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Transmigration, Voluntary Service and Complementary Careers

A Comparison of Canadian Regular and Reserve Force Military Members

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3 Transmigration, Voluntary Service and Complementary Careers

A Comparison of Canadian Regular and Reserve Force Military Members

Irina Goldenberg and Eyal Ben-Ari

Introduction

Reserve Forces play an integral role in the military, augmenting both the capacity and the capability of their national armed forces. Moreover, the reserves provide citizen soldiers with flexible opportunities to serve their country, both domestically and on international deployments. However, the scholarly literature to date highlights two features of the organizational position of reservists in the armed forces that may shape the nature of their military employment and the potential concerns therein.

First, a series of studies have documented how, when comparing themselves to regulars, reservists often perceive themselves being evaluated as a “second-class military” or as “weekend warriors” who join the reserves much like taking up a hobby or joining a social club (Bury, 2019a; Dandeker et al., 2010; Dandeker, Greenberg, and Orme, 2011; Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020; Woodward and Jenkins, 2011). In fact, corresponding research has shown that Regular Force members often view reservists as having inadequate training, expertise and commitment to the military cause (Anderson, 2018; Woodward and Jenkins, 2011; Kirke, 2008; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008; McKee and Powers, 2008; Pearce, 2020). These views reflect many military leaders’ beliefs that members of the Regular Force are the only true professionals and must be awarded recognition as such (Dandeker et al., 2010; Kirke, 2008; Smith and Jans, 2011). This also implies the maintenance of a hierarchy between regulars and reservists, even in cases in which reservists possess higher education and superior civilian skills (Danielsen and Carlstedt, 2011).

Second, reservists often have to negotiate multiple responsibilities, including military service, civilian employment, and family obligations (Anderson, 2018; Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019; Dandeker, Greenberg, and Orme, 2011; Hadziomerovic and Simpson, 2013; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008). Reserve Force service is hence seen as infringing on what would otherwise be time for personal and family-related responsibilities and to be marked by a tension-filled role conflict (Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019; Catignani and Basham, 2017). In fact, there is evidence

that work-life conflict contributes to reservists' intentions to leave the reserves (e.g., Bury, 2017; Griffith, 2005; Koundakjian, 2014; Pearce, 2020).

Against this background of perceptions by regulars and the multiplicity of demands and responsibilities, one would expect reservists to be less satisfied with their military experience and to identify to a lesser extent with the armed forces. However, according to recent surveys of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) comparing regulars and reservists on key aspects of their experiences (work-life conflict, satisfaction with work factors, organizational commitment and identity, and intentions to leave) reveals a puzzling – somewhat counterintuitive – set of findings. Reservists of the CAF actually demonstrate notably lower levels of work-life conflict than members of the Regular Force and in many respects report that they are more satisfied and more strongly identify with the country's military. These observations call into question oft-held beliefs regarding reservists' dedication and commitment levels (Anderson, 2018).

In this chapter, we offer two interrelated explanations for this discrepancy that derive from the analytical metaphor of reservists as “transmigrants” (Introduction to this volume; Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008; Wilson-Smith and Corr, 2019): individuals who constantly travel and shift between military and civilian spheres of life. The idea, according to Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari (2020), is that many reservists can be compared to seasonal laborers who transmigrate across “borders” to be employed in various roles for circumscribed periods of time. Being a *transmigrant* personifies, at once, the multiple expectations and balancing acts they face and the numerous transitions required of reservists having to be mobilized, deployed, and then transitioned back to civilian life (and again later into military service; Griffith and Ben-Ari, 2020).

Regulars and Reservists: The Scholarly Context

Regular Force members' conditions of service include the requirement to be deployed on operations or to frequently be away from home for training, resulting in significant geographic instability and isolation from their homes and families for long periods of time (Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019; Anderson, Koundakjian, and Pettalia, 2015). Reservists, as well, face difficulties. Some studies have shown that reservists who have deployed are at increased risk of mental and physical health problems upon return home (e.g., alcohol misuse, depression and anger, and posttraumatic stress disorder; Diehle, Williamson, and Greenberg, 2019; Fear et al., 2010; Griffith, 2017; Harvey et al., 2011; Russell et al., 2015), and other studies point to reservists' reporting greater risk of interpersonal violence (MacManus et al., 2012) and more readjustment difficulties than regulars (Browne et al., 2007; Kwan et al., 2017).

Being deployed has also been shown to have adverse effects on reservists' civilian careers and finances (e.g., Harvey et al., 2011; Knobloch and Theiss, 2012), with studies linking disruptions to civilian employment to retention

issues (e.g., Castaneda et al., 2008; Dandeker et al., 2010). In a related vein, reservists have reported that there are barriers to their career advancement in the CAF (Anderson et al., 2015; Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019; McKee and Powers, 2008). Lack of adequate training opportunities has been cited as a main dissatisfier among reservists, with lack of access to advanced skills training being a major career inhibitor (McKee and Powers, 2008). Further, reservists have reported receiving substantially less training than their Regular Force colleagues and often taking whatever training is available (McKee and Powers, 2008; Rounding, 2020). Reservists with civilian employment appear to be at a particular disadvantage when it comes to career progression, and inability to get time off from one's civilian job can lead to missed courses and career delays (Anderson et al., 2015; Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019).

