

Chapter 3J – INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND LATER TURNOVER

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3J.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter is to review individual differences factors that are likely to play a role in the process of military turnover. Four broad categories of factors relevant in military turnover have been identified. These are unmet expectations, work-family concerns, job related attitudes, and person-environment fit. Unmet expectations represent a relatively distal group of variables affecting especially early military turnover. The reviewed literature suggested that the effects of unmet expectations on military turnover seem to be mediated by overall job satisfaction and, perhaps, continuance commitment. Work-family concerns, as part of broader quality of life (QOL) concerns, constitute a critical group of individual differences variables associated with military turnover. Theoretical and empirical work on QOL carried out mainly in the U.S. Forces and the Canadian Forces suggest that work-family concerns are likely to contribute to the development of turnover intentions through their influence on work-related attitudes. Work-related attitudes, namely job satisfaction and organizational commitment, have been consistently shown to be related to variables associated with employee withdrawal. Evidence suggests that job dissatisfaction and relatively low levels of organizational commitment contribute to the development of turnover intentions. Finally, theoretical and empirical evidence lends support for the criticality of person-environment fit in the turnover process. Although both dispositional factors (in the form of personality congruence) and person-organization fit (i.e., values congruence) are expected to play a role in turnover, the impact of values congruence is expected to be stronger than that of personality congruence in the military context. In addition to presenting an overview of the literature concerning these individual differences factors and how they are linked within the military turnover process, practical implications of the reviewed literature for managing military turnover are discussed.

3J.2 INTRODUCTION

Turnover “as an individual motivated choice behavior” (Campion, 1991, p. 199) has been a widely studied outcome variable in industrial and organizational psychology literature for almost 50 years now. It is important to note at the outset that not all types of voluntary turnover are negative for the organization. According to Campion, turnover can serve the organization if it is functional. For example, if the individual leaving the organization is a poor performer or is an easily replaceable one, then the turnover can actually be a positive condition for the organization. Voluntary turnover may also be favorable to the extent that it is avoidable. That is, turnover may be something positive if the organization could have prevented it, but decided not to do it. Utility consideration is another factor in evaluating voluntary turnover. That is, turnover is considered negative if the cost of replacing the leavers outweighs the benefits. Voluntary turnover that is dysfunctional and unavoidable can be very costly for the organizations, especially for the military, considering the scale of the investments made in the recruitment, selection, classification, and training of the personnel. Hence, identifying organizational, job- and individual-related factors contributing to dysfunctional voluntary turnover is imperative in order to be able to take appropriate actions.

Well-known turnover models presented in the literature (Bannister and Griffeth, 1986; Dalessio, Silverman, and Schuck, 1986; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Griffeth and Hom, 2001; Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner, 2000; Hom and Griffeth, 1991, 1995; Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro, 1984; Mobley, 1977; Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth, 1978; Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, and Smith, 1995) have been based on civilian samples/organizations and are attitude-centered. In most of these models, although organizational and job-related factors and external labor market conditions are included as key variables in the turnover process, their effects on turnover thoughts and intentions are hypothesized to be through job attitudes, mainly job satisfaction. Yet, theoretical and empirical literature indicates the role of individual differences factors other than job satisfaction in the turnover process.

The purpose of this chapter is to review individual differences factors that are likely to play a role in the process of withdrawal from the military. These factors are examined under four general headings: unmet expectations, work-family concerns, job related attitudes, and person-environment fit. Furthermore, evidence suggests interrelations among these factors. As presented in the proposed military turnover model included in this report, most of these factors could be an antecedent, correlate, or consequence of one another.

In the following four sections, the literatures concerning each of the four-groups of factors are briefly reviewed. In these reviews, whenever possible, the links between these factors and the other recruitment and retention (R&R) topics of the Task Group, such as quality of life (QOL) and PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO, recruitment, and values are established. Also, at the end of the review of the literature on each of the individual-differences factor, a brief discussion concerning how that specific group of individual-differences factor fits in the military turnover process is presented. In the final section, some of the implications of the presented material for the management of military retention along with some recommendations are presented.

3J.3 UNMET EXPECTATIONS

Initial expectations not fulfilled at work are believed to play a critical role especially in early attrition in the military (e.g., Griffeth and Hom, 2001). According to van de Ven (2003), the majority of young people who are employed on fixed-term contracts have a relatively instrumental attitude toward the military work, and unmet expectations and disappointments concerning readily observable aspects of work/job have a great deal of influence in the decision to drop out. In a study testing these assumptions, van de Ven reported that compensation, more specifically salary, was the most important job aspect concerning which there was a great disappointment among both leavers and stayers of initial military training in the Royal Netherlands Army. One third of those leaving the training reported that their expectations concerning atmosphere in the workplace had not come true. The content of the job and work relationships were also among the sources of disappointment for the trainees. Furthermore, a significant portion of those who left training early indicated that they were not assigned to the function they had opted for. The author concluded that the extent to which initial expectations of the trainees about job characteristics were met determined to a great extent the satisfaction and the following drop out rate in the initial training programs.

Expectations concerning military life have also been reported to be a critical factor for the British Army personnel applying for premature voluntary release (PVR) (Richardson, 2003). Richardson reports that opportunities for sport, adventure, and an active life were among the factors most influential in the decision to join the British Army. Yet, almost 60% of the PVR leavers stated that lack of adventurous training and opportunities for sporting activities played a critical role in their decision to leave.

Hom and colleagues initially proposed that met expectations mediated the link between post-entry realistic job previews (RJP) and job-related attitudes, namely job satisfaction and organizational commitment

(Hom, Griffeth, Palich, and Bracker, 1998). However, empirical evidence indicated that realized expectations underlay the affect toward the job (i.e., job satisfaction) more than the organization (i.e., commitment) for newly hired nurses. Hence, in the revised model, rather than having a direct link to organizational commitment, met expectations were hypothesized to directly influence newcomers' commitment by enhancing job satisfaction. In a following study, Hom, Griffeth, Palich, and Bracker (1999) admitted problems in the measurement of met expectations in their previous analyses and proposed an alternative framework after reanalyzing the same data. According to this framework, post-entry RJP influences initial expectations, which in turn influence perceptions of post-entry experiences. Job satisfaction is stated to be influenced directly by post-entry experiences. Again no direct link between post-entry experiences and commitment is identified. All told, the revised model suggested that post-entry experiences on the job are likely to mediate/translate the effects of RJP on specifically job satisfaction.

