

FINNISH NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

COMMITMENT TO THE MILITARY SERVICE AMONG FINNISH CONSCRIPTS

Thesis

Captain
Mikael Salo

General Staff Officer Course 54
Army

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Author Captain Mikael Salo	
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<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>This research establishes the primary components, predictors, and consequences of organizational commitment in the military context. Specifically, the research examines commitment to the military service among Finnish conscripts and whether initial affective commitment prior to service predicts later commitment, attitudes, behavior, and performance, and, furthermore, analyzes the changes in commitment and its possible outcomes.</p> <p>The data were collected from records as well as by surveys from 1,387 rank and file soldiers, immediately after they reported for duty, near the end of basic training, and near the end of 6 to 12 months of service. The data covered a wide array of predictor variables, including background items, attitudes toward conscription, mental and physical health, sociability, training quality, and leadership. Moreover, the archival data included such items as rank, criminal record, performance ratings, and the number of medical examines and exemptions. The measures were further refined based on the results of factor analysis and reliability tests.</p> <p>The results indicated that initial commitment significantly corresponded with expected adjustment, intentions to stay in the military, and acceptance of authority. Moreover, initial commitment moderately related to personal growth, perceived performance, and the number of effective service days at the end of service. During basic training, affective commitment was mostly influenced by challenging training, adjustment experiences, regimentation, and unit climate. At the end of service, committed soldiers demonstrated more personal growth and development in service, had higher-level expected performance, and less malingering during their service. Additionally, they had significantly more positive attitudes toward national defense. The results suggest that affective commitment requires adequate personal adjustment, experiences of personal growth and development, and satisfaction with unit dynamics and training.</p> <p>This research contributes to the theoretical discussion on organizational commitment and the will to defend the nation and advances developing models to support and manage conscript training, education, leadership, and personnel policy. This is achieved by determining the main factors and variables, including their relative strength, that affect commitment to the military service. These findings may also facilitate in designing programs aimed at reducing unwanted discharges and inadequate performance. In particular, these results provide tools for improving conscripts' overall attachment to and identification with the military service.</p>	
<p>Keywords Organizational commitment, affective commitment, intent to stay, conscript, military</p>	

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“An ounce of loyalty is worth a pound of cleverness.”

Elbert Hubbard (1856 –1915)¹

1 INTRODUCTION

Everyone has sometimes been motivated to perform and behave in a particular way. Although this motivation may have vanished from sight at times, still the person has continued his or her membership in the organization as a somewhat productive member. This continued activity has risen from the commitment attaching the person to the given group and/or unit and providing a sense of purpose. This characterizes the main differences between the notions of motivation and commitment. Consequently, “motivation comprises the influences that bear on a soldier’s choice of, degree of commitment to, and persistence in effecting, a certain course of action,”² whereas commitment is more deeply rooted and solid. While commitment is discovered through “a sense of duty, conviction, or responsibility,”³ motivation directs immediate actions and performance of an individual. Particularly in the military, “commitment is the backbone” that makes soldiers overcome hardships.⁴

Before discussing the definitions and theory on commitment, it is essential to briefly explain why commitment is so important. Basically, the significance of commitment derives from its effect on the person’s attitudes and behavior. Without commitment and positive attitudes, the person’s skills and knowledge are not successfully employed for the benefit of the organization. Moreover, shared commitment to the unit and its mission unites its personnel whereas lack of commitment ruins the organization’s efforts to direct personal performance towards organizational effectiveness. Committed soldiers attach with the unit and the military,

¹ Hubbard 1998, 60

² Kellett 1982, 6

³ Gal 1985, 555

⁴ Ibid., 553

work hard, exert their efforts more than officially required, support others and the unit, and aspire to meet the organizational goals. Basically, well-committed soldiers forward their unit to improved achievements.

In order to accrue more knowledge about the essence of commitment to the military service, 89 cadets of the 94th Cadet Course were asked to provide responses for the question: What is a committed soldier like? The verbalizations featured in these answers aided in shedding light on the characteristics typical for commitment notions prevalent in military environments and, in particular, during conscript service. However, it needs to be pointed out that since these respondents represent young cadet officers, the responses necessarily bring out somewhat idealized conceptualizations. In other words, had these responses been collected from conscripts, the formulations featured in the following would most likely combine the notion of commitment less with glorified forms of behavior.

The cadets' responses revealed that commitment relates to a) the military organization and the overall society, b) military duties and training, c) social aspects of a conscript group, and d) the soldier's personal characteristics. In terms of the military organization, the committed soldier believes in the importance of the military obligation and considers service a valuable, meaningful, and rewarding duty. Commitment to the military service exists with the strong will to defend the country and a positive, "110% attitude" towards service and the military. In other words, the person understands that conscript service is both an obligation and a citizen's right.

One of the most common responses was that the committed soldier *serves a higher purpose* and the common interest of the citizens. Thus, the soldier views things in a context and draws the reasons and strengths for carrying out the daily activities from the larger meaning of the service. Therefore, the soldier perceives his or her effort as important. Moreover, the committed soldier believes in the effectiveness of the Finnish Defence Forces and also sustains others' trust in the system and its purpose. In practice, the soldier abides by rules, norms, and routines and understands their role in the given context. In general, he or she is proud of the unit and the completed military training and willing to maintain the good reputation of the unit, the Finnish Defence Forces, and the military.

The above describes strong *affective* ties to the organization. However, another reason for being committed could be the *instrumental* benefits that are gained through the membership in the military. The cadets indicated that the committed soldier may believe that serving the military obligation profits later in the civilian life. Thus, commitment may originate from the will of gaining something, such as respect, appreciation, or possible career options. Simply put, a committed soldier may perceive service as beneficial due to the improved leadership abilities and practical skills that promote his or her professional future in the civilian labor market. In addition, physical development, strengthened self-confidence, and a feeling of togetherness provide reasons for staying in service. In general, the committed soldier is ambitious and may have set high objectives that he or she quite often achieves.

In addition to affective and instrumental reasons for commitment, the cadets suggested that strong commitment may reflect a *vocation for or calling to the military career*, and therefore the person may have long-term plans for the service period. On the other hand, the calling may be generated at home. For example, family background and attitudes of the friends, parents, and relatives may stress the importance of fulfilled military service. The cadets also mentioned that a committed soldier is typically more mature and has already found his or her place in life and in the society. Perhaps settled, experienced people are able to reason for the usefulness of the military service at the personal, social, and organizational level. Instead of being burdened by the service, they take the military duty and experiences as positive challenges.

Besides organizational aspects of commitment, the cadets raised up the issue of a developed *work ethic and morale* as an evidence of the committed soldier. He or she is conscientious and works responsibly and thoroughly to the best of his or her abilities in order to promote the fulfillment of the set tasks and objectives. An interesting and personally valuable duty provides strength to endure hardship during the service. The person serves impeccably because he or she knows that it is for the best of everyone. Small obstacles do not bother him or her and therefore there is only a small difference between a good and bad day in terms of the soldier's behavior and performance. Even during hardship, the soldier still manages to do his or her share and does not affect the attitudes and atmosphere in the group. Moreover, the committed soldier never questions the duties. In fact, the person clarifies the meaning and appropriateness of training, inspires others, and makes sense of the duties. He or she anticipates problems in advance and tackles them already beforehand as he or she is able to influence things. The soldier observes the behavioral norms, wears a uniform and

demonstrates a strong bond with the daily practices in the unit and thereby sets an example for the others.

The committed soldier stands out from the rest because he or she never gives up. Thus, the committed soldier does not avoid responsibilities and never goes where the fence is in its lowest. Instead, he or she makes every effort in military training. Perhaps he or she draws more energy and strength from understanding an individual exercise as part of the whole mission. Therefore, the soldier has a meaning for service and clear goals for executing duties. The committed soldier is motivated and tries to encourage the others to do their best. He or she does not complain about small problems. Since he or she thinks of the benefit of others and the whole system, the committed soldier plans new courses of action and takes an initiative for improving training and working conditions.

The cadets emphasized that the committed soldier lives for the group. As a group member, the soldier is unselfish and social, and contributes to the welfare of others. He or she puts the group and the others' interest before his or her own benefit and feels responsible for the situation and circumstances of the peers and subordinates. Therefore, the committed soldier is ready for sacrificing his or her own time for helping others and supporting the overall purpose. He or she appreciates the other group members and the leaders. Moreover, the soldier is a good team-player and subordinate. In practice, he or she inspires confidence in teammates and teamwork, shows team spirit, and never lets his or her teammates down. Thus, commitment goes with thinking that the success of the troops is more important than a personal gain. Therefore, the soldier motivates and encourages others and performs to serve a higher purpose.

In terms of mood and attitude, commitment provides *mental strength* to the person. The committed soldier is humble, honest, and straightforward. Due to commitment, the soldier adopts a positive approach to service and new situations, is solidly motivated, focuses on the advantages of the situation, and spreads this positive orientation to others. The committed soldier has an answer to *why* something is done, and therefore is determined to do it. Goal-oriented, the soldier has perseverance and a plenty of stamina.

Commitment to the military service goes together with a strong *learning and training motivation*. The person is eager and enthusiastic to adopt new skills. He or she is self-motivated and tries to learn things independently without external motives. Self-disciplined and focused with a sense of duty, the soldier is tenacious, unyielding, and independent in his or her effort. Commitment strengthens the soldier's feeling of responsibility and increases the willingness to take the consequences of his or her actions.

The cadets pointed out that the committed soldier is never a "brown-nose." For example, he or she volunteers for doing things for the other group members, not for gaining something as an individual. The person is *loyal both to the friends and the organization*. In practice, he or she values the teammates and how the group is appreciated among the other unit members. Therefore, the person accounts for and discusses the meaning and consequences of behavior and performance. In conclusion, commitment to the military service presupposes that the soldier equally values the peers, leaders, and subordinates and duties. The strongly committed person is *a mainstay of the group*. Since every person has what it takes to be can be committed, it is not a requirement to be a "super-soldier" or a leader in order to strongly attach to and identify with the group and the unit.

The cadets detailed several representations of commitment in the conscript service. Based on the responses, commitment has its effect on attitude, behavior, and performance at the individual, group, and organizational level. At least to the cadets, it is evident that commitment is one of the most beneficial characteristics of the soldier. However, one particular answer needs to be mentioned before moving on to the study proper. A cadet listed many positive aspects of commitment similar to the other cadets' but ended the description by stating that a soldier with a strong commitment is a "fairy tale." This statement contains two assumptions: commitment among the rank and file soldiers is not anymore a self-evident issue, and, furthermore, commitment to the military may be weakening among conscripts. All the positive characteristics of commitment combined with a general trend of fading attachments to the organizations pave the way for studying soldiers' devotion and dedication in service. Thereby this thesis examines commitment to the military in order to increase understanding about the theoretical components of commitment and the practical knowledge on how commitment could be supported in the military.

The research is divided into six parts. The second section describes the notions and main components of organizational commitment. Particularly, the conceptualizations and definitions of organizational commitment are reviewed, after which the other viewpoints are also presented that either challenge or complement the tradition of organizational commitment research. The third section portrays relevant research findings concerning the antecedents and impacts of commitment. The fourth section presents the research questions and details the sample, methods, and measures used in the analyses. Finally, the fifth section illustrates the main results of the analyses, where the focus is on the examination of the conscripts' commitment and intentions to stay in the military. The end of the research discusses the main results in order to offer suggestions for future research projects and practical recommendations for improving and developing commitment in the military.

2 CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF COMMITMENT

2.1 Components of Organizational Commitment

Based on the bibliometry and the number of articles in the top journals dealing with commitment, Meyer and Allen's conceptualization⁵ is accepted and taken as a starting point for modeling organizational commitment in modern literature. This is particularly visible in numerous scientific articles that are published, for example, in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, which is the topmost in the ranking of journals that issue articles in the fields of organizational psychology.

According to the model of Meyer and Allen,⁶ there are three separate *components of commitment*: affective, normative, and continuance. Correspondingly, a person can have a desire (affective commitment), an obligation (normative commitment), and/or a need (continuance commitment) to stay in an organization.⁷ In other words, there are three psychological ties that bind: "emotional attachment," "feeling of obligation," and "perceived costs associated with leaving."⁸ Yoon and Lawler⁹ contend that this distinction respects Kanter's conceptualization,¹⁰ where a person's attachment can be affective (emotional),

⁵ Meyer & Allen 1984, 372

⁶ Meyer & Allen 1991, 67-69; 1997, 11-13

⁷ Meyer & Allen 1997, 61

⁸ Allen 2003, 237-238

⁹ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 8

¹⁰ Kanter 1968, 499

normative (moral), or instrumental (utilitarian). Together these distinct factors build “a psychological state,” commitment, which characterizes the member’s relationships with the unit and affects the decisions of remaining in the group.¹¹

Mowday, Porter, and Steers¹² suggested that there are two different types of commitment: attitudinal and behavioral commitment. *Attitudinal commitment* refers to “a mind set in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization,” whereas *behavioral commitment* “relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization.”¹³ In their model, Meyer and Allen¹⁴ emphasizes the attitudinal commitment (a psychological state), whereas behavioral commitment is termed as behavioral persistence. While attitudinal commitment implies identification with the goals and values of the organization, behavioral commitment refers to the process in which the person’s behavior binds him or her to the organization.¹⁵ Naturally, attitudinal commitment may affect behavioral commitment and vice versa.¹⁶

Affective Commitment (AC) represents an individual’s general psychological orientation to the organization and membership in it.¹⁷ AC is defined as “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization.”¹⁸ Basically, this definition derives from the subcomponents of commitment: identification with and involvement in the unit.¹⁹ Generally, AC and, particularly, an individual’s identification with the organization contain the idea that the person emotionally bonds with the organizational identity.²⁰

The scale of AC includes such items as “I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization”²¹ which assesses an individual’s affective attachment to the unit. Actually, it is close to the esprit de corps (“me-henki” in Finnish) and organizational cohesion that are standard notions in the military cohesion literature describing the strength of personal involvement among group members. Simply, AC develops when organizational experiences promote feelings of comfort in a dependable organization, support personal competence and

¹¹ Meyer & Allen 1991, 23, 67; Meyer, Allen & Smith 1993, 539

¹² Mowday, Porter, & Steers 1982

¹³ Ibid., 26

¹⁴ Meyer & Allen 1991, 63

¹⁵ Wright & Bonett 2002, 1188

¹⁶ Solinger, van Olffen & Roe 2008, 75

¹⁷ Meyer & Allen 1991, 75

¹⁸ Meyer & Allen 1997, 11

¹⁹ Mowday et al. 1982, 27; Mowday, Steers & Porter 1979, 226

²⁰ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 15

²¹ Meyer & Allen 1984, 375

self-worth through education and challenging jobs,²² and satisfy personal needs due to met expectations and goal achievements.²³

Because affective commitment characterizes an overall psychological orientation to the unit, AC has broad implications for attitudes and behavior.²⁴ AC both strengthens loyalty and obedience to the expectations and values of the unit and relates to tenure in the organization.²⁵ Due to AC, employees continue to work in the unit because they “want to do so.”²⁶ Thus, they stay and work in the unit “for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth.”²⁷

Normative Commitment (NC) ties the person to the organization “by feelings of obligation and duty.”²⁸ Thus, NC is “the ought to of commitment” referring to that the person has the responsibility for remaining with the organization due to “a moral obligation” or ‘calling’ and not merely a job.²⁹ NC involves internalized normative pressures and identification with the organization,³⁰ which is particularly relevant in the military due to positive effects of ‘calling’.³¹ Employees with strong NC remain in the organization because they feel that “it is the right and moral thing to do.”³²

Normative commitment is created by internalizing the person’s loyalty and devotion to the organization. Shared NC entails normative pressures to act in accordance with organizational goals and interests.³³ These normative pressures and commitment are generated through socialization tactics and experiences in the early phases of the socialization process.³⁴ Prior to the organizational membership, the family background and significant others may have affected the person’s NC through internalized normative pressures on appropriate ways of thinking and behaving.³⁵ Similarly, the organizational socialization process instills the unit’s values and standards in order to create congruence between organizational principles and

²² Meyer, Allen & Gellatly 1990, 710; Meyer, Allen & Topolnysky 1998, 83

²³ Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas & Cannon-Bowers 1991, 764-765; Tremble, Payne, Finch & Bullis 2003, 169

²⁴ Meyer & Allen 1991, 75

²⁵ Mathieu & Zajac 1990, 180-181, 189

²⁶ Meyer & Allen 1991, 67

²⁷ Buchanan 1974, 533

²⁸ Meyer & Allen 1997, 25

²⁹ Gade 2003, 164

³⁰ Wiener 1982, 418

³¹ Gal 1985, 553; Johns 1984, ix

³² Meyer & Allen 1997, 60

³³ Wiener 1982, 421

³⁴ Meyer & Allen 1997, 64-65

³⁵ Stinglhamber, Bentein & Vandenberghe 2002, 133

personal values. Consequently, the soldier is persuaded to create a sense of obligation to serve the purposes of the unit.³⁶

Continuance Commitment (CC) refers to an instrumental part of commitment, whereas AC and NC both engage with affective elements of attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment relates to outlines of *social exchange theory*.³⁷ The main premise of the theory is that satisfaction to continued participation is a function of perceived rewards minus costs.³⁸ Thus, the person assesses and is aware of the profits and costs associated with staying and leaving of the organization.³⁹ In other words, he or she exchanges the unit's favorable treatment for his or her emotional attachment.⁴⁰

In addition, CC has its roots in Becker's⁴¹ idea that commitment develops when a person makes *side-bets*.⁴² Side-bets imply any valuable investments the person has made or obtained⁴³ that would be lost if the person leaves the organization.⁴⁴ In other words, investments are the total amount of resources put into personal relationships and organizational membership that cannot be reclaimed if the membership ends.⁴⁵ Such investments can be, for example, the time and effort devoted to the duties at the organization.⁴⁶ Similarly, the *benefits* acquired by organizational membership develop cost-based commitment.⁴⁷ Thus, when there is "a profit associated with continued participation and a cost associated with leaving," cognitive-continuance commitment to the organization strengthens.⁴⁸ The profit could be pay, status, skills, job freedom, or friendship among group members.⁴⁹ Actually, anything increasing perceived costs of leaving is salient to CC.⁵⁰

Together with personal investments and organizational benefits, *the availability of alternatives* defines the strength of CC.⁵¹ By the definitions, the availability of alternatives is "the totality of benefits of a current relationship relative to those obtainable from alternative

³⁶ Meyer et al. 1998, 83; Solinger et al. 2008, 72

³⁷ Homans 1961

³⁸ Ko, Price & Mueller 1997, 962; Yoon & Lawler 2005, 2

³⁹ Cota, Evans, Dion, Kilik & Longman 1995, 572; Kanter 1968, 504; Meyer & Allen 1984, 373

⁴⁰ Sinclair, Tucker, Cullen & Wright 2005, 1280

⁴¹ Becker 1960, 32-33, 35

⁴² Meyer & Allen 1997, 12

⁴³ Meyer & Allen 1984, 373; Tremble et al. 2003, 169

⁴⁴ Eagly & Chaiken 1993, 209; Meyer & Allen 1991, 71

⁴⁵ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 3

⁴⁶ Meyer & Allen 1984, 373

⁴⁷ Sinclair et al. 2005, 1281

⁴⁸ Kanter 1968, 504

⁴⁹ Meyer & Allen 1984, 373

⁵⁰ Meyer & Allen 1997, 56

⁵¹ Meyer & Allen 1991, 71

relationships.”⁵² When the person has no relevant other options for the organizational membership, the perceived cost of leaving may be even higher.⁵³ Conversely, feasible alternatives may produce weaker CC among employees.⁵⁴ For instance, the person serving in the military may stay in the unit because he or she has no other relevant option. Thus, the conscripts may feel the “need” to stay put regardless of their “desires” or attachments.⁵⁵

A lack of alternatives for the conscript service may support continuance commitment of the person when there is a general conscript system in the country and the person is aware of how the majority of peers opt for the same way of conduct. In that kind of situation, there is a social pressure for fulfilling the military obligation and a common belief that the military service turns out to be beneficial later in civilian life as well. Therefore, the *perception* about the costs concerning why the person should stay in the organization determines CC – “not the existence of the costs themselves.”⁵⁶ Thus, the cost or benefit as such is not important but rather the awareness of and perception about, for example, the uniqueness of the benefits or shamefulness (as a cost) of leaving keeps the person committed to the organization. However, investments, benefits, and alternatives have an insignificant impact on CC if the group members are not aware of them or their meaning.⁵⁷

Theoretically, CC has two subcomponents: the perceived sacrifice that may result from leaving the organization and the perceived lack of alternatives.⁵⁸ The sacrifice subcomponent implies that the person has made irreplaceable investments during the membership.⁵⁹ Thus, the person has to or needs to stay in the organization because there is no sense in leaving it.⁶⁰ For example, after several years of employment in the same company, it can be hard to find another job or there may be too many years invested in the organization compared to the benefits of leaving.⁶¹ In other words, CC is based on “threat of loss that commits the person to the organization.”⁶² If the person commits to the organization only due to that threat or the costs associated with leaving, the person may have no desire to become a unit’s member but he or she stays in the unit only for practical reasons, such as investments, benefits, and lack of alternatives.

⁵² Yoon & Lawler 2005, 3

⁵³ Meyer & Allen 1984, 373

⁵⁴ Meyer & Allen 1997, 57

⁵⁵ Meyer & Allen 1987, 212

⁵⁶ Allen 2003, 242

⁵⁷ Meyer & Allen 1997, 58

⁵⁸ Meyer et al. 1990, 711; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson 1989, 154

⁵⁹ Solinger et al. 2008, 71

⁶⁰ Meyer & Allen 1997, 56

⁶¹ Gade 2003, 164

⁶² Meyer & Allen 1984, 373

In comparison with other commitment components, CC also features some negative aspects. While affective ties (such as AC and NC) are beneficial to the organization, CC is an undesirable feature.⁶³ Therefore, the required investments, possible alternatives, or acquired monetary benefits and perks (e.g., “optiot” in Finnish) should not be over-emphasized in any organization, and particularly not in the military, where the affective side of commitment is more salient for optimal outcomes than in other organizations. The possible draw-backs are that strong CC puts the person’s effort down⁶⁴ and he or she starts to neglect the duties.⁶⁵ Moreover, the person accepts the participation in the organization as the only possible, feasible choice.⁶⁶ Even experienced employees may withdraw their commitment to work due to CC⁶⁷ and execute only the minimum that is required for staying in the job.

The organizational psychological literature has adopted the Meyer and Allen’s three-component model (TCM) of commitment. However, the literature has also offered improvements to the model and even challenged its domination. The main critique targets the conceptualization. Solinger and his colleagues⁶⁸ argue based on the attitude-behavior model⁶⁹ that TCM comprises fundamentally different phenomena together: AC refers to a general attitude towards the organization while NC and CC “are attitudes regarding specific forms of behavior (i.e., staying or leaving)”⁷⁰ and assess the anticipated outcomes of the act of leaving. As an improvement they⁷¹ suggest examining affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of organizational commitment based on a singular, attitudinal definition of commitment.⁷²

Also, continuance commitment has been viewed with concern. CC and AC correlates weakly⁷³ or even negatively, indicating that they are individual measures of the person’s relation to the organization.⁷⁴ This is due to how CC emphasizes the instrumental side of the organizational membership, not the affective one. Moreover, CC is more an attitude towards behavior, not towards the organization in general.⁷⁵ In addition, the reliability of the CC scale

⁶³ Cota et al. 1995, 572

⁶⁴ Meyer et al. 1989, 152

⁶⁵ Meyer et al. 1993, 545

⁶⁶ Meyer & Allen 1997, 40

⁶⁷ Wright & Bonett 1997, 498

⁶⁸ Solinger et al. 2008

⁶⁹ Eagly 1992, 693-694

⁷⁰ Solinger et al. 2008, 70

⁷¹ Ibid., 76

⁷² Cf. Mowday et al. 1982, 26

⁷³ Meyer & Allen 1984, 376

⁷⁴ Ko et al. 1997, 966

⁷⁵ Solinger et al. 2008, 72

has been low suggesting that its construct validity is questionable.⁷⁶ On the other hand, NC has had even too strong a correlation with AC and it is difficult to separate them as factors. This stems from how AC and NC have many common antecedents,⁷⁷ and therefore, they lack discriminant validity.⁷⁸ Because of these reasons, the utility of affective commitment measuring identification and attachment to different foci is perceived relevant but the employment of NC and CC as measuring overall commitment has received critique and concerns such as described above. This is the reason why Ko and his colleagues⁷⁹ recommended to define commitment as “loyalty to the organization” emphasizing a person’s affective attachment to the unit.

2.2 Multiple Foci of Commitment in the Military

Meyer and Allen’s organizational commitment model⁸⁰ denotes the psychological states in work settings. Although their model governs the scientific debate in the journals, there have also been other ways to investigate an individual’s affection to and identification with the organizational entities. The following review of research describes the various ways to conceptualize commitment components and their foci. Because the rudiments of the three-component model are presented above, this section expands the issue by discussing the origins of the organizational commitment research and the work-related results that have been made on the basis of the multidimensional models of commitment.

Kanter⁸¹ perceived three types of commitment as continuance, cohesion, and control. Continuance refers to the assessed relative costs and benefits for leaving or staying in the group (refer to CC). Cohesion as “positive cathectic orientations” alludes to affective ties to the group whereas control refers to how the group members take norms, demands, and sanctions as legitimate and necessary.⁸² Following Kanter’s conceptualization of commitment as instrumental, cathectic, and normative ties,⁸³ Yoon and Lawler⁸⁴ state that commitment has three components: instrumental, affective, and normative commitment. Instrumental commitment refers to perceived benefits of staying in the organization. Affective commitment

⁷⁶ Ko et al. 1997, 961

⁷⁷ Meyer et al. 1993, 546

⁷⁸ Solinger et al. 2008, 71

⁷⁹ Ko et al. 1997, 971

⁸⁰ Meyer & Allen 1984, 377-378

⁸¹ Kanter 1968, 500

⁸² McClure & Broughton 1998, 10; 2000, 475

⁸³ Kanter 1968, 499

⁸⁴ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 8

derives from an emotional (cathectic) attachment to the organization, while normative commitment implies the attachment to the moral values and norms of the organization.

Slightly differently, Buchanan⁸⁵ defines commitment as a “partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth.” This perception emphasizes an affective / emotional part of the reasons why an individual would like to continue his or her membership in the organization. Porter and his colleagues⁸⁶ developed the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, and defined organizational commitment as “(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.”⁸⁷ Thus, commitment implies that a member desires to stay in the unit, accepts its goals and values, and exerts effort for the organization.⁸⁸ Actually, this definition forms the basis for the conceptualization for the three-component model of commitment. Furthermore, Mowday and his colleagues⁸⁹ conclude that organizational commitment refers to “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization.” Especially, the membership and involvement in the organization links the person with the specific group goals and facilitates achieving the organization’s objectives.⁹⁰

Gal⁹¹ categorizes the various aspects of *organizational behavior* to three facets of commitment in the military as organizational commitment, career commitment, and moral commitment. Through organizational commitment the person ties with the organization’s goals, purposes, and norms. In career commitment, the person strives his own success, whereas moral commitment refers to that the person believes in and lives for the moral codes of the group. It is argued that the membership in the military requires moral commitment since commitment relates the person with the values, norms, and standards of behavior of the organization and produces sensitivity to social sanctions of the other members.⁹²

O’Reilly and Chatman⁹³ argue that organizational commitment consists of compliance, identification, and internalization. Thus, commitment is founded on the person’s (a)

⁸⁵ Buchanan 1974, 533

⁸⁶ Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian 1974, 605

⁸⁷ Mowday et al. 1979, 226

⁸⁸ Hogg 1992, 72

⁸⁹ Mowday, Porter & Steers 1982, 27; Porter et al. 1974, 604

⁹⁰ McIntyre, Bartle, Landis & Dansby 2002, 302

⁹¹ Gal 1985, 555

⁹² Johns 1984, ix

⁹³ O’Reilly & Chatman 1986, 492-493

compliance for gaining specific, extrinsic rewards, (b) identification with the attitudes, values, or goals of the organization and his or her desire for affiliation, and (c) his or her internalization of the organizational characteristics and perspectives in order to obtain congruence between individual and organizational values.⁹⁴

Gal⁹⁵ compared commitment with obedience and stated that they both create a sense of duty. Obedience substitutes commitment when people are less motivated by their commitment, whereas obedience is not required as much among morally committed soldiers. Moreover, Gal⁹⁶ argues that low level of commitment could be substituted by obedience and control in order to fulfill non-valued organizational goals. However, regimentation without inducement toward affective ties may alienate the group members away from the larger organization and create ill-fated norms inside the group, such as avoidance of duty, performance with moderation, social loafing, and turnover.

*Commitment may have several foci in nested units.*⁹⁷ In other words, the person may have multiple commitments to the various aspects of group and organizational membership⁹⁸ that together make the person to remain in the group and exert effort for the benefit of the organization. Although the nature of these ties is different, their communality is that they create cohesion and commitment to the unit. Meyer and Allen⁹⁹ detail different logics as to how organizational commitment develops: (a) the organization and its structure and characteristics positively affect work experiences that strengthen AC, (b) the personal characteristics (such as background, values, desires, and expectations) directly influence AC, (c) behavioral commitment at work and in the group produces AC, (d) the person invests his or her time and effort and he or she has low alternatives that together support CC, and/or (e) cultural, familial, and organizational socialization process combined with organizational investments build up NC.

In terms of several foci of commitment, Meyer and his colleagues¹⁰⁰ examined the generalizability of the organizational commitment model to occupations and created corresponding measures for occupational commitment. This occupational emphasis was

⁹⁴ Ibid., 493

⁹⁵ Gal 1985, 556

⁹⁶ Ibid., 562

⁹⁷ Meyer et al. 1998, 87-89

⁹⁸ Meyer & Allen 1997, 92; Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 129

⁹⁹ Meyer & Allen 1991, 68

¹⁰⁰ Meyer et al. 1993, 538-540

promoted by Vandenberg and Scarpello¹⁰¹ who defined occupational commitment as “a person’s belief in and acceptance of the values of his or her chosen occupation or line of work, and a willingness to maintain membership in that occupation.” From another point of view, occupational commitment means “a psychological link between a person and his or her occupation that is based on an affective reaction to that occupation.”¹⁰²

Meyer and his colleagues¹⁰³ examined thoroughly organizational commitment at the individual level and described how a person can be committed to “work, team or group, manager, occupation, profession, career, and union. In terms of organizational functions, group refers to primary social relations between people, work denotes the instrumental functions of the group, manager signifies the group leadership, whereas occupation, profession, career, and union represent the characteristics of the organization where the primary group is nested and why people work in their groups. In the end, the soldier’s behavior is affected by the net impact of his or her commitment to the different entities of the organization (such as occupation vs. organization).¹⁰⁴ The most salient entity affects commitment and behavior more efficiently than others.

Another viewpoint is presented by Stinglhamber and his colleagues¹⁰⁵ who discuss that a person may commit to the supervisor, the work group and the customers at the workplace. Thus, a person can develop commitments to one or more of organizational collectives that belong to one another as ‘nested’ groups.¹⁰⁶ Relating to the idea about commitment to the different hierarchical levels, Heffner and Rentsch¹⁰⁷ demonstrated that *work group* commitment positively influences AC to the *department* which in turn affects AC to the *organization*. Similarly, it is demonstrated that AC and NC to the occupation positively correlate with AC to the organization.¹⁰⁸

From a different viewpoint, Ellemers, de Gilder, and van den Heuvel¹⁰⁹ distinguish three distinct commitment components through a confirmatory factor analysis as team-oriented, career-oriented, and organizational commitment, and correspondingly, their premise is that a person can be committed at the same time to the team, career, and organization. For example,

¹⁰¹ Vandenberg & Scarpello 1994, 535

¹⁰² Lee, Carswell & Allen 2000, 800

¹⁰³ Meyer & Allen 1997, 2; Meyer et al. 1998, 87-89

¹⁰⁴ Herscovitch & Meyer 2002, 476; Meyer et al. 1993, 549

¹⁰⁵ Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 132

¹⁰⁶ Lawler 1992, 327

¹⁰⁷ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 480

¹⁰⁸ Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 136

¹⁰⁹ Ellemers, de Gilder, & van den Heuvel 1998, 720-725

in the military, officers may be committed to the organization and their profession as separate foci of commitment. When commitments to different foci are not compatible, this implies that the person would like to be in the particular organization but not in the specific group or the person is not attached to the organization but stays in it due to his or her commitment to the primary group.¹¹⁰ Therefore, the research could identify different profiles based on the degree of commitment to different foci, such as (a) uncommitted to the military profession and the unit, (b) uncommitted to the military profession but committed to the specific unit, (c) committed to the military profession, but not to the current unit, and (d) committed both to the military profession and to the unit.

In the occupational models, organizational commitment typically refers to the bonding with a work unit. However, the *institutional models* accept that there can be multiple organizational levels above the unit to which the person can be committed at the same time. For example, in the military, the person can identify both with the organization (e.g., the regiment) and the institution or profession (e.g., the Army), and therefore the affective ties may be so powerful that they surpass the instrumental, more practical reasons for the membership. In this regard, Tremble and his colleagues¹¹¹ show that officers have higher levels of AC than CC supporting the aforementioned assumption. Furthermore, Allen distinguishes organizational and institutional foci of commitment. Thus, individuals may have strong commitment to their branch (e.g. Special Operations Force) while having weak commitment to the military as a whole.¹¹² In conclusion, commitment to different entities of the organization has diverse antecedent and effects, and without a comprehensive view on commitment, the research may lack the explanations for certain commitment levels or their relevant consequences.