Another disparity between Regular Force and Reserve Force employment relates to differences in pay and benefits (e.g., Bury, 2017; Goldenberg and Anderson, 2018; Koundakjian, 2014; Pearce, 2020; Rounding, 2020), dissatisfaction with which has been found to be associated with intentions to leave the reserves (Bury, 2017; Rounding, 2020). This situation suggests that (perceived) inadequacies in compensation for reservists are a long-standing problem in the military. The compensation provided to reservists likely has important implications given that monetary incentives have been shown to be a predictor of reservists' re-enlistment intentions (Anderson, 2018; Griffith, 2005).

Additionally, there is evidence that deployment can have negative consequences on reservists' family dynamics. Issues resulting from deployment range from marital strife to lowered family well-being and sharing of household responsibilities (e.g., childcare; Castaneda et al., 2008; Dandeker et al., 2010). While these circumstances have prompted calls for the military to provide support to their families while they are deployed (e.g., Dandeker et al., 2010), studies suggest reservists are only modestly satisfied with such support (Anderson, 2018; Koundakjian, 2014). In addition, reservists and their families may face obstacles in terms of being relatively removed from the support of military communities (Clever and Segal, 2013), partly due to the fact that they are often geographically dispersed and located at a distance from military bases (Castaneda et al., 2008).

Finally, satisfaction with leadership has been shown to relate to important outcomes among reservists, such as greater individual and unit combat readiness (Griffith, 1995), increased job satisfaction (Anderson, 2018), and intentions to remain with the reserves (e.g., Bury, 2017; Griffith, 2005). Research in this regard is fairly sparse, but reservists on deployment have been shown to have mixed feelings toward the leadership of their Regular Force leaders (Dandeker et al., 2010; Kirke, 2008). For example, many UK reservists deployed in the 2003 Iraq war reported negative feelings regarding the leadership they received, citing that they were poorly managed and that senior leaders did not care for their well-being. However, UK reservists who served in Iraq in 2004/2005 reported that they received good leadership and that they were treated as equals by Regular Force leaders. Research within

the CAF has shown that reservists are, for the most part, moderately satisfied with their leaders (e.g., Anderson, 2018; Koundakjian, 2014; Pearce, 2020).

Clearly, then, it is reasonable to expect that some reservists encounter unique challenges as a result of their dual belonging to, and movement between, the civilian and military worlds. Indeed, this portrait of the unique tensions that characterize reservists has led some regulars to question whether reservists are truly committed to the armed forces and to the military service (Bury, 2019b; Connelly, 2020; Dandeker, Greenberg, and Orme, 2011; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008). Previous research provides partial answers. A number of studies show that reservists are characterized by institutional motivations (e.g., to experience military service, to serve one's country; Moskos, 1988), and exhibit a stronger commitment to the armed forces and a lower risk of attrition from their reservist roles, compared to those who have an occupational orientation (e.g., to learn transferable skills, to earn money; Bury, 2017; Griffith, 2005, 2008; Griffith and Perry, 1993). Nonetheless, given their largely part-time roles, different enlistment motivations and continual movement in and out of the military environment (Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020), it is often assumed that reservists are less committed to military service than their Regular Force counterparts.

These contradictory contentions form the backdrop to our study in which we explore these propositions in CAF Regular and Reserve Force personnel.

The CAF comprises Regular and Reserve Force components, a structure generally similar to that of other nations. The country's Reserve Force is made up of part-time personnel who complement and support the Regular Force at home and during overseas missions. Reserve Force are distributed into four subcomponents, the largest of which is the Primary Reserve (P Res). Members of the P Res include, by majority, members of the Army Reserve (72% of the members), Naval Reserve (12% of the members) and Air Reserve (7% of the members), as well as members in domains of Health Services, National Defence Headquarters, Canadian Special Operations Forces Command Reserve and the Legal Reserve. Canadian reservists can be employed in three different classes of service (frequently transitioning between them [Anderson, 2018]): Class A service which is non-operational, part-time and generally involves training and employment for a minimum of two weeks annually and frequent weekend activities; Class B service which is also non-operational but involves full-time contracts, and is, in many ways, similar to Regular Force service but without some key conditions of service (most notably without non-optional postings and deployments); and Class C service, which is operational and full-time and includes deployment domestically and internationally, but again, unlike for regulars, this deployment is voluntary other than in extreme circumstances (Pearce, 2020). Almost half of the Reserve Force members report that they were employed outside the CAF and one-sixth report being students during their Reserve Force employment (Pearce, 2020).

Method¹

This chapter is based on empirical survey data and compares reservists to the most proximal comparator group – that is, military members who are not transmigrants (i.e., Regular Force members). In particular, data from the *2019 Regular Force Retention Survey* and the *2019 Primary Reserve Force Retention Survey* are used to compare the two components in terms of perceptions of, and satisfaction with, a number of key factors, including work-life conflict, family support, deployment, training, career progression, pay and benefits, leadership, organizational identity, organizational commitment and retention intentions.

Sample and Procedure

The *2019 Regular Force Retention Survey* and the *2019 Reserve Force Retention Survey* were administered to stratified random samples of personnel from the Regular Force and Primary Reserve Force CAF populations, respectively. The *2019 Regular Force Retention Survey* was administered electronically to 4,532 Regular Force members between February and May 2019. In total, 1,732 members completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 38.2% with an overall margin of error of $\pm 2.3\%$ with 95% confidence (Yeung, Musolino, and Eren, 2019). The *2019 Primary Reserve Retention Survey* was administered electronically to 4,718 Primary Reserve members between 14 March 2019 and 20 May 2019. In total, 1,603 members completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 34.0% with an overall margin of error of $\pm 2.4\%$ with 95% confidence (Pearce, 2020).