A meta-analysis by Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) indicated that met expectations modestly predicted actual turnover behavior (corrected validity coefficient = $-.15$). However, these authors cautioned the readers concerning problems associated with operationalization/measurement of met expectations.

3J.3.1 How Do Unmet Expectations Fit in the Military Turnover Process?

It seems plausible to state that unmet expectations expressed in the form of post-entry experiences concerning more visible job aspects/characteristics, such as specific working conditions, workplace atmosphere, relationships, and salary, are likely to have an influence on especially early turnover. Supporting this expectation, the revised integrated model of Hom et al. (1999) on the effects of post-hire RJP suggests that post-entry realistic job previews contribute significantly to the development of initial expectations concerning job and conditions of employment. These initial expectations in turn play a role in the perceptions of post-entry experiences, directly influencing job satisfaction. Discrepancies between initial expectations and post-hire experiences are likely to result in disappointments.

Unmet expectations are believed to be a relatively distal group of variables affecting military turnover. Their effects on turnover are likely to be mediated by overall job satisfaction, and perhaps continuance commitment, but not affective commitment. As discussed below, affective commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the employing organization, whereas continuance commitment refers to the perceptions of the costs associated with leaving the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1991, 1997). Based on van de Ven's (2003) findings, expectations, and hence disappointments, seem more likely to develop concerning readily observable aspects of jobs, such as physical conditions and compensation. Since affective commitment is expected to be relatively resistant to direct influences of physical aspects of the job, it seems reasonable to expect that unmet expectations are likely to affect (i.e., decrease) continuance commitment, which represents an exchange-oriented bond to the employing organization, rather than affective commitment (a more detailed discussion of different commitment types is presented below).

3J.4 WORK-FAMILY CONCERNS/BALANCE

Work-family conflict, which can be defined as the extent to which work invades not only family but also personal life (Hom and Kinicki, 2001), has been identified as one of the critical determinants of turnover. In a test of an expanded Hom-Griffeth (1995) model, Hom and Kinicki (2001) found that inter-role conflict influenced turnover through the mediated effects of job satisfaction (parameter estimate = $-.39$) and withdrawal cognitions (parameter estimate = $.15$).

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Work-family concerns, as part of broader quality of life factors, are believed to constitute a critical group of individual differences variables associated with voluntary military turnover as well. Rather than representing an independent set of factors in the R&R process, work-family concerns are closely interrelated with factors like work overload, PERSTEMPO, OPSTEMPO, and deployments (see also the topic chapter *PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and Quality of Life*). Kelley, Hock, Bonney, Jarvis, Smith, and Gaffney (2001) argue that family considerations have been under-researched in the prediction of retention/re-enlistment decisions in the military. These authors argue that theoretical models adopted from civilian research or research conducted on service members without families are deficient in capturing the development of re-enlistment intentions. Frequent and long deployments, overnight duty, long work hours, high tempo, and work overload, typical of most military jobs (e.g., Dunn and Morrow, 2002; Sanchez, Bray, Vincus, and Bann, 2004), are likely to play a critical role in the decision to join in and to leave the military. Hence balancing the conflicting demands of military life and family life becomes a challenging task for most military personnel, and naturally, for the armed forces.

According to the results of the U.S. Department of Defense's 2004 survey of both active-duty and reserve members, 14% of the respondents (20% for Army members) report that their desire to stay decreased as a result of tempo, or being away more than expected (U.S. Department of Defense, 2005). Similarly, the British Airmen and Non-Commissioned Aircrew Leaver's survey results indicated that "family stability" was the factor with the highest importance rating in the decision to leave especially for personnel with more than six years of tenure. Furthermore, high workload, lack of notice for postings, and frequency of detachments were among factors that had increased in importance recently as reasons for leaving (Brackley, 2003).

Enlisted men in the army as well as their spouses reported incompatibility of child rearing with the army life (Price and Kim, 1993). Similarly, active duty air-force women who gave birth were found to be twice as likely to leave the military compared to women who did not give birth during the same time period (Price, 1998). Research summarized by Kelley et al. (2001) indicates that deployed fathers report disrupted communication patterns, feelings of out synchrony with the family, and problems in establishing and maintaining strong parent-child attachment. Furthermore, both navy fathers and mothers anticipating deployment report substantial levels of separation anxiety characterized by guilt, shame, and concerns about the interruption of family relationships.

In another study investigating the factors associated with premature voluntary turnover in the British Army, the majority of the respondents (81.6%), who applied for premature voluntary release (PVR), reported that their decision was related very much to the impact of the Army on personal and/or domestic life (Richardson, 2003). For serving personnel, other critical factors in the development of intentions to leave were operational commitments and over-stretch (workload), amount of extra duties, frequency of operational tours, and accommodation.

Similarly, a study conducted in the Canadian Forces (CF) for the purpose of revising the Canadian Forces Attrition Information Attrition Questionnaire (CFAIQ) indicated that PERSTEMPO factors (e.g., frequent and long pre-deployment trainings and deployments themselves), quality of life concerns, and work overload were among the reported reasons (or potential reasons) for leaving the CF (Dunn and Morrow, 2002). More specifically, participants indicated family concerns as being one of the most critical factors in the decision to leave or stay in the military. Inability to balance work and family life, problems associated with being absent from home during postings, lack of support services when members were away from home or were deployed, lack of provisions for single parent families, and spouses'/partners' careers being negatively affected by postings emerged as critical issues under this general theme. According to the participants of this study, heavy workload, high tempo, frequent deployments, and long pre-deployment trainings resulted in

being away from home to an extent that was beyond the coping ability of both service members and their families.