In the conscript system, the military represents the society and the values of the total population, and therefore, the military links to the overall socialization process and indoctrination of the nation.¹¹³ The socialization process may create symbolically committed soldiers¹¹⁴ who, in addition to the military, commit to patriotism and sociopolitical aspects (or ideology) of the nation.¹¹⁵ Moreover, societal indoctrination may create a latent ideology or commitment that unites people for supporting the institutional purposes. Basically, the support of the citizens is secured by executing missions effectively, supporting societal goals and

¹¹⁰ E.g., Meyer & Allen 1997, 100

¹¹¹ Tremble et al. 2003, 179

¹¹² Allen 2003, 249

¹¹³ Shils & Janowitz 1948, 284

¹¹⁴ Wesbrook 1980, 260

¹¹⁵ George 1971, 304

policies, and preserving the country and the people.¹¹⁶ For example, Israel sets a good model of a country, where the vast majority of the citizens have a strong obligation to protect the nation and the society due to the close link between the conscript service and national defense.¹¹⁷

Wesbrook¹¹⁸ discussed ideology and its relation to commitment and performance and concluded that *ideologically committed* soldiers tend to be also effective soldiers, whereas every effective soldier is not necessarily ideologically committed. Thus, being ideologically committed (implying, for example, patriotism or nationalism) may benefit personal effectiveness in an institution, such as the military. Furthermore, Moskos¹¹⁹ proposes that latent patriotism underlies all commitment and motives in the military. Also this argument links to the primary socialization process, where a person is culturally induced with values, attitudes, and commitments with the organizational socialization.

2.3 Commitment to the Military Service and “the Will to Defend the Nation”

In Finland, a latent form of patriotism (in Moskos’s terms) is generally called as “the will to defend the nation” (“maanpuolustustahto” in Finnish) reflecting the person’s commitment to the military service and to the security policy in general. Adopting Gal’s¹²⁰ viewpoint, such a broad commitment refers to a conviction about and agreement with the purpose and the goals of the military system, and it reflects concordance between the personal and national interests and values.¹²¹ This broad commitment entails security political attitudes¹²² toward national defense in general as well as propensity to personal participation in the national defense system.¹²³ The willingness to defend the country may originate from societal bonding that implies an individual’s commitment to the values and symbols of the society¹²⁴ and refers to commitment to the social-political system, ideology, and patriotism.¹²⁵ Generally, the creation of the will to defend the nation is an inseparable part of personal growth and development of the citizens having historical, social, psychological, and moral mechanisms.¹²⁶

¹¹⁶ McBreen 2002, 14

¹¹⁷ Henderson 1985, 104-105

¹¹⁸ Wesbrook 1980, 253

¹¹⁹ Moskos 1990, 5-6

¹²⁰ Gal 1985, 555

¹²¹ HMK 1964; Valtanen 1954, 22-27

¹²² Eränen, Harinen & Jokitalo 2008, 56-57; Harinen & Leskinen 2008, 69

¹²³ Kekäle 1998, 60

¹²⁴ Moskos 1988, 2

¹²⁵ George 1971, 305

¹²⁶ Valtanen 1954, 6

Patriotism and the will to defend the nation may have powerful effects on the individual's perceptions about a) the presence of the military system, b) the acceptance of military obligation, and c) the importance of the personal efforts for the benefit of the country. For example, in Finland, patriotism and national defense closely relate to one another,¹²⁷ and the willingness to defend the country is viewed as a virtue among people.¹²⁸ Therefore, there is a strong relation between national identity and "the will to defend the nation" in Finland,¹²⁹ and thus, nationalism and patriotism have had a direct link to the Finns' commitment to the national defense.¹³⁰

Several factors contribute the citizen's affection to the nation and its defense. For example, the unique geopolitical and cultural situations of Finland¹³¹ and general conscription have sustained the will to defend the nation.¹³² Finns have lived "between East and West on the wrong side of the sea" for a hundreds of years.¹³³ Living in an independent country, where the citizens have roughly the same ethnic origin, languages, habits, traditions, and rights, and where cultures, religions, and legitimate institutions influence what people believe in, consequently affect what they commit to.¹³⁴

Valtanen¹³⁵ discerns the factors affecting the spirit of defending the country, such as national character, attitudes and morale of the citizens, unity and solidarity of the nation, trust in the political leadership, attitude and knowledge about the consequences of the war, and psychological strength to persevere in war. Moreover, he¹³⁶ concludes that the spirit to defend the country is founded on the determination to defend against an enemy and psychological strength for making resistance. On the other hand, Eskola¹³⁷ detailed the aspects that increase affection towards the country such as a) the benefits granted by the membership of the nation, such as well-being and subsistence, (b) familiar and meaningful habits, traditions, and courses of action in life, (c) the bonds to the friends and relatives, and d) the feeling of belongingness and attachment to the nation. These factors have potentially a great value in the people's minds and they can be confirmed and reinforced through myths, historical stories, or national events. For example, the national flag associates the person with the nation and provides a

¹²⁷ Eskola 1962, 6-7, 11-12; Lilius 1988, 24

¹²⁸ Alanen 1997a, 53-54; Nurmela 2005, 91-92, 99-104

¹²⁹ Nurmela 2005, 93-94, 100; Sinkko 2009, 19-20; Sinkko, Harinen, & Leimu 2008, 51

¹³⁰ Nurmela 2004, 33-34; Valtanen 1957, 3

¹³¹ Allardt 1986, 137-139; Rainio-Niemi 2005, 52-54, 59

¹³² Harinen & Leskinen 2008, 71-72; Laitinen 2005, 42

¹³³ Harinen & Leskinen 2008, 79

¹³⁴ Kemiläinen 1993, 45-46, 52-53; Lilius 1987, 16-18

¹³⁵ Valtanen 1954, 27-28

¹³⁶ Ibid., 61

¹³⁷ Eskola 1962, 8-9

feeling of the unity of people and a meaning for sustaining the welfare of the state.¹³⁸ Perhaps therefore, the respect for the Finnish flag is perceived as the most patriotic act.¹³⁹

Mannerheim¹⁴⁰ stated (1.12.1939) the famous keywords that describe why the Finns are fighting for: home, religion, and fatherland. Ahto¹⁴¹ summarizes such mottos and argues their importance as linking an abstract idea and the person's motivation and commitment together. For example, "Pro Gloria et Patria" simplifies both the personal and national motives together. The Finnish military-political attitudes crystallize into the slogan "Not against anyone – but everything for the fatherland and the citizens," which became a motto after World War II both in the military¹⁴² and among the pacifists.¹⁴³ Basically, the slogans and mottos stated by the commanders and political figures serve the person's need for a reason for sacrificing one's own effort and assure that he or she is fighting for a good cause. However, the motto may lose its strength if the situation changes and the message no longer tangibly touches the person or if the wordings initiate unwanted connotations.¹⁴⁴

In addition, strong commitment to defend the country may originate from the national historical experiences¹⁴⁵ that have assured of the necessity of the "total war,"¹⁴⁶ the "total defence,"¹⁴⁷ or the "comprehensive defense approach"¹⁴⁸ in order to survive as a small nation under attack.¹⁴⁹ In such defense system, all resources of the entire society (including human resources) focus on national defense efforts.¹⁵⁰ Thus, although the Finns have been reluctant to start a fight, they have been aware of the national defense as the nation's lifeblood.¹⁵¹ Especially, an external, distinct enemy unites such nation, and the citizens are more eager to pull together in order to defend their national identity and the existence of the country as happened, for example, in Finland during World War II.¹⁵² Particularly, the spirit of the Winter War¹⁵³ has supported commitment to the national defense – even nowadays.¹⁵⁴

¹³⁸ Tepora 2005, 44, 47

¹³⁹ Nurmela 2005, 95-97

¹⁴⁰ Mannerheim 1939/reprinted 1942

¹⁴¹ Ahto 2005, 15-18; 2006, 60

¹⁴² Kuusi & Maunula 1952, 7-8; Luoto 1966, 5

¹⁴³ Linkola 1960, 4-6

¹⁴⁴ Tepora 2005, 44

¹⁴⁵ Halsti 1951, 107-111; Hersalo 1951, 28-33

¹⁴⁶ Borell 1983, 5-6; Pirkola 1954, 1; Saikku 1954, 1; Valtanen 1954, 17; 1957, 5-6

¹⁴⁷ Koho 1961, 34; MPKK 2005; Puolustusministeriö 2009; Pääesikunta 2007, 3; Öhqvist 1956

¹⁴⁸ Prime Minister's Office 2009, 76-78, 82

¹⁴⁹ Lilius 1988, 9-10

¹⁵⁰ HMK 1964, 27-28; MPKK 2005; Pääesikunta 1966, 16-33, 57-61

¹⁵¹ Halsti 1939, 27-29; 1957, 8-9

¹⁵² Harinen & Leskinen 2008, 78; Moisala 1993, 9; Saikku 1954, 2, 5

¹⁵³ Kuusi & Maunula 1952, 1-4

¹⁵⁴ Nurmela 2004, 33; Laitinen 2005, 69

As a notion, “the will to defend” originates from the early days of independence (and probably beyond). For example, Kaila¹⁵⁵ elaborated that “the will to defend” determines the fate in war, and Laurila¹⁵⁶ stated that “the will to defend” is the essence for the nation’s ability to fight. “The spirit of the Winter War”¹⁵⁷ and “the spirit to national defense”¹⁵⁸ were the common notions describing willingness to national defense after war. Actually, the importance of psychological warfare became evident during the World War II¹⁵⁹ and during its aftermath.¹⁶⁰ For example, Shils and Janowitz¹⁶¹ studied the impact of allied propaganda on Wehrmacht’s troops in their seminal work. Similarly, the *Finnish Military Psychological Society* elaborated on the psychological warfare among the Finnish troops.¹⁶² The society also assessed the development of the Swedish psychological defense in terms of the notions (“the spirit of resistance”¹⁶³) and the organizational developments (the proposal for a permanent psychological defense organization: Beredskapsnämnden för psykologiskt försvar).¹⁶⁴

At the same time, Valtanen¹⁶⁵ wrote his thesis about the “the spirit to national defense.” Moreover, Koho¹⁶⁶ published his study about the public relations as a tool for affecting attitudes towards national defense. As a combination of the national interests, work of active societies, and following the example of the neighboring country, the *Committee of Psychological National Defence* (1960-1963) was established and later followed by the *Advisory Board of Psychological National Defense* (1963-1975).¹⁶⁷ Their main task was to plan and direct the confidence-building measures for improving the population’s information and motivation to defend their nation.¹⁶⁸ In the reviews, the advisory board was concerned, for example, about the citizens’ attitudes towards security policy, armed and non-violent resistance, and conscription.¹⁶⁹ At that time, psychological national defense was an essential part of the national defense system.¹⁷⁰ For example, Öhqvist¹⁷¹ defined psychological defense as the fourth element of the total defense system (besides the military, civil, and economic

¹⁵⁵ Kaila 1925, 3

¹⁵⁶ Laurila 1926, 58-61

¹⁵⁷ Kuusi & Maunula 1952, 1

¹⁵⁸ Valtanen 1957, 2-4; von Fieandt 1962, 5

¹⁵⁹ Andrews, Smith & Kahn 1954, 240; Ekstein 1942, 369-373; Watkins 1942, 119-121; 1943, 135-139

¹⁶⁰ Kahn & Andrews 1955, 368-369

¹⁶¹ Shils & Janowitz 1948, 311

¹⁶² Saikku 1954, 1-10

¹⁶³ Psykologiskt försvar 1953, 54

¹⁶⁴ Borell 1983, 6; Pirkola 1954

¹⁶⁵ Valtanen 1954, 27-28

¹⁶⁶ Koho 1961

¹⁶⁷ MTS 2006a, Rainio-Niemi 2005, 55-58

¹⁶⁸ MTS 2006a; Valtanen 1962, 8

¹⁶⁹ HMS 1970, 3-7; HMS 1971, 2-8

¹⁷⁰ Pääesikunta 1968b, 6-15; 1968c, 14-15

¹⁷¹ Öhqvist 1956, 3

defense). Particularly, the role of the closest military leaders was deemed significant for creating positive attitudes toward the defense system.¹⁷²

Since 1976, the *Advisory Board for Defence Information* (ABDI) has followed the development of the Finns' opinions about issues concerning Finnish security policy and national defense and provided information for action in normal and exceptional conditions.¹⁷³ The most visible work of the ABDI is commissioning of surveys about the opinions of the Finns on foreign, security, and defense policy.¹⁷⁴ Some of the survey questions have been part of the research since the 1960's. In terms of the trends and changes in questionnaires, the key parts have remained unchanged although some questions have been developed for inquiring about special issues, such as attitudes toward defending Lapland in different kinds of scenarios or defending the country when it is under nuclear attack.¹⁷⁵

In terms of theory, Törnqvist¹⁷⁶ defined the will to defend the nation (i.e. försvarsvilja in Swedish) as: "individers åsikt eller vilja att vi såsom kollektiv, samhälle, nation bör eller inte bör använda våra militära resurser för att försvara landet vid ett utifrån kommande militärt angrepp eller hot." Moreover, he distinguished between the general and personal will to defend the country. The *general* will refers to an individual's perception that the nation and the society ought to use military resources if there is a threat or attack against the country, whereas the *personal* will to defend the country implies that the person has a positive attitude towards participating in military training and military national defense in case of an attack against the country.¹⁷⁷

The traditional, "fundamental question"¹⁷⁸ about the *general* will to defend was first mentioned in the Swedish report,¹⁷⁹ from which it was adopted to the Finnish questionnaire in early 1960's.¹⁸⁰ In Swedish it goes: "*Antag att Sverige anfalles. Anser Ni då att vi bör göra väpnat motstånd, även om utgången för oss ter sig oviss?*"¹⁸¹, which is utilized in Finnish Defense Forces as: *If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily in all situations, even if the outcome were uncertain.*¹⁸² Actually, it is the first question in the

¹⁷² Pääesikunta 1968a, 3-5

¹⁷³ Tauriainen 1978, 236-241

¹⁷⁴ MTS 2006a, MTS 2008

¹⁷⁵ Haranne 1986, 176-180; MTS 2006b, 17-19

¹⁷⁶ Törnqvist 1975, 26

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 24

¹⁷⁸ Borell 1983, 23; Törnqvist 1975, 25

¹⁷⁹ Psykologiskt försvar 1953, 9-15

¹⁸⁰ Sinkko 2009, 37

¹⁸¹ Törnqvist 1968, 4

¹⁸² MTS 2008, 8: "The will to defend the nation"

official military questionnaire filled out at the end of service by every conscript implying this question's role as the leading one on defending the country. Altogether, the survey contains three questions about national defense. The second one assesses *personal* willingness to defend the country in the following way: *If Finland is attacked, I am ready to participate in military national defense as part of national service duties*. The third question weighs the role of the Finnish Defence Forces as part of national defense by stating: *Finland has to have functioning Defence Forces*, that as a statement links the conscript's (affective) attitudes to NC.

Naturally, these three questions are not the only ones that are used to assess Finnish psychological strength in national defense. Theoretically, the *general* will to defend the nation could be assessed based on the opinions about the importance of functional conscript service, the Finnish Defence Forces, and the overall national defense system.¹⁸³ In practice, "the will to defend the nation" has been conceptualized and measured as an attitude towards military appropriations and trust in Finland's defense capabilities.¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, the *personal* aspects of willingness to defend the country could be perceived as an individual's personal readiness to act as part of the Defence Forces and/or a motive to such action.¹⁸⁵ Thus, the person's service-related attitudes and behavior can be operationalized based on a) career intentions, b) participation in voluntary work in national defense, c) active and positive participation in conscript service, d) completion of conscript service,¹⁸⁶ e) the level of training motivation, f) willingness to participate in refresher training, g) perceptions about the importance of received training in the military,¹⁸⁷ h) the number of participants in civil and conscript service, i) the number of drop-outs in conscript service, or j) the number of offences, and e) refresher training motivation among the soldiers.¹⁸⁸

Sinkko and his colleagues¹⁸⁹ were able to cluster people based on the general and personal aspects of the will to defend the nation. They conclude that the *personal* will categorizes more the conscripts than the *general* will to defend the nation. Their main argument is that the combination of the person's social capital significantly explains the will to defend the nation although an individual component of the social capital (such as family background) may not

¹⁸³ Sinkko et al. 2008, 60

¹⁸⁴ MTS 2006b; 2008; Sinkko 2009

¹⁸⁵ Alanen 1997b, 52

¹⁸⁶ Törnqvist 1975, 26-27

¹⁸⁷ Sinkko et al. 2008, 60

¹⁸⁸ Alanen 1997a, 57

¹⁸⁹ Sinkko et al. 2008, 13

be directly related to commitment.¹⁹⁰ The social capital implies the person's capabilities and resources that he or she has adopted or received in family, education, and through social networks.¹⁹¹ In all, Sinkko and his colleagues¹⁹² suggest that overall approach towards the will to defend the nation could be assessed based on the sum of its general and personal counterparts. Furthermore, Alanen¹⁹³ would add the attitude towards the appropriations as the third component of the measurement.

In terms of the current attitudes, the majority (77 %) of the citizens believe that if attacked, Finland should defend itself in all situations, even if the outcomes were uncertain.¹⁹⁴ Almost an equal percentage of people (between 73 % and 82%, respectively) want to preserve general conscription for men.¹⁹⁵ The willingness to defend the country is even stronger among the reservists when it has been measured during a refresher training exercise (85–87 % agreed with the statement between the years of 1994–2000).¹⁹⁶ Moreover, citizens perceive that refresher training exercises are essential.¹⁹⁷ Half of the Finns (46 %) believe in Finland's defense capabilities in a conventional war, and also half of them would preserve the present level of the defense funds (or appropriations), while one third of the citizens would even increase the defense budget.¹⁹⁸

The study¹⁹⁹ also investigated the main factors that the Finns believe to affect a credible military defense and conclude that the credible defense is sustained by a) good relations with the neighboring countries, b) the (quantity, quality and maintainability of) defense materiel, c) the citizens' will to defend the nation, d) modern weapon systems, e) defense of the entire territory of the nation, f) general conscription for the men, and g) the level of the defense budget. All these details were chosen to represent a credible defense by more than 80 percent of the respondents. Moreover, the credible defense system is supported by regular refresher training exercises, Finland's participation in international military operations and EU's battle groups, NATO's interoperability in command systems and weaponry, and the existence of women's voluntary service. In conclusion, Finns strongly support the military and the idea of defending the country when it is under attack.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 14-31

¹⁹¹ Sinkko 2009, 14

¹⁹² Sinkko et al. 2008, 12

¹⁹³ Alanen 1997a, 57

¹⁹⁴ MTS 2008, 8

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 8; Nurmela 2004, 28

¹⁹⁶ Sinkko 2009, 6

¹⁹⁷ Nurmela 2004, 28

¹⁹⁸ MTS 2008, 8-9

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 9

²⁰⁰ E.g., Harinen & Leskinen 2008

Both the domains of this research, commitment and “the will to defend the nation,” have dealt with the differences between the perceptions of the two and motivation. Therefore, *motivation* deserves a short overview in light of commitment and “the will to defend the nation.” In general, commitment to the military service represents the person’s general *attitude* towards national defense,²⁰¹ and as an attitude, it is an individual’s relatively stable and consistent approach to a certain object.²⁰² Thus, commitment refers to a general preparedness to certain involvement in the organization.²⁰³ In contrast, motivation relates to *goal-oriented behavior*²⁰⁴ and implies a changing, psychological state of an individual that relates to a certain situation and determines the activity and direction of his or her actions.²⁰⁵

The motivation theory typically contrasts intrinsic motivation with extrinsic motivation (as introduced by *self-determination theory*).²⁰⁶ Due to intrinsic motivation, a person is naturally drawn toward completing the work. Furthermore, the person enjoys and is interested in the action or the work itself,²⁰⁷ and continuously looks forward to getting pleasure through work.²⁰⁸ By contrast, extrinsic motivation creates a desire to attain instrumental outcomes that are external to the work itself, such as rewards or recognition.²⁰⁹ Deci, Koestner and Ryan²¹⁰ demonstrated in their meta-analysis that extrinsic rewards decrease intrinsic motivation. Hence, people tend to lose their interest in the motivating activity in excess of enforced rewards.²¹¹ Based on these results, Ryan and Deci²¹² suggested that intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by providing challenging work settings and exercises, giving constructive and promoting feedback, and resorting to only necessary evaluations.

The motivation theory has moved from an individual phenomenon towards a more comprehensive approach that takes into account the social environment of the person (e.g., feedback, communications, and rewards).²¹³ For example, Volet²¹⁴ describes motivation as a “socially situated, dynamic, interactive and multidimensional” construct, which relates to a

²⁰¹ Eränen et al. 2008, 56-57; Solinger et al. 2008, 72

²⁰² Peltonen & Ruohotie 1992, 10

²⁰³ Ellemers et al. 1998, 728

²⁰⁴ Eränen et al. 2008, 62

²⁰⁵ Peltonen & Ruohotie 1992, 10

²⁰⁶ Deci & Ryan 2008b, 182-184

²⁰⁷ Grant 2008, 49

²⁰⁸ Deci & Ryan 2008a, 15

²⁰⁹ Grant 2008, 49; Ryan & Deci 2000, 71-72

²¹⁰ Deci, Koestner & Ryan 1999, 658-659

²¹¹ Deci & Ryan 2008a, 15

²¹² Ryan & Deci 2000, 70

²¹³ Deci & Ryan 2008b, 182-183

²¹⁴ Volet 2001, 328

sociocultural (“person-in-context”) perspective that views motivation “as an emergent property of the relation between the person and the environment, rather than solely a property of the individual.”²¹⁵ Thus, social and cultural environments affect motivation besides the personal characteristics, and therefore motivation is constantly revised based on an explicit and/or implicit appraisal about ongoing changes in the personal and contextual circumstances.²¹⁶ Briefly, higher order cognitive processes are “fundamentally social in nature.”²¹⁷ Therefore, an integrative model of motivation would consider commitment-related personal aspects, such as structure of personality, ideological beliefs, social attitudes, and personal values in the values.²¹⁸

Herscovitch and Meyer²¹⁹ describe how organizational commitment is a force that influences an individual’s behavior even when there are no rewards, evaluations, or other extrinsic motives. Generally, people with strong AC or NC are likely to have a higher (intrinsic) motivation to work and act for the organization.²²⁰ Correspondingly, motivation strongly relates to AC and NC,²²¹ and especially the soldiers with an intrinsic motivation have more positive attitudes, intentions, and commitment than other soldiers.²²² Thus, there is a strong link between motivation and commitment. Based on the self-determination theory, motivation equals an intention to act (due to personal drive or external incentives).²²³ On the other hand, commitment brings about in an individual the needed course of action relevant to a particular target.²²⁴ Hence, both concepts affect and direct personal behavior.

Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe²²⁵ present an integrative framework for commitment and motivation in which commitment is one of several stimulating forces for motivated behavior. The model is based on the Locke’s²²⁶ conceptualization of the motivation process. The particular theoretical improvement involves including goal regulation in the model.²²⁷ Specifically, they proposed that goal regulation as the linchpin connects commitment to the

²¹⁵ Roeser & Galloway 2002, 343

²¹⁶ Beltman & Volet 2007, 321

²¹⁷ Walker, Pressick-Kilborn, Arnold & Sainsbury 2004, 246

²¹⁸ von Collani & Grumm 2009, 107-108

²¹⁹ Herscovitch & Meyer 2002, 475-476

²²⁰ Camilleri 2006, 78

²²¹ Castaing 2006, 92

²²² Bagozzi, Bergami, & Leone 2003, 930

²²³ Ryan & Deci 2000, 70-71

²²⁴ Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 301

²²⁵ Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe 2004, 996

²²⁶ Locke 1997, 402

²²⁷ Meyer et al. 2004, 998; *Goal regulation* is “a motivational mindset reflecting the reasons for, and purpose of, a course of action being contemplated or in progress” (Ibid.)

motivation process and behavior.²²⁸ Moreover, they argue that the five forms of perceived regulation²²⁹ and the three forms of commitment could be taken as a continuum from internal control (intrinsic motivation and AC) to external control (external regulation of motivation and CC) having in the middle NC (and introjected regulation of motivation and).²³⁰ Briefly, commitment affects the motivation process through goal regulation. Thus, commitment influences how the person perceives the reasons for and purpose of a course of action, and how this eventually modifies his or her behavior.²³¹

Based on the discussion on these theoretical conceptualizations, commitment and motivation are distinguishable yet related concepts that mutually affect one another.²³² For example, employees with strong affective commitment experience greater intrinsic motivation (and the promotion focus is on accomplishments and development), while employees with strong continuance commitment are more directed by external motivation (and the prevention focus fulfills only minimally acceptable requirements).²³³ Consequently, AC has a strong positive relation on motivation, whereas CC affects negatively the person's motivation.²³⁴ These results suggest that commitment explains motivation.

To summarize the comparison between commitment and motivation, commitment signifies "an urge to perform behaviors that ... exceed instrumental motivations of the individual."²³⁵ Thus, due to commitment, the person can persevere and work beyond formal requirements to support a higher purpose that he or she believes in and identifies with.²³⁶ Representing an attitude and emotional attachment to the unit, commitment indicates a *general* willingness to act or a tendency to perform for the benefit of the unit.²³⁷ This means that, in comparison with motivation, commitment involves a holistic, deeply rooted orientation.

²²⁸ Ibid., 992

²²⁹ Ryan & Deci 2008, 187. The person a) is persuaded or coerced by external factors (*external regulation*), b) is affected by norms, guilt, or social pressure for approval and compliance (*introjected regulation*), c) values the action and its consequences and therefore identifies with the goal attainment (*identified regulation*), d) has assimilated the values and needs of the organization with his or her own and thereby these have a congruence with the person's values and perceptions (*integrated regulation*), and/or e) enjoys, desires and aspires to work (*intrinsic regulation*) reflecting an open curiosity about and interest in the issue (Deci & Ryan 2008a, 16; Ryan & Deci 2000, 72-73).

²³⁰ Meyer et al. 2004, 996

²³¹ Ibid., 998

²³² Ibid., 991

²³³ Luchak & Gellatly 2007, 792

²³⁴ Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf 1994, 18

²³⁵ Solinger et al. 2008, 80

²³⁶ O'Reilly & Chatman 1986, 498; Riketta 2008, 473

²³⁷ Solinger et al. 2008, 76

As a summary of various terminological definitions, organizational commitment could be perceived as a composite of “various types of motives for remaining with, and performing for, an organization.”²³⁸ Furthermore, the person may identify with and commit to different entities or abstract ideas. For example, the person may have a sense of duty (commitment) which, however, may depart from how he or she conducts the duty in daily business. Still, behavior at work is more directly affected by motivation which regulates the person’s behavior and performance and directs a certain course of action. Generally, commitment represents an underlying, deeply-rooted propensity that provides certain motives and reasons that motivation directs into action.

Motivation necessarily precedes behavior being one of the reasons for a certain action.²³⁹ Before a given action, motivation is affected by personal values and needs, skills and knowledge, desires and intentions, self-efficacy, and expectations, whereas after the action proper motivation is influenced by an immediate feedback from behavior and performance, incentives and rewards, and personal satisfaction.²⁴⁰ Actually, motivation is more a continuous process than a stable construct, and through this psychological process the person’s efforts are directed, energized, and sustained.²⁴¹ Since motivation has a direct relation with performance and productivity of the group, the military has been interested in to study the motivational aspects of the service members. For example, motivation to fight,²⁴² training motivation,²⁴³ achievement and training motivation,²⁴⁴ and motivation during refresher training²⁴⁵ have been thoroughly investigated.

The motivation theory and research distinguishes between situational motivation and general motivation.²⁴⁶ Situational motivation refers to inner and outer stimuli that dynamically affect the direction and activity of actions, while general motivation denotes an average, general, more permanent motivation to act in a particular way. The similarity between motivation and commitment refers to the similar characteristics of commitment and general motivation.

Yet, the main difference between motivation and commitment is that motivation involves an intensity and direction for an action, whereas commitment does not necessarily require any of

²³⁸ Gade 2003, 164

²³⁹ Leimu, Harinen & Sinkko 2008, 70

²⁴⁰ Ruohotie 1993, 14

²⁴¹ Grant 2008, 49

²⁴² Gal 1986, 145-148

²⁴³ Kuronen 1995, 45-49, 82-86; Määttä 1999; 46-61

²⁴⁴ Mathieu 1991, 608, 610, 61-615; Salo 2008a, 54, 94-95,

²⁴⁵ Siira 1994, 32-40

²⁴⁶ E.g., Peltonen & Ruohotie 1992, 17-18; Siira 1994, 2

these elements. Thus, commitment has only an object that appeals to a person without directing his or her actions. Although there is a relation between commitment and action, commitment and action can exist without one another. For example, “the will to defend the nation” refers to a general commitment to defend the country, but it does not presuppose personal willingness to defend the country. Commitment could be perceived as a continuum where there are, for example, the following foci of commitment as enumerated from abstract to more concrete: commitment to the (a) country, (b) national defense, (c) military, (d) conscript service, (e) brigade and battalion, (f) own unit, (g) platoon, and (h) squad and team. Moving from an abstract idea to a more salient primary group, the person’s behavior, performance, and actions are more prone to be affected by commitment. This is because commitment and motivation are more closely related at the lower level of focus. In other words, commitment to the group may enforce motivation to behave and act in a certain way.

2.4 Commitment to the Group

The previous chapter emphasized how an individual can be committed to the several foci of organizational elements and how the institution and even the nation operate as the broadest object for an emotional attachment. Actually, the essence of organizational commitment is that it serves as a mechanism through which group members and small units are bound to the larger structure which they are part of.²⁴⁷ Therefore, teamwork and social integration in a group can considerably facilitate the effect of commitment to the unit and to the military. At the primary group level, the foci for commitment can be a person or a group as the concept of interpersonal relationships or abstract ideas, such as group norms and organizational values.²⁴⁸ Next, the examination of different foci of commitment turns to the individual’s most salient social entity – the group – and briefly describes the primary theoretical approaches to examine commitment in the group.

The organizational commitment denotes the bonding with the larger entity, such as an organization, work unit, and their higher organizational entities. However, the most salient grouping is the primary group, where the person lives and works. At that level and in terms of definitions, commitment refers to conscripts’ “acceptance of the group’s goals and values, positive affective ties to group members, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the group and to fulfill group expectations, and desire to gain or maintain membership in the group.”²⁴⁹ This

²⁴⁷ McClure & Broughton 2000, 475

²⁴⁸ Oliver 1990, 6

²⁴⁹ Moreland & Levine 1982, 148

definition openly views the group and its members as the primary foci of commitment. From this perspective, commitment to a group rises when the recruit prefers his or her group membership more than other available options. On the other hand, the group is committed to a person, when the group members value the fact that the person contributes to the functions of the group.

In addition to commitment to the group, cohesion is a commonly used notion for describing attachment to the group membership. Shils and Janowitz²⁵⁰ laid the foundation for military unit cohesion research in their study about *Cohesion and disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II*. They discovered the importance of integrity and solidarity of the primary group in the military. Basically, they found out that a high degree of primary group integrity protected against desertions and surrenders despite high casualties and desperate situations in a group.²⁵¹ Since their study, the military have continuously examined and improved the methods for increasing group integration in order to positively affect the soldiers' attitudes, behavior, and performance.

Manning and Ingraham²⁵² define military unit cohesion as “the bonding together of soldiers in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to each other and the unit.” The “will” refers to the affective dimension, whereas the “commitment” mostly yields instrumental gains. Moreover, both the primary group (as soldiers) and the organization (as a unit) were taken into account. Basically, Johns²⁵³ defined military unit cohesion identically to the above discussed definitions by adding commitment as a cohesion-increasing element in a mission. Later, Furukawa and his colleagues²⁵⁴ continued to define military unit cohesion as representing “bondings of soldiers of equal rank as well as between ranks, commitment of all ranks to the military mission, and the affirmation of special properties of their group, team, crew, company, or battery that keeps them alive in combat.” Gal, Fishof, and Geva²⁵⁵ view cohesion as consisting of four components: “a) bonding (interpersonal, confidence), b) vertical, c) horizontal, d) commitment (organization, unit, mission).” In this definition, commitment is directed to the unit and the Army missions and values, and features four different levels of cohesion: peers, leaders, the unit, and the Army.

²⁵⁰ Shils & Janowitz 1948

²⁵¹ Ibid., 285

²⁵² Manning & Ingraham 1983, 7

²⁵³ Johns 1984, ix

²⁵⁴ Furukawa et al. 1987, 5

²⁵⁵ Gal, Fishof & Geva 1987, 30

Griffith and Siebold and Kelly separately arrived at the same conclusion that cohesion consists of several components based on different structural relationships:²⁵⁶ horizontal or peer bonding among members at the same hierarchical level (e.g., in a squad), vertical bonding between those at different levels (e.g., between group members and their leaders), and organizational bonding between soldiers and their organizational units. Each type of bonding is considered to have two aspects: affective (an emotional / reactive side) and instrumental (a task / proactive side).²⁵⁷ Hogg²⁵⁸ completes the picture about primary group cohesion by showing its relation to social identity. He distinguishes “interindividual commitment” between members and their leaders (i.e., peer and leader cohesion in the group) and overall attraction of the group which “implies commitment to an abstract idea of what the group as a whole represents.”²⁵⁹

Relational cohesion theory examines the importance of cohesion in terms of commitment and positive affect with the group.²⁶⁰ For example, Yoon and Lawler²⁶¹ assert that people create ties to the group that are sources of positive feelings and emotion whereas weak ties cause negative feelings. The ties are due to affective (“expressive”) attachment to the social unit and caused by instrumental benefits allowed through group membership. Shared, positive experiences in teamwork and taskwork and mutual understanding that the group is a source of satisfying, positive feelings generate cohesion among group members. Moreover, Ellemers²⁶² concludes that only team-oriented commitment explains why group members are ready to sacrifice their leisure time for helping others. Overall, these results suggest that commitment is created differently across unit levels, and the quality of interpersonal relations establishes a bond to the primary group – more than to the organization.