Table 3.1 includes the sample and population proportions by rank, years of service, age, gender and first official language. A review of Table 3.1 demonstrates that Regular Force and Primary Reserve Force CAF members were generally similar across demographic characteristics. With respect to rank, both components largely comprised non-commissioned members – particularly those in the junior ranks. Both components comprised a large proportion of personnel with 5–14 years of service, both had a notably larger proportion of males than females, and both contained a sizably larger proportion of personnel whose first Canadian official language was English. However, a larger proportion of primary reservists had less than five years of service and were under the age of 25; in contrast, a larger proportion of Regular Force members were between the ages of 35 and 44.

Measures

Work-life conflict

As a result of differences in the conditions of service for Regular and Reserve Force personnel, only two items could be reasonably compared, based on Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian's (1996) work-family conflict scale.

Table 3.1 Sample and population characteristics

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Regular force (%)</i>		<i>Primary reserve force (%)</i>	
	<i>Sample (%)</i> <i>(n = 1,732)</i>	<i>Population (%)</i> <i>(N = 53,041)</i>	<i>Sample (%)</i> <i>(n = 1,603)</i>	<i>Population (%)</i> <i>(N = 20,681)</i>
Rank				
Junior NCM	26.5	55.2	29.1	62.6
Senior NCM	27.9	24.1	27.9	18.6
Junior Officer	23.8	11.9	23.0	12.9
Senior Officer	21.8	8.8	20.0	5.9
Years of Service (YOS)				
1–4	7.3	24.0	12.2	33.7
5–14	40.9	45.5	29.4	41.5
15–24	32.0	19.7	19.0	15.1
25 +	19.7	10.8	39.4	9.7
Age				
16–24	1.8	8.7	6.9	24.2
25–34	26.8	38.4	22.5	35.3
35–44	37.3	31.4	20.4	17.0
45 +	34.1	21.5	50.2	23.5
Gender				
Male	81.0	85.2	82.7	84.0
Female	16.7	14.8	17.3	16.0
Other	0.2	—	—	—
Prefer not to say	2.0	—	—	—
FOL				
English	75.2	72.7	77.9	76.0
French	24.8	27.3	22.1	24.0

Satisfaction with key aspects of work and the organization

The two retention surveys included a number of scales developed by the CAF to assess key work and organizational constructs considered to drive commitment and retention among military personnel (Anderson, 2018; Goldenberg, 2012). In particular, measures included satisfaction with career and occupational training, career progression, pay and benefits, deployment and unit leadership. Items that could be reasonably compared across surveys were retained for the current comparative analysis.

Organizational commitment

Perceptions of organizational commitment were assessed using Meyer, Allen and Smith's (1993) three-dimensional conceptualization of commitment while items were slightly modified to reflect membership in the Regular or Primary Reserve Forces. Meyer et al.'s instrument assesses three types of organizational commitment. Affective commitment items assessed the degree to which a respondent felt emotionally attached to the CAF

(e.g., “The CAF has a great deal of personal meaning for me”). Normative commitment items assessed the degree to which a respondent felt obliged to remain with the CAF (e.g., “I would not leave the CAF right now, because I have a sense of obligation to the people in my unit”). Continuance commitment items assessed the degree to which a respondent perceived that staying with the CAF was a matter of necessity (e.g., “Right now, staying with the CAF is a matter of necessity as much as desire”).

Organizational identity

Perceptions of organizational identity were measured using Cameron’s (2004) instrument that assesses three types of organizational identity. Centrality assessed the degree to which a respondent felt that they spent time thinking about their membership to the CAF (e.g., “I often think about being a CAF member”). In-group affect assessed the degree to which a respondent had positive feelings regarding their membership to the CAF (e.g., “Generally, I feel good about myself when I think about being a CAF member”). In-group ties assessed the degree to which a respondent reported feelings of bonding and belongingness with other CAF members (e.g., “I feel strong ties to other CAF members”).

Intentions to leave the CAF

Respondents from both components reported their intentions to leave the CAF within the next three years.

Results and Discussion

Work-life Conflict

The findings indicate that although work-life conflict was moderate in both components, members of the Regular Force expressed somewhat higher work-life conflict as compared to their Reserve Force counterparts (Figure 3.1). However, this finding should be interpreted with caution as only two items were used in the calculation of the composite scores.²

Satisfaction with Key Work and Organizational Factors

Members from both components are modestly satisfied with their career and occupational training, although reservists were slightly more satisfied than their Regular Force counterparts in this regard (Figure 3.2). Similarly, there was moderate satisfaction with career progression and promotion opportunities in the CAF, with reservists evincing greater satisfaction than members of the Regular Force. With respect to CAF pay and benefits, whereas Regular Force members were moderately satisfied, reservists were generally