Interestingly, studies on the effects of frequency of deployment seem inconclusive at first. Yet, a detailed examination of the findings suggests that the relationship between deployment frequency and withdrawal intentions is not necessarily linear. For example, Sticha, Sadacca, DiFazia, Knerr, Hogan, and Diana's (cited in Huffman, Adler, Castro, and Dolan, 2000) review of the studies examining personnel tempo and retention suggested that moderate levels of personnel tempo had a positive impact on retention. In a study on the impact of multiple peacekeeping deployments on soldiers' attitudes, morale, and retention in the U.S. Army, Reed and Segal (2000) found no relationship between the number of deployments and re-enlistment intentions. They, however, reported that as the number of deployments increased, soldiers' morale declined. Acknowledging the other potential contributors of low morale, like living conditions, food quality, or mail service, Reed and Segal reported that the majority of the soldiers viewed deployments to be more difficult for married soldiers with families. Castro and Adler (1999) proposed a model of the relationship between OPSTEMPO and soldier and unit readiness/performance/retention. The model predicted that moderate levels of deployments, garrison duties, and training activities were likely to facilitate soldier and unit readiness and that retention tended to decline only when OPSTEMPO levels were either very high or very low. Supporting this model, Huffman et al. (2000) reported that officers with at least one deployment (but not two or three deployments) were more likely to report that they were staying in the military than those with no previous deployment experience. Furthermore, these authors found that although junior officers with at least one deployment experience were more likely to stay in, those expecting to deploy a lot in the future were more inclined to leave the military.

Finally, Kelley et al. (2001) compared deployed and non-deployed Navy mothers on a number of variables like commitment to Navy, re-enlistment intentions, and work family concerns. Although the groups did not differ in terms of intentions to re-enlist, women who experienced deployment were more likely to report commitment as a reason for planning to stay in the Navy than non-deployed women in the control group. Also, women in the control group were more likely to report dissatisfaction with the Navy as a reason for planning to leave. The authors argued that deployments increased integration to the Navy for Navy women experiencing deployment. Yet, regardless of having experienced deployment or not, approximately one fourth to one third of the women in both groups emphasized the difficulty of balancing a Navy career with family responsibilities as a reason to leave the military.

3J.4.1 How Do Work-Family Concerns Fit in the Military Turnover Process?

Based on the available evidence it seems plausible to argue that work-family concerns as part of broader QOL factors are likely to contribute to the development of turnover intentions through their influence on overall job satisfaction and continuance commitment. Theoretical and empirical work on QOL carried out mainly in the U.S. Forces and the Canadian Forces lends support for this argument. For example, Kerce (cited in Dowden, 2000) provided a conceptual framework for the QOL research within the U.S. Marines, which later directed the development of the QOL survey in this service. The following aspects are among the main assumptions of this framework:

- 1) Global perceptions of QOL (i.e., people's sense of global well-being) reflect a composite of feelings and satisfactions related to various domains of life; that is, the more domains people feel positive about (satisfied with), the stronger their sense of well-being;
- 2) Personal dispositions influence perceptions of QOL; and

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- 3) Perceptions of global QOL have direct influences on important organizational outcomes such as retention, performance, and personal readiness.

Building further upon Kerce's framework, Dowden (2000) proposed a conceptual model for the measurement of QOL in the Canadian Forces. Among the assumptions of the model are:

- 1) QOL domains such as income, job characteristics, family domain, and friends and friendship, are significant contributors of global QOL;
- 2) Enhancing the global QOL has an impact on subjective variables like satisfaction, commitment, and motivation; and
- 3) The global QOL perceptions influence important organizational outcomes, mainly retention, absenteeism, and performance through the mediating effects of subjective organizational variables.

The way work and family (or non-work) domains are balanced or not balanced seems to play a critical role in the perceptions of quality of life by the military members. According to Dowden's (2000) model, work/non-work factors, such as marriage/intimate relationships, job itself (e.g., work load, tempo, job enrichment, and safe working conditions); self and self-development, and leisure and recreation are among the critical QOL domains. Balancing work and non-work lives means positive perceptions concerning these QOL domains and hence can be expected to contribute to the development of positive global QOL perceptions. Reviewed literature suggested that work-family concerns play a critical role in the development of intention to leave the military. It is believed that, work-family concerns influence turnover intentions through their effects on job satisfaction and continuance commitment, but not necessarily affective commitment. In the framework proposed by Dowden, a distinction between affective and continuance commitment is not made. Yet, it is expected that affective commitment would be relatively more resistant to conditions of employment. Hence, it is not expected to mediate the effects of quality of life factors/concerns on turnover intentions.

3J.5 JOB-RELATED ATTITUDES

Job attitudes have always been included among the critical antecedents of voluntary turnover. Early turnover research was directed at identifying correlates of turnover within the framework of simple models relating turnover directly to job attitudes like satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Newman, 1974; Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, 1974). These initial models were followed by increasingly complex models focusing on the decision-making processes involved in employee withdrawal (e.g., Bannister and Griffeth, 1986; Dalessio, Silverman, and Schuck, 1986; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Griffeth and Hom, 2001; Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner, 2000; Hom and Griffeth, 1991, 1995; Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro, 1984; Mobley, 1977; Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth, 1978; Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, and Smith, 1995). In the following parts of this section, relevant literature regarding three attitudinal variables, namely job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational identification, are presented. In the last part of this section, the interplay between job-related attitudes within military turnover process is discussed.

3J.5.1 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction, which can simply be defined as an affective response to specific facets of job (e.g., pay and benefits, physical conditions, and leadership), has been an extensively studied variable in the turnover literature (e.g., Farkas and Tetrick, 1989; Hom and Griffeth, 1991, 1995; Griffeth and Hom, 2001; Mobley et al., 1978; Muchinsky and Morrow, 1980; Williams and Hazer, 1986). Although dissatisfied employees are more likely to quit their jobs than are satisfied employees, the correlation between satisfaction and turnover is moderate at best (-.19). Furthermore, the relationship between turnover and overall job satisfaction is reported

to be higher than the relationships between turnover and satisfaction with job facets, such as pay (-.09), supervisor (-.10), and co-workers (-.11) (Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner, 2000).