The reason why a considerable number of studies have invested in discovering and explaining small unit cohesion lies on cohesion’s several potential positive outcomes. Cohesion may direct the efforts toward organizational goals and strengthens identification with the organization (referring to AC).²⁶³ Cohesion also supports commitment, which in turn is reflected in retention and behavior of the members.²⁶⁴ Yet, while cohesion may increase commitment, also the opposite is possible. Thus, increased AC may promote sociability,

²⁵⁶ Griffith 1988; Siebold & Kelly 1988

²⁵⁷ Griffith 1988; Siebold & Kelly 1988

²⁵⁸ Hogg 1992

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 72

²⁶⁰ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 2

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6

²⁶² Ellemers 2001, 112

²⁶³ Butler, Blair, Phillips & Schmitt 1987, 12

²⁶⁴ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 8

interaction, and cooperation among group members increasing cohesion in the group, which in turn makes group members to commit more to the organization.²⁶⁵ Moreover, specific group functions may relate to certain concepts of commitment. Specifically, interpersonal relationships and interaction may affect an individual's NC and result in performing in a certain way.²⁶⁶ Through the socialization process, the group creates specific, appropriate roles and norms that define the level of conduct on work and influence the degree of NC in the group.²⁶⁷ However, Johns²⁶⁸ notices how group cohesion does not automatically contribute to organizational effectiveness. The positive effects of cohesion on unit performance require a link between the group members' norms and the organizational goals, and this link is established by creating the soldiers' commitment to the unit and its mission.

2.5 Commitment as a Consequence of Organizational Socialization

The organization improves the personnel's organizational commitment through an organizational socialization process,²⁶⁹ where the unit trains and inforces the "ropes",²⁷⁰ and creates identification that binds the recruits with a unit and its members,²⁷¹ Moreland and Levine²⁷² present a model of group socialization with three psychological processes: evaluation, commitment, and role transition. In terms of military socialization, evaluation refers to a process where a group assesses a recruit's ability to make a contribution to achieving set group goals. Basically, this means normative evaluation by group leaders and peers of how the recruit fits in the group and assimilates his or her behavior and performance to fit the group.

From an individual point of view, the recruit evaluates group practices, roles, norms and goals, and tries to make sense of the context.²⁷³ Moreover, he or she assesses the value of *the psychological contract* in interaction with leaders, peers, and organizational demands and standards.²⁷⁴ In this evaluation, one of the main variables at stake is the *congruence* between the recruit's ability and values and the new set demands and values of the military

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 16

²⁶⁶ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 487-488

²⁶⁷ Meyer et al. 1998, 83, 87

²⁶⁸ Johns 1984, 4

²⁶⁹ Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo & Tucker 2007, 707-708, 718

²⁷⁰ Schein 1976, 121

²⁷¹ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 473; Meyer & Allen 1997, 72

²⁷² Moreland & Levine 1982, 139-140

²⁷³ Jones 1983, 472

²⁷⁴ Barrios-Choplin, Kominiak & Thomas 1999, 19

environment.²⁷⁵ Basically, the person assesses whether the organization fulfills the person's expectations and desires and thereby either wins or loses his or her attachment and commitment.²⁷⁶

From an organizational point of view, the socialization of the conscripts is an uncertainty reduction process with the unit educating and training the tasks and accustoms the organizational norms and values.²⁷⁷ The unit may enforce socialization by establishing feedback and rewards that prompt and direct the person towards an appropriate behavior.²⁷⁸ A successful socialization process implies that the recruits understand and adopt the organizational goals and rudiments and behaves based on the standards of the new membership.²⁷⁹ The success of the newcomers' socialization determines their loyalty, commitment, performance, and turnover in the organization.²⁸⁰

A person's commitment develops and fluctuates over the phases of the socialization process. For example, Moreland and Levine²⁸¹ present *five phases of group socialization*: investigation, socialization, maintenance, resocialization, and remembrance, through which individuals move with four role transitions: entry, acceptance, divergence, and exit. *Before the entry*, commitment develops due to personal orientation to and preparations for the military service. During active investigation, a recruit explores information about the prospective group and organization, and correspondingly, the military shares information for preparing the inductee.²⁸² In this phase, the inductee plans and anticipates options and problems, makes commitments and obligations, and discusses the upcoming military service and "tries on" military roles with the parents, siblings, and peers.²⁸³ In addition, the person creates an initial motivation to perform in the organization and general attitudes towards the participation in the unit. If the motivation is high, the person more likely tolerates uncomfortable socialization experiences, whereas the person with a low motivation has also a low threshold to leave the unit if he or she faces unpleasant challenges.²⁸⁴

²⁷⁵ Hayden 2000, 4; Nelson & Quick 1997, 487

²⁷⁶ Tannenbaum et al. 1991, 765

²⁷⁷ Bauer et al. 2007, 718

²⁷⁸ Jones 1983, 472

²⁷⁹ Moreland & Levine 1982, 163; Payne & Huffman 2005, 158

²⁸⁰ Schein 1976, 121

²⁸¹ Moreland, Levine & McMinn 2001, 93

²⁸² Moreland et al. 2001, 93; Levine, Bogart & Zdaniuk 1996, 535, 541

²⁸³ Barrios-Choplin et al. 1999, 16; Perry, Griffith & White 1991, 115

²⁸⁴ Schein 1976, 124

The encounter with the military (the entry) starts the systematic socialization where the personal attributes, including commitment, are shaped to an acceptable level. During the entry and the first experiences in the organization, the newcomer is susceptible to be influenced by organizational socialization programs due to uncertain situation and lack of knowledge about an appropriate behavior.²⁸⁵ The military organization affects the person's commitment by persuading him or her to conform and contribute to organizational goals. Through socialization the person is familiarized with the basic objectives, means, responsibilities, behavior patterns, and a set of rules of the organization.²⁸⁶ Commitment to and identification with the organization is supported by affecting the recruit's perceptions, dispositions, motives, behavior, and social relations.²⁸⁷ In addition to developing personal skills, the character and emotions of the recruit are under a transformation.²⁸⁸ In this process, the military attempts to modify the whole personality, attitudes, perspectives, and normative attachments of the person²⁸⁹ in order to adjust and integrate the person as well as to influence his or her social identity as a soldier. Finally, the recruit becomes accustomed to new tasks, interpersonal relationships, roles, and the expected progress in the organization.²⁹⁰

A certain *commitment level* serves as a measure for accepting an individual as a full member of the unit.²⁹¹ Specifically, commitment to the group rises when the recruit prefers his or her group membership more than other available options. On the other hand, the group is committed to the person, when the group members notice that the person contributes to the functions of the group.²⁹² Feldman²⁹³ calls this whole phase accommodation, as the recruits accommodate themselves with new tasks, interpersonal relationships, roles, and expected progress in the organization. However, it is not guaranteed that a person achieves the adequate commitment level in which case either (re)socialization or discharge are the options left. For example, in the military the discharges (for other than physical reasons) reflect the failure of the organization to assimilate the person as a group member.

The idea of the socialization process is to get the person to identify with and commit to the organization and to accept the social requirements of the group. The *maintenance* phase of

²⁸⁵ Jones 1983, 465

²⁸⁶ Schein 1976, 122

²⁸⁷ Hayden 2000, 5

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 15

²⁸⁹ Ward 1999, 20

²⁹⁰ Feldman 1976, 435

²⁹¹ Moreland et al. 2001, 93

²⁹² Moreland & Levine 1982, 146-149

²⁹³ Feldman 1976, 435

socialization²⁹⁴ entails that the person abides by the rules and norms, successfully carries out his or her roles, and manages the new tasks.²⁹⁵ In return for personal acceptance of the military system, the recruit expects that the organization looks after his or her interests and satisfaction.²⁹⁶ This acceptance is externally marked by taking the soldier's oath and accepting some symbolic privileges.²⁹⁷ Furthermore, the oath ceremony makes it possible to affect the conscripts' and their significant others' positive attitudes towards the military and commitment to national defense.²⁹⁸

At some point, a member's attachment to the particular organization wanes,²⁹⁹ and actually it is typical that commitment declines over time.³⁰⁰ If the instructors and commanders notice the change in the member's commitment, they may try to resocialize the person. If the conscript does not want to adopt the organizational standards and openly challenge the system, the person and the group may diverge from each other which results in the person becoming a marginal member of the group, and commitment levels continue falling until the person leaves. In any case, before exit there is the last phase of socialization – *remembrance* – during which the person and the organization officially recall past good memories and achievements in traditional events. However, implicitly either one or both the parties conclude that a new phase has started and there is no return back.³⁰¹ For example, in the conscript service the remembrance phase contains programs to support commitment to national defense and ceremonies to indicate that the active service period has ended.

To conclude, prior studies suggest that the socialization process significantly affects organizational commitment. Among different commitment components, the socialization process may have its strongest effect on NC compared to others³⁰² which is the case particularly in the military³⁰³ with generated commitment encouraging employees to pursue effective performance in the organization.³⁰⁴ The entry and the socialization phases of the process are moments when the organization has a significant opportunity to affect its members and when the first social, training, and leadership experiences have important long-

²⁹⁴ Moreland & Levine 1982, 167

²⁹⁵ Moreland et al. 2001, 93; Nelson & Quick 1997, 487-488

²⁹⁶ Moreland et al. 2001, 93

²⁹⁷ Gal 1986, 111; Hockey 1986, 32

²⁹⁸ Gal 1986, 112

²⁹⁹ Ward 1999, 67

³⁰⁰ Meyer & Allen 1987, 202, 205; 210; Vanderberg & Self 1993, 564

³⁰¹ Moreland et al. 2001, 94

³⁰² Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 124, 133

³⁰³ Johns 1984, 36

³⁰⁴ Payne & Huffman 2005, 158

term implications on the individual's integration and performance as well as the organization's atmosphere and effectiveness.³⁰⁵

3 PREDICTORS AND CONSEQUENCES OF COMMITMENT

3.1 Personal, Social, and Organizational Factors Influence Commitment

The predictors and associates of commitment are next introduced in three groups: personal characteristics, social and leadership experiences, and work-related, organizational experiences.³⁰⁶ In terms of personal characteristics, the possible predictors that are considered in the literature are age, gender, marital status, family, and educational and criminal background.

Personal Characteristics. Although *age* may not explain group experiences, it is to some extent associated with organizational perceptions and particularly with commitment.³⁰⁷ Meyer and Allen³⁰⁸ note the relation between age and tenure and affective commitment. Mathieu and Zajac³⁰⁹ confirm in their meta-analysis a weak but still significant relation between age and affective commitment even when tenure is controlled. In occupational studies of commitment, it is argued that age relates to commitment resulting from an individual's seniority and better positions in the organization and possibly the investments that he or she has been able or required to make over time in the occupation.³¹⁰

As a basic rule, the longer the person has been in the organization, the more he or she is committed to the unit.³¹¹ Meyer and Allen³¹² reason that that people with longer *tenure* have justified their longer term in the organization or such people have already received more rewards and better positions thereby increasing their satisfaction and continuance commitment with the organization. However, although (continuance) commitment increases with tenure, it does not have the same effect on performance. Wright and Bonett³¹³ discern in their meta-

³⁰⁵ Meyer & Allen 1987, 200; Meyer et al. 1989, 155

³⁰⁶ Cf. Avolio, Zhu, Koh & Bhatia 2004, 952

³⁰⁷ Hackett et al. 1994, 18; Meyer et al. 1993, 545

³⁰⁸ Meyer & Allen 1984, 378

³⁰⁹ Mathieu & Zajac 1990, 191-192

³¹⁰ Irving, Coleman & Cooper 1997, 446

³¹¹ Tremble et al. 2003, 184

³¹² Meyer & Allen 1984, 378

³¹³ Wright & Bonett 2002, 1188

analysis that tenure moderates the commitment–performance relation and correlations actually decrease with increasing tenure.

Similarly to relations between age and commitment, *gender* has showed only weak or even no relation to organizational commitment. For example, Karrash³¹⁴ and Mathieu and Zajac³¹⁵ did not find any significant relation between gender and affective commitment. Thus, gender does not determine the degree of which the person commits to the organization, for example, the unit and Army. However, gender may affect the interpersonal relationships in the group that in turn affect commitment of the particular group members. In Finland, women are less prone than men to accept that the country is defended under attack.³¹⁶ On the other hand, the volunteer women who complete the conscript service demonstrate even stronger motivation and commitment to the military service than male soldiers on average.³¹⁷ Generally, defending the nation is not a topmost issue for women but the conscript service makes it a valuable matter. Moreover, volunteering attests the positive orientation of the person (in this case among the women), supports service motivation, and makes the person to focus on the benefits and positive aspects of the situation.³¹⁸ Therefore, volunteering instead of one's gender is probably the reason for commitment to serve.

Marital status and educational level are not consistently associated with commitment,³¹⁹ although education associates with well-being and identification among soldiers and offers opportunities for better jobs or tasks.³²⁰ Somebody could perceive that low relations between personal characteristics and commitment are not encouraging. From another point of view, these results suggest that people from diverse background with different abilities are able to create strong affective and instrumental commitment to the organization if leadership and experiences in the organization are supportive.

Personal attitudes and values affect commitment more than personal background factors although also in this case the effect is low. For example, conscripts' low perceptions about service may be due to the characteristics that individuals bring to the military, such as initial low commitment. On the other hand, certain personality characteristics may increase the

³¹⁴ Karrash 2003, 230

³¹⁵ Mathieu & Zajac 1990, 177

³¹⁶ Sinkko 2005, 160-161; 2009, 27

³¹⁷ Salo 2008a, 117, 130, 146-147

³¹⁸ Sinkko 2005, 139, 150-154

³¹⁹ Meyer & Allen 1997, 44

³²⁰ Griffith 2002, 228; Irving et al. 1997, 446

likelihood that the person forms an involvement with a group.³²¹ Johns³²² argues that the military should employ people with certain values which may help make the fit to the military easier. Such values are “willingness to sacrifice personal welfare for group welfare, desire to belong to a structured group, a sense of community obligation, and respect for authority.”³²³ Bartone³²⁴ proposes *hardiness* as “a personality or cognitive style” that, among other things, explain why some people are more committed than others. Specifically, hardiness brings out a high sense of life, openness to challenges, and commitment to work.³²⁵ In Finland, “sisu” is a parallel notion to hardiness and it has a significant relation to general and personal commitment to defend the country.³²⁶

Family background and relationships may affect an individual’s commitment to an organization. For example, Gade and his associates³²⁷ find that spouses’ affective and continuance commitment has an influence on soldiers’ affective commitment. On the other hand, growing in the family where the father is an officer may influence the values and obligations of the person.³²⁸ Therefore, some family relationships prepare the conscript and his or her pre-service orientation.³²⁹

During the membership in the military, the family or *significant others can create competing commitments* or even pressures on the person during the service.³³⁰ Therefore, problems in the family decrease the person’s attachment to the military unit.³³¹ Thus, attention diverted from the military to the family has harmful consequences in the unit. In the worse case, the conscript needs to make a choice between service and family expectations. Particularly, if the person has children, there is a need for the shortest possible service period instead of serving 12 months in the military.³³² Naturally, the military can affect familial relationships and commitments of the significant others by looking after the soldier, the organizational communication, and functioning policy, for example, leaves. Particularly, those conscripts who are engaged or married have needs for close communication with their spouse or

³²¹ Etzioni 1975, 289

³²² Johns 1984

³²³ Ibid., 35

³²⁴ Bartone 2000, 1, 6

³²⁵ Bartone, Johnsen, Eid, Brun & Laberg 2002, 3-4

³²⁶ Sinkko 2008, 37-38

³²⁷ Gade, Tiggel & Schumm 2003, 204

³²⁸ Meyer & Allen 1997, 96

³²⁹ Ward 1999, 7

³³⁰ Bartone et al. 2002, 3

³³¹ Bartone & Adler 1999, 104; Tucker, Sinclair & Thomas 2005, 283, 290

³³² Sinkko et al. 2008, 15

girl/boyfriend.³³³ If the relationships between the conscript and his or her family are not taken care of his or her motivation to be attached and committed to the group and organization would be jeopardized.³³⁴ Moreover, the family members would not be as supportive of military service.

Rank and status in the group are labeled here as personal factors although they are also related to success in organizational membership. Commitment varies systematically by virtue of rank.³³⁵ Thus, more committed service members have typically higher rank in the military.³³⁶ Rank also correlates with career intentions.³³⁷ Similarly, the will to defend the nation is related to the rank of the conscript. For example, the leaders are notably more willing to defend the country than the rank and file soldiers (85-90 % vs. 69-70 %, respectively, agree to the traditional questions about defending the country when it is under attack).³³⁸

Commitment also seems to be connected to the *type and status of the unit* such as combat, combat support and support units or elite vs. non-elite units.³³⁹ For example, the Ranger Regiment (as an elite unit) had significantly higher commitment than other units in addition to their superior horizontal and vertical cohesion, job satisfaction, and perceived combat readiness.³⁴⁰ This applies to the group level as well, because high ingroup status involves higher group self-esteem and group commitment³⁴¹

Social Experiences. Besides all the background and personality differences, there is a good possibility to have highly united groups if social and leadership experiences in the organization are positive and satisfy personal needs.³⁴² Meyer and Allen³⁴³ argue that a possible relation between personality characteristics and organizational commitment takes place due to “their interaction with particular work experiences.” For example, a person who would like to affiliate socially will be more committed to the organization where such needs are fulfilled. Next, social and leadership experiences are discussed in terms of their relation to organizational commitment.

³³³ Lähdesmäki 1993, 22-25

³³⁴ Butler et al. 1987, 29

³³⁵ Britt 1999, 16

³³⁶ Gal 1985, 562

³³⁷ Tremble et al. 2003, 179

³³⁸ Sinkko 2009, 7

³³⁹ Allen 2003, 247; Gal et al. 1987, 30

³⁴⁰ Britt 1999, 5

³⁴¹ Ellemers 2001, 105

³⁴² Siebold & Lindsay 1999, 117

³⁴³ Meyer & Allen 1997, 44

Basically, group members' *sociability* is positively associated with group-based liking, for instance, social attraction.³⁴⁴ In addition to good peer relations, sociable people get along with their leaders and have more positive orientation with the unit than group members who do not get along with others.³⁴⁵ Through common positive experiences, the group members establish norms and standards for the group behavior and enforce "loyalty, trust and commitment to the group" and its members.³⁴⁶ In addition, social experiences produce interaction, interdependence, 'local identities' and common goals that create a commitment to the shared identity.³⁴⁷ Thus, positive social experiences in subgroups are like the 'stepping stones' leading to organizational affective commitment³⁴⁸ and the will to defend the nation.³⁴⁹ Overall, an organization with sociable, for example, socially-oriented people has better affective commitment and organizational effectiveness than the organization with the members who are less sociable.³⁵⁰

The perceived level of *social support* strengthens the conscripts' commitment, reduces turnover, and helps the soldiers to maintain a minimum level of psychological comfort during service. Therefore, social support is positively associated with the person's commitment, and intention to stay in the duty.³⁵¹ House³⁵² detailed the mechanisms of social support and argued that besides the direct effect on outcomes (such as commitment), social support has the moderating, buffering effect (related to stressors in the situation). The buffering effect refers to a situation in which stress does not lead to negative outcomes if social support is provided, but does so without the social support.³⁵³ Interestingly, stress is unrelated to negative outcomes when social support is available and related to, for instance, lower satisfaction and higher turnover without the presence of social support.³⁵⁴

While sociability and social support are advantageous to social functions of the group, *interaction and cooperation* help the group in its instrumental tasks and goals. Furthermore, interaction may facilitate commitment of the group members. For example, Heffner and Rentsch³⁵⁵ find that an increase in social interaction at all levels of the organizational fosters

³⁴⁴ Hogg 1992, 145

³⁴⁵ Etzioni 1975, 289

³⁴⁶ Ingraham & Manning 1981, 9

³⁴⁷ Ashforth & Johnson 2001, 35

³⁴⁸ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 485

³⁴⁹ Sinkko et al. 2008, 43

³⁵⁰ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 16

³⁵¹ Fisher 1983, 12; Fisher et al. 1983, 9

³⁵² House 1981, 30-32

³⁵³ Fisher 1983, 3; Pierce, Sarason & Sarason 1990, 177

³⁵⁴ Fisher 1983, 6

³⁵⁵ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 485, 488

workplace commitment in addition to productivity and retention of the employees. Reciprocally, commitment encourages members to communicate and coordinate in order to work for the benefit of the team.³⁵⁶ The results of Tucker and his associates³⁵⁷ ascertain the positive impact of working together. They found that the soldiers with higher collective work hours demonstrated also stronger affective commitment. Thus, working and training together provide more shared experiences and opportunities to involve with the unit and its purpose. Moreover, affective commitment in the work group relates positively to AC in the whole department, and correspondingly commitment in the department (AC) associates positively with organizational AC.³⁵⁸

Constant and intense interpersonal relations, consensus of opinions, and conformity with group norms create and strengthen solidarity and bonds among group members and between them and their immediate leaders. Consequently, affective and instrumental bonds among group members lead to *group cohesion*, which refers to a strong attachment, identification, and pride in the group, as well as commitment to and trust in peers and immediate leaders.³⁵⁹ As proved by the results of Heffner and Rentsch,³⁶⁰ commitment to the primary group, for example, cohesion in the workgroup is an antecedent of organizational affective commitment. Commitment to peers and leaders associate with the overall idea about the group. For example, Siebold³⁶¹ noticed how platoon pride related to both squad member and leader factors. Basically, organizational commitment requires an adequate level of group cohesion consisting of satisfactory vertical communication and horizontal bonds among group members.³⁶² *Cohesion among peers* or peer cohesion means the net of all bonds among group members, for instance, overall commitment of the members to each other. Typically, cohesion increases inter-individual commitment, trust, loyalty, and attraction³⁶³ that contribute to organizational commitment.

In other words, commitment functions as a source of behavior and performance that benefits the group and possibly also the organization because commitment includes a sense of responsibility to the task and other group members.³⁶⁴ When group goals are in harmony with organizational goals, *commitment to group tasks and goals* benefits also organizational

³⁵⁶ Grice & Katz 2005, 13

³⁵⁷ Tucker et al. 2005, 293

³⁵⁸ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 480

³⁵⁹ Milgram, Orenstein & Zafir 1989, 191, 195-196

³⁶⁰ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 485

³⁶¹ Siebold 1990, 3

³⁶² Ingraham & Manning 1981, 11

³⁶³ Hogg 1992, 72

³⁶⁴ Gal 1985, 555

effectiveness. Therefore, it is necessary to foster commitment at the small group level. Theoretically, commitment implies “the extent to which group members place value in the group and are willing to subordinate their goals to the group’s goals.”³⁶⁵ Thus, shared commitment to the task and goals is the essence of commitment in the military group. Cohesion itself represents a force that sustains will and commitment to group members, the unit, and the mission.³⁶⁶ Due to the elevated effort and appropriate norms, task cohesion (as commitment to the task as a group) best explains why cohesion affects performance.³⁶⁷

Leadership Experiences. The leader behavior and the leadership style determine the impact of leaders on subordinates’ performance,³⁶⁸ commitment,³⁶⁹ and group cohesion.³⁷⁰ In the military, a group leader may support the positive outcomes by creating close contacts with the subordinates and showing interest and involvement in interpersonal relations. Living and working together produce shared experiences and hardships that bring leaders and their subordinates together and foster positive relationships and commitment between them. Positive relationships to the leader have more influence on commitment to the organization than the quality of and satisfaction to interpersonal relationships in the group. This is due to that the leader represents the formal unit, whereas other group members do not have the same kind of responsibility.³⁷¹

The military leader set an example by modeling organizational citizenship behavior, caring for the welfare of individuals, showing competence, and displaying commitment to the goals.³⁷² Particularly, the informal and unofficial practices, where the leader looks after the welfare of the group members on and off duty,³⁷³ create commitment to the leader and also reinforce commitment to the military service in general.³⁷⁴ Furthermore, fair, considered leadership supports affective commitment,³⁷⁵ and the leader’s personal attention and care of his or her troops increase the conscript’s motivation and contentment with duty.³⁷⁶ Generally, leaders who are supportive of and concerned for their subordinates’ development also hold up organizational commitment in their unit.

³⁶⁵ Griffith 1988, 165

³⁶⁶ Manning 1991, 457

³⁶⁷ Mullen & Copper 1994, 221

³⁶⁸ Grice & Katz 2005, 10

³⁶⁹ Kane & Tremble 2000, 137

³⁷⁰ Bass & Avolio 2000, 73, 76

³⁷¹ Vandenberghe, Bentein & Stinglhamber 2004, 61

³⁷² Cf., Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 400, 407

³⁷³ Hockey 1986, 132

³⁷⁴ Payne & Huffman 2005, 160

³⁷⁵ Meyer & Allen 1997, 46

³⁷⁶ Manning & Ingraham 1981, 269; Moore 2002, 260

In studies on cohesion,³⁷⁷ commitment to the leader is termed as *vertical bonding*, whereas the aggregate of commitment levels in the group implies *vertical cohesion*. Vertical cohesion refers to affective and instrumental positive relationships between the leader and the other group members. In other words, it is the degree to which the group members identify with and relate positively to their caring and competent leader.³⁷⁸ Due to strong vertical cohesion, the subordinates trust in, identify with, and even like their leader,³⁷⁹ and correspondingly, the leader respects and has confidence in his or her subordinates. Strong identification with the leader supports an internalization of goals, standards, and values represented by the leader³⁸⁰ that in turn fosters commitment.³⁸¹ Moreover, the person's trust in group performance and the leaders directly relates to the will to defend the nation.³⁸²

Since *the leaders are the envoys of the organization* to group and vice versa, it is essential that they maintain high level of values by themselves. As Etzioni³⁸³ clearly points out, commitment to the leader (in case when the leader is committed to the organizational norms) directly and positively affects the subordinates' involvement in the unit. Therefore it is required that the leader is morally committed to the organization and institution, for instance, the military. Moral commitment implies that the person has internalized the values and norms of the military and he or she is sensitive to the social sanctions of the other members of the corps.³⁸⁴ Moral commitment is particularly supported by transformational leadership behavior.³⁸⁵

The best outcomes of leadership are expected when the organization has *caring, respectful, competent, and committed leaders* who lead and train their troops.³⁸⁶ From a soldier's point of view, positive leadership is supportive of his or her sense of worth, well-being, pride, and identification with the leader and the military.³⁸⁷ On the other hand, positive relationships between the leader and the subordinates protect against possible negative outcomes resulting from membership. For example, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe³⁸⁸ find that commitment to

³⁷⁷ Siebold & Kelly 1988

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 2

³⁷⁹ Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 396; Furukawa et al. 1987, 10

³⁸⁰ Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 396

³⁸¹ Griffith 1986, 12

³⁸² Sinkko et al. 2008, 29, 31, 41-42

³⁸³ Etzioni 1975, 300

³⁸⁴ Johns 1984, 43

³⁸⁵ Kane & Tremble 2000, 157

³⁸⁶ Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 398

³⁸⁷ Griffith 2002, 236

³⁸⁸ Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 134; Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 59

the leader is significantly and negatively related to the intent to quit. Furthermore, the results of HumRRO³⁸⁹ suggest that the leaders' effort on improving soldiers' satisfaction lead to increased commitment, which becomes visible as a stronger intention in the subordinates to continue the military career.

In addition, successful *leadership significantly influences affective commitment* to the organization and its higher purpose.³⁹⁰ For example, Vandenberghe and his colleagues³⁹¹ examined the work group members' commitment to different foci and established the relations between leadership, cohesion, and commitment by showing how organizational commitment ($\beta = .40$) and group commitment ($\beta = .18$) were significantly related to commitment to the supervisor. Therefore the more the person bonds with the leader, the more he or she is committed to the leader's goals and the organizational goals and standards.³⁹²

If *the leader links* the hierarchical groups together, (a) information and feedback flow profusely support the functioning of the whole system, (b) the organizational efficacy of the primary group is elevated, and (c) the group members are more likely to be motivated by the organizational goals and purpose.³⁹³ Actually, the leader's main function is to create and maintain an unbroken chain of group members' commitment to different organizational elements³⁹⁴ between the social group, the task-performing group, the group leaders, the unit or department that the group is part of, the larger organization, and the institution that gives the purpose for the existence of lower level groups and units.

The leadership theory argues that *transformational leaders* reflect the best characteristics of successful leadership.³⁹⁵ While transformational leadership supports affective commitment to the organization, *transactional leadership* predicts calculative, continuance, commitment.³⁹⁶ Interestingly, transactional leadership has a negative influence on job motivation and moral commitment.³⁹⁷ In contrast, a transformational leader ("syväjohtaja" in Finnish) involves the subordinates in envisioning an attractive future and inspires them to be committed to achieve that future. Transformational leadership behavior builds team spirit through enthusiasm, high moral standards, integrity, and optimism, and provides meaning and challenge to the work,

³⁸⁹ HumRRO 2004, 303-304

³⁹⁰ Kane & Tremble 2000, 148

³⁹¹ Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 63

³⁹² Etzioni 1975, 291-292; Gal 1986, 562; Manning 1991, 465; Manning & Ingraham 1983, 4

³⁹³ Katz & Kahn 1978, 280-281

³⁹⁴ Siebold & Kelly 1988, 5

³⁹⁵ Bass 1985; Nissinen 2001a; 2001b

³⁹⁶ Kane & Tremble 2000, 157

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 154

thereby improving subordinates' self-efficacy, confidence, sense of meaning, and self-determination.³⁹⁸ In others words, due to transformational leadership, the subordinates (a) admire, respect, and trust in the leader, (b) are motivated and committed to share goals and the vision, (c) find innovative and creative solutions to problems, and (f) satisfy their unique needs and desires and develop their full potential.³⁹⁹ Basically, transformational leadership produces commitment and involvement as a result of developing personal identification to the organizational goals.⁴⁰⁰

Leadership behavior affects performance, attitudes, and commitment of the subordinates. Bartone and his associates⁴⁰¹ demonstrated that effective leadership during an exercise results later in higher group cohesiveness indicating the team-building effect of leaders. Siebold⁴⁰² explains this effect by arguing that strong leadership "inspires group members to bond with each other and go beyond themselves in commitment to achieving an elevated goal." Similarly, Deluga⁴⁰³ observed that the subordinates' perceptions about trusting interpersonal relationship with the leader get them to exceed formal job requirements. Correspondingly, Vandenberghe and his colleagues⁴⁰⁴ show how commitment to the supervisor increases organizational commitment and commitment to the work group which in turn improves performance.

On the other hand, the quality of *leader-member exchange* uniquely and positively relates to the affective commitment to the leader.⁴⁰⁵ Positive leader-member relations improve the person's sense of self-worth and provide supportive environment and encourage him or her to be committed to the organization.⁴⁰⁶ Howell and Hall-Merenda⁴⁰⁷ confirm that leader-member exchange is more strongly related to subordinates' performance than transformational leadership. Moreover, subordinates' perceptions of their leaders' commitment influence the development of vertical cohesion,⁴⁰⁸ and the group members' own commitment.⁴⁰⁹ In addition, soldiers tend to favor a leader who demonstrates strong affective commitment to the

³⁹⁸ Avolio et al. 2004, 953

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 953-954; Kane & Tremble 2000, 137-138

⁴⁰⁰ Bass & Avolio 2000, 5

⁴⁰¹ Bartone et al. 2002, 13-18

⁴⁰² Siebold 1996, 268

⁴⁰³ Deluga 1995, 12

⁴⁰⁴ Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 63

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 64

⁴⁰⁶ Camilleri 2006, 79

⁴⁰⁷ Howell & Hall-Merenda 1999, 687

⁴⁰⁸ Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 404

⁴⁰⁹ Bartone et al. 2002, 18

organization (in addition to competence, sociability, and group integration).⁴¹⁰ Simply, the more the leader is committed, the more the subordinates identify with him or her. In a nutshell, commitment is an essential part of leadership – and leadership increases commitment to the group and the organization.