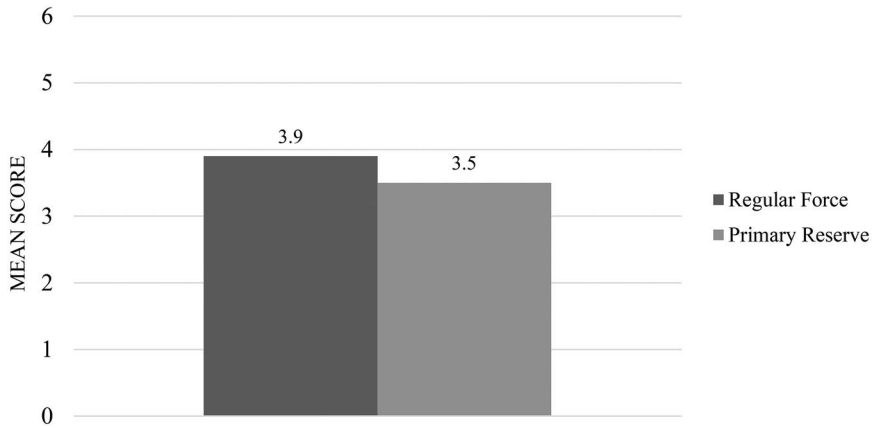


Figure 3.1 Work-life conflict by component

Source: Author's creation.

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree, 7 = not applicable.

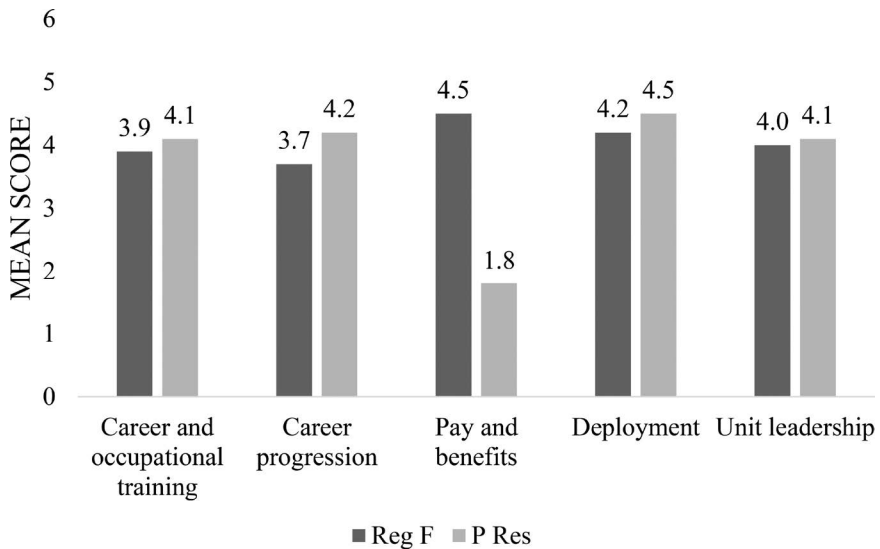


Figure 3.2 Satisfaction with key work and the organization factors by component

Source: Author's creation.

Note: 1 = completely dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat dissatisfied, 4 = somewhat satisfied, 5 = satisfied, 6 = completely satisfied, 7 = not applicable.

dissatisfied in this regard. With respect to deployment, reservists were again slightly more satisfied than Regular Force members. Finally, there was little difference in satisfaction with leadership between members in the two components.

Organizational Commitment

A comparison of scores across the three types of organizational commitment between the two components is presented in Figure 3.3. Primary reservists evinced higher levels of normative commitment, and to a lesser degree higher levels of affective commitment, than their Regular Force counterparts. The opposite pattern is observed for continuance commitment, wherein reservists evince slightly lower levels of continuance commitment than members of the Regular Force.

Affective commitment is said to occur when one experiences an emotional attachment to their organization, feels part of that organization, and wishes to remain with that organization for the foreseeable future. The findings generally suggest that both Regular Force and Primary Reserve personnel have a moderate degree of emotional attachment to the CAF. Importantly, reservists evinced slightly higher levels of affective commitment compared to regulars, which is contrary to the oft-held perception that they are less committed based on the part-time nature of their roles (Anderson, 2018; Dandeker, Greenberg, and Orme, 2011; Danielsen and Carlstedt, 2011; Kirke, 2008). Normative commitment is said to occur when one experiences a sense of loyalty to an organization and strong obligation to stay with that

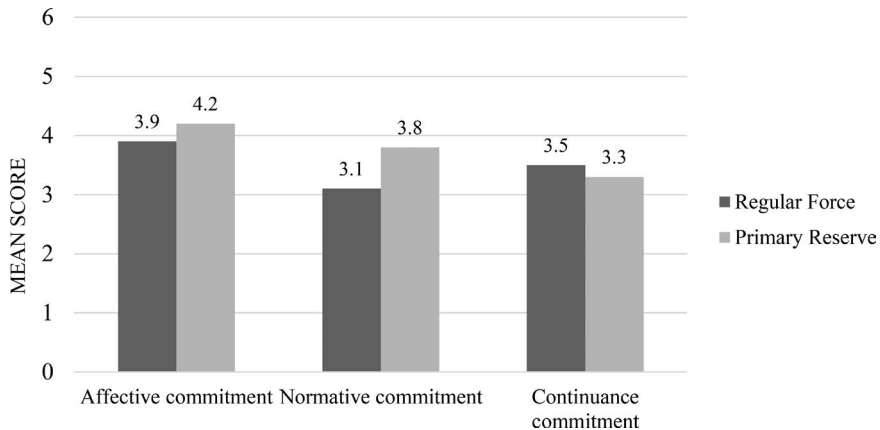


Figure 3.3 Organizational commitment by component

Source: Author’s creation.

