal health and good morale can be used as mitigation strategies to decrease the likelihood of WFC occurring.
	Soldiers who are more satisfied with their jobs and feel recognition from leaders for their hard work reported less WFC.	15) As per recommendations 10 and 11.	

PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Topic	What the research says	Practical explanation of the research	Recommendation(s) to address the issue
		While not conclusive, results indicated that strong leadership may buffer soldiers from factors related to increased WFC.	16) Strong leadership may be used to reduce the likelihood of WFC occurring.