Work-related organizational experiences. Basic training equals the phase is the socialization process in which commitment can be influenced and improved.⁴¹¹ Apart from socializing inductees, *military training* targets developing skills and competence of service members. In turn, perceived competence (referring to self-efficacy) strongly associates with commitment.⁴¹² Thus, the more the person learns and develops in the unit, the more likely he or she is also grateful for and committed to the organization. In another organizational study, Mathieu's model⁴¹³ corroborates that training characteristics affect job satisfaction that in turn influences organizational commitment. Moreover, organizational commitment is inspired by perceptions about training experiences, performance, and the extent to which training fulfills expectations.⁴¹⁴

Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu⁴¹⁵ argue that committed employees perceive *training* as useful and beneficial, want to exert more effort and be successful in training (to support their own position in the organization). Theoretically, this argument implies that commitment improves training motivation that perfects performance. On the other hand, the results suggest that achievement motivation influences commitment.⁴¹⁶ Moreover, receiving training that improves an individual's skills and knowledge and provides an opportunity for advancement makes the person believe that the organization values his or her effort and leads to stronger commitment.⁴¹⁷

The sense of training influences creating commitment to military service. For example, inconvenience and hardship are more acceptable when given some reasons and meaning. On the other hand, soldiers' endeavor without meaning makes the service a more unpleasant and compulsive experience.⁴¹⁸ For instance, the feeling of boredom, as a result of poorly planned training experiences, negatively affects service members' attitude towards the military

⁴¹⁰ Salo 2008b, 22

⁴¹¹ Heffner & Rentsch 2001, 488; Meyer & Allen 1997, 74

⁴¹² Mathieu & Zajac 1990, 178

⁴¹³ Mathieu 1991, 615

⁴¹⁴ Tannenbaum et al. 1991, 759

⁴¹⁵ Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum & Mathieu 1995, 145

⁴¹⁶ Mathieu 1991, 615

⁴¹⁷ Meyer & Allen 1997, 67-68

⁴¹⁸ Manning & Ingraham 1981, 265

service.⁴¹⁹ On the contrary, *shared goals and unity of purpose* support organizational commitment. Particularly, stronger affective commitment is evident if the personal goals are congruent with the military ones⁴²⁰ and there is a consensus about these goals.⁴²¹ This could be achieved by inviting service members to work together in goal setting and decision-making⁴²² that enhances control over and ownership of the mission. A shared, meaningful mission⁴²³ and “a sense of being entrusted with it” strengthen commitment to a shared goal.⁴²⁴ Shared vision, clear goals, and joint actions sustain the subordinates’ sense of self-worth, collective efficacy, and meaningfulness of the group and organizational membership – factors that also build identification with and commitment to the organization.⁴²⁵

Individual needs, expectations, and values are not identical among soldiers. Therefore, particular work and training experiences may have varying influences on soldiers’ commitment.⁴²⁶ Typically, the person with traditional values is nearly always strongly committed to defend the nation.⁴²⁷ On the other hand, somebody may be committed due to personal benefits gained through the military service. Basically, knowledge and understanding about conscripts’ needs and expectations during their service help to sustain soldiers’ commitment to the military. For example, the congruence between organizational experiences and prior expectations supports the person’s organizational commitment.⁴²⁸ As another example, needs for status, personal development, and social interaction could be fulfilled through organizational membership that in turn creates commitment to the specific unit where the needs are served. Specifically, organizational (instrumental) commitment develops as a result of training and education (due to increased human capital), social support and relationships (enhanced human capital), and good organizational reputation (as cultural capital).⁴²⁹ Moreover, affective commitment is created by fulfillment of personal (higher-order) needs.⁴³⁰ Thus, personal growth and development and achievement of personal goals would benefit organizational commitment. As a general rule, it is better to provide positive experiences than try to confirm to the members’ expectations.⁴³¹

⁴¹⁹ Fisher et al. 1983, 22

⁴²⁰ Meyer & Allen 1997, 47

⁴²¹ Gal 1985, 562

⁴²² Grice & Katz 2005, 5

⁴²³ Bartone 2000, 9

⁴²⁴ Furukawa et al. 1987, 10

⁴²⁵ Bass & Avolio 2000, 5

⁴²⁶ Meyer & Allen 1991, 76

⁴²⁷ Sinkko et al. 2008, 35

⁴²⁸ Meyer & Allen 1987, 206, 212

⁴²⁹ Yoon & Lawler 2005, 11

⁴³⁰ Meyer & Allen 1997, 50, 56

⁴³¹ Irving & Meyer 1994, 948

Fair treatment and informed decisions are more important than fulfillment of personal needs for sustaining commitment.⁴³² For example, shared deprivation of allocated time, rest, or food does not affect commitment, if the hardship is justified, for instance, by particular training goals and purposes. In other words, all personal needs do not have to be satisfied at once if the needs are taken care by equally treating all unit members. Coherence of management and personnel policy may improve overall satisfaction with the organizational membership and therefore indirectly affect commitment. Equal, consistent policies and practices (between groups and the same kind of units) safeguard organizational commitment, because then comparisons do not reveal differences between units arising from the quality of management or standard operating procedures.

The unit can support organizational commitment by alleviating the personal adjustment process.⁴³³ Van de Ven and Van Gelooven⁴³⁴ suggest that a better *person-environment fit* leads to an increase in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intentions to stay in the military, which all together reduce discharges in the military. Since personal coping involves continuous appraisals about the person-environment relationship,⁴³⁵ organizational commitment most likely improves if the unit can prove that it supports the person's fit to the organization.⁴³⁶ If the organization takes care of the person-environment fit, it provides support to the person in order to assist his or her behavior and performance in a new group. From a new member point of view, this phenomenon is called *perceived organizational support* which refers to the common belief of that the organization values and cares for its members. For example, Vandenberghe and his colleagues⁴³⁷ have showed that perceived organizational support (implying, for example, support to fulfillment of personal needs) is an important antecedent of organizational commitment.

Exchange theory posits that an individual maintains interpersonal associations and organizational membership that he or she perceives as *rewarding*. Such a person evaluates "the net difference between rewards received and given,"⁴³⁸ However, in this study it is argued that exchange theory may better apply to instrumental, task-oriented, work-related situations, whereas in social groups affective and emotional relationships and ties exceed instrumental, calculative assessments and make them irrelevant in the close, social situation.

⁴³² Meyer & Allen 1997, 46-48, 88

⁴³³ Vandenberg & Self 1993, 557

⁴³⁴ Van de Ven & Van Gelooven 2006, 3-4, 8

⁴³⁵ Lazarus & Folkman 1984, 142; Moos & Schaefer 1993, 238

⁴³⁶ Meyer & Allen 1991, 76

⁴³⁷ Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 52-54

⁴³⁸ Kviz 1978, 220

If this argument is correct, then the military should emphasize the quality of social relationships in small units in order to strengthen affection and identification of the group members and in turn enhancing the probability that the person stays in the organization as a productive member.

Basically, this discussion points out that *primary group relations can be rewarding* as such due to friendship, social support, or affection, and therefore primary group relations are not constantly evaluated and compared with other possible group relations. On the other hand, organizational membership may involve more intense evaluation of the worth of being in a certain unit, especially when the reason for being in the unit is instrumental (pay, learning, pension etc.) as may be the case in civilian work units. Then, commitment to the organization could be enforced with elements that set the criteria for the comparison, such as, for instance, the system of awards, rewards, and punishments. Moreover, the extent to which a person values social or work-oriented group varies individually. As an example, if a person is inclined to strive for rewards and avoid punishments, and the membership is not motivated by affective ties with the social group, then, according to the exchange theory, the person will be affected by the organizational recognitions. However, the recognitions may have no effect on a person's commitment if he or she places the main importance of social life in the organization.

Punishments represent socialization efforts to assimilate a person to the normal flow of organizational life and to point out behavior that is totally unacceptable. Every organization has some kind of formal or informal signals for how a person has not observed the set rules or guidelines. Particularly, in a total institution, for instance, in the military, punishments are valuable tools in socializing people. By using punishments, the military organization expresses disapproval for a conscript's slip from the right behavioral code by showing that the conscript has done something disgraceful and dishonorable.⁴³⁹ Thus, sanctions and punishments enforce a moral commitment to the norms and values of the group.⁴⁴⁰ However, sanctions are ineffective "unless a moral involvement already exists."⁴⁴¹ Thus, without initial, adequate level of moral and normative commitment, sanctions arising from disobedience of norms and rules would fall on deaf ears. On the other hand, rewards such as promotions may elicit perceptions that the organization is interested in an individual's career and development that leads to stronger organizational commitment.

⁴³⁹ Artema 1993, 33-35

⁴⁴⁰ Johns 1984, 31

⁴⁴¹ Wesbrook 1980, 251

Normative influence on group members depends on how the group can shape its members attitudes and behavior “through demands, expectations, rewards, and punishments.”⁴⁴² Moreover, variation in group functions produces different types of norms. For example, shared commitment to task has a different impact on attitudes and behavior in the group than shared commitment to interpersonal relationships.⁴⁴³ Basically, group performance and organizational effectiveness are most likely supported by shared commitment to the task⁴⁴⁴ that incorporates the norms and goals of the group and the larger military organization.⁴⁴⁵

Because commitment links the person with the institution and its higher purpose, the *symbols* that highlight the importance of personal sacrifices for the institution would strengthen personal attachment with the continued membership in the unit (AC). Prior to the military service, the socialization process may have already created loyalty and commitment to values, national symbols, and the military service as an active membership in the society.⁴⁴⁶ An example of socialization from the civilian setting that repays during the military service is the Independence Day which provides a chance to memorize the sacrifices of prior generations and proves the need for the military system in protecting freedom.⁴⁴⁷

During the military service, participation in units which have distinct history, traditions and rituals, and specialized training induce strong affective commitment to the unit and the military.⁴⁴⁸ Thus, the military heritage experienced through unit membership ties the soldier to his or her service and the military.⁴⁴⁹ As a detail, even distinct uniforms and badges have an effect on the morale and commitment of soldiers,⁴⁵⁰ because they show the unique organizational membership in a valuable institution. Basically, everything that fosters social identity in the unit is a useful tool for increasing commitment to the organization.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴² Hardin & Higgins 1996, 64

⁴⁴³ Zaccaro & McCoy 1988, 843

⁴⁴⁴ Savell, Teague & Tremble 1995, 194; Weiner 1990, 24

⁴⁴⁵ McClure & Broughton 1998, 9; McClure & Broughton 2000, 475

⁴⁴⁶ Butler et al. 1987, 21; Westbrook 1980, 250

⁴⁴⁷ Ingraham & Manning 1981, 11

⁴⁴⁸ Griffith 1988, 167

⁴⁴⁹ Ingraham & Manning 1981, 11

⁴⁵⁰ Sinaiko, Segal & Goldich 1984, 10

⁴⁵¹ McBreen 2002, 13

3.2 Commitment Affects Attitudes and Behavior

In terms of different forms of commitment and their outcomes, commitment seems to insulate the organization against poor outcomes at the same time when organizationally valued attitudes and behavior are supported. For example, commitment affects positively behavior,⁴⁵² group performance,⁴⁵³ personal performance,⁴⁵⁴ organizational citizenship behavior,⁴⁵⁵ low absenteeism,⁴⁵⁶ low turnover,⁴⁵⁷ reenlistment,⁴⁵⁸ job satisfaction,⁴⁵⁹ and well-being.⁴⁶⁰ In terms of *the impact of commitment*, AC appears to be the most valuable for the organization.⁴⁶¹ For example, AC is more strongly related to behavioral outcomes than CC.⁴⁶² Although AC may demonstrate the strongest impact on attitudes and behavior, also NC has similar effects (due to their strong interrelation).⁴⁶³

“Commitment to the military is characterized by a sense of duty.”⁴⁶⁴ This affirmation implies that committed soldiers work harder to fulfill their duties which results in improved *performance* in the group and unit. The literature details that group performance is most affected when soldiers have strong commitment to a task compared to interpersonal commitment or group pride.⁴⁶⁵ On the other hand, Zaccaro⁴⁶⁶ shows how interpersonal liking and attraction increase commitment to task which positively influences group performance. Thereby, commitment significantly predicts perceived combat readiness in the military, and the well-performing groups are distinguished from poor-performing ones by their group members’ commitment to task performance.⁴⁶⁷

Besides group performance, *personal performance* and organizational commitment are directly related.⁴⁶⁸ Henderson⁴⁶⁹ argues that a soldier’s battle performance is determined by

⁴⁵² Meyer & Allen 1991, 68

⁴⁵³ Mullen & Copper 1994, 210

⁴⁵⁴ Meyer & Allen 1987, 209; Luchak & Gellatly 2007, 791

⁴⁵⁵ Organ & Ryan 1995, 775; Riketta 2002, 472, 476

⁴⁵⁶ Mathieu & Zajac 1990, 184; Meyer & Allen 1997, 27-28

⁴⁵⁷ Gade et al. 2003, 201

⁴⁵⁸ Hom, Katerberg & Hulin 1979, 285-286

⁴⁵⁹ Heffner & Gade 2003, 219; Mathieu 1991, 607

⁴⁶⁰ Gade et al. 2003, 203

⁴⁶¹ Ellemers 2001, 109

⁴⁶² Luchak & Gellatly 2007, 786; Sinclair et al. 2005, 1284

⁴⁶³ Karrasch 2003, 235

⁴⁶⁴ Gal 1985, 555

⁴⁶⁵ Mullen & Copper 1994, 210, 221

⁴⁶⁶ Zaccaro 1981, 82-83

⁴⁶⁷ Mullen & Copper 1994, 225

⁴⁶⁸ Meyer et al. 1989, 154; Riketta 2002, 476

⁴⁶⁹ Henderson 1985, 22-23

personal or moral commitment, and his or her loyalty to the group. Moreover, commitment to the leader (or supervisor) directly affects job performance, whereas organizational commitment indirectly affects performance through increasing commitment to the supervisor.⁴⁷⁰

Actually, commitment and performance may have a *reciprocal relation*. In other words, while commitment to the organization makes the person to exert more effort and consequently perform better, the high level of performance may correspondingly make the person more committed to the organization where he or she has learned to perform so well.⁴⁷¹ The research proves that (attitudinal) commitment affects and increases performance more than vice versa.⁴⁷² *Commitment components* are not equally related to performance. Meyer and Allen⁴⁷³ predict that AC has a positive effect on performance, whereas CC may affect performance negatively or not at all. Gade, Tiggie, and Schumm⁴⁷⁴ supported this prediction and reported that AC influences performance positively and CC negatively.

It needs to be emphasized that *commitment to the work group may result different outcomes than commitment to the unit*.⁴⁷⁵ For example, a person is not necessary willing to work for the benefit of his or her work group just due to commitment to the larger unit if he or she hates membership in the group and has low commitment to its performance and goals. Therefore, literature asserts that the best outcomes are obtained when all various forms and foci of commitment are strong.⁴⁷⁶

In addition to performance, commitment has several beneficial attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. For example, commitment interacts with *expectations and desires*. For example, trainees who were more committed prior to training expected better performance and desired more from the training than trainees with initially low commitment.⁴⁷⁷ Affective commitment explains also *organizational citizenship behavior*.⁴⁷⁸ Organizationally directed people, for example, are more motivated to work hard, take initiative, and follow rules.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, they are more likely to promote the unit's image and participate in voluntary events.⁴⁸⁰ Thus,

⁴⁷⁰ Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 47, 60

⁴⁷¹ Meyer & Allen 1991, 78

⁴⁷² Riketta 2008, 476

⁴⁷³ Meyer & Allen 1997, 25, 29-31

⁴⁷⁴ Gade et al. 2003, 198

⁴⁷⁵ Ellemers 2001, 110

⁴⁷⁶ Bartone & Kirkland 1991, 395

⁴⁷⁷ Cannon-Bowers et al. 1995, 160

⁴⁷⁸ Organ & Ryan 1995, 775-778

⁴⁷⁹ Van Scotter & Motowidlo 1996, 525

⁴⁸⁰ Motowidlo & Van Scotter 1994, 475-476; Sinclair et al. 2005, 1284

committed soldiers “go the extra mile” for the unit⁴⁸¹ and work beyond formal requirements to support organizational objectives.⁴⁸² Therefore, commitment has a negative relationship with *absences* and punishments, and committed employees are expected to be less absent from work and be more focused on job performance.⁴⁸³ Particularly, low affective commitment may produce an underlying cause for voluntary absence.⁴⁸⁴

However, besides commitment, also *norms* determine the absence rate in a group. The findings of Mathieu and Kohler⁴⁸⁵ suggest that the average group-level absence predicts an individual absence beyond other factors, such as commitment, satisfaction, or demographic items. Thus, the company’s absence culture and policy, and especially group norms, influence how contextual and situational factors are reflected an individual’s behavior, such as absence.⁴⁸⁶ Pearlin⁴⁸⁷ argues that absence arising from *malingering* and other stress-avoidance techniques is learned from the reference group, for instance, from other squad and platoon members.

A person who is not integrated in the group and the military may psychologically distance him- or herself from the situation, and consequently be less committed (affect), believe less in the unit and think negatively about the circumstances (cognition), and be less eager to perform as expected (action).⁴⁸⁸ Sinclair and his associates⁴⁸⁹ categorized employees based on their AC and CC and found that free agents (having moderate CC and low AC) demonstrated significantly poorer task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and antisocial behavior than other people in the group. In the military, conscripts with weak (affective) commitment are not willing to participate in training, and implicitly protest against their situation in the military and alleviate their bad feelings about the service by being absent. For example, sickness is a typical defense mechanism that is utilized by soldiers avoiding service. Thus, low commitment to military service can be demonstrated in an active way by avoiding responsibilities in service and seeking medical exemptions from training, or in a passive way, by showing little initiative or desire of learning during training.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸¹ Ellemers 2001, 110

⁴⁸² O’Reilly & Chatman 1986, 498; Riketta 2008, 473

⁴⁸³ Meyer & Allen 1997, 24; Meyer et al. 1993, 545

⁴⁸⁴ Luchak & Gellatly 2007, 789; Meyer & Allen 1997, 27-28

⁴⁸⁵ Mathieu & Kohler 1990, 218-220

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 220

⁴⁸⁷ Pearlin 1993, 304

⁴⁸⁸ Solinger et al. 2008, 77

⁴⁸⁹ Sinclair et al. 2005, 1285

⁴⁹⁰ Dovrat 1995, 5

Commitment in organizations strongly related with perceived *stress and reported turnover*.⁴⁹¹ Generally, committed recruits report lower stress levels than uncommitted service members.⁴⁹² However, shared stressors intensify the effect of personal stress on commitment.⁴⁹³ As a basic rule, commitment secures the person from stress by increasing the thresholds when he or she starts to react under stress. In addition, the person perceives organizational and supervisor support more favorably due to his or her attachment and therefore is able to benefit from provided help and support.⁴⁹⁴

People lacking commitment and motivation are in high risk of early separation. For example, Cannon-Bowers and colleagues⁴⁹⁵ demonstrate that recruits' expectations, self-efficacy, commitment and pre-training motivation are four significant turnover predictors. Basically, the more problems a recruit has with morale, self-discipline, self-esteem, pride, and commitment, the slighter is his or her likelihood to stay in service.⁴⁹⁶ Moreover, Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner⁴⁹⁷ prove in their meta-analysis that organizational commitment and job satisfaction are the primary antecedents of turnover (besides quitting intention, which is the best predictor of it). This has been further examined and proved that low commitment predicts the *intent to quit*⁴⁹⁸ and that commitment is indirectly related to actual separation via these intentions.⁴⁹⁹ Therefore, the turnover literature suggests that organizational commitment affects turnover behavior through intentions.⁵⁰⁰

Results show that both AC and CC relate to turnover intentions and actual turnover behavior.⁵⁰¹ For example, Gade and his colleagues⁵⁰² and Luchak and Gellatly⁵⁰³ report that AC, CC, and their interaction impact on retention intentions. Stinglhamber and his colleagues⁵⁰⁴ attest that AC and the "high sacrifice" subcomponent of CC are directly related to turnover. These results indicate that people remain in the organization due to extrinsic rewards (relating to CC) and because they like the membership (implying AC).⁵⁰⁵ Thus, high

⁴⁹¹ Lee et al. 2000, 804

⁴⁹² Harris, White, Eshwar & Mottern 2005, 7

⁴⁹³ Tucker et al. 2005, 276

⁴⁹⁴ Lee et al. 2000, 804

⁴⁹⁵ Cannon-Bowers et al. 1995, 159

⁴⁹⁶ Hayden 2000, 8; Moore 2002, 267, 269, 274

⁴⁹⁷ Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner 2000, 480

⁴⁹⁸ Ellemers et al. 1998, 727

⁴⁹⁹ Lee et al. 2000, 802, 807; Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 129, 135; Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 57

⁵⁰⁰ Hom et al. 1979, 288-289

⁵⁰¹ Hackett et al. 1994, 18; Meyer et al. 1993, 545

⁵⁰² Gade et al. 2003, 201

⁵⁰³ Luchak & Gellatly 2007, 788

⁵⁰⁴ Stinglhamber et al. 2002, 135

⁵⁰⁵ Allen 2003, 241

AC and CC commitment secure against turnover intentions among soldiers.⁵⁰⁶ Griffith⁵⁰⁷ draws attention to nationalism (as an even more salient form of commitment than, for example, AC), and reports that soldiers with higher nationalism have less turnover intentions (and more intentions to stay) in reserve military service than those having lower nationalism. Generally, every form of commitment should prevent from workers intentions to quit or their actual turnover.⁵⁰⁸ It is suggested that remaining in the unit (or conversely turnover behavior) is the primary indicator of *instrumental* (continuance) commitment.⁵⁰⁹ However, AC has also turned out to be important in the turnover process.⁵¹⁰

Relating to retention and turnover, Salo⁵¹¹ discerns that AC is the most significant predictor in explaining success in the military adjustment process in Finnish conscript service. The other powerful predictors are sociability, physical health, and adjustment to obedience and authority relations. Together these four explained 50% of the variance of adjustment expectations prior to the service, 58% of basic training adjustment, and 61% of later adjustment at the end of service. In structural equation models, these four dimensions, AC, sociability, physical health, and regimentation, explained 56% of the later adjustment experiences.

The results suggest that AC *affects turnover both indirectly and directly*. Indirectly, AC is one of the strongest predictors of experienced stress which in turn determines the turnover in the military, whereas AC directly influences intentions to quit and stay in service.⁵¹² From another point of view, Sümer⁵¹³ integrates the predictors of turnover in a model and ascertains that personal and organizational adjustment factors (as distant factors) affect intentions to quit, proximal factors, through commitment, job satisfaction, and quality of life perceptions, mediating factors.

The research also offers *leadership as a moderator of the relationship between commitment and turnover*. For example, when AC is kept constant, engaging in a mentorship process decreases the odds of turnover by 38 percent.⁵¹⁴ On the other hand, Vandenberghe and his colleagues⁵¹⁵ demonstrate that commitment to the supervisor indirectly affects turnover

⁵⁰⁶ Gade et al. 2003, 200

⁵⁰⁷ Griffith 2005, 11-12

⁵⁰⁸ Mathieu & Zajac 1990; Meyer & Allen 1997

⁵⁰⁹ O'Reilly & Chatman 1986, 497

⁵¹⁰ Payne & Huffman 2005, 164

⁵¹¹ Salo 2008a, 191-195

⁵¹² HumRRO 2004, 111, 119, 300

⁵¹³ Sümer 2004, 2-6

⁵¹⁴ Payne & Huffman 2005, 164-165

⁵¹⁵ Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 56, 58

intentions through AC. Thus, organizational commitment may be more directly related to turnover intentions than commitment to the supervisor.⁵¹⁶ Although these studies emphasize the importance of commitment to decrease turnover, commitment does not always guarantee that a person stays in the organization. For example, in spite of strong attachment to the organizational membership, a person may leave because of family or economic obligations or better career options elsewhere. Similarly, a person may strongly identify with the group and the unit but he or she needs to leave due to specific regulations, for instance, the end of service period or a fixed retirement age.⁵¹⁷

Job satisfaction denotes satisfaction with situational factors in the organization, such as leadership⁵¹⁸ and training characteristics.⁵¹⁹ Therefore, variables that affect commitment also associate with job satisfaction.⁵²⁰ Such variables are, for example, commitment to leader and satisfaction with learning and working climate, pride in the unit, and positive experiences and feelings arising from organizational membership. Furthermore, the literature indicates that organizational commitment and actual job satisfaction strongly relate to one another.⁵²¹ For example, Heffner and Gade⁵²² discerned that AC to the military significantly relates with satisfaction to Special Operations Forces. Mathieu⁵²³ suggests that job satisfaction and commitment are reciprocally related, and satisfaction affects commitment even stronger than vice versa ($r = .44$ vs. $r = .27$, respectively).⁵²⁴ Although *job satisfaction* supports commitment,⁵²⁵ these two are theoretically and empirically different concepts because organizational commitment is more general, stable, slowly developed and dispelled,⁵²⁶ whereas job satisfaction is an affective, less stable response to the job and its characteristics.⁵²⁷ Altogether, these results suggest that programs which target improving job satisfaction most likely positively influence organizational commitment. Commitment is also reflected in the employees' well-being at work⁵²⁸ and the service members' *well-being* in the military.⁵²⁹

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., 57

⁵¹⁷ Solinger et al. 2008, 74.

⁵¹⁸ Heffner & Gade 2003, 212-213

⁵¹⁹ Mathieu 1991, 614-615

⁵²⁰ Meyer & Allen 1987, 210

⁵²¹ Gade et al. 2003, 191-192

⁵²² Heffner & Gade 2003, 219

⁵²³ Mathieu 1991, 607, 615-616

⁵²⁴ The same is argued by Meyer & Allen 1987, 211

⁵²⁵ Meyer et al. 1993, 545

⁵²⁶ Manning 1991, 458

⁵²⁷ McIntyre et al. 2002, 302

⁵²⁸ Meyer & Allen 1997, 37

⁵²⁹ Gade et al. 2003, 203

As a summary of the results, committed soldiers are invaluable in the military because they perform better and are more likely to remain in their units.⁵³⁰ Basically, the military sustains and retains enough effective troops by creating and maintaining their organizational commitment that support military service.⁵³¹ Therefore, it is of interest to maintain and improve a psychological link between the service member and the organization. The strength of the link is indicated by intentions to stay in the organization. Both AC and CC sustain the intent to stay (as expected based on turnover review),⁵³² although AC is a more powerful predictor of intent to stay than CC.⁵³³ Due to attachment and identification to the military (AC), the person stays in the organization because he or she likes it. Because of NC, the person is obliged to continue his or her membership in a job,⁵³⁴ whereas CC affects the retention of the person, because he or she perceives the cost to leave to be too high.

4 METHODS

4.1 Outline for the Study and the Research Questions

This research examines the factors that are related to commitment to the conscript service over time. Thus, the emphasis is on conscripts' attitudes and perceptions, whereas career officers' occupational or organizational commitment is purposely excluded from the research design. *The rank and file soldiers* form the focus group for the primary investigations stemming from the following reasons. First, the rank and file soldiers represent people who have no intentions to become officers, and therefore, the intent for a military career does not affect their commitment levels. Second, they have not received any leadership training that would increase their commitment during the service. Third, their commitment levels are expected to be lower than leaders' commitment but demonstrate at the same time more variation. And, fourth, it is expected that focusing on this group of "normal, standard" soldiers would reveal most about differences in, reasons for, and consequences of the certain commitment levels.

In terms of the analysis, three main phenomena are examined: commitment, intent to stay, and outcomes of commitment. Among the commitment components (affective, normative, and

⁵³⁰ Gade 2003, 163

⁵³¹ McIntyre et al. 2002, 312

⁵³² Meyer & Allen 1997, 33

⁵³³ Meyer & Allen 1991, 66

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 67

continuance), *affective commitment* (AC) is the primary focus of the examinations. As detailed in the literature review, affective commitment represents in this study the conscript's attachment to and identification with the military and involvement in the unit.⁵³⁵ Besides AC, *intent to stay* was also examined due to the following reasons. In the conscript service, the rank and file soldiers have no interest in a prolonged presence. In other words, the conscripts do not make any substantial emotional investments to the organization that would promote their long-lasting membership or benefit them in the long run. This is because the service lasts for only six to twelve months for the rank and file soldiers, and moreover, the service is an obligation that needs to be fulfilled. Thus, arising from the enforced, compulsory nature of the service and the lack of opportunities to become a career officer, the rank and file soldiers demonstrate relatively weak CC to the service. Based on the aforementioned reasons, intent to stay is selected to indicate the strength of conscripts' (short-term) commitments and whether the conscripts would like to continue their service in the military. The main suggestion for examining intent to stay comes from the prior literature which has shown a significant relation between commitment and such intentions.⁵³⁶

The third main element of the analysis is the examination of different *commitment-related outcomes* over time. Based on the literature, the selected variables about the conscripts' attitudes, behavior and performance are gathered and examined in order to identify the main effects of commitment. The outcome variables are also analyzed over time in order to show how preliminary commitment before service explains later attitudes and performance of a conscript. Furthermore, such a design allows the examination of commitment among those conscripts who are discharged during the first days of service as well as to identify differences between commitment during basic training and at the end of service.

Based on the literature and the outlines of the study, the main research questions are:

1. What predicts commitment to the military service?
 - a. How is the conscripts' commitment related to personal background and characteristics?
 - b. What are the main variables that predict preliminary commitment prior to the service?
 - c. What predicts commitment during the basic training period?
 - d. What predicts commitment at the end of service?
2. What predicts intent to stay in the military?
 - a. How are personal background and characteristics associated with the conscripts' intent to stay?
 - b. What predicts intent to stay over time?

⁵³⁵ Meyer & Allen 1991, 67, 75

⁵³⁶ HumRRO 2004, 111, 119, 300; Vandenberghe et al. 2004, 57

3. What are the main outcomes of commitment to the military service?
 - a. How is commitment related to attitudinal and behavioral variables before service and during the basic training?
 - b. How is conscripts' commitment associated with positive and negative outcomes at the end of service?

4.2 Sample

The sample consists of the conscripts inducted to the Armored Brigade in Hattula in Finland in 2001. Altogether, 2,047 conscripts were ordered to fulfill their military obligation in the brigade, which was about 6.8 % of the annual male cohort in Finland in 2001. The conscripts were mainly from the province of Häme in south-western Finland. The modal age in the sample was 20 years (52 %) with 88 % of the participants between 19 and 20 years of age, and 2.5 % 18 year olds, 4.5 % 21 year olds, and 5 % 21–29 year olds. The majority (42.5 %) of the recruits had graduated with a high school diploma after completing 12 years at school. Almost as many (39.5 %) had studied from 9 to 11 years, while only 16 % had only a comprehensive school background, and just 2 % were college graduates. In this sample, all the recruits were Caucasian and only 34 (1.7 %) were female soldiers performing voluntary service. Among those 1,792 conscripts who completed their service, 53 % were privates, 33 % were lance corporals or corporals, 7 % were sergeants, and another 7 % of the conscripts were promoted to a platoon leader or an equal position. The length of service depended on the type and amount of training received, and for 35 % of the conscripts it was six months, for 13 % it was nine months, and 52 % of the conscripts served for the twelve-month period.

The focus sample was composed for this study by 1,387 of *rank and file soldiers*. Among these soldiers, 58.7% were planned to serve for 6 months, while 41.3% were selected for the nine or twelve months of special training, for example, serving as military policemen or tank drivers. Prior to completing the service, 230 conscripts (16.6 %) were promoted for lance corporals, whereas 206 rank and file soldiers were discharged typically during the basic training period. The majority of soldiers were either 19 or 20 years old (88.0 %). Hence, the age structure was basically the same comparing to the whole sample. Only 22 soldiers (1.6 %) were women. In terms of their physical health, these soldiers ran on average 2,362 meters in the 12-minute running test, and one fourth of them did not exercise at all prior to their service.

The majority of the soldiers were still single (54.1 %) and only 5.3 % were married. One third had graduated with a high school diploma after completing 12 years at school, while 20.3 % ended their studies at the comprehensive school level. Moreover, 25.0 % of the soldiers

indicated some kind of learning difficulties problems while at school. Every third soldier drank alcohol at least once a week, and 16.1 % had a positive attitude towards drug use. Every tenth was charged with an offence in the civilian, although only 2.8 % had a criminal record during that time. Exactly 30 % of the soldiers had experienced their parents' divorce.

Before service, 25.1 % of the recruits had no place to work or study and 47.8 % of the conscripts anticipated to have no place to work or study after their service. No wonder that every second recruit perceived to have little or no money. In terms of military duty and period of service, 35.4 % hoped to be chosen for the 6 months period of service no matter what, 33.2 % wished for 6 months of service with particular training or branch and 17.5 % planned to serve 9 to 12 months and have special training. Only 13.9 % of the rank and file soldiers dreamed of leadership training and the 12-month service period while entering the military.

The main differences between the rank and file soldiers and the conscripts who became squad or platoon leaders were that the leaders were brighter and more adaptive based on the aptitude tests (P1 and P2 military tests) and in a better physical condition as indicated by the results of the 12-minute run tests: 2,362 vs. 2,492 vs. 2,618 meters in average for the rank and file soldiers, corporals, and sergeants / platoon leaders, respectively. Thus, the conscript leaders were in a better mental and physical condition than the privates. Moreover, these groups were significantly different in terms of exercising frequency, lack of criminal background, graduated education level and success at school. The leaders got well along with their parents, and interestingly, the rank and file soldiers' parents had been divorced significantly more likely than the corporals', sergeants', or platoon leaders' parents. In their future, the leaders were more confident to have a place to study than the rank and file soldiers. In terms of training motivation, commitment, and intent to stay, the leaders significantly differed from soldiers in all respects.

4.3 Questionnaire Administration

For the design of the measures, the research took into account the variety of possible commitment predictors. Specifically, both personal and situational factors were assessed through the survey questionnaires and based on the archival data available. In order to distinguish preliminary commitment and the impact of conscript service experiences, the questionnaires were administered in three stages: just before service, at the end of basic training period, and at the end of service. Before delivering the questionnaires, the

composition of self-contained, optically scannable questionnaires were formed and tested. Most of the questionnaire items were about opinions and attitudes and were responded to by using a 5-point Likert scale varying from a strongly negative answer to a strongly positive one (scored from 1 to 5). The questions were worded affirmatively and negatively, and the scale items were separated from each other to prevent response sets and to reduce multicollinearity of items and scales.

At the end of service, the primary tool for assessing the conscripts' attitudes and experiences in the Finnish Defence Forces is the official military questionnaire that is regularly filled out by every conscript prior to the end of service. The official questionnaire assesses situational and institutional factors of the service, such as social, leadership and training experiences. However, there was a need for supplementing the questionnaire by having a separate survey for acquiring commitment-related items and the conscripts' situation in the civilian setting – details that were not thoroughly covered by the official questionnaire. In addition to these two research tools at the end of service, two other surveys were administrated for the study. The first one was given just while conscripts were entering the service, with no direct experience about the military life. During that time, the primary focus was on their preliminary attitudes and commitment to the military service.

Altogether, 1,387 rank and file soldiers took part in filling out this first questionnaire. The second survey was carried out after seven to eight weeks of service in order to examine the changes in attitudes and commitment due to the encounter with the military culture and the experiences in the basic training. Altogether, 1,224 and 88.2 % of the focus sample filled out the second questionnaire, and finally, 1,080 and 77.9 % of them delivered the third set of responses. However, only 989 rank and file soldiers filled out the official (fourth) military questionnaire, and therefore, there were 975 soldiers who completed both the third and fourth questionnaire which equals 70.3 % of the focus sample. Notably, 206 rank and file soldiers (14.9 %) were discharged during their service due to their lack of adjustment to the military or poor physical health. Naturally, they were absent from the surveys except the first one.