In most models of turnover, job satisfaction is treated as the major variable in the decision making process concerning whether or not to leave the organization, and it is assumed to influence turnover behavior not directly, but through turnover thoughts and intentions (e.g., Bannister and Griffeth, 1986; Dalessio, Silverman, and Schuck, 1986; Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro, 1984; Mobley et al., 1978). Supporting these model, the results of the U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) 1999 Active Duty Survey (ADS) and the web-based surveys (Status of Forces Surveys of Active-Duty Members) conducted in July 2002 and March 2003 suggested considerably high correlations (.53 to .55) between satisfaction with military life and willingness to stay on active duty on all three years (Lappin, Klein, Howell, and Lipari, 2003). Furthermore, personal and work characteristics are assumed to influence turnover intentions (and hence, turnover itself) through their effects on job satisfaction.

Most turnover models have been developed for and are more applicable to civilian situations and, to the knowledge of the author of this chapter, there exists no comprehensive framework capturing military turnover, perhaps except for an attempt by Knapp, McCloy, and DiFazio (1993), who examined satisfaction, re-enlistment intentions, and performance as predictors of military attrition. Nevertheless, some of the meta-analytic reviews of turnover include organizational type (military vs. non-military) among the potential moderators within turnover models. These meta-analytic findings as well as more theoretical arguments suggest that because of contractual obligations, satisfaction is likely to have a weaker (yet still significant) influence on withdrawal cognitions and actual turnover for military samples than for civilian samples (e.g., Carsten and Spector, 1987; Farkas and Tetrick, 1989; Hom, Caranikas-Walker, Prussia, and Griffeth, 1992). Carsten and Spector, for example, found that predictability of turnover especially by satisfaction decreased with time, and this decrease was more evident in the military samples.

The decision making process in the military seems to be more planned and programmed; individuals are expected to choose between re-enlistment and separation much before the end of their current tour of duty (Steel and Ovalle, 1984). As stated by Hom, Caranikas-Walker, Prussia, and Griffeth (1992), unlike civilians, when they make an enlistment decision, military personnel irreversibly commit themselves to multiyear membership. Under such circumstances, dissatisfaction is expected to have a weaker effect on military personnel's withdrawal thoughts than on civilians' withdrawal thoughts. That is, military people are likely to form planned decisions (to stay in or to leave) relatively early, often at the time of entry. Once the decision is crystallized (i.e., whether they have decided to leave or re-enlist at the end of a tour of duty of fixed duration), it is likely to become resistant to satisfying/gratifying (or even unsatisfying/disappointing) experiences or morale boosting organizational interventions. Consistently, quit decisions are expected to predict military turnover more accurately than civilian turnover. Supporting this argument, in an earlier attempt to understand the process of military turnover, Knapp et al. (1993) found that although predictive ability of satisfaction concerning turnover behavior was weaker, the association between turnover intentions and turnover seemed stronger in the military context.

Empirical evidence provides clear support for the assertion that the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover is weaker for military samples. For example, as discussed above, Farkas and Tetrick (1989) found that satisfaction with the Navy 20 – 21 months after entry had no direct effect on re-enlistment intentions. Similarly, in Motowidlo and Lawton's (1984) study, the model that best explained the re-enlistment decision making process for the military personnel was the one with no direct path from satisfaction to turnover intentions. In line with the above findings, in their meta-analysis of the studies on unemployment, job satisfaction, and turnover, Carsten and Spector (1987) found that predictability of turnover especially by

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satisfaction decreased with time, and this decrease was more evident in the military samples (the relationship between length of turnover data collection and job satisfaction-turnover correlations were $-.24$ and $-.84$ for civilian and military samples, respectively). Hom et al.'s (1992) meta-analysis also indicated that dissatisfaction was less related with thoughts of quitting in the military samples ($-.57$ vs. $-.65$), and there was a closer agreement between quit intentions and withdrawal behavior for the military samples (.40) than for the civilian (.34) samples. In response to the closer correspondence between intention to quit and actual withdrawal for the enlisted personnel, the authors concluded "decision to withdraw from the military develop relatively early and remain stable" (p. 902). Empirical evidence also indicates that quit decisions, which are more predictive of military turnover behavior, are quite resistant to morale boosting organizational interventions (e.g., Landstrom, Biordi, and Gillies, 1989).

3J.5.2 Commitment

Organizational commitment, which refers to a relatively stable and more global attitude toward the employing organization, has been consistently shown to be related to variables associated with employee withdrawal. In a recent meta-analysis, Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) reported that organizational commitment predicted turnover (average corrected correlation coefficient = $-.23$) better than did overall satisfaction ($-.19$). The predictive power of commitment was even larger for the military samples ($-.28$). Sjoberg and Sverke (2000) reported that together with job involvement, commitment affected actual turnover behavior of emergency nurses through their effects on behavioral intentions. Among the antecedents of commitment are personal characteristics (age, sex, organizational tenure, perceived personal competence, salary, work values, and job level), job characteristics (skill variety, challenge, and job scope), leader-member/group relations (group cohesiveness, task interdependence, leadership style, leader communication), and role states (role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload) (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) conceptualized commitment as a three-component structure, and the three dimensions of commitment proposed by these authors have received considerable research attention. These dimensions are Affective Commitment (AC), Continuance Commitment (CC), and Normative Commitment (NC). Within the military context AC refers to a soldier's (or a significant other's) emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the military service or unit, it is the *want to* part of the construct of commitment. CC refers to the perceptions of the costs associated with leaving the military, and it is related with *need to* aspect of commitment. CC taps into perceptions of both available job alternatives and the personal sacrifices to be created by leaving the organization. Finally, NC refers to a soldier's (or significant other's) felt moral obligation to stay with the military. NC refers to *ought to* aspect of commitment (Gade, 2003).

Although all three commitment dimensions were reported to have negative correlations with turnover intentions (e.g., Meyer, Allen, and Smith, 1993; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky, 2002), empirical evidence suggests that among these three dimension, AC is a better predictor of variables associated with military withdrawal than the other two dimensions of commitment. For example, Teplitsky (cited in Tremble, Payne, Finch, and Bullis, 2003) reported a significant path coefficient between AC and officer's propensity to stay in the Army. Tremble et al. reported that AC was a stronger predictor of career intent (i.e., likelihood of staying in the Army) for the commissioned officers in the US Army than CC. In this study, organizational tenure accounted for 9% of the variance in career intent and AC accounted for an additional 9%. The additional variance accounted for by CC was 2%. In another study, Heffner and Gade (2003) found that AC mediated the relationship between satisfaction (both satisfaction with the military and satisfaction with Special Operations) and career intentions.