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree.

organization. The findings suggest that Primary Reserve personnel feel a moderate sense of obligation to remain with the CAF, whereas Regular Force personnel tend to somewhat disagree that they feel obliged to remain with the CAF. Again, although contrary to expectations, these findings may reflect the fact that reservists do not generally depend on full-time military employment for financial reasons, and are thus perhaps more likely to serve out of a sense of duty rather than need when compared to their Regular Force counterparts. Continuance commitment is said to occur when one is keenly aware of the costs associated with leaving an organization or perceives that there are few alternative options should they leave. The findings suggest that both groups have modest continuance commitment, but that Regular Force members evince higher continuance commitment as compared to reservists. This makes sense given that Regular Force members are more likely to depend on their military employment for pay and benefits and may be less likely to have occupational skills that are easily transferable to civilian employment. However, costs associated with leaving the organization (both monetary as well as other costs such as loss of meaningful work and camaraderie) pertain to both groups.

Organizational Identity

A comparison of scores across the three dimensions of organizational identity between the two components is presented in [Figure 3.4](#). Surprisingly, primary reservists evinced greater CAF identity across each dimension as

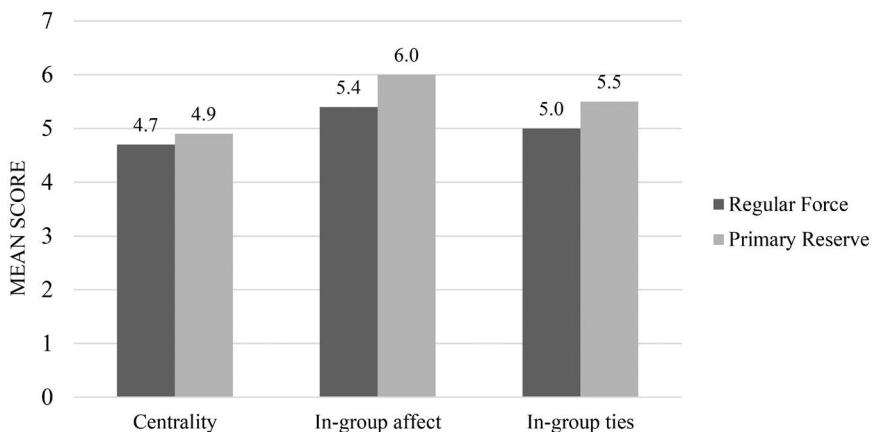


Figure 3.4 Organizational identity by component

Source: Author's creation.

Note: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neutral*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

compared to Regular Force members, with the greatest difference between the two components evinced in in-group affect, followed by in-group ties.

Centrality refers to the frequency with which an individual's membership within a group "comes to mind" as well as the importance one's membership to the group has on their definition of self. The findings suggest that members from both components spend time thinking about being members of the CAF, but that Primary Reserve Force members do so even more than their Regular Force counterparts. *In-group affect* is said to occur when an individual experiences positive emotion as a result of group membership. The findings suggest that while members from both components report positive feelings associated with being members of the CAF, this is more so the case for primary reservists than for their Regular Force counterparts. *In-group ties* refer to one's perception that they share a common bond with other group members and feel a sense of belongingness with them. Personnel from both components indicated moderate feelings of bonding and belongingness with other CAF members, but again this type of identity was stronger for reservists as compared to members of the Regular Force. These findings are consequential given that greater identification has been found to be related to higher perceived unit readiness and commitment (Griffith, 2009) and retention (Cromptoets, 2013; Griffith, 2011a).

Intentions to Leave the CAF

Personnel retention is an important concern for any organization given the high costs associated with replacing employees and the consequences for organizational effectiveness. However, retention is even more critical in the armed forces stemming from the significant investment into the training and career management of initially young, untrained members entering the organization and the requirement for unique military skills that can only be leveraged through military experience and training. Therefore, it is imperative that the armed forces protect their considerable investment in the expertise and knowledge of its people (Department of National Defence, 2017; Goldenberg, 2018).

Somewhat surprisingly, Regular Force and Reserve Force members indicated similar intentions to leave the CAF within three years (Figure 3.5), although reservists were more definite in these sentiments compared to their Regular Force counterparts.

Balancing Military, Civilian and Family Responsibilities

While regulars and reservists did not differ in perceptions across most of the factors explored, some notable differences were observed and are both consistent with previous research and call into question some common stereotypes and beliefs about reservists. The surveys showed that reservists are not only at least as satisfied as regulars with many aspects of military