4.4 Validity and Reliability of the Measures

The procedures of factor analysis and reliability tests were utilized for testing the validity and reliability of the measures. The factor analysis verified that the measures formed distinguished

patterns and showed whether the planned groups of items were internally interdependent.⁵³⁷ Consequently, all the survey items underwent a series of factor analyses with the principal axis factoring extraction and orthogonal, varimax rotation.⁵³⁸ Since many personal and situational factors were interrelated and not totally independent, each factor analysis was also conducted by using promax oblique rotation,⁵³⁹ which permits the correlation of factors, and consequently, clarifies the results of factor analysis among concepts demonstrating low or moderate mutual variance.⁵⁴⁰ Basically, the items whose responses loaded on the same factor formed an initial measure that went through the reliability tests in order to be able examine the consistency of the measure. In cases where the loadings of an individual item were very similar across emergent factors, the item was removed from further analysis to avoid multicollinearity.⁵⁴¹

Time 1 Factor Analyses. The value of each variable was assessed for creating as accurate measures as possible. The independent variables were determined based on the results of correlation and a series of factor analyses. If an independent variable did not relate to any other body of items (having lower than .30 correlations to any item and less than .30 communalities in the factor analysis), the variable was omitted and not utilized in the scale construction because it independently measured something else than the other variables. Therefore, such an item was removed from the further factor analysis and possibly later used as an individual item in the examinations. Altogether, the criteria for assessing the utility of items were a) the value of communalities (an adequate level of common variance among other items was .30 or more), b) the loading of the item in the factor analysis (an adequate value for loadings was more than .30), c) descriptive information (having no anomalies such as high skewness or kurtosis), d) the *meaningfulness* of the factor loadings in different points in time, and f) the results of the reliability test (the items increased the value of alfa in the test). Together the combination of all these criteria was employed to assess the questionnaire items.

The factor analyses were carried out in steps in order to distinguish the measures that were applicable for examining commitment over time. For the start, all the available Likert scale items were included. Based on the above mentioned criteria, the items having low communalities, low loadings, skewness, or loadings in many factors were omitted from the next factor analysis. Once the factor structure was revealed, the items that formed mutual

⁵³⁷ Gorsuch 1983, 2-4

⁵³⁸ Child 2006, 153-154

⁵³⁹ Gorsuch 1983, 190, 205

⁵⁴⁰ Child 2006, 82, 101

⁵⁴¹ Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken 2003, 419-420

relation went through a narrowed factor analysis (for instance, all commitment-related items were included to the analysis but not other items). Based on the series of factor analyses at three points in time, the measures were finally constructed and refined for the study.

At time 1, the principal axis factoring that used oblique rotation derived seven factors, accounting for 47.3 percent of the variance. The first factor covered items concerning general attitudes toward the military service and commitment thereby explaining 29.4 percent of the variance. Thus, the affective commitment and motivation items formed a “tone” factor that gauged conscripts’ general attitudinal approach towards the military service. Because of this extensive factor structure, difficulties arose in separating the items for measuring training motivation from commitment items. In practice this means that those who are committed to serve are also willing to do well and learn in their service (Table 1). On the other hand, the items for determining *Intent to Stay* and *Normative Commitment* loaded together as the last factor of the analysis with the question dealing with “the will to defend the nation.” This interrelation pointed out the separate nature of affective and normative parts of commitment, such as the items in the first factor.

Table 1
Factors at Time 1

Factors and their items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attitude and Commitment. Getting military training is important and significant to me	.88						
To me it is important to do well in the army	.86						
I am highly motivated to complete my military service	.74						
I am not interested in military service	.73						
My personal contribution to military service is important	.71						
I will feel at home in military service	.69						
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.66						
I will try to do my best in training (mot)	.62						
I am willing to participate in training that is intellectually demanding (mot)	.61						
I want to learn the things that are taught thoroughly (mot)	.58						
Military service is useless and unnecessary	.50						
Military Adjustment. I will adjust to being away from my family		.81					
I will adjust to being away from my friends		.78					
I will adjust to dormitory accommodation		.57		.30			
I will adjust to military service		.51					
I normally adjust to a new environment		.50		.45			

Table 1 (continued)

I can cope with the mental pressure of conscript training		.49
I will adjust to military discipline		.47
I will adjust to rush and strict timetables		.40
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships	.30	.35
Emotional Stability. I have often had feelings that life is not worth living		.77
I have had suicidal thoughts		.72
I often feel depressed		.55
I am often anxious and tense		.48 .30
I do not feel a part of this society (system)		.44
If I could live my life all over again. I would do almost everything differently		.40
Social Adjustment. I can adjust to being around people I do not know		.71
I feel uncomfortable with other people		.67
It is easy for me to make new friends		.62
I usually do not share my thoughts with other people		.49
Belonging to a squad or a group feels pressing beforehand		.43
Schooling and Obedience. I felt at home at school		.82
I adjusted to comprehensive school		.72
I was willing to help other students at school		.41
It is easy for me to obey given orders		.34
I cannot stand being ordered around and commanded		low
An explicit chain of command promotes action in the army		low
Physical Health. I can manage the physical demands of military service		.84
My health corresponds to the demands of military service		.73
I am healthy and my physical health is better than in my age group in general		.68
Military Obligation. NC: All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense	.31	.65
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves...		.61
NC: Military service is every male citizen's duty	.37	.59
CC: I have considered applying to civilian service		.42
CC: I have considered dropping out of service	.30	.37

Note. $n = 1,387$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. KMO = .96. Total variance explained = 47.3 %. (mot) = Training Motivation. NC = Normative Commitment. CC = Intent to Stay / Continuance Commitment. low = The loading was less than .30.

In terms of other measures, social adjustment was distinguished as a scale from overall military adjustment. One of the biggest surprises was that obedience related to schooling

experiences among the rank and file soldiers prior to their service. This result indicates that the comprehensive school represents an important institution where the young men need to obey orders and possibly adjust to be commanded.

For the further analysis, the items that were meant to denote CC (such as I have considered dropping out of service) were named as *Intent to Stay*. The reason was that those two items did not include the idea about side-bets that is contained into the original measure of CC. Naturally, this was due to that the rank and file soldiers had basically nothing to lose if their service ended prematurely, and thus, inherently there was lack of commitment to their continued membership in the organization. Due to the theoretical interest for distinguishing AC and CC measures from one another, the more specific factor analysis was carried out where all the attitudinal “tone-factor” items were included. The reason for such analysis was to test whether commitment items went apart as they should have been. Thus, the items that were related to commitment to the military service were examined together (Table 2).

Table 2

Factor Analysis for the Commitment-Related Items at Time 1

Factors and their items	1	2	3
Affective. To me it is important to do well in the army	.78		
I am willing to participate in training that is intellectually demanding	.74		
Getting military training is important and significant to me	.72		
I will feel at home in military service	.70		
I am highly motivated to complete my military service	.67		
My personal contribution to military service is important	.67		
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.60		
I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.60		
I want to learn the things that are taught thoroughly	.59		
I will try to do my best in training	.56		
I am not interested in military service	.55		
Military service is useless and unnecessary	.41		
Intent to Stay. I have considered dropping out of service		.76	
I have considered applying to civilian service		.75	
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships		.35	
Normative. All men should carry out military service as a part of national defense			.70
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain			.66
Military service is every male citizen's duty			.51

Note. $n = 1,387$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. KMO = .95. Total variance explained = 47.6 %.

Methodologically and contents-wise, the main finding was that the conscripts' general affective attitudes were distinguishable from normative and continuance counterparts (Table 2). As another important issue, the training motivation and affective commitment items still formed a common factor despite of a closer look at the attitudinal items. Therefore, the items about motivation were not utilized with affective commitment items or as a predictor of commitment in the further analysis in the Results section in order to reduce the multicollinearity of the measures.

Time 2 Factor Analyses. The basic training questionnaire consisted of 99 questions, and 86 of them underwent the initial examination of means (M), standard deviations (SD), communalities, and factor loadings. Based on the item properties, communalities, and loadings, 72 items that were both theoretically and methodologically relevant for the study were accepted for the last phase of factor analysis. This factor solution comprised 14 factors and accounted for 50.4 percent of the variance, and again the first factor was about the attitudes and commitment of conscripts. Altogether, 11 items explained 26.7 percent of the overall variance, which indicates the importance of commitment during the basic training period. Notably, the items of *Intent to Stay* and *Normative Commitment* no longer loaded together but instead formed individual factors. This result suggests that the recruits were already able to distinguish between affective commitment, normative commitment, and intent to quit the military service (Appendix 1, Table A). However, the item about "the will to defend the nation" still loaded with the items about normative commitment indicating the normative aspect of defending the country as a typical attitude in Finland.

After conducting the broader factor analysis covering all the items, the final phase of the analysis involved examining the commitment-related items which partly loaded with the same factor as in previous analyzes but which were characterized in the literature as representing separate constructs, such as AC, NC, CC, the will to defend, and motivation. Table 3 shows how the 16 items generated only two strong factors representing general attitudes toward the military service (AC and motivation explaining 47.4 % of the variance) and sense of military obligation (NC, intent to stay, and "the will to defend the nation" corresponding 5.3 % of the variance). These results supported the findings at time 1 on how training motivation was not an appropriate measure to use in order to reduce the multicollinearity in the analysis. However, NC and Intent to Stay were in some factor analyses separable constructs, whereas in some other settings they loaded together. Therefore, a thorough examination determined the

instances where NC was used for explaining the conscripts' *Intent to Stay* in the analyses at time 2. Yet, NC was excluded from most of the stepwise regression analyses.

Table 3

Factor Analysis for the Commitment-Related Items at Time 2

Factors and their items	1	2
Affective Commitment and Motivation		
To me it is important to do well in the army	.82	
I have felt at home in military service	.78	
I am highly motivated to complete my military service	.76	
My personal contribution to military service is important	.73	
I am willing to participate in training that is intellectually demanding	.72	
I am not interested in military service	.70	
I want to participate in refresher training a couple of years	.68	
Getting military training is important and significant to me	.67	
I want to learn the things that are taught thoroughly	.65	
I have tried to do my best in training	.54	
Sense of Military Obligation		
NC: Military service is every male citizen's duty		.87
NC: All men should carry out military service as a part of national defense		.81
CC: I have considered applying to civilian service		.64
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily...		.63
CC: I have considered dropping out of service		.54
Military service is useless and unnecessary	.38	.40

Note. $n = 1,224$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. KMO = .95. Total variance explained = 52.7 %. NC = *Normative Commitment*; CC = *Continuance Commitment / Intent to Stay*. Time 2 refers to the end of the basic training period.

Time 3 Factor Analyses. At the end of service, two separate questionnaires were distributed that featured almost two hundred items for the rank and file soldiers. The second table in Appendix 1 features the 101 items that were included in the factor analysis after refining the items and measures. Table B presents only the commitment-related items and predictors that were used in the analysis. Thus, this table does not show the loadings of the outcome measures, such as perceived group performance, personal growth, or national defense attitudes, which are detailed as factors in Appendix 2 in order to simplify the factor structure and its results. However, the outcomes were similarly defined and tested in other factor analyses. Moreover, this analysis was chosen not to include those items that were inadequate in terms of their communalities and loadings in prior analyses.

In the final test, the factor structure was constructed by principal axis factoring with promax rotations allowing the correlation of the factors. Altogether, the 22 factors explained 52.6

percent of the variance. The main difference from the previous factor analyses at time 1 and 2 was that AC was not anymore the strongest factor among the measures. Instead, *Military Adjustment* formed the first factor (17.7 % of variance), while the second was *Emotional Stability* (5.4 % of variance). However, the third factor was composed by the items measuring commitment and achievement of motivation of the conscripts explaining 3.4 percent of variance. The loadings among 11 items were between .38 and .80. The other factors in the top ten were *Peer Bonding and Friends*, *Platoon Leader*, *Information and Feedback*, *Squad Leader*, *Physical Training*, *Training Quality*, and *Regimentation*. Thus, the first three factors dealt with the personal issues about the conscripts' adjustment, mental health, and attitudes, whereas the other measures sorted out more specific military experiences with other group members and leaders, in the physical and military training, and about the regimentation in the military. More details about these results are presented in the tables of Appendix 1.

Similarly to the time 2 factor analysis, the final phase at time 3 was to examine commitment-related items (Table 4). The 14 items accounted for 48.2 percent of variance and formed three separate factors: general attitude towards the military service (referring to affective commitment and motivation), attitudes towards national defense, and sense of military obligation (consisting of the items of *Intent to Stay* and *Normative Commitment*).

Table 4
Factor Analysis for the Commitment-Related Items at Time 3

Factors and their items	1	2	3
AC: To me it is important to do well in the army	.81		
Mot: I want to learn the things that are taught thoroughly	.72		
AC: Getting military training is important and significant to me	.70		
Mot: I am willing to participate in training that is intellectually demanding	.64		
AC: I am not interested in military service	.60		
Mot: I have tried to do my best in training	.58		
AC: Military service is useless and unnecessary	.42		
ND: If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily...		.84	
ND: If Finland is attacked, I am ready to participate in military national defense as part of national service duties		.75	
ND: Finland has to have functioning Defence Forces		.74	
CC: I have considered applying to civilian service			.92
CC: I have considered dropping out of service			.84
NC: Military service is every male citizen's duty	(.23)	(.26)	.40
NC: All men should carry out military service as a part of national defense	(.20)	(.24)	.34

Note. $n = 975$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. KMO = .89. Total variance explained = 48.2 %. AC = *Affective Commitment*; NC = *Normative Commitment*; CC = *Continuance Commitment*

/ *Intent to Stay*; Mot = *Training Motivation*; ND = *National Defense Attitudes*. Time 3 refers to the end of conscript service.

Time 3 was the only moment offering three items available for measuring “the will to defend the nation” and its general and personal aspects. Interestingly, these attitudes did form a distinct factor separate from affective and normative aspects of commitment to the military. These results further suggest the difference between general commitment to national defense and commitment to the military service. This is, commitment to the military service represents a less abstract concept and tangibly touches every conscript while in service, whereas “the will to defend the nation” refers to an abstract notion in its expansive scope (Table 4).

In a summary, the commitment items were clearly separated from other measures in every questionnaire. On the other hand, commitment items consistently formed two factors (general affective tone and military obligation). In order to avoid multicollinearity, the focus was kept in the analysis on *Affective Commitment* and *Intent to Stay*. Thus, the examination and prediction of *Training Motivation* and *Normative Commitment* were not conducted in this study. As suggested by Tremble and his colleagues⁵⁴², the logic of CC is so different from AC that they are consistently distinguishable in factor analysis as noticed also in this study. However, it was a notable to find out that NC formed a separate factor at time 1, although it loaded together with the variables of AC at time 2 and 3. The same kind of difficulties of separating affective and normative aspects of commitment has been noted in the prior literature⁵⁴³ reflecting a possible overlap in the measurement. In addition, the notion of “the will to defend the nation” was not thoroughly examined in this study for two interrelated reasons. First, this concept is even more all-encompassing than commitment to military service. And second, for measuring attitudes towards national defense, in questionnaires at times 1 and 2 there was only one item available, and the end of service sported three items. Therefore, the relations between training motivation, commitment to military service, and “the will to defend the nation” require more thorough examining in future research to contribute to developing questionnaires and measures that provide theoretically and methodologically transparent conceptualizations and practical implementation tools.

Overall, the decision to emphasize AC instead of other commitment components in this research is in harmony with the criticism that the organizational commitment model has received. In other words, it is suggested that the focus should be sustained on the attitudinal /

⁵⁴² Tremble et al. 2003, 186

⁵⁴³ E.g., Yoon & Lawler 2005, 16

affective aspects of commitment.⁵⁴⁴ In terms of theory, the examination of *Affective Commitment* and *Intent to Stay* refers also to the attitude–behavior model of Eagly and Chaiken.⁵⁴⁵ While AC implies *general attitudes* toward the organization, intent to quit describes *specific attitudes toward certain behavior*, which equals staying or leaving the military. The main premise about the relations between these two concepts is that AC influences the intent to quit or stay which in turn affects whether a person leaves the military.

Before further analysis, the factors underwent a series of reliability tests where the psychometric properties of the scales were examined. Appendix 2 details the primary measures and their variables with information about Cronbach's alpha (reliability), item-scale total correlations, scale means, and scale standard deviations. The main measures had decent Cronbach's alphas.⁵⁴⁶ In terms of values, $\alpha > .60$ represents an adequate value for the measure and $\alpha > .80$ is a high value. For example, AC sustained its quality as a measure over time (t1 $\alpha = .85$; t2 $\alpha = .90$; t3 $\alpha = .82$). On the other hand, *Intent to Stay* increased its reliability over time achieving a high value at time 3 (t1 $\alpha = .64$; t2 $\alpha = .74$; t3 $\alpha = .80$). The possible reason for a low reliability of *Intent to Stay* at time 1 was that the majority of the recruits did not intent to drop out from their service when they entered the service (time 1), and therefore, *Intent to Stay* had a very high mean value (4.6) and low standard deviation. On the other hand, the variables of *Intent to Stay* gained more meaning over time, and the scale became more salient as a measure. Therefore its reliability notably improved by time 3. Also, Meyer and Allen⁵⁴⁷ have discerned that CC is less stable over time because it is more easily affected by situational conditions such as perceived and existing benefits of organizational membership.

Finally, after several steps in a way for guaranteeing and testing the quality of measures, the primary tools for the analyses were created. As mentioned above, the measures did not stand alone in the research design since the soldiers' background details and the records during their service were also incorporated in the data by permission of the Finnish Defence Forces. Therefore, the data integrated a rare combination of information having such individual items as the conscripts' past criminal record, reprimands and punishments during their service, the number of doctor's appointments, the granted exemptions from duty, the results of cognitive and physical tests, the number of effective days in service, and the details about assessed personal performance, such as field proficiency scored by the instructors. These comprehensive data enabled utilizing background information, personal characteristics, and

⁵⁴⁴ Soligner et al. 2008, 79

⁵⁴⁵ Eagly & Chaiken 1993

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. Nunnally 1967, 226

⁵⁴⁷ Meyer & Allen 1991, 66

organizational experiences in predicting and explaining *Affective Commitment* and *Intent to Stay* in the Results section.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Relations Between Personal Characteristics and Commitment

Description of Commitment and Other Measures. Before service, the rank and file soldiers had moderate but positive expectations about conscription ($M = 3.3$) and they were relatively motivated to complete their service ($M = 3.5$). The soldiers' training motivation was good ($M = 3.8$) referring to that they were willing to learn new things and try their best in training as indicated by the items of the measure. In terms of commitment, the soldiers had a strong "will to defend the nation" ($M = 4.0$), which refers to the general attitude towards defending the country. NC measured the related aspect of the same kind of phenomenon. Specifically, military service was perceived as a citizen's duty for men ($M = 4.0$). Perhaps therefore, *Intent to Stay* was notably strong ($M = 4.4$) and only few considered to drop out from service.

Table 5
Values of Items Before Service

Scales and Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affective Commitment (S)	3.47	1.03
Normative Commitment (S)	4.02	1.23
Intent to Stay (S)	4.42	1.00
"The will to defend the nation" – If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily in all situations, even if the outcome were uncertain (i)	4.02	1.26
Training Motivation (S)	3.79	.95
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (i)	3.28	1.26
I will feel at home in military service (i)	3.25	1.10
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (i)	3.48	1.26
Military Adjustment (S)	3.79	.73
Emotional Stability (S)	4.14	.84
Physical Health (S)	3.45	.87
Sociability (S)	3.86	.73
Acceptance of Authority (S)	3.76	.90
Schooling (S)	3.62	.90

Table 5 (continued)

I was hazed at school (i)*	3.85	1.37
I was admitted to the brigade (unit) that I had wished for in advance (i)	3.59	1.41
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (the military) (i)	2.63	1.46
I do not feel a part of this society (i)*	4.28	1.15
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (i)*	3.67	1.32

Note. $n = 1,387$. (S) = A scale / measure. (i) = An individual item. * = Reverse coded.

However, the personal aspect of “the will to defend the nation” was not as positive. AC consisted of such items as “Getting military training is important and significant to me” and “To me it is important to do well in the army.” Thus, the measure assessed the personal readiness and willingness to service and its value to the recruit (e.g., “Military service is useless and unnecessary”). The mean value of AC was notably lower than the general question about defending the country ($M = 3.5$ vs. $M = 4.0$, respectively). Particularly, the soldiers were not interested in the military as a career ($M = 2.6$).

During the basic training period, initial positive expectations turned in seven weeks to lowered motivation and commitment. For example, AC decreased (from 3.5 to 3.1), training motivation weakened from 3.8 to 3.5, and the soldiers had more considerations to drop out from service since there were less Intent to Stay (from 4.4 to 4.2). Thus, *personal* aspects of “the will to defend the nation” decreased notably. However, the soldiers still perceived to the same extent that Finland should be defended. In other words, their *general* will was sustained due to or despite of experiences in the military. Actually, the comparison between commitment measures and social and organizational experiences raise a question. Why does motivation and commitment decrease although the soldiers adjusted well to the military, felt sociable, bonded with peers, and were more emotionally stable than before service? Thus, personal and social experiences did not explain the decrease of commitment.

In terms of regimentation, obeying orders was the primary problem during the first weeks of service (Table 6). Basically, the recruits had difficulties to be ordered and commanded or to understand the reasons of an explicit chain of command as promoting actions in the military. Perhaps nowadays the civilian life does not anymore prepare the person for authoritarian relationships, and therefore a disciplined military environment brings up also new personal problems. Generally, military training is not meaningful and important for young men, and consequently, they have no willingness to participate in the refresher training afterwards ($M = 2.3$).

Table 6
Values of Items During Basic Training

Background and Aptitude Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affective Commitment (S)	3.12	1.13
Intent to Stay (S)	4.20	1.15
Normative Commitment (S)	3.92	1.19
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves... (i)	4.04	1.20
Training Motivation (S)	3.53	.96
I have felt at home in military service (i)	2.76	1.32
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (i)	3.02	1.33
I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years (i)	2.32	1.38
Military Adjustment (S)	3.63	.85
Emotional Stability (S)	4.24	.79
Physical Health (S)	3.40	.94
Sociability (S)	4.04	.69
Regimentation (S)	2.66	.99
Peer Bonding (S)	3.83	.69
Experienced Hazing (S)	4.27	.83
Basic Training Superiors (S)	3.73	.71
Organizational Climate (training and atmosphere) (S)	3.81	.84
The training has been challenging and interesting (i)	3.03	1.26
Stressful Life Changes (S)	3.84	.92
Group Performance (S)	3.46	1.03
Malingering (S)	4.59	.84
Service Impact on Civilian Life (S)	3.60	1.26
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (i)	2.40	1.43
I was admitted to the brigade (unit) that I had wished for in advance (i)	3.60	1.49
I do not feel a part of this society (system) (i)	4.16	1.17
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (i)	3.66	1.42

Note. $n = 1,224$.

Actually, there were two notably low mean values (i.e. Regimentation and training challenges). For the military organization this is an alarming result because it indicates that training does not meet the recruits' expectations and build their commitment to their conscript service. This may also be the reason for the soldiers' intentions to quit.

At the end of service, the soldiers' motivation and commitment were at their lowest (Table 7). The following examples characterize the decline in attachment to the military service. Affective commitment ($t1: M = 3.5 \rightarrow t2: M = 3.1 \rightarrow t3: M = 3.0$) and "I am highly motivated to complete my military service" ($t1: M = 3.5 \rightarrow t2: M = 3.0 \rightarrow t3: M = 2.9$) followed the same kind of pattern over time. Similarly, there was a decline in intentions to stay until the end of service ($t1: M = 4.4 \rightarrow t2: M = 4.2 \rightarrow t3: M = 4.0$). In terms of general commitment to the national defense, the soldiers sustained their NC and perceived that all men should carry out military service as a part of total defense ($t1: M = 4.0 \rightarrow t2: M = 3.9 \rightarrow t3: M = 3.8$).

Interestingly, the general “will to defend the nation” even strengthened during the service. For example, the soldiers believed in that “the Finns must defend themselves” ($t1: M = 4.0 \rightarrow t2: M = 4.0 \rightarrow t3: M = 4.2$). Despite the general perception about the importance of the military system, the soldiers were not willing to make personal efforts to support it. Thus, the soldiers would not have joined the military if they had a chance to avoid it ($M = 2.6$), they had no intentions to participate refresher training in a couple of years ($M = 2.2$), and even less career intentions in the military ($M = 1.9$).

Table 7
Values of Items at the End of Service

Background and Aptitude Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affective Commitment (S)	3.01	1.04
Intent to Stay (S)	4.02	1.20
Normative Commitment (S)	3.79	1.18
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves... (i)	4.15	1.07
Training Motivation (S)	3.35	.91
I would have joined the military if serving had been on a voluntary basis (i)	2.56	1.41
I have felt at home in military service (i)	2.71	1.23
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (i)	2.90	1.24
Refresher Training Intentions (S)	2.23	1.32
Career Intentions (S)	1.94	1.04
Military Adjustment (S)	3.74	.88
Emotional Stability (S)	4.03	.88
Physical Health (S)	3.96	.93
Sociability (S)	4.18	.81
Regimentation (S)	2.84	.81
Peer Bonding (S)	3.56	.77
Friends (S)	3.55	1.08
Experienced Hazing (S)	3.75	.97
Confidence in Squad Leaders (S)	3.42	.95
Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S)	3.63	.91
Confidence in Instructors (S)	3.74	1.02
Unit Climate (S)	3.41	1.08
Positive Experiences (S)	3.46	.97
Training Information and Feedback (S)	3.42	.76
Training Quality (S)	3.29	.80
Allowed to Think in Training (S)	2.91	1.17
Quality of Physical Training (S)	2.70	.83
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (e.g., military) (i)	2.53	1.35
After basic training I received the training I wished for (i)	3.32	1.31
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (i)	3.16	1.29

Note. $n = 989$

In terms of personal characteristics, the soldiers’ emotional stability and sociability were as good as during the basic training period (Table 7). In addition, the soldiers improved their physical health during the service ($t2: M = 3.4$ vs. $t3: M = 4.0$). Social and organizational

experiences were not as positive, although the conscripts had relatively good relations with their peers and leaders. However, experienced hazing or bullying increased over time (after basic training) and the conscripts were annoyed by regimentation in the military (i.e., discipline during training, strict timetables, and restrictions of freedom in military life). Basically, social and organizational experiences fail to sustain the initial positive pre-service commitment and attitudes until the end of service. Particularly, training experiences were rated the lowest among situational factors of the military, and there is a lot of room for improvements in quality of training, training challenges, and physical training.

Associations of personal background and characteristics with the conscripts' commitment and intent to stay. The impact of the recruit's background and other characteristics on his or her commitment and attitudes toward the military service was examined through the series of analysis. Specifically, the variance analysis was made with Oneway ANOVA utilizing Tukey's post-hoc test at the .05 significance level that demonstrates the mean differences between groups. Alternatively, the t-test was employed in a case, when the item had only two categories (such as gender).

The examinations started from the demographic information. Basically, the variation on *age* had no effect on commitment, training motivation, and intent to stay in the military. Thus, the young men (18 – 20 years of age) were as motivated and attached to their service as their older, possibly more mature peers of 21 – 29 years of age. On the contrary, there were notable differences in AC between men and women. *Women* ($n = 22$) inducted the service with stronger attachment to the military than men ($\eta^2 = .00$; $p < .05$; $M = 4.0$ vs. 3.5). Similarly, women had significantly more positive AC than men during the basic training period ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .01$; $M = 4.0$ vs. 3.1) and at the end of service ($\eta^2 = .00$; $p < .05$; $M = 3.6$ vs. 3.1). The women's stronger commitment to the military service is explained by that the women were volunteered to their service, whereas the men served their mandatory obligation. Thus, the women created more positive expectations and attitude towards their service and maintained it better than men during their service.

The soldiers' *cognitive abilities* were checked through the Aptitude tests 1 and 2. Aptitude test 1 estimates the soldiers' intelligence and cognitive skills and produces a measure which has 9 categories (1–9) where the higher number indicates better ability. The results show that low levels of intelligence (1 and 2) differed significantly from others, and particularly from the levels of 7–9. Although, the recruits with the best cognitive skills (7–9) had also the strongest commitment to the military service than any other group of the recruits with lower

intelligence test scores, the difference was not significant among the private soldiers. Instead, the significant differences were notable in training motivation which varied based on the cognitive ability. In the whole sample, the lower intelligence related poorer commitment, perceptions, and performance ratings as well as to weaker AC and intent to quit in the military.

The results of Aptitude test 2 categorized the soldiers even more than the intelligence test. Aptitude test 2 assesses the general *personality characteristics* of the person, such as his or her emotional stability, sociability and leadership characteristics providing a measure with four values (0, 2, 4, and 6). The personality characteristics were linearly related to AC and training motivation, whereas personality had not visible impact on the soldiers' intentions to stay in the military. For example, 316 soldiers who had the test score 0 were significantly different from the 356 soldiers having the test result of 4 in terms of their initial AC ($\eta^2 = .03$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.3$ vs. 3.6) and training motivation ($\eta^2 = .06$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.6$ vs. 4.0) before service. Similarly, the groups were different during the basic training period in AC ($\eta^2 = .04$; $p < .001$; $M = 2.8$ vs. 3.3) and training motivation ($\eta^2 = .07$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.3$ vs. 3.8). However, the personality characteristics had less influence on commitment at the end of service ($\eta^2 = .02$), although training motivation was still affected by it ($\eta^2 = .07$). Interestingly, the personality characteristics and the intelligence test results related more to AC of the soldiers, whereas intent to stay or normative commitment were not as much shaped by the soldiers' personality. Overall, the results suggest that the personality test is a valid tool for assessing the soldiers' orientation towards the military.

The *success at school* has predicted general attitudes and later success in life. The recruits' *grade point average* at school ranged between 4 to 10, and the measure was recoded to 8 groups. Although the differences in AC were not significant among these 8 groups, the recruits who had grade point average 4–5.99 or 9–10 had the lowest expectations and initial commitment ($\eta^2 = .02$) and training motivation ($\eta^2 = .04$). Generally, the grades at school and schooling experiences support the recruits' military expectations and commitment before service.

Surprisingly, *educational level* did not predict the soldiers' AC, training motivation, or intent to stay, although the prior literature related it both to the success and perseverance of the person. *Learning problems at school* indicated whether the recruit repeated a year at school, had remedial teaching in special groups, or had problems to learn. Despite such problems in schooling, the recruits had similar commitment and intent to stay than others who had no

learning problems. However, earlier learning problems came out as slightly more negative training motivation ($\eta^2 = .02$). In the larger sample, learning problems were more evidently related to lowered motivation and commitment to the military.

In terms of *work history*, the recruits responded the number of jobs, whether they had been fired, and whether they worked, studied, or were unemployed before the military. The number of jobs before service did not significantly related to AC prior service. Few recruits (49 people) reported having been *fired* during the last year, and they had significantly lower NC to the military ($p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .00$). However, the effect size (i.e. η^2) was low and therefore suggested that being fired is not meaningful for expectations and commitment, although it may indicate some problems in organizational membership. *Unemployed* people ($n = 348$) reported significantly lower AC ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .01$; $M = 3.3$ vs. 3.5) and intent to stay ($\eta^2 = .02$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.2$ vs. 4.5) than soldiers who *studied* or *worked* before the service ($n = 1039$). These results suggest that unemployed recruits who were not members of any unit before service had also more difficulties to be motivated and accustomed to organizational membership. At the end service, unemployment just before service ($n = 256$) still related to poorer commitment ($\eta^2 = .01$) and motivation ($\eta^2 = .01$) at the end of service than others. Moreover, if the person had quarreled with a supervisor at work or at school ($n = 217$) he or she also had significantly lower AC ($\eta^2 = .03$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.1$ vs. 3.5), training motivation ($\eta^2 = .03$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.4$ vs. 3.9), and intentions to stay ($\eta^2 = .03$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.0$ vs. 4.5) than others ($n = 1,170$). As a conclusion, work history has a low but significant relation to commitment and motivation in the military.

The recruits' *economic situation* was assessed based on their responses about loans, financial situation (lack of money), and the guardian's occupational group. First of all, the guardian's occupation is not meaningful for understanding differences in the recruits commitment or intent to stay in the military. Thus, the recruits' economic background did not create differences in commitment. However, the recruits' current personal economic situation affected their attitudes. For example, the soldier who had loans more than 4000 euros ($n = 72$) had significantly lower AC than others ($\eta^2 = .02$; $p < .05$; $M = 2.8$ vs. 3.4–3.5). Moreover, the soldiers who had little money ($n = 711$) had significantly lower AC ($\eta^2 = .02$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.3$ vs. 3.6), training motivation ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.7$ vs. 3.9), and more intentions to quit ($\eta^2 = .02$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.3$ vs. 4.6) than the soldiers with some money ($n = 676$). However, the soldiers who shared living costs at home were not different from those who had no economic responsibilities relating to family life. Generally, these results indicate that

economic background has a small relation to differences in commitment and intent to stay in the military, where the primary impact is due to the person's current financial situation.

The family background was expected to affect the recruit's values and attitudes and consequently the soldier's commitment and motivation in the military. If the father or mother had died, there was no impact on service attitudes and commitment. However, coming from a broken family due to *parents' divorce* entailed less intentions to stay in the military at the end of service ($\eta^2 = .01$; $M = 3.8$ vs. 4.1 , $p < .01$). The soldiers also mentioned their *father's rank* in the questionnaire. Surprisingly, the soldiers whose father had not completed the military service ($n = 49$) and the soldiers who did not know their father's rank ($n = 476$) had the lowest mean values in AC to the military compared to those who knew their father's rank. These results indicate that if the person does not know the father's rank, he or she has not discussed the military service and experiences with his or her father before service, due to a broken family, bad relationships with the father, or ignorance from one or both sides. Basically, the father's support of the military service may be reflected in the conscript's motivation and commitment to service.