3J.5.3 Organizational Identification (OID)

Recently, a distinction has been made between organizational commitment and organizational identification. While organizational commitment, in its popular conceptualization, refers to a person's belief in and acceptance of the organization's values and goals, willingness to exert effort for the benefit of the organization, and desire to maintain membership in that organization (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979), OID is defined as a form of social identification in which people define themselves by their membership in an organization (Mael and Ashforth, 1995). According to Mael and Ashforth, in the process of identification with the organization, people internalize the attributes and values associated with the organization as their own. While OID is necessarily organization specific, commitment may not be. In fact, OID is expected to be high for at least some people prior to their actual working in the organization.

There exists empirical evidence suggesting that OID is a distinct concept from commitment in its conventional conceptualization and measurement as a single dimensional construct (Mael and Tetrick, 1992). Mael and Tetrick reported that OID had significantly weaker associations with job satisfaction and organization satisfaction than did commitment. OID was found to be a significant predictor of military attrition especially during the first six months of the enlistment (Mael and Ashforth, 1995). At the conceptual level, however, OID seems to be akin to AC as defined by Meyer and Allen (1991).

3J.5.4 How Do Work Attitudes Fit in the Military Turnover Process: The Interplay between Satisfaction and Commitment

There seems to be a lack of clear causal relationship between satisfaction and commitment in relation to employee withdrawal despite some studies suggesting that satisfaction is a precursor of organizational commitment and that commitment mediates the relationship between satisfaction and turnover intentions (e.g., Heffner and Gade, 2003; Williams and Hazer, 1986). Yet, some of the early models indicated that organizational commitment was significantly and negatively related to turnover, and that commitment included job satisfaction among its components (e.g., Porter et al., 1974). According to Currivan (2000), satisfaction and commitment seem to have a spurious relationship in the turnover process due to common determinants like routinization, supervisory support, peer support, and workload. In their meta-analysis Mathieu and Zajac (1990) emphasized the difficulty in specifying the causal precedence of job satisfaction or organizational commitment in the turnover process. Similarly, Hom and Griffeth (Griffeth and Hom, 2001; Hom and Griffeth, 1995) treated job satisfaction and organizational commitment as distinct attitudes separately influencing the withdrawal process. According to these authors, employees may dislike their jobs, but may still decide to remain if they feel committed to the organization.

Interestingly, however, in a methodologically sound longitudinal study, Farkas and Tetrick (1989) reported that the nature of the relationship between commitment and satisfaction was more complicated than a simple unidirectional relationship. Farkas and Tetrick examined the temporal nature of the relationship between satisfaction, commitment, and turnover in a sample of first-term Navy enlisted personnel. Data were collected from the enlisted personnel at three time points: at the end of recruit training, about 8 – 10 months after the beginning of recruit training, and about 20 – 21 months after the beginning of recruit training. Structural equation methodology was employed in testing alternative causal models. Results suggested that the direction of the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment changed over time, with satisfaction influencing commitment at Times 1 and 3, and commitment having a direct effect on satisfaction at Time 2, suggesting a cyclical relationship between the two variables. Satisfaction mediated the effects of personal attributes on commitment and commitment mediated the effects of both satisfaction and personal characteristics on the intention to re-enlist at Time 1 only. At Time 2, however, satisfaction mediated the effects of commitment on intention to re-enlist. At time 3, however, intention to re-enlist was no longer caused by either satisfaction or

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commitment, instead, the re-enlistment intention directly influenced satisfaction, which in turn influenced commitment. This last finding suggests that by Time 3, the intention to re-enlist is crystallized and it becomes a critical factor in itself affecting job-related attitudes.

An important implication of Farkas and Tetrick's (1989) study is that the relationships between satisfaction, commitment, and turnover intentions are not static at all, especially in the military context, and hence, in order to reveal the true nature of the developmental processes underlying turnover intentions, longitudinal research designs need to be employed. Similarly, Tremble, Payne, Finch, and Bullis (2003) emphasize the benefits of longer tracking periods in fully capturing the development of organizational commitment. For example, van Maanen's study, cited in Tremble et al., using a sample of police officers indicated that it was not before the first 30 months of employment that organizational commitment stabilized.

One of the factors contributing to inconsistent results concerning the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment within the turnover process could be the ad-hoc nature of the commitment measures used. Despite the well-established relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions, as emphasized by Gade (2003) and Allen (2003), military commitment literature has been quite atheoretical concerning the measurement of organizational commitment until recently. Meyer and Allen's (1997) conceptualization of commitment as a three-component structure seems to offer a framework to explore the nature of the relationship between commitment and turnover in the military turnover process.

Based on the available evidence it seems plausible to make the following assertions:

- 1) Both AC and CC (AC to a greater extent than CC) and job satisfaction contribute to turnover intentions, and
- 2) The nature of the relationship between AC and satisfaction is likely to be cyclical in nature.

That is, satisfaction is expected to play a role in the development of AC, but once established, AC can be expected to have an influence on satisfaction. CC is expected to be influenced by satisfaction/dissatisfaction with specific, especially, extrinsic aspects of job, such as pay and benefits. No predictions concerning the role of normative commitment have been made because of the conceptual overlap between AC and NC items (see Allen, 2003).