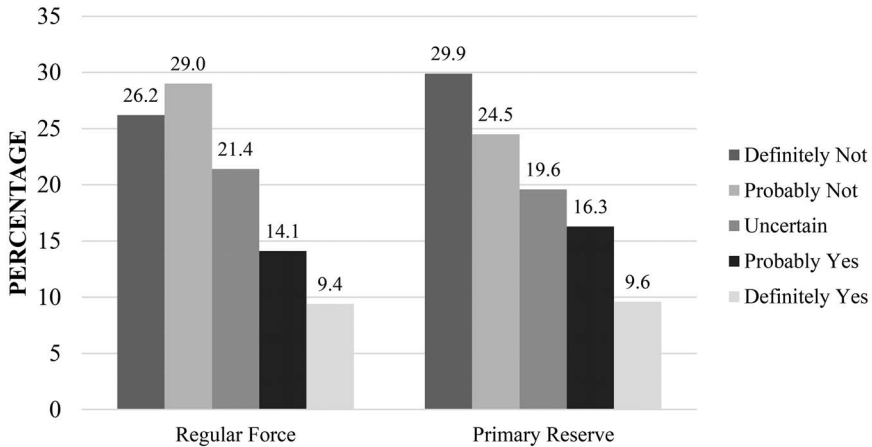


Figure 3.5 Intentions to leave the CAF

Source: Author's creation.

employment, but they are equally if not more committed to the military than regulars and have a strong sense of military identity. Thus the perceptions by some regulars that reservists are “second-class military” or “weekend warriors” that engage in the military as a hobby or social club appears unjustified.

Identification with the CAF

Cameron's (2004) tripartite model of social identification was used to compare Regular Force and Primary Reserve personnel regarding their degree of identification with the CAF. Primary Reserve personnel thought more about being members of the CAF and the importance that membership had on their self-concept (centrality), had more positive emotions associated with their membership (in-group affect) and had a greater sense of bonding and belongingness with other CAF members (in-group ties).

These results are counterintuitive given that reservists' competing roles and the part-time nature of their service might elicit assumptions that they would be less committed to the military than regulars (Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020). All members of the Regular Force were employed full-time by the CAF, whereas over half of the Primary Reserve members were serving part-time (Pearce, 2020). Given that regulars spend such a significant portion of their lives in the military, it is somewhat surprising that they appear to identify with the CAF to a lesser degree than those in the Primary Reserve. Yet, these results are consistent with previous research highlighting the presence of strong bonding and social identification among reservists and higher commitment levels (Ben-Ari, 1998; Bury,

2019a; Griffith, 2009). Perhaps it is precisely this strong social identity that motivates reservists to serve in the military, even though they may not have as much need to do so from a monetary perspective and even though their service often requires them to balance the competing demands of military service and civilian employment.

Commitment

Perhaps because they view reservists as being largely motivated for occupational reasons (e.g., pay, training) instead of institutional reasons (to serve one's country; to answer a "calling"), or because they view them as prioritizing social opportunities over training (Bury, 2019b), regulars as well as leaders have a history of questioning the commitment and dedication of reservists (Anderson, 2018; Dandeker, Greenberg, and Orme, 2011; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008; McKee and Powers, 2008). Despite these views, consistent with the findings regarding organizational identity, the results presented here, as well as those from other recent CAF research (Anderson et al., 2018), suggest that reservists are generally no less committed than regulars and maybe even more committed to the CAF in certain areas. These areas include affective commitment (emotional attachment to CAF) and normative commitment (feeling obliged to remain with the CAF), with differences between components being most apparent with respect to normative commitment. Of the types of organizational commitment included in the three-component model (Meyer and Allen, 1991), affective and normative have been identified as particularly favorable forms of commitment among military personnel (Anderson, 2018; Koundakjian, 2014; Meyer et al., 2013; Meyer et al., 2002). It may be that reservists' strong military identity discussed above translates to strong ties, and a sense of duty, to the CAF.

Satisfaction with deployment

In terms of soldiers' satisfaction with deployment, the results revealed that both Regular Force and Primary Reserve members were moderately satisfied with their deployment experiences, but regulars had slightly lower satisfaction levels. This finding is interesting in light of the fact that deployment on operations is a requirement of service in the Regular Force, whereas deployment in the Primary Reserve is voluntary. Having had the option to refuse to be deployed may have resulted in a greater sense of control, and further may have enabled only those reservists who were in a better position to deploy to choose to do so, something that Regular Force members would not have had the discretion to choose.

However, these findings are not necessarily intuitive, as deployment is a requirement of service in the Regular Force, and thus Regular Force members may be more prepared and/or better trained in areas relevant to combat

than reservists who might have less deployment-relevant training and experience (Browne et al., 2007). Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that regulars would have more positive deployment experiences compared to reservists. Further, Regular Force members who return from deployment tend to be able to spend time with the same people they deployed with, during which they can discuss their shared experiences and also take some time to “wind down” (Dandeker, Lomsky-Feder, and Orme, 2011), whereas reservists often have to return to their civilian work wherein their coworkers do not relate with their recent deployment experience. Further, those in the Primary Reserve may be confronted with disruptions to their civilian employment upon return home from deployment (Castaneda et al., 2008; Dandeker et al., 2010) and confront a host of mental health issues for which there is less recognition and support (Diehle, Williamson, and Greenberg, 2019; Fear et al., 2010; Griffith, 2017; Harvey et al., 2011; Russell et al., 2015). Regardless, the fact that reservists have voiced their enthusiasm for deployment (Fraser and Powers, 2009; Hadziomerovic and Simpson, 2013) and perhaps advancements in reservist training and preparation (Bury, 2019b; Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020) may explain their generally positive levels of satisfaction surrounding deployment.