The significance of the family relationship came up in the results that assessed *quarrels* at home over the past year. Simply, the quarrels at home ($n = 583$) related to low AC ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.3$ vs. 3.6) and motivation ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .001$; $M = 3.7$ vs. 3.9) as well as to intentions to quit the service ($\eta^2 = .01$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.3$ vs. 4.5). Similarly, the *quarrels with a girlfriend or wife* before service reflected in the lowered initial commitment and motivation, and such quarrels during the service turned the person to consider quitting the service. Basically, family and spousal relationships directly affect the soldier's mood, motivation, and commitment to the military service especially when there are problems in social relationships.

The socialization literature accentuates that particularly the family and friends affect the values, commitments, motives, and behavior of a person. In order to test this assumption, the soldiers responded to whether their parents' or friends' had positive attitudes toward the military service. Tables 8 and 9 display that the parents have a notable influence on the person's NC ($\eta^2 = .19$), whereas the friends have their strongest effect on the affective side of commitment ($\eta^2 = .26$).

Table 8
Parents' Positive Attitude Towards Military Service

Measures	Disagree or difficult to say	Partly agree	Totally agree	η^2
Affective Commitment (t1)	2.53	3.18	3.71	.16
Normative Commitment (t1)	2.80	3.81	4.29	.19
Intent to Stay (t1)	3.47	4.31	4.63	.15
Training Motivation (t1)	2.87	3.58	4.01	.16
<i>N</i>	174	245	968	-
Affective Commitment (t2)	2.46	2.80	3.30	.07
Normative Commitment (t2)	3.17	3.64	4.11	.05
Intent to Stay (t2)	3.62	3.95	4.35	.07
Training Motivation (t2)	2.96	3.41	3.65	.05
<i>N</i>	135	223	866	-

Note. $n = 1,387$ at time 1 and 1,224 at time 2.

Table 9
Friends' Positive Attitude Towards Military Service

Measures	Disagree or totally disagree	Partly agree	Totally agree	η^2
Affective Commitment (t1)	2.41–2.88	3.52	4.01	.26
Normative Commitment (t1)	2.91–3.49	4.13	4.48	.19
Intent to Stay (t1)	3.53–4.06	4.57	4.73	.14
Training Motivation (t1)	2.88–3.37	3.86	4.20	.19
<i>N</i>	308	411	515	-
Affective Commitment (t2)	2.38–2.49	3.11	3.55	.16
Normative Commitment (t2)	3.28–3.36	3.93	4.28	.09
Intent to Stay (t2)	3.48–3.79	4.27	4.45	.07
Training Motivation (t2)	3.04–3.16	3.53	3.82	.08
<i>N</i>	255	369	472	-

Note. $n = 1,387$ at time 1 and 1,224 at time 2. In the questionnaires, there was an option of difficult to say. This group of answers was taken into account in the total n and for the eta squared value.

The conscripts' deviance and possible problems in civilian life were assessed based on excessive drinking habits, attitude towards drugs, and criminal record. For example, soldiers ($n = 101$) who drank two times a week or more often significantly differed from those who drank once a week ($n = 274$) in terms of AC ($p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .06$; $M = 2.8$ vs. 3.2), intent to stay ($p < .05$; $\eta^2 = .03$; $M = 3.9$ vs. 4.3), and training motivation ($p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .05$; $M = 3.2$ vs. 3.6). Basically, the same differences were evident during the basic training period and at the end of service. The severe deviance was indicated by having a *criminal record* in civilian life. The soldier who was charged with an offence ($n = 382$) had significantly lower ($p < .05$) commitment, motivation, and intentions to stay than other. However, there were no differences in commitment and motivation during basic training and at the end of training.

Thus, the military may provide a new start for those with a criminal background. At least, the criminal record has no impact on the person's motivation and effort during his or her service.

Contrary to the case with criminal records, the person's positive attitude towards drugs significantly shadows his or her service. *Attitude towards drugs* was divided to three categories: positive ($n = 224$), negative ($n = 373$), and extremely negative ($n = 790$), which had a direct relation to the soldier's attitudes. For example, attitudes toward drugs associated with intentions to quit in basic training, and on the other hand, the soldiers having a negative or extremely negative attitude towards drugs had also a significantly stronger training motivation and commitment to the military service (Table 10).

Table 10

Attitude Towards Drug Use Relates to Service Attitudes

Measures	Positive attitude	Negative attitude	Extremely negative attitude	η^2
Affective Commitment (t1)	2.96	3.36	3.66	.06
Normative Commitment (t1)	3.42	3.85	4.26	.08
Intent to Stay (t1)	3.98	4.36	4.58	.05
Training Motivation (t1)	3.37	3.76	3.93	.04
<i>N</i>	224	373	790	-

Note. $n = 1,387$. $p < .001$ (except for NC $p < .05$).

The soldiers also estimated their physical efficacy and health and reported the frequency of exercising before service. As expected, the recruits exercising more often had more positive attitudes toward the military. Specifically, the recruits who exercised once a month or more seldom ($n = 350$) had significantly lower initial AC ($\eta^2 = .04$; $p < .05$; $M = 3.2$ vs. 3.4–3.7) and less intentions to stay in the military during their basic training ($\eta^2 = .04$; $p < .05$; $M = 3.8$ vs. 4.2–4.5) than others. However, the 12-minute run test results had only a weak relation to the attitudes of the conscripts. The results suggest that the preparation of the soldiers in terms physical exercising linked him or her to the upcoming military service, and hence exercising indicated the person's motivation to serve adequately and commitment to stay in the unit until the completion of service.

The literature suggests that the amount and precision of prior information about service relate to the person's met expectations and in turn to his or her motivation and commitment. The results showed that *received information* influence attitudes and perceptions of the soldiers. For example, the recruits who at least partly agreed to having enough prior information ($n = 747$) were significantly different from those who disagreed ($n = 640$) in terms of AC ($\eta^2 = .08$;

$p < .001$; $M = 3.6\text{--}3.9$ vs. $2.8\text{--}3.3$), training motivation ($\eta^2 = .06$; $p < .05$; $M = 3.9\text{--}4.1$ vs. $3.3\text{--}3.6$), NC ($\eta^2 = .06$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.2\text{--}4.3$ vs. $3.4\text{--}3.8$), and intentions to stay or quit ($\eta^2 = .03$; $p < .001$; $M = 4.5\text{--}4.6.6$ vs. $4.0\text{--}4.3$). Therefore, receiving enough information has a notable input on soldiers' military commitment.

The soldiers expressed their *desire for duty and service period* in the military as (a) 180 days no matter what, (b) 180 days in a specific duty, (c) 270 or 362 days as a rank and file soldier, (d) 362 days as a squad leader, or (e) 362 days as a platoon leader. This item clearly summarizes the recruits' orientation towards military service. Particularly, the soldiers who desired the shortest possible period of service demonstrated a completely different commitment to the military service than the other soldiers. Table 11 shows, for example, that the desire for a certain service period before the entry determines 15 percent of basic training motivation (refer to values in the η^2 -column). These results also suggest influencing the inductees' perceptions about their service. For example, if the person is converted from the "180 days no matter what" attitude towards considering other service options, training motivation and commitment would be more positive during his or her service. However, the soldiers' expectations should not be too positive or unrealistic in order to avoid disappointment. On the other hand, realistic expectations⁵⁴⁸ and an improved person-environment fit would lead to increased satisfaction, AC, and intentions to stay in the military.⁵⁴⁹ The successful person-environment fit would be supported when both the soldiers and their leaders inform one another about their expectations and required obligations. In brief, both the literature and the results emphasize that the expectations have a powerful effect on commitment to the military service.

Table 11
Desired Service Period (Before Training)

Measures	180 days, no matter what	180 days	270 days	362 days	η^2
Affective Commitment (before service)	3.00	3.40	3.89	4.28–4.30	.19
Affective Commitment (during basic training)	2.61	2.99	3.59	3.94	.18
Training Motivation (before service)	3.36	3.73	4.20	4.38–4.52	.18
Training Motivation (during basic training)	3.14	3.43	3.93	3.96–4.22	.15
<i>N</i>	491	461	243	192	-

Note. $n = 1,387$. There were two categories for the "362 days" option which were to become a squad leader or platoon leader. Therefore, there are two mean values indicated in that column.

⁵⁴⁸ Barrios-Choplin et al. 1999, 15-16

⁵⁴⁹ Van de Ven & Van Gelooven 2006, 3-4, 8

The soldiers' period of service was determined by the unit commander at the end basic training period. At that moment, the second questionnaire gathered information about the soldiers' desires for duty and the period of service. Amazingly, 26 percent of basic training AC was explained by their desire for duty (Table 12). Similarly, training motivation, intentions to stay, and NC strongly related to the desire for service period. Moreover, the desires during basic training affected commitment and motivation at the end of service. For example, eight percent of AC was explained by the soldiers' desire for service four months earlier. Thus, the desire for duty had an impact on actual experiences and commitment in the basic training period and later in service. Simply, the more the person desired his or her duty, the more positive experiences and stronger commitment and motivation the conscript had.

Table 12

Desired Service Period (During Basic Training)

Measures	180 days	270 – 362 days	η^2
Affective Commitment (during BT)	2.61 – 2.82	3.61–4.33	26
Normative Commitment (during BT)	3.56–3.74	4.32–4.59	10
Training Motivation (during BT)	3.11–3.39	3.87–4.47	19
Intent to Stay (during BT)	3.82–4.04	4.62–4.80	11
Affective Commitment (at the end)	2.74–2.90	3.24–3.73	08
Normative Commitment (at the end)	3.56–3.71	3.95–4.29	04
Training Motivation (at the end)	3.16–3.31	3.45–3.90	04
Intent to Stay (at the end)	3.78–3.91	4.28–4.45	04
<i>N</i>	776	448	-

Note. $n = 1,224$.

“The will to defend the nation” before service had the strongest effect on NC ($\eta^2 = .25$) compared to its influence on AC ($\eta^2 = .11$), training motivation ($\eta^2 = .08$), and intent to stay ($\eta^2 = .10$) before service. Similarly, “the will to defend” at the end of service explained more NC ($\eta^2 = .16$) than, for example, AC ($\eta^2 = .11$). An exceptionally high η^2 value was identified based on the person's character (Table 13). Specifically, AC relates to the person's social identity, and moreover, if the person perceives that his or her character suits for the military, the soldier has notably strong commitment compared to the others.

Table 13
Character Suitable for the Military

Measures	Totally disagree	Partly disagree	Partly or totally agree	η^2
Affective Commitment (t3)	2.13	2.84	3.51–4.03	.32
Normative Commitment (t3)	3.08	3.71	4.26–4.34	.15
Training Motivation (t3)	2.76	3.24	3.73–4.19	.22
Intent to Stay (t3)	3.49	3.91	4.41–4.47	.09
<i>N</i>	252	222	366	-

Note. $n = 1,080$ (the group that answered “difficult to say” consisted of 240 conscripts). The character was acquired at the end of service.

The literature suggests that met expectations (the congruence between organizational experiences and prior expectations) support the person’s organizational commitment.⁵⁵⁰ Thus, organizational commitment is inspired and promoted by the extent the unit membership and training fulfill the expectations.⁵⁵¹ The results support this hypothesis about met expectations by showing, for instance, that the soldiers who received training that they wished for during the basic training period had also stronger commitment and motivation and more intentions to stay in the military than their fellows who were not trained as they expected.

Table 14
Received Training that Wished for

Measures	Totally disagree	Partly disagree	Partly or totally agree	η^2
Affective Commitment (t3)	2.45	2.78	3.20–3.34	.08
Normative Commitment (t3)	3.35	3.53	3.98–4.11	.05
Training Motivation (t3)	2.91	3.19	3.48–3.72	.09
Intent to Stay (t3)	3.72	3.92	4.16–4.32	.04
<i>N</i>	145	151	562	-

Note. $n = 1,079$ (the group that answered “difficult to say” consisted of 221 conscripts).

5.2 Predictors of Affective Commitment and Intent to Stay

5.2.1 Soldiers’ Affective Commitment and Intent to Stay Before Service

Correlations Between Measures Before Service. At time 1, the *Affective Commitment* factor had its highest correlations with training motivation ($r = .71^{***}$) and NC ($r = .69^{***}$). Both the relations are in accordance with the theory about commitment. In other words, the affective and normative components of commitment have partly had the same predictor items

⁵⁵⁰ Meyer & Allen 1987, 206, 212

⁵⁵¹ Tannenbaum et al. 1991, 759, 764-765; Tremble et al. 2003, 169

and shared variance. On the other hand, commitment affects motivation through goal regulation, and correspondingly, commitment is affected by the outcomes of motivated behavior. In addition, AC had a common variance with acceptance of authority, military adjustment, and intent to stay. Thus, the strongly committed recruits were more willing to follow the orders, expected to adjust to the military regime, and had no consideration to quit their service (Table 15).

Intent to Stay showed the highest correlations with AC and NC ($r = .51^{***}$ and $r = .55^{***}$, respectively) suggesting that intentions to stay in service strongly relate to person's commitment and correspond with CC in compulsory service (Table 15). However, the main difference between AC and intent to stay was that the latter was more explained by the emotional stability of the person, whereas AC represented more attitudinal aspects without such strong associations to the recruit's mental health.

Table 15
Correlations of Measures Before Service

Scales	Affective Commitment	Intent to Stay
Affective Commitment	1	.51
Normative Commitment	.69	.55
Training Motivation	.71	.41
Intent to Stay	.51	1
Military Adjustment	.53	.39
Emotional Stability	.28	.42
Physical Health	.33	.25
Sociability	.36	.36
Acceptance of Authority	.56	.44
Schooling	.32	.22
Stressful Life Changes	-.19	-.21

Note. $n = 1,387$. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed).

In terms of correlations of individual items, AC strongly associated with the soldier's motivation to complete service and his or her positive feelings and expectations about upcoming training (Table 16). Commitment was also affected by the friends' and parents' attitudes toward the military. Especially, the perception on whether the service period would have had a negative impact on civilian relationships, pushed commitment levels down. On the other hand, the commitment levels were supported if the person had received enough information, was interested in the military occupations, or was admitted to the desired brigade. Moreover, the soldier's wish for a particular duty or training was linked to his or her attachment to the military.

Surprisingly, the traditional question about the general “will to defend the nation” had only moderately correlated with affective commitment ($r = .32^{***}$). As another point, *Intent to Stay* correlated quite differently with the items compared to AC. It was not as much related to motivation, expectations, and attitudes of the soldier, but notably strongly influenced by the feeling of being outsider of the society ($r = -.51^{***}$). Thus, a soldier who experienced not belonging to the system had more considerations of leaving the organization that represented it.

Table 16
Correlations of Individual Items Before Service

Items	AC	Intent to Stay
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain	.32	.29
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.60	.35
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships	-.43	-.33
I am highly motivated to complete my military service	.71	.45
I will feel at home in military service	.70	.44
I do not feel a part of this society (system)	-.38	-.52
I was hazed at school	-.12	-.21
I am interested in occupation in the field of security	.40	.13
I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance	.31	.20
I received enough information about conscription	.27	.17
Desire for duty and service period	.43	.24
Friends have a positive attitude towards military service	.51	.37
Parents have a positive attitude towards military service	.40	.37

Note. $n = 1,387$. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed).

Predictors of Affective Commitment Before Service. The main predictors of AC and intentions to stay were determined through the multiple regression analysis with the forward method.⁵⁵² It was acknowledged that the stepwise regression analysis is a quite robust tool among other methods.⁵⁵³ However, the reason for employing the stepwise regression arose from the high number of suggested predictor items, and because many of them were related to commitment and service intentions as detailed by the theory and the above results. Thus, the stepwise regression analysis provided a raw but lucid explorative method for separating the essential predictors from items that did not increase the understanding of the conscripts’ commitment and identifying the main relations particularly in this Finnish conscript sample.

⁵⁵² Kerlinger & Pedhazur 1973, 286

⁵⁵³ Cohen et al. 2003, 161

The regression analysis was conducted in sequences. At first, the background predictors and aptitude tests were invited for predicting commitment and intent to stay. Because there were 503 recruits whose Aptitude test records were missing, the same analysis was conducted as the second step by using only background items in order to increase the number of included soldiers to 1,387. The third phase employed both individual variables and measures into the analysis, and finally, the last step of the analysis utilized only the measures (presented in Appendix 2).

Before service, background and aptitude variables explained initial AC to the military in the following way. Table 17 expresses the importance of the friends' attitude towards the military. Thus, people form their commitment based on the attitudes and perceptions of the closest ones. Moreover, AC was explained by the expectations of the person. For example, the desired period of service and expected impact of service were strongly related to commitment. In addition, the general "will to defend the nation" varies with the soldier's commitment to the conscript service. The larger, 16-item model showed that also prior information and parents' attitudes affect the recruit's affective approach towards the military. On the other hand, the items that imply deviance or some problems in civilian life related to the negative levels of commitment. Specifically, if the person had positive attitudes toward drugs, been arrested, learning problems at school, or hazed at school, he or she had more likely a lower level of commitment than others.

Table 17

Background Predictors of Affective Commitment Before Service

Background Items	β	p of β	R	Adj R^2
1) Friends has a positive attitude towards military service	.27	***	.49	.24
2) Desire for duty and service period	.21	***	.59	.35
3) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.24	***	.63	.40
4) Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships	-.18	***	.66	.43
5) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain	.16	***	.68	.47
6) I do not feel a part of this society	-.13	***	.69	.48

Note. $n = 1,108$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 16-item model, $R = .72$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .52$. In addition, the full model included the following items: I will have a school where to study (d), Received enough information about conscription, Thinks drug tests should not be allowed (d), Graduated education level, I was admitted to the brigade (unit) that I had wished for in advance, Had been arrested (d), Parents have a positive attitude towards military service, Attitude towards drugs, Had learning problems at school, and I was hazed at school. *** = $p < .001$.

At first, the individual items about motivation were also utilized as predictors of commitment. The items of "I am highly motivated to complete my military service" and "I will feel at home

in military service” were too closely related to the measure of affective commitment. Thus, they were more part of the measure than separate variables. Therefore, they were excluded from the analysis. As an anecdote, they would have explained 58 percent of the variance of AC. In other words, these two items summarize the general attitudinal tune of the soldiers. They may be of use in a study where there is no need for exhaustive measures of different kinds of commitment as representing the soldiers’ affective view to the military.

The final step of the analysis utilized the measures and almost all items which correlated with commitment in prior phases. The consequent model (Table 18) included items actually more than expected. The soldier’s and his or her friends’ expectations and attitudes toward the military explained almost half of the variance. The only scales that associated with commitment were *Acceptance of Authority*, *Intent to Stay*, and *Military Adjustment*. Thus, the recruit who committed to the military in advance was more willing to follow the orders, stick with the military until the end of service period, and expected to easily adjust to military discipline and life. However, the main conclusion is that the positive expectations and commitment go together. If the military is able to affect the soldiers’ expectations and make them more positive, it would pay back as increased affective commitment to the military service.

Table 18

Scales and Background Items as Predictors of Affective Commitment Before Service

Scales and Items	β	p of β	R	Adj R^2
1) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.30	***	.58	.34
2) Friends has a positive attitude towards military service	.20	***	.66	.43
3) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.20	***	.70	.49
4) Acceptance of Authority (S)	.18	***	.73	.54
5) Intent to Stay (S)	.18	***	.75	.56
6) Desire for duty and service period	.14	***	.76	.58

Note. $n = 1,108$. (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 15-item model, $R = .79$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .61$. The full model also included the items of GPA in comprehensive school, Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships, If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves..., Military Adjustment, I was admitted to the brigade (unit) that I had wished for in advance, I will have a school where to study (d), Was accused of a crime (d), Attitude towards drugs, Had learning problems at school. *** = $p < .001$.

Soldiers’ Intent to Stay Before Service. Pre-service considerations of quitting service or staying were influenced by parents’ attitudes and the conscripts’ relationships with them (Table 19). Interestingly, soldiers’ AC was influenced more by friends’ attitudes (Table 18), whereas obligation to serve was derived from the parents’ perceptions about the military. The second group of predictors denotes to a deviant orientation of the conscript, and it consisted of his or her perception of being an outsider of the society as well as the soldiers’ attitude

towards drug use and against drug tests (the items in the larger model). The third category of predictors is “the will to defend the nation” which apparently holds the people in service. The fourth group of predictors was the personal orientation towards service in terms of positive or negative expectations about the service and its impact on civilian life and the desired duty and service period. The last, fifth category derives from an additional model that tested the effect of the aptitude tests on the intentions to leave the military. The model revealed that the soldier’s intelligence and schooling experiences influence whether the recruit considers staying in service. Together these above mentioned predictors explained more than one third of the variance of quitting and staying thoughts ($R^2 = .39$). Interestingly, some items that were predictive of commitment were not included in the model of *Intent to Stay*, such as the extent of information, an admission to the brigade that was wished for, or the recruits’ education level.

Table 19

Background Predictors of Intent to Stay Before Service

Background Items	β	p of β	r	R	Adj R^2
1) I do not feel a part of this society	-.31	***	-.50	.50	.25
2) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service	.14	***	.38	.56	.31
3) I get along with parents	.15	***	.34	.58	.33
4) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...	.13	***	.31	.59	.35
5) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.10	***	.32	.61	.36
6) Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships	-.08	**	-.31	.61	.37
7) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service	.08	**	.35	.62	.38

Note. $n = 1,108$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 11-item model, $R = .63$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .39$. The full model also included the items of I was hazed at school, Thinks drug tests should not be allowed (d), Parents have divorced (d), Desire for duty and service period. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$.

Once the scales and attitudinal items were placed on par with background items, the resulting regression model called attention to personal and parents’ commitment and attitudes toward the military service (see Table 20). The first item in the model refers to the alienation of the person from the society. Thus, the person who felt that he or she was not part of the society also viewed that he or she not going to stay in the organization that represents an obligation to the society. Similarly, quitting was more likely in the minds of the conscripts who were *not interested in military service* because it is *useless and unnecessary* (items which were negative statements of AC). The importance of parents’ push and support was emphasized on the basis of the fourth item and, furthermore, both parents’ attitudes and also good relationships with them supported the conscript’s positive orientation towards his or her service (the 3rd item in the model). Moreover, “the will to defend the nation” strengthened the

will to stay in the military (the fifth item). The sixth predictor showed that an emotionally unstable person had more considerations of quitting. Altogether, these items and scales accounted for 41 percent of the explanation for *Intent to Stay*. Additionally, the full model contained items of being highly motivated to complete service, schooling adjustment, presumed negative impact of service, 12-minute run test results, attitude against drug tests in service, and living close to the brigade (less than 7 miles). However, these items were not as meaningful predictors compared to above emphasized variables.

Table 20
Scales and Background Predictors of Intent to Stay Before Service

Scales and Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) I do not feel a part of this society	-.26	***	.50	.25
2) Affective Commitment (S)	.17	***	.58	.34
3) Conscript did get along with parents	.13	***	.61	.37
4) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service	.14	***	.62	.38
5) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain	.10	***	.63	.39
6) Emotional Stability (S)	.09	**	.63	.40

Note. $n = 1,108$. (S) = A scale. For the 12-item model, $R = .65$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .41$. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$.

The factor analysis showed how the AC and NC scales were strongly related to one another at time 1. Due to such methodological consideration about multicollinearity of the measures, the scale of NC was not selected for the above mentioned analysis. However, it was noticed that NC was the best predictor of *Intent to Stay* (in an alternative model that utilized NC). In other words, if the person felt that *All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense* and *Military service is every male citizen's duty* (as items of NC), he or she had also high intentions to fulfill his own military obligation.

The scale mean of *Intent to Stay* was 4.42 with the standard deviation of 1.00. The closer look revealed that 912 and 65.8 percent of the recruits answered 5 to the both items of the 5-point Likert scale. For the military authorities this is a promising piece of information because the soldiers are at least initially committed to stay in the military until the end of their obligation. However, from a statistical point of view, the nature of the scale was problematic for the analyses. The skewness of *Intent to Stay* (-1.82, which is almost twice its standard error) indicates that the measure departed from the normal distribution of measures. Therefore, it was considered whether the examination would be more appropriate when it takes into account only those recruits whose answer differed from the most common responses (in this case 5 for the majority of the recruits). In other words, the minority (i.e., 475 recruits) whose

mean values were between 1.0 and 4.5 was taken into a closer examination and others were temporarily excluded from the next analysis.

In general, the decrease of the sample did not have a drastic impact on the results. The same items and scales came up as meaningful predictors of intentions to quit or stay that surfaced in previous analyses: I do not feel a part of this society, affective commitment, and I get along with parents. Actually, the importance of positive relationships at home was even more emphasized through the results of the narrowed sample. Specifically, the model included two items that were not in the aforementioned models: parents have divorced and quarrels at home. Thus, the positive attitudes of parents, good relationships with them, and the presence of the father support the soldier to go through the military without considerations to quit the service.

Multiple regression analysis (with the enter method) reveals the variance accounting for the main measures of *Intent to Stay* before service. Cases with missing values were excluded from the analysis. The three most predictive scales in the order of importance to the regression model were: (1) NC, (2) AC, and (3) *Emotional Stability*. Together, these measures account for 35 percent of variance of the soldiers' intentions to stay in the military.

Table 21

Multiple Regression of Predictors of Intent to Stay in the Military

Predictor Scales	β	p of β	r
Affective Commitment	.15	***	.51
Normative Commitment	.33	***	.55
Emotional Stability	.22	***	.42
Acceptance of Authority	.05	ns.	.44
Military Adjustment	.05	ns.	.39
Sociability	.04	ns.	.36
Physical Health	.00	ns.	.25

Note. $n = 750$. $R = .63$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .38$. Method = Enter. *** = $p < .001$. For all correlations in the last column, $p < .001$.

Taken as a whole, the recruits who perceived that the military is not worthy of serving (AC), did not share the idea of national, obligatory service (NC), who were anxious or depressed, and whose parents did not support their military service, had more likely contemplated between “to be or not to be” in the military while they entered the conscript service.

5.2.2 Affective Commitment and Intent to Stay During Basic Training

Correlations Between Measures. During basic training, AC was strongly related to NC ($r = .69^{***}$) and the experiences in the military. The particular organizational experiences are the atmosphere in the unit ($r = .66^{***}$), challenging and interesting training ($r = .67^{***}$), and regimentation in the military ($r = .60^{***}$). In addition, the soldier's AC related to his or her perceived ease to obey orders ($r = .61^{***}$) and to adjust to the military life in general ($r = .60^{***}$). *Intent to Stay* strongly correlated with AC and NC to the military ($r = .50-.53^{***}$). However, it was also affected by positive experiences in the military, such as lack of bullying among peers and the success of the personal adjustment to the basic training. The extent to which the person maintained his or her emotional stability during stressful socialization process associated with the considerations of quitting or staying in the military.

Table 22
Correlations of Scales During Basic Training

Scales	Affective Commitment	Intent to Stay
Affective Commitment	1	.51
Normative Commitment	.69	.53
Training Motivation	.72	.37
Intent to Stay	.50	1
Regimentation	.60	.42
Acceptance of Authority	.61	.43
Basic Training Supervisors	.45	.31
Organizational Climate (training and atmosphere)	.66	.40
The training has been challenging and interesting	.67	.37
Group Performance	.37	.23
Peer Cohesion	.43	.28
Experienced Hazing	-.21	-.30
Sociability	.38	.38
Military Adjustment	.60	.53
Emotional Stability	.32	.41
Physical Health	.35	.33
Stressful Life Changes	-.27	-.31

Note. $n = 1,224$. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed).

Affective commitment coexists with the conscript's interest in refresher training exercises after the conscript service ($r = .60^{***}$). Thus, the military administration could pay attention to sustaining and increasing commitment since commitment affects attitudes and behavior even after the period of service. As a surprise, the extent the person received information prior service did not have effect on commitment ($r = .15^{***}$) or intent to stay ($r = .12^{***}$) during basic training compared to the influence of the friends' and parents' attitudes ($r = .22-$

.36***). If the person experienced to be different from other conscripts, he or she had been less committed to the military and had considered quitting the service in comparison with others. An effective integration of the conscripts into the social group could be a solution for reducing such feelings and improving attachment to the military. Other correlations proved that the person's "will to defend," positive expectations, and motivation before service come up as strong commitment and intentions to stay once he or she is a soldier.

Table 23
Correlations of Items During Basic Training

Items	AC (t2)	Intent to Stay (t2)
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves...(t1)	.22	.17
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves...(t2)	.40	.32
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (t1)	.38	.23
Desire for duty and service period (t1)	.42	.25
I will feel at home in military service (t1)	.47	.31
I have felt at home in military service (t2)	.72	.44
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t1)	.47	.30
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t2)	.77	.48
My motivation has not decreased (d) (t2)	.29	.16
I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance (t1)	.20	.14
I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance (t2)	.28	.20
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t1)	.37	.21
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t2)	.43	.21
Received enough information about conscription (t1)	.15	.12
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (t1)	-.27	-.23
Service Impact on Civilian Life (t2)	.46	.37
I was hazed at school (t1)	ns.	-.17
I do not feel a part of this society (t1)	-.20	-.28
I do not feel a part of this society (t2)	-.46	-.45
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (t2)	-.28	-.37
Friends has a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.36	.26
Parents has a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.27	.22
I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years (t2)	.60	.29

Note. $n = 1,224$. (d) = A dummy variable. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed).

Predictors of Basic Training Commitment. The recruits indicated their commitment in a questionnaire that was filled out near the end of basic training. Table 24 summarizes the pretraining background and aptitude predictors that explain (38 % of the variance of) affective commitment later in service. Among pre-training individual variables, personal determination to complete service, desired duty and service period, and feeling at home in the military explained one third of the overall variance even before any considerations of situational factors, such as training and leadership.

Table 24

Background and Aptitude Predictors of Affective Commitment During Basic Training

Background and Aptitude Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) I am highly motivated to complete my military service	.23	***	.48	.23
2) Desire for duty and service period	.18	***	.54	.29
3) I will feel at home in military service	.18	***	.57	.33
4) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.14	***	.58	.34
5) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service	.14	***	.59	.35

Note. $n = 750$. (S) = A scale. For the 12-item model, $R = .63$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .38$. All predictor items were measured before service (i.e., 7 weeks earlier). *** = $p < .001$.

An alternate regression analysis was computed where all the relevant items were utilized for predicting the soldiers' responses. The resulting model showed that AC is understood by knowing the soldiers' training experiences, relationships with the supervisors, his or her interests in the military occupation or particular duty in the military, normative approach to serve the country, adjustment to rush, restrictions, and discipline, and "the will to defend the nation," which explain two thirds of basic training commitment.

Table 25

Scales and Items as Predictors of Affective Commitment During Basic Training

Background and Aptitude Items	β	r	R	Adj. R^2
1) The training has been challenging and interesting (t2)	.31	.67	.67	.45
2) Acceptance of Authority (S) (t2)	.14	.60	.74	.55
3) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t2)	.15	.43	.77	.59
4) Normative Commitment (S) (t1)	.10	.43	.79	.63
5) Desire for duty and service period (t2)	.14	.50	.81	.65
6) Regimentation (S) (t2)	.13	.60	.82	.66
7) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves... (t2)	.11	.39	.82	.67
8) I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t1)	.11	.48	.83	.68
9) Intent to Stay (S) (t2)	.09	.49	.83	.69

Note. $n = 1,098$. (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 12-item model, $R = .84$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .71$. In addition, the full model had the items of I had learning problems at school, Organizational Climate (S), I do not feel a part of this society, Desire for duty and service period (t1), GPA in comprehensive school, I was hazed at school (t1), Service Impact on Civilian Life (S), Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (t1), My mother is died (d) (t1), Reported quarrels with girlfriend (d) (t1).

Lastly, AC during basic training was studied based on the multiple regression analysis where basic training attitudes and experiences were utilized as predictors of commitment. The resulting model indicates that AC is strongly related to adjustment and training experiences in the military and the soldiers' NC. Surprisingly, "the will to defend the nation," leadership, or social experiences had no meaningful effect on commitment although they had relatively strong independent correlations with the commitment measure.

Table 26
Predictor Scales of Affective Commitment During Basic Training

Predictor Scales	β	p of β	r
Normative Commitment	.36	***	.69
Intent to Stay	.06	**	.50
Emotional Stability	-.05	*	.32
Physical Health	.06	**	.35
Sociability	.02	ns.	.38
<hr/>			
Military Adjustment	.12	***	.60
Regimentation	.14	***	.60
Peer Cohesion	.04	ns.	.43
Experienced Hazing	-.05	*	-.21
BT Leaders	.01	ns.	.45
Organizational Climate	.08	*	.66
Challenging and interesting training (i)	.26	***	.67
<hr/>			
Stressful Life Events	.02	ns.	-.27
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...(t2)	.02	ns.	.40

Note. $n = 1,219$. (i) = An individual item. $R = .83$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .68$. Method = Enter. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$. For all correlations in the last column $p < .001$.

In terms of situational factors, the model brings up military regimentation and challenging training as the two main concepts that support organizational commitment. Regimentation is a unique aspect in the military compared to civilian experiences, and it is more stringent during BT than at later phases of service. Therefore, adjustment to regimentation also supports the creation of affective relations with the organization. On the other hand, interesting training induces commitment among the recruits. Although basic training leaders have quite a low direct effect on commitment, they can indirectly strengthen the soldiers' attachment to and identification with the military through well-planned and high-quality training, and through the pace and content of military experiences referring to the climate and regimentation in the unit.