3J.6 PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT: PERSONALITY, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, AND PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT

According to Mumford and Strokes (cited in Gustafson and Mumford, 1995), the fit between person and environment can be expressed as the degree of adaptation an individual exhibits with respect to his/her vocational niche. Increased fit can be expected to result in positive organizational and personal outcomes such as increased satisfaction, motivation, morale, job performance, commitment, and retention. Both empirical and theoretical evidence suggests that the fit between the person (as represented by the personality attributes, interests, skills, abilities, and values) and the environment (as represented by the job or occupation, or the organization) play a critical role in a number of organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, career involvement, career success (all positively), and turnover intentions and behaviors (negatively) (see Kristof, 1996; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Westerman and Cyr, 2004). In this chapter the P-E fit is conceptualized at three different levels: fit in terms of personality attributes, fit in terms of psychological well-being, and fit in terms of person-organization (P-O) congruence (i.e., value congruence). Based on the literature presented below, all three forms of fit can be expected to play a role in the turnover process.

3J.6.1 Fit in Terms of Personality Characteristics

Schneider's Attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model, lends support for the criticality of personality-environment fit in the turnover process (Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al., 1995). The model states that individuals are attracted to, selected by, and stay with the organizations that suit their personality characteristics. The major assumption of the ASA model is that both the attraction and retention processes are based on some kind of person-environment (i.e., organization) fit. Schneider and colleagues state that people select themselves into and out of work organizations, and that environments are function of persons working in them. Furthermore, they assert that attraction to, selection by, and withdrawal from an organization result in trait homogenization in that organization.

The effects of personality in the employee withdrawal process have been examined either using a predictive/regression approach or a commensurate measurement approach. Generally, the predictive/regression approach involves examining the effects of single personality characteristic on the outcome variables, such as satisfaction, turnover intentions, and actual turnover. Commensurate measurement approach to personality fit, on the other hand, requires measuring the congruence between the person's personality and the organization's ideal personality type using the same content domain.

Using the predictive approach, Boudreau, Boswell, Judge, and Bretz (2001) found that personality characteristics, such as agreeableness and neuroticism were predictive of employee withdrawal. Another attribute, called *job embeddedness*, has also been shown to predict voluntary turnover over and above organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, and Erez, 2001; Mitchell and Lee, 2001). Job embeddedness refers to an employee's (1) association with other people, teams, and groups within the organization, (2) perceptions of his/her fit with the job, organization, and community, and (3) perceived cost of leaving the job (i.e., what the person says he/she has to sacrifice if he/she leaves the job).

Although there exists some evidence concerning the predictive ability of personality characteristics in the turnover process, usually these variables fail to explain a significant portion of the variance in employee withdrawal. According to Westerman and Cyr (2004), because of their relatively weak direct effects on withdrawal process, personality variables are generally assumed to have indirect effects on turnover, through their effects on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Westerman and Cyr, further argue that "... it may be overly simplistic to assume that any single individual difference variable, acting in isolation from consideration of its relevant environment, would have significant effects on complexly determined withdrawal cognitions and behaviors" (p. 259). These authors recommend the use of commensurate-measurement approaches in studying the effect of personality on employee withdrawal.

According to Westerman and Cyr (2004), the commensurate approach "...provide(s) a more comprehensive picture of the 'chemistry' resulting from congruence between individual differences and organizational situations and may indicate potential to explain more of the variance in withdrawal cognitions and behavior" (p. 259). Consistently, in their study they measured personality congruence by correlating the personality profile of the prototypical successful firm member (by aggregating the "ideal personality" ratings given by participants from a given organization) to each individual's own personality profile. They found that personality congruence contributed directly to intention to remain with the organization.

Along the same lines, using data obtained from a sample of Navy subordinates and their immediate supervisor Gustafson and Mumford (1995) tested the effects of person-environment fit in predicting job performance, job withdrawal, and job satisfaction. Using hierarchical cluster analysis technique they identified eight characteristic patterns of personality (i.e., *externally focused non-impulsives*, *overall uninvolveds*, *anxious*

unmotivated impulsives, anxious defensives, comfortable non-strivers, non-anxious strivers, low self-esteem impulsives, and internally controlled rigids) and five subgroups of environment (i.e., *independent-simple, structured-complex, unstructured-unsupported, directed-undemanding, and protected-certain*). As an example, while anxious defensives were characterized by low job involvement and anxiety, non-anxious strivers were characterized by high job involvement, high achievement motivation, and low anxiety. Results suggested differential effects of person subgroup (i.e., personality type), situation subgroup (i.e., environment type) fit on the three organizational outcomes. For example, compared to the other groups/types, the *anxious defensives, overall uninvolveds, and anxious-unmotivated impulsives* were more likely to be dissatisfied, withdrew more, and performed poorly within the structured-complex environments (for more details, see Gustafson and Mumford, 1995). Although further studies are needed to advance our understanding of the interplay between person-environment fit and organizational outcomes, results of Gustafson and Mumford's (1995) study have important implications for personnel management practices in the military. That is, if the best-fitting personality type(s) could be identified for a given organizational/environmental type, then selection and classification efforts can be geared toward selection and classification of individuals into their ideal environments.

3J.6.2 Fit in Terms of Psychological Well-Being

In addition to job-related personality variables, mental health factors are expected to play a significant role in the process of military turnover. Talcott, Haddock, Klesges, Lando, and Fiedler (1999) found that mental-health-related factors were one of the common predictors of discharge in the United States Air Force basic military training. As cited by Holden and Scholtz (2002), emotional instability, over-dependence, optimism, self-efficacy, and depression have all been identified to be significant predictors of military training outcome in the US military.

Psychological well-being has been among individual differences factors considered in the selection/screening of military personnel (e.g., Holden and Scholtz, 2002; Magruder, 2000; Sümer, Bilgic, Sümer, and Erol, 2005). Krueger (2001) stated that compared to most civilian jobs, military jobs involve much more demanding physical and psychological conditions, such as fear, sensory overload, sensory deprivation, exposure to extreme geographies and climatic temperatures, and the like. These conditions call for individuals with not only physical but also psychological stamina. According to Cigrang, Todd, and Carbone (2000), mental-health-related problems play a critical role in a significant portion of the turnover/discharge within the first six months of enlistment in the U.S. Armed Forces. Scholtz (2003) reported that personality factors, such as conscientiousness and neuroticism, significantly correlated with psychological well-being and that both personality measures and psychological well-being had significant relationships with interpersonal and organizational deviance in the Canadian Forces. Along the same lines, Holden and Scholtz (2002) used Holden Psychological Screening Inventory (HPSI) for predicting basic military training outcome for a sample of non-commissioned recruits in the Canadian Forces. Results indicated that the Depression scale of the inventory was predictive of training attrition, yielding support for the use of the inventory as a screening tool.