Remaining gaps and tensions

With regard to compensation, reservists generally indicated that they are displeased with the pay they receive compared with what regulars earn (e.g., Koundakjian, 2014; McKee and Powers, 2008; Rounding, 2020; Zurcher, Patton, and Jacobsen, 1979). In line with these findings, the results presented here demonstrated that Regular Force respondents were notably more satisfied with compensation and benefits than Primary Reserve respondents. Since pay is a reason some individuals are motivated to join the reserves in the first place (Griffith and Perry, 1993), these findings are not reassuring for the CAF and may have negative implications for reservists’ retention. In support of this possibility, reservists have previously noted that the unfair difference in pay between themselves and regulars was a factor that could increasingly bother them over time, such that it could potentially be a driver of attrition (McKee and Powers, 2008; Rounding, 2020).

Interpreting the Findings: Multiple Careers and Voluntarism

Reservists, as is clear from previous studies, are uniquely challenged by competing (often tension-ridden) military, civilian employment and familial claims (Dandeker, Lomsky-Feder, and Orme, 2011; Hadziomerovic and Simpson, 2013; Lomsky-Feder, Gazit, and Ben-Ari, 2008). Indeed, whereas both Regular and Reserve Force military personnel have to balance military and family obligations, reservists are commonly faced with the added difficulty of juggling the many implicit and explicit “contracts” they hold

within their military and civilian employment settings (Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari, 2020), and hence may be especially prone to role conflict (Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019; Griffith, 2005). However, in contrast to the finding and contentions of previous research, the two surveys we base our analysis on indicate that members of the Regular Force and Primary Reserve had similar or even higher levels of satisfaction on many key works and organizational factors. These findings then underscore a rather positive attitude of Canadian reservists to their military units and experiences.

We offer two interrelated interpretations deriving from the analytical metaphor of transmigration to explain the apparent discrepancy between the expectations of regulars about reservists and the contentions of some previous studies on the one hand and the findings of the two Canadian surveys of focus in this chapter on the other. These interpretations involve widening and reconceptualizing our understandings of both the voluntary nature of military service and the multiple, parallel careers pursued by reservists. First, if we understand the idea of volunteering for military service not only as an act undertaken when one joins the armed forces (be it as a regular or a reservist), but as a series of acts in regard to specific circumstances (e.g., agreeing to be deployed or to take up certain tasks and responsibilities), then it seems that reservists have much more leeway than regulars. This volitional aspect of their experiences grants reservists a greater sense of control over their lives especially when the military accedes and accommodates their wishes, which may partially account for their commitment to and identification with the CAF. This is in line with the well-supported job demands-resources model from the field of industrial—organizational psychology which demonstrates that job control and autonomy contribute to greater job satisfaction as well as more general outcomes such as greater retention (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Second, we suggest thinking about reserve service as a way to pursue multiple careers, which may be undertaken by individuals throughout their lives or parts of their lives. This point means looking at reserve service or other voluntary work or serious leisure as something that is pursued concurrently or in parallel with another career. Careers in this sense are undertakings lasting over a significant period of time and marked by an interplay of future projection, choice, intentional actions, adaptation to emerging circumstances and self-fulfillment. Accordingly, following Catignani and Basham (2017) we suggest that for at least some reservists, military service is a “career” that is pursued alongside their civilian careers. Let us take up each explanation in turn.

To begin, at the heart of the metaphor of transmigrants is a volitional element centered on such migrants choosing to travel between and maintaining (at least) two homes. For example, in the CAF this volitional element is most apparent in the fact that whereas deployment is optional for reservists it is not optional for Regular Force members (Pearce, 2020), and

British reservists have much more leeway than regulars to negotiate individual (informal) contracts with their superiors (Bury, 2019a; Connelly, 2020). Indeed, what characterizes the conditions of service of regulars around the world is an *unlimited liability* in that they risk being injured or killed in the line of duty. In contrast, reservists have more *limited liability* and in practice this means a more conditional attitude to military service that is predicated on the possibility of relatively easy withdrawal (as we saw in this study wherein reservists evinced lower continuous commitment). More widely, this conditional and voluntary feature characterizes what Levy and his colleagues call contractual militarism (Levy, Lomsky-Feder, and Harel, 2007). In such a system, military service is not perceived as an unconditioned, long-term, commitment (as is often the case for Regular Force members), but rather it is conditional on the fulfillment of the individual's ambitions and interests. In other words, for many reservists, the governing attitude is one of choice over their life-moves.

It should be noted, however, that contractual militarism does not only refer to attitudes centering on material benefits. No less important it includes non-material enticements such as the challenges and self-fulfillment found in military roles and missions that are part of reservists' engagement with reserve service (Anderson, 2018; Higate et al., 2019; Pearce, 2020). This contention is supported by the findings herein which demonstrate that despite dissatisfaction with pay and benefits and lower continuance commitment, reservists have similar retention intentions and even stronger organizational identity and affective and normative commitment as compared to their Regular Force counterparts. As Gazit, Lomsky-Feder, and Ben-Ari (2020) note, reservists have "psychological contracts" with the military that encompass a wide variety of expectations including exposure to new experiences and tasks. Seen this way, it is understandable that CAF research shows that reservists express desire for greater military involvement, including a desire to be deployed (Anderson, 2018; Fraser and Powers, 2009; Hadziomerovic and Simpson, 2013) and cite a lack of opportunities for deployment as a main reason for their leaving the reserves (Anderson, 2018; Bury, 2017; McKee and Powers, 2008; Rounding, 2020). Further, we suggest that, ironically, it is precisely their high commitment to, and identification with, the armed forces that may intensify dissatisfaction with some aspects of reserve service.