Predictors of Intent to Stay in the Basic Training. Considerations of quitting the service were more common at the end of basic training than before the service (t1: $M = 4.4$, $SD = 1.00$; t2: $M = 4.3$; $SD = 1.15$, $n = 1,224$). When the background items and aptitude measures were employed for the analysis, the resulting model explained such considerations with 1) motivation to complete service (t1), 2) attitudes toward drug use, 3) feelings to belong apart from the rest of society, and 4) parents' attitudes toward service ($n = 750$; $R^2 = .18$). The enhanced model showed that a man was uncertain about serving in the military if he (a) hoped to serve only for a 6-month period, (b) did not exercise often, (c) had low scores in diploma at

school, (d) quarreled with a girlfriend, (e) was unemployed before service, (f) was fired from a job, and (g) was not particularly intelligent ($R^2 = .22$).

Additionally, it was examined whether there were meaningful differences among predictors when aptitude measures were left out and when n was increased from 750 to 1,100. In addition, the first item from the previous model was omitted since it basically acquired the same content with the *Intent to Stay* measure. Virtually, the predictors were the same as above: orientation towards the duty and period in the military, feelings of being an outsider, others' attitude towards service in civilian settings, own drug attitudes, and received information accounted for the same amount of variance as the above described model.

Table 27

Background Predictors of Intent to Stay During Basic Training

Background Items	β	p of β	r	R	Adj. R^2
1) Desire for duty and service period (t2)	.23	***	.32	.32	.10
2) I do not feel a part of this society (t1)	-.14	***	-.28	.40	.16
3) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.11	***	.25	.42	.18
4) Positive attitude towards drugs (t1)	-.13	***	-.22	.44	.19
5) Received enough information about conscription (t2)	.12	***	.20	.46	.21
6) I was hazed at school (t1)	-.11	***	-.14	.47	.22
7) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t1)	.09	**	.22	.48	.22

Note. $n = 1,100$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 11-item model, $R = .50$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .24$. The whole model also included the items of Reported sleeping disorders (d), GPA in comprehensive school, Frequency of exercising, Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (all t1). *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$.

All the available pretraining predictors explained 28 percent of later intentions to stay in the military. In other words, almost one third of the intentions to serve in BT were predetermined already before service. These intentions were particularly salient at the end of basic training if the person had thoughts about dropping out before service ($\beta = .32$) and perceived military service useless and unnecessary ($\beta = .13$) (Table 28).

Table 28

Predictor Scales and Items of Intent to Stay in Basic Training

Scales and Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) Intent to Stay (t1)	.32	***	.43	.18
2) Affective Commitment (t1)	.13	***	.47	.22
3) Attitude towards drugs (t1)	-.11	***	.48	.23
4) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t1)	.10	***	.49	.24
5) Reported sleeping disorders* (t1)	-.09	***	.50	.25
6) Desire for duty and service period (t1)	.09	***	.51	.25

Note. $n = 1,100$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 14-item model, $R = .54$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .28$. The whole model also included the items of I get along with parents, Frequency of exercising, GPA in comprehensive school, Marital status, I was hazed at school, Had no job; not in school (d), Military Adjustment, and Acceptance of Authority. *** = $p < .001$.

The combined information of pretraining and BT attitudes and experiences showed that BT intentions to quit (among those who did not quit during BT) were formed by personal factors, such as ability to adjust to BT, earlier intentions to quit, AC, being or feeling different from others, and emotional stability in general. In other words, situational and organizational factors had only limited direct impact on *Intent to Stay*. Thus, the effect may be through the appraisal the person makes in the situation, and perhaps therefore training-related measures were not represented in the model. This is, either leaders did not focus on supporting the soldiers' commitment and intentions to stay in BT or their influence was mixed. However, neither leadership nor training provided by the leaders were not meaningful predictors of *Intent to Stay* at the end of BT.

Table 29

Scales and Background Predictors of Intent to Stay in Basic Training

Background and Aptitude Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) Military Adjustment (S) (t2)	.25	***	.51	.26
2) Intent to Stay (S) (t1)	.27	***	.61	.37
3) Affective Commitment (S) (t2)	.19	***	.64	.40
4) I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (t2)	-.12	***	.65	.42
5) I do not feel a part of this society (t2)	-.11	***	.65	.43

Note. $n = 1,097$. (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 18-item model, $R = .70$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .48$. In addition, the full model included the items of 6) Malingering (i.e., avoiding service), 7) I did get along with parents, 8) Emotional Stability (S), 9) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves..., 10) Acceptance of Authority (S), 11) Frequency of exercising, 12) I was hazed at school, 13) Attitude towards drugs, 14) Adjustment to Schooling (S), 15) Peer Bonding (S), 16) I am highly motivated to complete my military service, 17) Reported disease or injury (d), and 18) Stressful Life Changes (S). *** = $p < .001$.

As before service, the majority of the recruits had no intentions to quit their service at the end of the basic training period and they marked 5 to both the questions of *Intent to Stay* ($n = 672$; 48.4 percent). Therefore, intentions to quit were examined among those who did not intend to continue their service (recruits whose mean values of the *Intent to Stay* were 1.0 – 4.5; $n = 552$). Basically the same three main predictors of *Intent to Stay* rose up: commitment ($\beta = .28$), basic training adjustment ($\beta = .23$), and feelings of being different from the fellows ($\beta = .13$). However, considerations of quitting were more thoroughly explained in the whole sample than in the selected sample ($R^2 = .48$, $n = 1,097$ vs. $R^2 = .26$, $n = 486$). Another differing point in the models was that the latter consisted only six items comparing to the above table with 18 items. In the end, the Table 30 summarizes the results by showing that an adaptable,

committed, and emotionally stable soldier who has avoided bullying by the peers and stressful events in civilian settings (such as quarrels with a girlfriend) has no intention to quit during the basic training period.

Table 30
Predictor Scales of Intent to Stay in Basic Training

Predictor Scales	β	p of β	r
Affective Commitment	.11	***	.50
Normative Commitment	.29	***	.53
Emotional Stability	.11	***	.41
Physical Health	.04	ns.	.33
Sociability	.04	ns.	.38
Military Adjustment	.22	***	.53
Regimentation	.01	ns.	.42
Peer Cohesion	-.07	*	.28
Experienced Hazing	-.10	***	-.30
BT Leaders	-.04	ns.	.31
Organizational Climate	.01	ns.	.40
Challenging and interesting training (i)	.00	ns.	.37
Stressful Life Events	-.06	*	-.31

Note. $n = 1,219$. (i) = An individual item. $R = .65$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .42$. Method = Enter. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$. For all correlations in the last column, $p < .001$.

5.2.3 Affective Commitment and Intent to Stay at the End of Service

Scale Correlations at the End of Service. Compared to the correlations during basic training, AC had lower correlations with other measures at the end of service. On the other hand, this implies that commitment was a more independent phenomenon at that time. However, it was astonishing to find the low correlations between commitment and the situational factors such as leadership and training. For example, basic training challenges strongly associated with commitment ($r = .67^{***}$), whereas training quality had only moderate correlation to the soldiers' AC at the end of training ($r = .33^{***}$). However, commitment was still solidly related to training motivation ($r = .61^{***}$) and NC ($r = .59^{***}$). Moreover, the correlations of situational factors suggest that the soldier who adjusted to the military, accepted the authorities, and had positive experiences during service had an excellent commitment compared to others (Table 31). In turn, considerations to stay in service related to the perceived obligation (NC) ($r = .51^{***}$), positive adjustment experiences ($r = .44^{***}$), and lack of negative social experiences (such as bullying) ($r = -.31^{***}$). In all, the personal

factors, such as sociability, emotional stability, and physical health were more related to *Intent to Stay* than to AC.

Table 31
Correlations of Scales at the End of Service

Scales	Affective Commitment	Intent to Stay
Affective Commitment	1	.42
Normative Commitment	.59	.51
Training Motivation	.61	.30
Intent to Stay	.42	1
Regimentation	.40	.26
Acceptance of Authority	.44	.29
Confidence in Squad Leaders	.23	.15
Confidence in Platoon Leaders	.22	.18
Confidence in Instructors	.22	.10
Unit Climate	.37	.23
Positive Experiences	.43	.20
Training Information and Feedback	.26	.17
Training Quality	.33	.19
Allowed to Think in Training	.26	.13
Quality of Physical Training	.33	.12
Peer Cohesion	.37	.26
Friends	.27	.17
Experienced Hazing	-.19	-.31
Sociability	.27	.32
Military Adjustment	.44	.44
Emotional Stability	.20	.43
Physical Health	.25	.32
Stressful Life Changes	-.14	-.20
Service Impact on Civilian Life	.28	.31

Note. $n = 975$. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed).

The soldiers' positive expectations and motivation before service (t1) significantly relate to AC the end of service (t3) ($r = .31-.34^{***}$). Logically, the committed soldiers declared that they would have voluntarily joined the military and were motivated to complete their service ($r = .56-.66^{***}$). However, the latter correlations are between the measures that were acquired through the same questionnaire at the same point of time, and therefore they do not show any causality. In terms of *Intent to Stay*, the considerations to quit the conscript service related to low social and leadership skills (Aptitude test 2) and feeling different from the fellow soldiers and other in society.

Quite surprisingly, the general will to defend the nation (refers to the first item in Table 32) was only weakly related to AC and intent to stay in the military. In other words, general appreciation of national defense and own willingness to serve in the military are two different

concepts. Thus, the military officials need to take into account that although the citizens would like to have the nation be defended, they still may personally want to contribute less to the defense system.

Table 32
Correlations of Items at the End of Service

Items	AC (t3)	Intent to Stay (t3)
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves...(t2)	.19	.09**
If Finland is attacked, Finns must defend themselves...(t3)	.32	.23
I would have joined the military if service had been on a voluntary basis (t3)	.56	.25
I have felt at home in the military (t3)	.57	.26
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t3)	.66	.31
My motivation has not decreased (d) (t3)	.18	.11
My friends in military service have helped me significantly in adjusting to military life (t3)	.23	.19
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t3)	.38	.08**
After basic training I received the training I wished for (t3)	.27	.17
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (t3)	-.16	-.28
Aptitude test 1 (t1)	-.01 (ns.)	-.01 (ns.)
Aptitude test 2 (t1)	.13	.22
Had learning problems at school (t1)	ns.	-.12
Received enough information about conscription (t1)	.10	.06*
Desire for duty and service period (t1)	.26	.15
I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (t1)	.31	.19
I will feel at home in the military (t1)	.33	.21
Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (t1)	-.16	-.19
I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t1)	.34	.24
I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance (t1)	.15	.11
I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t1)	.26	.14
I do not feel a part of this society (t1)	-.19	-.25
I was hazed at school (t1)	.05 (ns.)	-.13
Friends has a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.26	.19
Parents has a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.21	.16

Note. $n = 975$. (d) = A dummy variable. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed), expect ** $p < .01$ and * $p < .05$. ns. = non-significant.

Predictors of Affective Commitment at the End of Service. Among individual items, the soldiers' pretraining expectations ($\beta = .13$), motivation to complete the service ($\beta = .13$), and interest in the military occupation ($\beta = .12$) explains affective commitment six to twelve months later. In addition, the model included such items as attitudes toward drug use ($\beta = -.13$), accused of a crime ($\beta = -.10$), desire for duty and service period ($\beta = .10$), the friends attitudes toward the military ($\beta = .10$). However, the model explained only 20 percent of the variance of commitment suggesting that attachment to the military increases based on the

experiences during the service. An alternative model was conducted where the aptitude test results were included as possible predictors. Still, only 21 percent of variance was correctly explained and the soldiers' aptitude did not determine their commitment (and were not part of the model). The most affective pretraining predictors are summarized in Table 33, which clearly illustrates the importance of initial attachment to the military as a predictor of later commitment. Thus, 23 percent of AC at the end of service is explained by knowing the soldier's AC before service.

Table 33

Pretraining Scales and Items as Predictors of Affective Commitment at the End of Service

Scales and Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) Affective Commitment (t1)	.43	***	.48	.23
2) Attitude towards drugs (t1)	-.11	***	.49	.24
3) Was accused of a crime (d) (t1)	-.08	**	.50	.24
4) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t1)	.08	*	.50	.25
5) Shared living costs at home (d) (t1)	-.06	*	.50	.25

Note. $n = 984$. (d) = A dummy variable. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$.

Again, an alternate regression analysis was computed which examined the extent to which commitment is explained by pretraining and basic training measures and items. Table 34 shows the strongest predictors of AC as initial commitment before service, challenging training experiences and positive motivation in basic training, and "the will to defend the nation." Altogether, these four items explain 37 percent of AC at the end of service.

Table 34

Pretraining and Basic Training Predictors of Affective Commitment at the End of Service

Scales and Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) Affective Commitment (t1)	.24	***	.48	.23
2) The training has been challenging and interesting (t2)	.19	***	.56	.31
3) I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t2)	.16	***	.58	.33
4) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...(t2)	.11	***	.59	.34
5) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t2)	.09	***	.59	.35
6) Attitude towards drug use (t1)	-.08	***	.60	.35

Note. $n = 979$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 10-item model, $R = .61$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .37$. The full model also included the items of 7) Military Adjustment (t1), 8) I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years (t2), 9) I have lived with girlfriend or wife (d) (t1), and 10) Malingering (t2). *** = $p < .001$.

In terms of situational predictors, AC is affected by positive experiences and atmosphere in the unit, personal adjustment to the regimentation and the military in general, and social experiences in a group which has a good esprit de corps. Interestingly, there were soldiers who had felt anxious and tense and the life as not worth of living (items of Emotional

Stability; $\beta = -.13$) but at the same time adjusted well to the military and had positive social and organizational experiences. Consequently, they were also attached to their conscript service. Still astonishing is the weak impact of the squad leaders, instructors, and training on the soldiers' commitment to the military service.

Table 35
Predictor Scales (t3) of Affective Commitment at the End of Service

Predictor Scales	β	p of β	r
Normative Commitment	.34	***	.59
Intent to Stay	.12	***	.42
Emotional Stability	-.13	***	.19
Physical Health	-.00	ns.	.24
Sociability	-.03	ns.	.27
Military Adjustment	.12	***	.43
Regimentation	.18	***	.39
Peer Cohesion	.11	***	.37
Friends	.03	ns.	.27
Experienced Hazing	.01	ns.	-.18
Confidence in Squad Leaders	-.03	ns.	.23
Confidence in Platoon Leaders	.00	ns.	.22
Confidence in Instructors	-.01	ns.	.22
Unit Climate	.07	**	.38
Positive Experiences	.12	***	.43
Training Information and Feedback	-.03	ns.	.26
Training Quality	.00	ns.	.33
Allowed to Think in Training	.04	ns.	.26
Quality of Physical Training	.08	**	.33
Stressful Life Events	-.01	ns.	-.14
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain (i)	.07	*	.32

Note. $n = 974$. (i) = An individual item. $R = .71$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .50$. Method = Enter. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$.

Predictors of Intent to Stay During the Last Months of Service. The examination of background items for predicting considerations of quitting service showed that such intentions were related to the lack of motivation to complete service and deviant attitudes in civilian. Specifically, the soldier more likely contemplated to quit the service if he or she was not motivated, accepted or favored drug abuse, lacked social skills, had parents with negative attitudes toward service, or the parents were divorced, and expected negative consequences in civilian settings due to service (Table 36). However, it was notable that although they had quite unfavorable a background and considerations of dropping out the military, they still fulfilled their service obligation.

Table 36
Pretraining Items Predicting Intent to Stay at the End of Service

Background and Aptitude Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) I am highly motivated to complete my military service (t1)	.15	***	.26	.07
2) Positive attitude towards drug use (t1)	-.14	***	.31	.10
3) Aptitude test 2 (leadership and social skills) (t1)	.11	**	.34	.11
4) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.10	*	.36	.12
5) Parents have divorced (d) (t1)	-.09	*	.37	.13
6) Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships (t1)	-.09	*	.38	.13

Note. $n = 654$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 9-item model, $R = .40$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .15$. The full model also included the items of 7) GPA in comprehensive school, 8) 12-minute run test results, and 9) I do not feel a part of this society. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$.

An alternative model examined also pretraining scales besides the above mentioned items. The resulting model displayed that low commitment, the prior intentions to quit, and disbelief in personal military adjustment explained among the individual items the later considerations of dropping out (Table 37). Still, the acceptance of drug use and coming from a broken family also affected the intentions to quit the service period.

Table 37
Pretraining Scales and Items Predicting Intent to Stay During the Last Months of Service

Background and Aptitude Items	β	p of β	R	Adj. R^2
1) Affective Commitment (S) (t1)	.13	***	.28	.08
2) Intent to Stay (S) (t1)	.18	***	.32	.10
3) Positive attitude towards drug use (t1)	-.10	***	.34	.11
4) Parents have divorced (d) (t1)	-.08	**	.35	.12
5) Military Adjustment (S) (t1)	.09	**	.36	.13

Note. $n = 984$. (d) = A dummy variable. For the 9-item model, $R = .38$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .14$. The full model also included the items of 6) gender, 7) I had little money (d), 8) Acceptance of Authority, and 9) Had learning problems at school. *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$.

The pretraining *Intent to Stay* ($\beta = .10$, $r = .30$ ***) and BT *Intent to Stay* ($\beta = .46$, $r = .50$ ***) predicted 26 percent of the end of service *Intent to Stay* ($n = 1,074$). Table 38 further suggests that *Intent to Stay* is more a state of mind than affected by certain positive or negative situational military experiences. Particularly, if the person believed that *All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense* and *Military service is every male citizen's duty* (i.e. items of NC) then he or she had few doubts about continuance of service. However, if the soldier had qualms about his or her mental health, felt military service useless and unnecessary, had adjustment problems during service, perceived problems in civilian during last months of training, and felt different from the fellow soldiers, he or she more likely considered quitting the military (as an avoidant of the unpleasant situation). On the other

hand, all factors that were directly or indirectly related to leadership and authority relationships (regimentation, instructors, unit climate, and training quality) did not explain staying or quitting intentions. The only concrete situational factor that had a positive input in such considerations was the confidence in the platoon (conscript) leader.

Table 38
Predictor Scales (t3) of Intent to Stay at the End of Service

Predictor Scales	β	p of β	r
Affective Commitment	.15	***	.42
Normative Commitment	.31	***	.51
Emotional Stability	.23	***	.44
Physical Health	.02	ns.	.32
Sociability	-.04	ns.	.32
Military Adjustment	.15	***	.45
Regimentation	-.01	ns.	.26
Peer Cohesion	-.01	ns.	.27
Friends	-.05	ns.	.17
Experienced Hazing	-.04	ns.	-.31
Confidence in Squad Leaders	-.01	ns.	.15
Confidence in Platoon Leaders	.06	*	.18
Confidence in Instructors	-.05	ns.	.10
Unit Climate	-.03	ns.	.23
Positive Experiences	-.00	ns.	.20
Training Information and Feedback	-.01	ns.	.17
Training Quality	-.00	ns.	.19
Allowed to Think in Training	.02	ns.	.13
Quality of Physical Training	-.04	ns.	.12
Stressful Life Events	-.06	*	-.20
Personal civilian things decreased my motivation	.01	ns.	-.05
(d) (i)			
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts (i)	-.13	***	-.27

Note. $n = 973$. (d) = A dummy variable. (i) = An individual item. $R = .65$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .41$. Method = Enter. *** = $p < .001$; * = $p < .05$.

Additional analyses were carried out that focused on the predictors that explained changes in commitment over time. The results indicated that positive commitment changes are due to adjustment to the pace and compliance in the military (regimentation; $\beta = .28$), perceiving service as an obligation (i.e., NC; $\beta = .24$), improved unit atmosphere ($\beta = .07$), firm intentions to complete the military service ($\beta = .10$), positive experiences in a cohesive group ($\beta = .09$), lack of civilian disturbances ($\beta = .08$), high-quality training ($\beta = .08$), and improved sociability of the person during the service ($\beta = .06$). These main contributors explained 30 percent of the changes in AC. Basically, the positive social and organizational situation and experiences in the unit combined with personal determination to serve enhanced AC to the military.

Similarly, changes in *Intent to Stay* were examined. Compared to the scale values between time 2 and 3, it was noticed that the conscripts had less consideration to quit if their *Emotional Stability* was better ($\beta = .29$), AC and NC were stronger ($\beta = .12$ and $\beta = .17$, respectively), *Physical Health* was improved ($\beta = .07$), and the person did not feel him- or herself as much different from others than during basic training ($\beta = .06$). Moreover, peer cohesion and effective training related to the changes in considerations to stay or quit ($R^2 = .22$).

5.3 Effects of Commitment on Soldiers' Attitudes and Performance

Characteristics that Distinguish Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers. For examining differences between committed and uncommitted soldiers, the *Affective Commitment* scale was divided to two parts. For example, the soldiers' responses of 1.0 to 3.0 (33.7%) and 4.2 to 5.0 (31.3%) formed the groups at time 1. Thus, the diverse ends (or thirds) of AC were compared in further analysis. The discriminant analysis finds the predictor variables that maximally distinguish between the states of the dependent variable (committed vs. uncommitted soldiers). The primary result of the procedure is a discriminant function⁵⁵⁴ which, among other things, provides the relative weight of each utilized variable in making the maximal distinction between the selected groups. It was acknowledged that the different aspects of commitment may have also own predictors, and the discriminant analysis was presumed to identify such items that predict either negative or positive ends of the measure or both. Moreover, the discriminant function simply demonstrates the strongest predictors of commitment. Thus, the discriminant models were presented for illustrative purposes of complementing the results of regression analysis and to widen the understanding of the phenomenon.

Appendix 3 details the differences between the committed and uncommitted soldiers. In addition, the tables present the characteristics that distinguish soldiers who considered separation from service from those who intended to stay in the military. All the three points of time are presented in the several tables in the appendix. Basically, the appendix was constructed for the possible purposes of future research. In other words, the upcoming studies dealing with "the will to defend the nation" and commitment to the military may utilize them as a reference point for comparing their findings.

⁵⁵⁴ Kerlinger & Pedhazur 1973, 337

In terms of commitment, Tables A, B, and C make a comparison between uncommitted and committed soldiers over time. In conclusion, the committed soldier had significantly better training experiences, a sense of military obligation (NC), positive experiences in the military in terms of unit climate, adjustment, and regimentation, and notably more intentions to participate in refresher training exercises (Tables B and C). However, commitment is not meaningfully related to age, gender, marital status, graduated education level, GPA at school, learning problems at school, working or studying before or after service, parents' possible divorce or death, living situation in civilian, criminal record, 12-minute run test results, or frequency of drinking. In other words, commitment is facilitated by positive social and organizational experiences in the military, and the soldiers' background problems do not prevent them from being committed to the military.

On the other hand, the differences in *Intent to Stay* were explained by knowing the soldier's commitment, emotional stability, perceptions about regimentation in the military, and whether the person felt alienated from the society, whereas training experiences only distantly related to the consideration to quit (Tables D – H in Appendix 3). The conclusion is that *Intent to Quit* is a psychological state of mind that stems from the person's commitment and emotional stability and affected by the parents' and friends' attitudes prior to and during the service period.

Table 39

Effects of Basic Training Intent to Stay on Attitudes and Performance at the End of Service

Measures at the End of Service	Standardized Coefficients	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Normative Commitment (S)	.43	.63
2) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S)	.41	.53
3) Interested in occupation in the field of security (i)	.36	.34
4) Emotional Stability (S)	.31	.49
5) Performance Ratings (S)	.26	.45
6) Personal Performance (S)	.25	.51

Note. *n* = 232. Variables are ordered by stepwise inclusion in the model. (S) = scale. (d) = A dummy variable. Wilk's Lambda = .70; Eigenvalue = .43; Canonical Correlation = .55.

Based on the results in Table 39, the person who considered quitting already during basic training had significantly lower normative commitment at the end of service (a sense of obligation). Additionally, he or she perceived that the service disturbed and negatively affected the civilian life, was not interested in the military as an occupation, had a weaker mental health, lower ratings by the instructors ("sotilaspassin arvosanat" in Finnish), and perceived lower personal performance abilities at the end of service. As Tables K – M

present, considerations to quit were strongly related to the person's emotional stability, performance, adjustment, physical health, period of service, and his or her perceptions about service as a "duty for all men" (NC).

The soldiers having strong commitment to the service before their entry had six months later significantly more positive adjustment experiences in the military, more career intentions, more favorable attitudes toward national defense and the military occupation, and positive perceptions about unit climate (Table 40). On the other hand, the soldiers who were committed during basic training had significantly better personal performance at the end of service (Table 41) besides their more positive adjustment experiences, normative commitment, and refresher training intentions.

Table 40

Effects of Initial Commitment Before Service on Attitudes and Performance at the End of Service

Measures at the End of Service	Standardized Coefficients	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Military Adjustment (S)	.63	.74
2) Career Intentions (S)	.31	.46
3) National Defense Attitudes (S)	.31	.60
4) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.27	.42
5) Unit Climate (S)	.27	.34

Note. $n = 150$. The comparison between uncommitted and committed soldiers before service in terms of their attitudes and performance at the end of service. Variables are ordered by stepwise inclusion in the model. (S) = scale. (d) = A dummy variable. Wilk's Lambda = .65; Eigenvalue = .55; Canonical Correlation = .59.

Table 41

Effects of Basic Training Commitment on Attitudes and Performance at the End of Service

Measures at the End of Service	Standardized Coefficients	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Perceived Personal Performance (S)	.48	.65
2) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.38	.41
3) Military Adjustment (S)	.35	.49
4) Period of a conscript service	.27	.46
5) Normative Commitment (S)	.25	.46
6) Refresher Training Intentions	.25	.51

Note. $n = 170$. The comparison between uncommitted and committed soldiers (during basic training) in terms of their attitudes and performance at the end of service. Variables are ordered by stepwise inclusion in the model. (S) = scale. (d) = A dummy variable. Wilk's Lambda = .51; Eigenvalue = .96; Canonical Correlation = .70.

Tables I and J portray the variables that were most influenced by the discrimination between committed and uncommitted soldiers in two points of time. The results suggest a significant relation between earlier commitment and the soldiers' attitudes, physical health, and

performance at the end of service. Based on the correlations (Table 42), commitment has its strongest relation with personal growth and development indicating that commitment is influenced if the conscript's mental stamina, self-control, and social skills are improved, and the person has learnt to take responsibility and organize time and actions in the military service. Briefly, military service as an educational experience is elemental in invoking the soldiers' commitment to the military service.

Table 42
Correlations with the Outcome Measures

Primary Outcome Measures	Affective Commitment	Intent to Stay
Group Performance	.29***	.20***
Personal Performance	.38***	.27***
Performance Ratings	.19***	.22***
Career Intentions	.34***	.05 (ns.)
National Defense Attitudes	.45***	.32***
Refresher Training Intentions	.41***	.14***
Personal Growth and Development	.56***	.31***
Malingering (i.e., Seeking Exemptions)	-.27***	-.30***
Number of Doctors Appointments	-.08**	-.15***
Effective Service Days (percent)	.09**	.10***
Decent Service	.12***	.21***

Note. $n = 975$. Each correlation was significant at the $p < .001$ level (2-tailed), except ** $p < .01$. ns. = non-significant.

All the outcome measures were examined separately and explained by using regression analysis. In all, the results of this study corroborate that basic training commitment explains later commitment, adjustment, turnover, personal performance, malingering, and deviance in service. For example, the results show that 38 percent of the later AC at the end of service is explained by AC during BT. Moreover, *Affective Commitment* is one of the best predictors of the success in the military adjustment process and also explains the actual turnover, although *Intent to Stay* is notably the strongest predictor of turnover.⁵⁵⁵

Based on the regression analysis, AC during the basic training period was the strongest predictor (among other measures of basic training questionnaire) of personal and group performance at the end of service (explaining 14 % and 8 %, respectively). On the other hand, AC and NC during BT explained together 23 percent of the soldiers' attitudes toward national defense at the end of service. Interestingly, BT commitment significantly affected later malingering. Thus, uncommitted soldiers more likely responded that they "applied for exemption from field exercise" even though they were not ill, because they "could not care

⁵⁵⁵ Salo 2008a, 170-172, 184-185

less about participating in military service.” In another study, it was revealed that the other soldiers named more likely a soldier as being a competent leader if he or she had better AC and NC.⁵⁵⁶ Basically, soldiers who are more committed and perform better are also valued by their peers as competent squad leaders in war-type situations (perhaps due to their demonstrated citizenship behavior). Based on these results, commitment is one of the key elements in an effective group. The next chapter portrays the possible research questions and practical recommendations that could be utilized in future research and personnel policy programs in order to strengthen the psychological state of the military forces.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Main Results

The present research argues that personal and organizational factors influence commitment that, in turn, determines behavior and attitudes, such as intentions to quit the service. Organizational commitment is “a complex construct involving acceptance of organizational values, willingness to put forth effort for the organization, and desire for continued membership.”⁵⁵⁷ Thus, the examined concepts (commitment and intent to stay) are theoretically and empirically related aspects of organizational membership. Specifically, this study focused on these two concepts and their main predictors and outcomes during conscript service.⁵⁵⁸

The personal background and characteristics were examined based on the correlations and through the t-test, variance analysis, and regression analysis. The results emphasize that the following individual items are particularly relevant for understanding affective commitment: the soldiers’ *motivation to complete* service, their positive feelings and *expectations* about upcoming training, and the *friends’ and parents’ attitudes* toward the military. In addition, the soldiers’ perception as to whether the service period would have a negative impact on civilian relationships relate to their commitment. Moreover, the results suggest that commitment is

⁵⁵⁶ Salo 2008b, 17-18

⁵⁵⁷ Tremble et al. 2003, 168

⁵⁵⁸ The three research questions presented in the Method section were: 1) What predicts commitment to the military, 2) What predicts intent to stay in the military?, and 3) What are the main outcomes of commitment to the military?

supported by providing the soldiers enough service-related information and taking into account their desires for duty and service period.

The regression models point out that the soldiers' affective commitment is influenced by positive expectations, sense of obligation, ability to adjust to the military, to regimentation and authority relationships, work and training in positive unit climate, and support of the significant others in the civilian life. Basically, the military organization should put its main emphasis on supporting the soldiers' adjustment to disciplined military regime and providing interesting and challenging training and quality leadership. At end of service, the commitment levels were determined based on positive experiences and adjustment to the military in general. Commitment showed its value through the association with many attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Specifically, affective commitment significantly related to the soldiers' expected and rated performance, attitudes towards national defense, refresher training intentions, career intentions, low levels of avoidance of service, and more decent service without reprimands. Above all, the soldiers became committed to the military due to their personal growth and development during service.

Based on the results, *Intent to Stay* indicates personal commitment to continued service and denotes the person's better adjustment expectations and experiences in service. In addition, *Intent to Stay* and conversely considered separation is a relevant measure for identifying and understanding soldiers who have had personal problems that hinder successful attachment to the military. Hence, *Intent to Stay* predominantly associated with personal factors and characteristics. For example, soldiers who deviated from the majority of the population due to their own and the friends' and parents' disapproving attitudes and orientation toward the military, their relation with drugs, learning problems at school, doubts about the military service, or broken family background also considered quitting the service.

Intent to Stay was notably high before entry and during basic training. However, the considerations to quit increased over time. The results pointed out that both preliminary *Intent to Stay* and the same perceptions during basic training were mainly explained by the level of affective and normative commitment, emotional stability, adjustment to the military, and the quality of attitudes and relationship with parents. In addition, deviant behavior and attitudes, low aspiration in service, and low intelligence explained why some recruits had considerations to quit the service even beforehand. On the other hand, basic training experiences, such as bullying among the group members and stressful events in the civilian life were the most influential situational factors that predicted considerations of quitting

(during BT). The basic training leaders had a surprisingly weak influence on such considerations, and they were not particularly skillful in improving the soldiers' intentions to stay in the military.

In the end, uncommitted and unstable soldiers had more considerations to quit. On the other hand, positive adjustment experiences and strong affect entailed strong intentions to continue the service. The only two situational factors that positively affected such considerations were lack of hazing among peers and confidence in platoon conscript leaders. Additionally, any problems in civilian settings (as measured by *Stressful Life Events*) negatively affected the soldiers' commitment to continue service. In terms of outcome measures, the importance of *Intent to Stay* was notable in explaining maladjustment and separation from service. It is difficult to overemphasize that *Intent to Stay* is the best predictor of turnover.

6.2 Methodological Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Necessarily, carrying out a research project involves accounting for methodological concerns and limitations. First of all, the study assessed personal commitment and intent to stay based on self-reported data by soldiers which may affect and inflate the true correlations between the items. Future research could minimize the common method variance by utilizing multisource data, for example, by acquiring the instructors' and peers' estimations about the person's commitment to the military. In addition, the sample predominantly consisted of young men, and therefore the results do not necessarily represent the attitudes of women or the citizens in general. Moreover, the focus of the study was on the attitudes of the rank and file soldiers. Therefore, the study should be replicated among the conscript leaders and career officers in order to understand the reasons and consequences of their commitment to the national defense.

Although the data were collected at three points in time, still the focus of the measures was at the end of service when the official military questionnaire and the supplementing survey were administered. Because the circumstances between basic training and training at the end of service are not comparable, it is more difficult to make statements about the causalities of the commitment components and criteria. Basically, the time frame between surveys should be long enough for allowing for a development of commitment and motivation but short enough for controlling the experiences that affect these factors.⁵⁵⁹ The study would have accrued even

⁵⁵⁹ Mathieu 1991, 617

more knowledge about commitment if there had been a survey two months before the end of training. Then, the changes in attitudes and commitments and the reasons for those changes would have been more easily identified.

Commitment can have a reciprocal causal relation to another concept and therefore it can be both a predictor and a consequence of perceived experiences.⁵⁶⁰ This is the reason, why future studies should establish the hierarchy and causal relations between measures and the real effects of the different factors on one another. Basically, the situational factors, such as perceptions about training quality and challenges, should be explored at least at two points in time in order to avoid response bias. As a recommendation, future research should employ a longitudinal approach to the data. In addition, a research project could follow the conscripts and their performance in life, and in the reserve. It would be interesting to compare commitment and attitudes of the same sample during the conscript service and later in the civilian life, for example, few years after the service, and explore whether commitment changes, whether the importance of national defense is viewed differently during and after service, and whether the military service has effects on an individual's civilian life.