3J.6.3 Person-Organization Fit: Values Congruence

A distinction has been made between person-organization (P-O) fit and person-job (P-J) fit (see Cable and DeRue, 2002; Kristof, 1996; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001). While P-O fit refers to the extent to which an employee's personal values and the employing organization's values/culture are congruent or compatible, P-J fit refers to the extent to which abilities of the person and the demands of the job match, or the needs of the person and what is provided by the organization are congruent (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001). In other words, while P-O fit involves the compatibility of the individual with the employing organization, mostly at

the level of values, P-J fit refers to a person's compatibility with the job in question (Kristof, 1996). Empirical evidence indicates that these two fit types are weakly but positively correlated (e.g., Cable and DeRue, 2002; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001). While P-J fit seems more relevant in the process of recruitment and selection, the P-E fit seems to be especially critical in understanding the military turnover process as it refers to the similarity between deeply seated individual and organizational characteristics.

Several researchers reported P-O fit as being a sound and/or better measure of P-E fit predictive of important organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (e.g., Cable and Judge, 1996; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell, 1991). Using a values profile matching process to assess person-environment fit, O'Reilly et al. (1991) found that P-O fit predicted job satisfaction and organizational commitment a year after the measurement of fit, and that it predicted actual turnover even after two years. Similarly, Lauver, and Kristof-Brown (2001) found that perceived P-O fit was a significant predictor of job satisfaction ($\beta = .40$) and intention to quit ($\beta = -.47$) for employees working in a large national trucking company. Predictive ability of P-O fit seemed stronger than that of P-J fit for especially intention to quit ($\beta = -.22$). In another study, Cable and DeRue (2002) made a distinction between three types of fit perceptions: *P-O fit perceptions* (i.e., value congruence between the person and the organization); *needs-supplies fit perceptions* (i.e., match between what is need by the person and what is offered by the organization); and *demands-abilities fit perceptions* (i.e., congruence between the demands of a job and the person's abilities). These authors examined whether these three types of fit were differentially related to organizational outcomes. The needs-supplies and demands-abilities fit perceptions tap into P-J fit construct. Among the important findings of this study was that P-O fit perceptions were good predictors of turnover decision ($\beta = .48$), perceived organizational support ($\beta = .44$), organizational identification ($\beta = .42$), job satisfaction ($\beta = .28$), and citizenship behaviors ($\beta = .20$).

More recently, Westerman and Cyr (2004) examined the effects of values congruence (i.e., P-O fit), work environment congruence (needs-supplies fit), and personality congruence on job attitudes and turnover intentions using a sample of sales people in a number of organizations. They measured fit using commensurate measurement approach rather than relying on perceptions of congruence. They found that values congruence and work environment congruence were both predictive of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Also, job satisfaction and commitment mediated the relationship between these two types of congruence and turnover intentions. In addition to its influence through satisfaction and commitment, values congruence had a direct effect on turnover intentions. Finally, as mentioned before, personality congruence had only a direct effect on turnover intentions.

3J.6.4 How Does P-E Fit in the Military Turnover Process?

Based on the reviewed evidence, personality, psychological well-being, and values can all be expected to play a role in the process of military turnover. Hom et al. (1992) state that moral or patriotic reasons play an important role in the enlistment decisions of military personnel. These authors cite empirical evidence implying prevalence of an institutional orientation rather than an occupational orientation among military personnel (Janowitz, cited in Hom et al.). Hence, re-enlistment decisions may have less to do with attitudes concerning specific job duties and, perhaps, more to do with personal characteristics/inclinations, and especially with values.

Although not directly included in most turnover models, personal dispositions are acknowledged in the literature as critical factors in the process of turnover. Griffeth and Hom (2001) included negative affectivity, the tendency to perceive oneself and environment negatively, among the factors contributing to job dissatisfaction in employee turnover. Similarly, person-job fit is hypothesized to be a critical factor

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influencing military retention both directly and through global satisfaction (i.e., QOL perceptions) in the Kerce model (cited in Dowden, 2000). In his conceptual model of QOL outcomes, Dowden proposed that personal dispositions are likely to influence three organizational outcomes (retention, absenteeism, and individual performance) through their effects on attitudinal factors, moral, motivation, and perceived stress.

Despite the evidence concerning their possible effects and despite their intuitive appeal, there are important methodological (i.e., measurement-related) and practical issues concerning the inclusion of personality characteristics in a conceptual turnover framework. First of all, it is important to decide whether personality variables need to be treated as distal variables linearly influencing turnover intentions and behaviors (directly or through attitudinal variables) or whether we should focus on the fit between personality and environment and identify the best fitting personality types for a given environment, as done by Gustafson and Mumford (1995) and Westerman and Cyr (2004). The problem with the former approach, where individual personality variables are assumed to influence the variables critical in employee withdrawal, is that, as argued by Westerman and Cyr (2004), it seems overly simplistic to assume any personality attribute or dispositional variable acting in isolation would have significant effects on a complexly determined process like voluntary turnover.

The latter approach, where personality congruence rather than the individual effects of certain personality attributes is the focus of attention, seems to provide a relatively sound basis for exploring the effects of personality in employee withdrawal. Westerman and Cyr's (2004) own study also provided evidence for the effects of personality fit on turnover intentions. However, a general problem with the inclusion of personality factors (as individual variables or as congruence) in a military turnover framework is that it is not possible to talk about personality attribute(s) with a generalizable desirability to all military jobs; studies are needed to identify the best predicting or fitting personality attributes or profiles for different military jobs, and this seems to be a serious endeavor in itself. Additionally, it seems more logical to focus on personality variables, and perhaps psychological well-being, during the process of selection as opposed to retention.