Furthermore, given that reservists' views and expectations change with time, we suggest taking the idea of contractual militarism one additional step to view it over the course of reservists' lives. This point implies introducing the idea of multiple but (potentially) complementary careers that are not exclusively sequential but *simultaneous*. Most of the literature on dual careers refers to two marriage partners and the tensions marking commitment to workplaces versus families (overwhelmingly in regard to women). In fact, this view has undergirded the thrust of much work on military families (Gribble et al., 2019; Moelker, Anders, and Rones, 2019) and is evident

in psychological studies about the actual and potential dissatisfaction of reservists as compared to regulars. Along these lines, Canadian studies have reported that reservists with civilian employment are more likely to report missing CAF training courses (Anderson et al., 2015), and that challenges in attaining an important course can delay military career progression (Anderson and Goldenberg, 2019).

A strand of sociological thinking proposes a wider view of the concept of career. Beginning with Howard Becker's work we can refer to the "careers" of marijuana users (Becker, 1953; Jarvinen and Ravn, 2014), individuals who participate in serious leisure (Lamont, Kennelly, and Moyle, 2013; Lingo and Tepper, 2013), voluntary activity (Taylor, 2005) or who undertake certain forms of creative work (Lingo and Tepper, 2013). Following Grey (1994), we can understand "career" to refer to actions involved in pursuing disciplined cultivation and development over a substantial length of time. This kind of conceptualization is at the heart of studies about serious leisure (Stebbins, 2011) in which such individual development (over the course of one's life course) parallels one's organizational or professional career. Participants in serious leisure – and very often voluntary work – find such activities to represent a powerfully attractive career and an experience that is unavailable in more casual leisure or, indeed, in their primary employment careers. In this view, engaging in a hobby or a voluntary activity is not seen as being trivial or lacking real economic and/or political value. Along these lines, the trans-migration of reservists between military and civilian pursuits need not imply only a set of stressors, but also as a pursuit that offers unique benefits and avenues for self-fulfillment.

To go on, multiple careers pursued by a reservist may contain elements that may be both conflicting (again, as most studies have focused on) or complementary. Complementary careers center on the pursuit of parallel avenues of self-actualization or self-achievement through which people realize goals and engage in interests (Catignani and Basham, 2017). In this sense, for at least some individuals reserve service and advancement within it may represent a complementary career to their civilian one, just as engagement in serious leisure may "compensate" or counterbalance regular work that is only partially fulfilling. Indeed, research on reservists' reasons for joining the armed forces points to the desire for self-fulfillment through military service such as personal growth, opportunity to make a difference, to serve one's country, to stay fit and have an active lifestyle and/or for challenging work (Griffith, 2008; Otis, 2019).

This suggestion fits with the analytical frame proposed by Griffith and Ben-Ari (2020). Reviewing a large number of studies on reservists, they argue that four social constructions encompass the way service is related to individuals' lives: complementary to life, equitable arrangements, receiving a greater self-definition and discordant identity. In other words, we can conjecture that for the more satisfied and committed Canadian reservists, military service is complementary to the other dimensions of their lives.

This kind of interpretation aligns with the findings of Griffith's work on the types of identities reservists assume (Griffith, 2011a, 2011b, and 2011c). His broad conclusion, echoed by Vest (2013), is that reservists whose identities align with that of a "soldier warrior" make especially good reservists. These individuals take a professional approach to their reservist roles, are committed to their missions and are mentally prepared and trained for deployment (Griffith, 2011a). We propose that future research examine these propositions in an a priori fashion.

Conclusion

Smith and Jans (2011) suggested a decade ago that multiple employments along the life course have become more commonplace. Our analysis underscores two points. The first is that reservists' decisions to join or remain within the armed forces have become more conditional and contingent than in the past, and that these patterns are particularly pronounced for reservists since so much of their identity formation takes place beyond the confines of the military institution. The second point is that the pursuit of multiple careers should be seen not only sequentially, as is often the case, but instead ought to be viewed as being potentially simultaneous, and that reservists enter service to achieve forms of self-actualization and self-fulfillment that are not readily available in their civilian occupations.

Our interpretations derive from the contentions of Gazit, Lomksy-Feder, and Ben-Ari (2020) that the management of multiple (sometimes competing and other times complementary) roles and movement of military members between the armed forces and civilian society adds a dynamic dimension to the implicit contracts that organize reservists' relations with the state and military. Such a dynamic view allows us to understand the essential flexibility built into reserve service since motivations ebb and flow according to individuals' location within their own individual life-cycle (Lording, 2015). Indeed, contrary to oft-held beliefs, reservists in this study were generally at least as satisfied with and committed to the military as their Regular counterparts, which we contend is influenced by their having more choice in some aspects of their military service, including the extent of their Reserve Force engagement and whether or not to deploy.

Notes

- 1 The method and statistical results are based on the material from the descriptive reports for the 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey (Yeung, Musolino, and Eren, 2020) and the CAF Primary Reserve Force Retention Survey descriptive reports (Pearce, 2020).
- 2 The items common to both surveys were: *The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life* and *the amount of time my job(s) takes up makes it difficult to fulfill personal responsibilities*.

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