There seems to be stronger evidence for the inclusion of values congruence as an important component in the military turnover process. First, the evidence concerning the primacy of values congruence as a predictor of work attitudes and turnover intentions over the other measures of fit, including personality is quite convincing (e.g., Cable and Judge, 1996, Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell, 1991; Westerman and Cyr, 2004). Second, as stated by Puente (2004, see also the topic chapter *Values Research*), values are especially crucial in the military context, in both recruitment and retention processes. According to him, as deeply seated individual differences factors, values influence individual and collective behavior, both directly and indirectly, through intervening variables such as attitudes and norms. Consequently, understanding values is critical in managing differences and creating a mutual understanding and tolerance for diversity. Hence, values congruence (or P-O fit) can be hypothesized to influence military turnover especially through its influence over work attitudes, mainly job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

3J.7 CONCLUSION: THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES FACTORS IN THE EMPLOYEE WITHDRAWAL PROCESS AND SOME PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The individual differences factors discussed above are believed to be a correlate, antecedent, or consequence of one another in the turnover process. Among these factors, unmet expectations seem to be a relatively distal group of variables affecting military turnover. Unmet expectations are expected to influence job satisfaction and especially continuance commitment, possibly through QOL perceptions. Expectations and disappointments

seem more likely to develop concerning readily observable aspects of jobs, such as physical conditions, compensation, work load, and tempo (e.g., van de Ven, 2003), and such aspects of jobs are included among the potential contributors of QOL perceptions as described by Dowden (2000). Unmet expectations are less likely to influence affective commitment since affective commitment, as an emotional bond to the employing organization, is expected to be relatively resistant to direct influences of physical aspects of the job. Although they seem to be distal factors affecting military turnover through a number of intervening variables, unmet expectations seem to deserve special attention in the development of military recruitment and retention strategies. Since a significant portion of those leaving the military report disappointments concerning work atmosphere and the job/function they are assigned to (e.g., Richardson, 2003), more realistic (!) “Realistic job previews – RJP” can be used to create accurate expectations concerning military life awaiting the candidates. More realistic job previews may involve extended visits to military bases and/or extended probationary/try-out periods. Additionally, alternative approaches to RJPs, such as “decision making training” (Ganzach, Pazy, Ohayun, and Brainin, 2002) and an “expectation-lowering procedure”, proposed by Buckley, Fedor, Veres, Wiese, and Carraher (1998), can be employed to create more realistic expectations in the potential members (for more details about the alternatives to RJPs see the topic chapter *Realistic Information or Not?: Short-Term Consequences of (Mis)Information*). In addition, policies aiming to improve the QOL of military personnel and their dependents are important ways to reduce disappointments concerning the military life.

Improving the QOL life is expected to contribute to the retention of military personnel not only through reducing disappointments concerning military life, but also through providing a base for a more balanced work-family life. The reviewed literature suggests that work-family concerns play a critical role in the development of intentions to leave the military. It is believed that work-family concerns, as part of broader QOL factors, influence turnover intentions through their effects on job satisfaction and continuance commitment, but not necessarily affective commitment. In Dowden’s (2000) QOL model, work/non-work factors, such as marriage/intimate relationships, job itself (e.g., work load, tempo, job enrichment, and safe working conditions), self-development, leisure, and recreation are among the critical QOL domains. Balancing work and non-work domains means positive perceptions concerning these QOL domains, which in turn contributes to job satisfaction and commitment.

As suggested by Marrow (2004), managing deployment time seems to be a critical factor in ensuring the quality of life, hence positive job attitudes, for military personnel. Optimum number, frequency, and length of deployments for different groups of military personnel need to be identified to maximize the outcomes for both the members and the organization. This approach may require establishment of prediction equations, each unique to a specific group of personnel, in a specific force, in a specific nation, to be used in determining the time away from home critical in decreasing the members’ quality of life perceptions.

Military organizations have long been cognizant of the role of job attitudes, especially job satisfaction and commitment, in the member withdrawal process. In this topic chapter, using Meyer and Allen’s (1997) three-component approach to organizational commitment, some predictions have been made concerning the nature of the relationships between satisfaction, AC, and CC within the military turnover process. Consistent with the proposed military turnover model (see *A proposed Model of Military Turnover*), job satisfaction and both types of organizational commitment are expected to be among the critical mediators in military turnover. In other words, the effects of unmet expectations, person-environment fit, and work/non-work concerns on military turnover are expected to take place through their effects on these three critical work-related attitudes.

From a practical standpoint it seems logical to focus on factors immediately influencing job satisfaction, and perhaps commitment, in the military withdrawal process. Among these factors, person-organization fit, especially in the form of values congruence, can best be dealt within the processes of recruitment and

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selection. In addition to aiming to find the best fitting personnel in terms of skills and abilities, military recruitment and selection efforts can be geared toward finding the best-fitting members in terms of the honored values. Furthermore, as discussed above, policies and strategies aiming to maximize the quality of both work and non-work life of the military members are expected to facilitate the development of positive job attitudes, mainly satisfaction.

Among the factors directly influencing job satisfaction, non-instrumental characteristics, such as leader-member relations, are perhaps the most difficult ones to be influenced by short-term organizational interventions. In many cases a system-wide change or a cultural change may be required to create an environment nourishing positive work-related attitudes.

Personality variables, dispositions, and values are all acknowledged in the literature as critical factors in the process of turnover (e.g., Boudreau et al., 2001; Griffeth and Hom, 2001; Waterman and Cyr, 2004). According to Dowden (2000), personal dispositions are likely to influence organizational outcomes, such as retention, through their effects on attitudinal factors, moral, motivation, and perceived stress. Yet, as discussed above, there are methodological and practical problems especially with the inclusion of dispositional factors in a military turnover conceptual framework. The reviewed literature suggests that values congruence, or P-O fit, has stronger relationships with both intermediate and ultimate outcomes in the civilian turnover process than any other index of person-environment fit. Hence, acknowledging the significance of values within the military context, it is expected that values congruence/incongruence is likely to play a more critical role in the development of turnover intentions in the military, especially through its effects on attitudes known to be critical in the process. Although there are post-hire means to increase the fit of the members in terms of values (such as through training programs or the job experience itself) as emphasized above, recruitment and selection activities allow for the use of more direct means to assure values congruence between the members and the organization.