Mathieu⁵⁶¹ argues that commitment and job satisfaction may represent two measures of a broad affective approach to the organization. The factor analysis of this study suggests the same conclusion: commitment and motivation formed a large tune-factor that summarized the soldiers' emotional mood towards the military. Particularly among the rank and file soldiers, it was challenging to separate affective commitment from training motivation because the items were so closely connected. One solution is to measure motivation and commitment through separate surveys. Then, the commitment survey could inquire about general attitudes, expectations, and feedback about larger issues (such as "the will to defend the nation"), whereas the motivation questionnaire would focus on social and organizational experiences and ask about the quality of training, leadership, and social relationships in the group. In the end, the data of these two questionnaires could be combined with the archival data and other surveys in order to obtain well-identified measures and comprehensive approach in the same research.

In this study, the Meyer and Allen's definition and conceptualization of commitment formed a framework for the examinations.⁵⁶² However, the theory and research of commitment have

⁵⁶⁰ Ko et al. 1997, 971; Meyer & Allen 1987, 211

⁵⁶¹ Mathieu 1991, 616

⁵⁶² Meyer & Allen 1984; 1991; 1997

stated several other definitions (as detailed in Chapter 2) and concepts that deserve to be examined. For example, commitment could be defined and studied as a one-dimensional phenomenon such as “loyalty to the organization”⁵⁶³ emphasizing a person’s affective attachment to the unit. Alternatively, more thoroughly defined⁵⁶⁴ conceptualizations could be utilized for identifying different facets of commitments.

This study covered quite extensively the conscripts’ affective commitment to the military. However, the logic and the measures of normative and continuance commitment and their relations to training motivation require more research and examining. Particularly, the difficulty to distinguish affective and normative commitment components and the items of training motivation indicate a need for testing their construct validity. For example, the rank and file soldiers may perceive the conscript service period totally differently from the conscripts who complete leadership training. Perhaps, the leaders’ different viewpoint is explained by leadership experiences that provide them with more knowledge and in depth understanding about the details and different aspects of the military service. Nevertheless, future research should reveal the measures that gauge the conscripts’ different viewpoints in terms of their commitment and motivation in service. Thus, future research could complement this study by validating and developing the measures of commitment and motivation.

Once a comprehensive measurement tool is established, the theoretical discussion would benefit from an investigation of how different organizational interventions affect initial commitment and expectations prior to service and actual commitment and motivation in service. Optimally, one theoretical model (integrating related but distinguishable concepts) would apply to many situations and samples, such as measuring commitment of conscripts, reservists, career officers, and civilians.

Also individual items need further examinations and improvements. For example, the traditional question about “the will to defend the nation”⁵⁶⁵ measures the general attitude towards the national defense but at the same time lacks precision.⁵⁶⁶ Actually, this question is so extensive and refers to nationally accepted values, for instance, patriotism that it could be

⁵⁶³ Ko et al. 1997, 971

⁵⁶⁴ Solinger et al. (2008, 80) states that “organizational commitment is an attitude of an employee vis-a`-vis the organization, reflected in a combination of affect (emotional attachment, identification), cognition (identification and internalization of its goals, norms, and values), and action readiness (a generalized behavioral pledge to serve and enhance the organization’s interests),” whereas Herscovitch & Meyer (2002, 475) defines commitment as “a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets.”

⁵⁶⁵ MTS 2008, 8

⁵⁶⁶ E.g., Sinkko 2009, 37-40

perceived as measuring Finnish national identity.⁵⁶⁷ Thus, it has a low ability to measure personal aspects of commitment to the military service and the national defense. Therefore, several disadvantages are involved in using only one general attitudinal question for measuring “the will to defend the nation.” For example, Sinkko⁵⁶⁸ ponders whether there is a normative pressure to answer positively to this question because of its aforementioned links to the national identity. Thus, the person may answer “automatically” that Finland should be defended although he or she has no personal will to defend it. The question externalizes the responsibility to defend the country as somebody else’s responsibility, and the link between the question and “the will to defend the country” may be less salient than in the 1950’s when the question was originally formulated.

The traditional question about “the will to defend the nation” may be appropriate itself in a general attitudinal polling (as it is used now) when there is no intent to find out why people are committed, what kind of social, organizational, and national details are related to commitment, and what the citizens are willing to do based on their commitment. However, an isolated question about the national defense is not adequate for research purposes – it requires related sub-questions that together contribute to outlining the measure for the “general will to defend.” The research could utilize three to five questions about the “personal will to defend” the nation that both theoretically and methodologically depart from the motivation scale and other instruments in the survey. Only by respecting the complexity of the commitment and motivational constructs as well as their multiple consequences in attitudes, behavior, and performance, future research will produce seminal theoretical and methodological contributions.

Commitment relates to the socialization process where the person is integrated in the society. The person may have several commitments at the same time to the different levels and entities of the organization and to the civilian life as well. The future research could devote more efforts into studying commitment to the different foci and their impact on a person’s other commitments and his or her attitudes and behavior. For example, it is expected that commitment to social group has totally different implications compared to commitment to personal career. Similarly, commitment to peers may have a different effect compared to commitment to the leadership in the unit. Generally, the research could benefit the military organization by studying the techniques for strengthening service members’ commitment and creating well-balanced commitment profiles for the people. The results show that more

⁵⁶⁷ Nurmela 2005, 101

⁵⁶⁸ Sinkko 2002, 40

commitments bring about more positive attitudes toward the respective entities and more positive behavior and performance in those groupings. Therefore, the military should create its personnel's commitment to the several entities, such as the group, the leaders, the unit, and the national defense system.

The scientific instruments could measure the normative "ought to" aspect of commitment (for instance, how the Finns should think and act), attitudes towards civil service, conscript service, the Finnish Defence Forces, and national defense in general, the difference between "the will to defend the nation" and commitment in peace time, in an EU operation, or during a crisis in Finland), and c) the different kinds of actions that the person is willing to do based on his or her commitment to the military service and the national defense.⁵⁶⁹ Moreover, it would be interesting to measure the continuous line of commitments based on the perceived importance of 1) an independent country or national sovereignty (since independence or sovereignty is not anymore a value for everyone due to increased immigration, globalization, and Finland's membership in the European Union), 2) own Defense Forces, 3) credible (territorial) defense system, 4) general conscription and refresher training, 5) personal participation in conscription, and 6) personal participation in wartime duty during a crisis.

The future research could also focus on certain groups of people that are vital for the effective military forces. For example, the comparisons between students, inductees, conscripts, reservists, career officers, men or women, unemployed, and/or college students would be valuable. In addition, an examination of different kinds of profiles over time could exemplify the commitment concepts and their effects. Then, the first questionnaires and analyses could identify the clusters or profiles, and the further questionnaires would examine whether the same people stayed in their cluster or changed their commitment over time. Once changes are distinguished, the analysis would examine their reasons and consequences.

Research projects should be continuously carried out in refresher training exercises. The interesting questions applying to the reservists are: a) What are the reasons for the refusals or deferments of training, b) how do the people differ from one another based on their expectations for refresher training, attitudes toward the military, and "the will to defend the nation," c) does training increase their willingness to participate in another exercise, and d) is their trust in the military and national defense improved because of the exercise? The same research project could examine training motivation and the possible reciprocal relations

⁵⁶⁹ Leimu et al. 2008, 14

between motivation and performance. The military organization should particularly know the details that increase the propensity to refresher training, such as the meaningfulness of the exercises, the importance of one's own task, "the will to defend the nation," the service friends that are met again in an exercise, or a possible promotion in the reserve.

On the other hand, commitment and job satisfaction of young officers compared to more experienced instructors would be interesting. Based on the organizational commitment theory, there could be differences in their affective, normative, and continuance commitment to serve the country through their work. These two groups may have different status, tenure, work experiences, alternatives, and career options that may affect their commitment levels. The same research project could take into account the effects of management in the unit and personnel policy of the military either increasing or decreasing the commitment of the employees. Consequently, the results of such investigations could help the organization to plan and conduct supportive programs for sustaining the employees' faith in their job and commitment to the larger purpose.

The level and meaning of organizational commitment may vary over time as a result of the person's developing relationship to the unit membership.⁵⁷⁰ For example, the results of the factor analysis showed that the commitment components were not easily distinguishable prior to the entry of conscripts. This may be because the situation was not salient enough for the recruits and/or they lacked the necessary knowledge and experiences about affective and normative aspects of the military.⁵⁷¹ Therefore, future research could examine expectations, desires, needs, initial affective commitment, and achievement motivation prior to service, and the measures about normative and continuance commitment could be employed once people have participated in service training (for instance, at the end of the basic training period). Also, future examinations could look at whether the items have a different conceptual meaning during different periods of time. For example, the mindset behind the attitudes towards military training may considerably vary before service, during the basic training period, and at the end of service. Similarly, the meaning of military service may be interpreted differently over time.

The military exposes the soldiers to a strong formal and informal socialization process that indoctrinates and assimilates the group members into the military life. Due to shared experiences and shared social identity, the military unit may have more impact on personal

⁵⁷⁰ Solinger et al 2008, 74

⁵⁷¹ E.g., Vanderberg & Self 1993, 566

characteristics, attitudes, and behavior than other types of organizations. Therefore, future research could increase knowledge about commitment by examining group- and organization-level phenomena and their impact on personal and group-level commitment to the military. Thus, it is strongly advised to utilize aggregated measures at the group and unit-level and to examine their impact on personal commitment and performance. Especially, social life, such as shared experiences, bullying, leadership, tasks, norms, workload, retention, social loafing, or shared stressors potentially affect the soldiers' attitude and motivation in the military. Moreover, a certain level of commitment and motivation may be understood only by knowing the settings where the particular behavior and attitudes are relevant.⁵⁷² For example, the soldier who is bullied and lives without any social or leader support may have low commitment to the group and the organization and little interests in staying in the military. Moreover, the organizational experiences and practices, such as atmosphere in the unit, management, promotions, personal policy, organizational change, changes of the key leaders, and mission accomplishments may influence personal-level measures, including commitment and motivation. Therefore, it is highly recommended to utilize a statistical analysis that is capable of identifying multilevel conceptualizations (for instance, the hierarchical linear modeling).

In summary, the core idea of the military sociological research is to identify motives, connections, and dependences behind the general attitudinal items. Therefore, the future research could explore how an individual attachment to a unit and the nation is build up and affected by personal, social, organizational, and societal circumstances and experiences. As proposed by Eskola,⁵⁷³ a qualitative and quantitative approach that takes into account the many facets of predictors, components, and consequences of commitment and “the will to defend the nation” would benefit further research and practical improvements in organizations.

6.3 Foundations of Commitment in Cadets' Responses

This research started with a description about the characteristics of the committed conscripts and it ends with a discussion whether the conscripts could be supported in their commitment. In order to get insight to this question, qualitative data were collected from 89 cadets who answered the following question: How is commitment strengthened among the conscripts? The basic idea was to gather information from a young, intellectual group of cadet officers

⁵⁷² Solinger et al. 2008, 74

⁵⁷³ Eskola 2004, 24

who have experienced their own conscript service few years ago, noticed the benefits and drawbacks of the different commitment levels, and understood the conscripts' situation and the measures that may be effective to improve commitment among the rank and file soldiers. The responses are classified into three categories: individual/conscript-related, group-related, and organizational recommendations.

Individual/Conscript-Related Recommendations. The results and the cadets' responses show that the support of the family and friends to conscript service affects the conscripts' commitment. Few decades ago, citizens had a relatively strong (continuance) commitment and intent to stay in the military service till the end of the obligation. Nowadays, such an attitude is not anymore a self-evident fact. On the contrary, the military service is taken as a delay in the work or civilian life without any payoffs in return. Therefore, the cadets suggest that the Finnish Defence Forces should try to affect the general attitude towards conscript service through a comprehensive *imago campaign* targeted to adolescents and their parents.

The imago campaign could start already at school where children and teenagers could be taught the importance of the military system as part of the defense system and foreign policy. When developing the cadets' idea about the campaign, more detailed knowledge could be offered in call-ups where the draftee is informed about the upcoming service and the brigade where he or she is ordered to serve. At the same time, the email addresses of the conscripts could be collected in order to send an information package prior to the entry to service. Moreover, the conscript should have an email connection to the brigade in order to allow him or her to ask questions beforehand. Correspondingly, there should be conscript leaders who are responsible for answering such questions in the brigade.

While in service, a person expects that his or her personal background and experiences are taken into account in a *meaningful and rewarding service* position. If that is the case, then the military and the person can get more from the membership and the system can make use of the conscript's personal capabilities. Also, the feeling of belonging to something special and important makes conscript service meaningful. Therefore, every person should be explained why he or she is an important part of the national defense. Additionally, the cadets mentioned the utility of traditions for linking daily service to the achievements of older generations in the same kind of tasks and branch. The traditions and distinct history of (special) units provide opportunities to draw concrete examples from history that exemplifies the great value of the effort of an individual person in the military.

The cadets recommend *rewarding* the conscripts who express commitment in the long run. The unit commander and instructors could hand over organizational-level encouragement and incentives that clearly and coherently notify the expressions of strong commitment, group-oriented behavior, and effective team-performance. The rewards can be versatile and not always vacations. For example, a concrete memory from service, such as a knife, a flashlight, or a cartridge case could be obtained through respectable service.

A group where the members are committed to fulfill its tasks is highly valuable for the military. Therefore, the incentives should be also granted to the teams or groups based on their positive atmosphere, lack of attitudinal and behavioral problems, or good performance. In addition, commitment is strengthened by *sharing responsibilities* inside a group. Then, the group pressure takes care of directing behavior in the group. In other words, when everyone knows the tasks, roles, and norms in the group, the conscripts start to exert pressure on other group members in order to achieve the set goals.

Every person wants to be appreciated by the other group members and the organization and to have an *influence on daily activities*. If the person does not receive encouragement and his or her suggestions for developing training are ignored, the faith in the purpose of the military service will be diminished. Listening to the conscripts' *wishes and desires* but not promising too much is a way of conduct that was suggested by the cadets. The quota for promotions should be more flexible in order to promote those who really deserve it, to offer leadership training for all capable candidates, and correspondingly, to reserve the rights to not promote people if their attitudes and know-how do not meet the standards.

Commitment is supported by improving the conscripts' physical fitness during service. Physical training is one of the best in kind where an individual and his or her personal goals could be taken into account. The utilization of streams in physical training allows the conscripts to exert effort at their own level. At the same time, the conscripts can have their own, attainable goals that would motivate the conscripts to try harder in service. Moreover, the utility of military service as a beneficial life period becomes more evident through personal goals, training programs, tests, and encouragement over time.

The cadets also suggested that the conscripts who are intelligent and highly educated in civilian settings could serve as trainers of others. In that way, the most capable conscripts would not suffer boredom but challenges in service. In addition, their status could improve

among the other group members. The basic idea is to utilize the most potential ones and support the slower learners at the same time.

A supportive home provides security when the person is in the military. Especially, the spousal relationship and economic situation may cause problems during service unless they are not taken care of. The organization can be flexible when the person is confronted with unusual circumstances in civilian life. Professional help is available at the brigade level and a vacation can be granted if necessary. Taking the conscripts' problems seriously and demonstrating care and competence in assistance prove that people are supported in the service.

The integration of the family with conscript service could be possible through visits in the unit. For example, the end of service could be a graduation event where the soldier's significant others witness the moment when a young man or woman has fulfilled his or her part of obligation to the society. At the same time, the relatives could meet and greet the unit commander and the instructors and correspondingly observe how their beloved is praised by the officials.

Team- and Group-Related Factors. The effect of another conscript on a soldier's commitment is powerful. *Supportive and encouraging atmosphere* where every person is looked after by a mate makes service a worthwhile effort and indirectly supports the conscripts' commitment. Therefore, the cadets suggest creating a *strong team spirit* in a cohesive group where "the will to defend the nation" is one positive element among other details, such as esprit de corps and productive teamwork. Moreover, a soldier should never be excluded from the group life. Therefore, the cadets recommend keeping the groups as intact as possible during the basic training and advanced training periods for utilizing the good team spirit that is created through shared experiences. In addition, back-up and encouragement of the closest leaders is priceless for improving motivation and commitment of the soldiers. In teams, acceptance of all people on equal terms and support for those who have problems in learning or adjustment create an encouraging atmosphere where all conscripts feel comfortable and have a valuable role among others.

However, in hard times when people do not perform as they should, punitive actions are not the best ways of dealing with the situation. Instead, constructive measures that directly try to find a solution to a problem maintain commitment more efficiently. Thus, disciplinary actions only destroy the atmosphere and weaken commitment if they are taken against the whole

group. However, a conscript whose commitment level is lowered and who performs insufficiently or behaves improperly requires guidance from the upper-level leaders (such as correctional action by the unit commander or the instructors) not by the conscript leader. Simply, praise the group and correct an individual.

The responsibility of the instructors is to prevent bullying and harassment in the group. Tolerance of different kinds of people and the support of the instructors and the small group leaders for those who do not fit into the system reduce tension in the group. Moreover, the instructors could back up the conscripts who make their best for the good atmosphere in the group and defend the weaker ones.

A group leader (who is typically a conscript having the rank of lance corporal or sergeant) should take part to the official and unofficial life of the subordinates. An upright, generous, yet demanding conscript leader supports the emotional characteristics of the soldiers, such as feelings, attitudes, and commitment, as well as instrumental characteristics, for instance, task motivation and effective performance. The cadets emphasize that the conscript leader should be one of the other team members but at the same time set exemplary attitudinal and behavioral standards. Thus, avoiding a “conscript mentality” while living and serving with the troops is the key issue that every conscript leader needs to solve.

The cadets also mention that the conscript leader may not be ready to carry out his or her responsibilities as a competent leader. This is due to that the conscript leaders may be at their first time as leaders and therefore some of them are not mentally prepared for carrying out the new role. As a result, few squad leaders act like the “garrison lions” that shout their orders, focus only on controlling of the subordinates, emphasize management instead of leadership, and forget that they should work for the benefit of the new recruits.

Group norms direct behavior and aspirations of the group members. Therefore, it is necessary to have formal and informal goals as similar as possible. Clear goals where people are required to work together toward the common direction put the group members actively and independently perform for the benefit of the group. Due to common goals and working as a team, the person understands that a personal failure is always the group’s failure. Optimally, everyone participates in training, and somebody’s absence is a responsibility of the whole group to integrate the absentee and teach him or her the topics. Such group mentality provides a powerful motivating norm for behavior and sets standards for personal performance. With consistent norms in nested organizations, the soldier performs based on his or her role in the

group for satisfying the expectations of the group members and at the same time supports the achievement of the organizational goals. Challenging education and training that require the effort of the whole group for fulfilling the task is a perfect method for integrating the service members into the military.

Organizational Factors in the Unit. The unit commander and the instructors represent father figures or big brothers who should focus on the benefit and development of their subordinates in order to sustain the conscripts' commitment. Basically, fair, strict, honest, and praiseworthy instructors will have strong commitment among their troops. Therefore, exemplary behavior and positive attitudes and commitment of the instructors are required for having positive impact on the subordinates' attitudes and performance. The cadets suggest that the instructors should dedicate themselves to their work as (charismatic) leaders and educators and put their heart and soul into training. Thus, the instructors should be interested in and enthusiastic about training and leadership which is indicated, for example, by setting an example in field exercises. The devotion to the conscripts' development is also shown by providing systematic face to face feedback to all subordinates (including the rank and file soldiers).

The instructors need to have a strong belief that their work is valuable. The recruits sense whether their leaders believe in the system and are committed to do their best. Therefore, the exemplary behavior of the leader is a prerequisite for his or her effect on the subordinates. The instructors who lack of commitment should be transferred to the tasks where they do not have conscripts as subordinates. Moreover, the cadets discuss the instructors who are consistently incompetent from the conscripts' viewpoint in leadership and training skills, and who should be relocated to another place in the system. Thus, the instructors should stake themselves and not just "yell from the Defender's window." Even more, the leaders should dismount to the conscripts' level in order to understand their motives and valuable things in service. Thus, easy-going leadership behavior would more easily meet the expectations of the conscripts, and open communication and transparent leadership are tools for showing that the military represents the same values as the rest of the society – fair and equal terms for dealing with people.

Although it is generally known that when the soldier has a purpose for what he or she is doing, this person also perseveres more easily in daily activities, but yet instructors do not explain issues clearly enough to soldiers. Therefore, it is essential that the instructor starts every exercise by explaining how the upcoming hours link to the end state in terms of group goals and personal development. The instructors are the key representatives of the

organization, and it is their responsibility to spell out the reasoning behind daily tasks and justification for the training procedures and goals.

The meaningfulness of service is obtained through challenging training which provides memorable shared experiences to the soldiers. The cadets ask for providing realistic training to the conscripts. For example, the field exercises carry great weight on sustaining motivation and providing unforgettable experiences. On the other hand, planning unit exercises where troops fight constantly against one another with laser equipment makes training purposeful and well-organized. Thus, when conscripts are trained, the plan and execution of training should be professional and resourceful in order to fully utilize the conscripts' time and nourish their motivation and commitment.

The cadets also note that proper gears and pieces of equipment indicate that the conscript and provided training is valuable from the organization's point of view. In other words, lack of materiel is not bad as such but the way in which represents a decreasing value of conscript training in the Finnish Defence Forces lowers the conscripts' commitment to serve in the military.

The precondition for the positive effect of service is a versatile training program that offers everyone challenges. The cadets propose to establish clear training standards which every person is expected to meet in the end. Meeting the standards represents success in training which is marked, for example, by wearing berets or having other insignia in a uniform. Moreover, the instructors and the unit commander should clarify the logic of the methods and be prepared to adjust the training curriculum in order to improve education. Particularly, the cadets emphasize the importance of upwardly directed training programs during all phases of the conscript service (not only during the basic training period).

The strain of training should be planned and monitored because boredom goes together with frustration, and on the other hand, too much strain increases mental and physical stress of the person. By planning demanding exercises and organizing enough rest and day-offs between drills and training keep workload bearable and still people busy in their business. Basically, the conscripts value outdoor activities more than indoor lectures.

Clear, attainable goals could provide a direction for personal and team effort and repay the conscripts when they have achieved a certain level of performance. The optimum for commitment is to combine organizational and individual goals together. One of the tools for

supporting commitment is to organize group goals and incentives in a way that the person benefits once the group achieves its tasks. The training examinations in the unit after every training period would provide natural goals where the instructors prepare their troops for and show that the commanders are interested in the quality of groups. Consequently, the instructors could identify and endorse individual learning and development together with teamwork and group performance during and at the end of the examination.

Although the military life is quite a strictly guided business, the cadets suggest breaking the routines when possible. In addition, personal consideration and *humor* are mostly welcomed by the conscripts, and therefore the utilization of “situation comedy” could turn the experiences into even more positive ones. Moreover, the cadets recommend utilizing different kinds of playful games where the conscripts need to perform in order to support the success of the group. Such activities unite the troops and provide memorable experiences.

The cadets contemplate whether there should be incentives for choosing the 12-month service instead of serving 6 months, because currently the difference between these two options is considerable from conscripts’ point of view. Another suggestion is to increase the daily allowance for those who serve 12 months instead of 9 or 6 months. On the other hand, there could be a larger difference in the daily allowance of the soldiers whose group achieves their tasks would gain a small increase in their allowance.

One of the most often mentioned details in the cadets’ comments about commitment was that the conscripts should understand their service as part of the larger purpose. Therefore, the cadets’ advice to the instructors is to put the conscript service into the context and clarify the frame of reference where the soldier can link his or her service with the benefits of the unit and the country. In the end, the performance of the reservists (and the conscripts) determines the fate of the country in wartime. This is also the reason why military service should start with reasoning why the conscripts are there from the individual, group, unit, and the national defense viewpoint. As a recommendation, the cadets point out that teaching and training the conscript to handle tasks in one position above link him or her with the demands of the group and open his or her view to the military. In addition, such training supports the existence of the military troops in a crisis where casualties and sudden changes in tasks require the groups to be flexible in order to survive.

The above discussed cadet officers’ views represent ideas stemming from committed trainers-to-be who have all relatively recently completed their conscript service. Thereby, these freshly

topical views provide food for thought and aid in devising practical tools for increasing commitment to the military service among conscripts.

6.4 Practical Implications and Recommendations

Harinen and Leskinen⁵⁷⁴ detail several reasons for being committed to defend the nation. At the same time, their causes could be used as arguments for sustaining general conscription in Finland, because conscription offers an opportunity to a) provide realistic knowledge about the national defense system, b) increase confidence in the Finnish Defence Forces and the credible ability to defend the country, c) educate, socialize, and mature young men, d) unite them into society, and e) offer experiences and social capital that are beneficial later in civilian life. Since conscription is advantageous to the person in terms of personal growth and development, and to the society in terms of increased commitment and the will to defend the nation, the best should be taken out of the system. The most fundamental recommendation of this study is to sustain general conscription in Finland in all circumstances since it serves in multiple ways the nation and at the same time trains young men for defending the Finnish values and interests. In the following, the rest of the recommendations intend to be useful in the upcoming improvements in the military.

The Finnish Defence Forces should positively affect the recruits expectations and attitudes and provide accurate information prior to the service, for making it possible that the conscripts have realistic expectations about the upcoming service and knowledge about how they could ease the service by preparing for it in advance. Particularly, the social media of the recruits should be influenced by information campaigns. For example, the internet could be more effectively utilized as a platform for sharing and communicating information. Therefore, the recommendation is to establish contacts with the recruit prior service via email and intensify general information in different internet pages (such as YouTube). If the recruit is allowed to ask questions and acquire more knowledge about the service, the likelihood for more realistic expectations and their fulfillment is increased. Similarly, a visit to the unit before service would clarify the prospects of the recruits.

As suggested by the cadets, the Finnish Defence Forces needs more thoroughly focus on the perception management through a comprehensive, long-lasting imago campaign. The particular target audience should be the adolescents since they have more doubts about the

⁵⁷⁴ Harinen & Leskinen 2008, 79

military service and the lowest personal will to defend the country among the citizens. The campaign could start already at school and continue in different occasions, such as in national holidays, refresher training exercises, and national sport events. Specifically, more information is needed for clarifying the reasons for having a credible national defense system in Finland, and about the aims and tasks of the Finnish Defence Forces, and the consequences of conscript service at the individual and national level. At the comprehensive school, lessons could be given by a conscript leader who has graduated from the same school in order to have an impact on the teenagers' impressions about service. In addition, the call-ups provide an opportunity to explain the importance of personal participation in national defense. Basically, the military should clearly articulate in a simple, practical manner the meaningfulness of the conscript service. The emphasis could be on the personal benefits, positive experiences, and the value of the conscription to the society. In the perceptions management campaign, an old rule still applies: images are much more powerful than words and stories are more effective than lectures.

*Action Competence Research 2009*⁵⁷⁵ examined psychological, social, and organizational aspects of the military service and personnel policy and their impact on turnover, attitudes, and performance of the conscripts. The research project brought up details that should be taken into account in order to improve the conscripts' commitment to the military service.

The influence of the battalion- and brigade-level commanders is indirect on commitment. There are so many "filters" between the commander's intent and the conscript that it is an exception if the commander quickly improves the commitment of his or her troops. However, the commander has eventually an impact, but it takes more time than typically expected to perceive the effect. Generally, the commander has a stronger and more sudden impact on negative than positive things in the organization.

In the future, the *unit commanders* should have enough time for planning and monitoring education and training because they can have an important impact on the atmosphere by directing the instructors and encouraging the conscripts. Currently, the commander is too much burdened with bureaucratic management, although his or her expertise could be utilized in leadership. Therefore, organizational efforts are needed for keeping the unit commanders as the supervisors of training.

⁵⁷⁵ Toimintakytkutkimus 2009.

The *best leaders* should be appointed to be the conscripts' instructors and to welcome the recruits when they enter the service. Similarly, the best conscript leaders should be responsible for training the recruits. Therefore, the students of the reserve officer course could be integrated for a few weeks during their course in welcoming and training the recruits and supporting their adjustment and commitment to the military. When the best leaders are available for the basic training period, the instructors and conscript leaders could work more closely together and coordinate the entry and training of the recruits.

Education of the guidelines to the conscript leaders is crucial before the entry of the recruits in order to shape the conscript leaders' way of conduct and establish the procedures for indoctrinating the recruits during the first weeks of service. Normally, there is a one or two week time frame before the recruits' entry when the conscript leaders and the instructors can focus on the planning and preparing the basic training period. Since it is quite impossible to extend the period due to other schedules, these few days should be used effectively. Through continuing education, the leaders are ready to receive the recruits, get acquainted with them, teach the "ropes," and help in the adjustment to the new culture and circumstances. The main idea of cooperation is to unite both thinking and behavior of the different levels of leaders and to share responsibilities with the conscript leaders in order to increase their commitment to educate the recruits. In that way, the fresh ideas of the conscript leaders could be utilized in training.

In terms of *turnover*, strengthening commitment is central to military retention efforts.⁵⁷⁶ Currently, the conscripts see that an interruption of service is a noble and justified deed. Thus, the attitudes of the citizens towards the conscript who does not finish his or her military service have notably changed over the past decades. Therefore, the whole conscript system should be reorganized to match the current needs and expectations of the society and people. On the other hand, the selection and release of some people from the military obligation do not support the idea about general conscription and commitment of young men. Therefore, the imago campaign and practices should be logical and support the impression that *everyone's service is meaningful*. Equal standards and opportunities for the conscripts lay a foundation for the whole conscript system. Currently, the personal will to defend the nation is vague among teenagers. The situation is not supported if there is the impression that the military obligation is no longer a requirement.

⁵⁷⁶ Tucker et al. 2005, 276

The recommendation is to eliminate the loopholes that are unintentionally opened (for instance, the increase of C-class soldiers in medical examinations) and to plan an *integrated conscript system* that meets the concerns and expectations of the recruits. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive arrangement of a national service, where civil and military services constitute an integrated system. Therefore, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy should work out a structure that would more closely meet an individual's viewpoint and the needs of the national defense. Furthermore, the discharge of a soldier could be integrated into the standards of the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA). Consequently, the soldier would be completely exempted from military duty (to the C-class) only if he meets the standards of disability pension ("työttömyyseläke"). Otherwise, he is required to complete civil service because of his exemption from the military.

Moreover, there should be *common rules for retention and turnover* of conscripts. Currently, there is considerable variation in turnover policy due to different courses of action among medical doctors and the commanders. The recommendation is to educate the key personnel for supporting service motivation of the conscripts and having unified lines of action for turnover. The basic message from the organization to the conscripts should be that every person's service is valuable.

The general conscription offers an opportunity to affect the whole male population. At the same time, it enables to affect the citizens' attachment to the Finnish society, "the will to defend the nation," the willingness to participate in refresher training, and the general attitudes towards the Finnish Defence Forces. For example, there is a visible difference between 17–18- and 19–21-year-old men in terms of their attitudes toward defending the country. Specifically, the conscript service makes national defense more salient, and consequently, strengthens their will to defend the nation.⁵⁷⁷ The conclusion is that the general conscription is vital for sustaining the citizens' commitment to the country and the national defense.

However, there are few caveats. First of all, despite of the positive effects of military training on the military-related attitudes, the strong commitment and motivation weakens over time during service.⁵⁷⁸ Second, the overall tendency among young people is lowering commitment to the national defense.⁵⁷⁹ Particularly, the young adults have significantly lower commitment

⁵⁷⁷ Sinkko 2009, 26

⁵⁷⁸ Kuronen 1995; Salo 2008a; Tannenbaum et al. 1991, 765

⁵⁷⁹ Sinkko et al. 2008, 59; Sinkko & Nurmela 2009, 142

to defend the country⁵⁸⁰ and the conscripts may perceive their service as a necessary evil.⁵⁸¹ Third, the number of the discharged soldiers has increased during the last decade. Consequently, there is a tendency that the general conscription does not anymore apply to everyone due to the increased number of those who are relieved from all the military responsibilities during peace time. However, there is lack of research about the consequences of such a change in the overall system. The main concern is that the meaningfulness of conscription weakens if nothing is done to balance the situation. Fourth, the willingness to participate in refresher training exercises has weakened.⁵⁸² Although the significance of regular refresher training exercises is evident, refresher training has nevertheless been the area where the Defense Forces has saved money and effort because of economic reasons during the past years. The reduced number of military exercises may have given a signal to the citizens that refresher training is no longer a necessary tool for keeping up the capacity of the national defense system.⁵⁸³ Consequently, the soldiers do not anymore perceive refresher training as meaningful as earlier which is also indicated by an increased number of application for deferring the exercise.⁵⁸⁴ The military fails to have a positive influence on the “common” soldier. In the worst case, the initial positive expectations turn to concerns that eventually result in a cynical approach to the military.

Based on the results, the conscript leaders have significantly stronger commitment and “the will to defend the nation” than the rank and file soldiers. The reason may be due to the more positive expectations, motivation, and commitment of the leaders prior to service and more positive experiences in training as suggested above. Thus, the conscript leaders are taken care of by providing challenging leadership training and opportunities for personal growth and development. However, the rank and file soldiers have serious problems in terms of their attitudes toward the personal readiness to work for the national defense. It seems that their whole energy is spent in tolerating their uncomfortable situation. Based on the results, most of them just want to get away from conscript service as soon as possible. Moreover, they have an extremely low willingness to participate in the refresher training exercises in the future. However, the decline of attitudes could be prevented through qualitative leadership and education. Therefore, the recommendation is to *focus on the training quality of the rank and file soldiers*, particularly during the advanced training period.

⁵⁸⁰ Nurmela 2005, 100

⁵⁸¹ Sinkko 2009, 49

⁵⁸² Salo 2008a, 111, 147; Sinkko et al. 2008, 60

⁵⁸³ Sinkko & Nurmela 2009, 138-139

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 138-139

The *research on leadership, military pedagogy, and military sociology* could examine the causes and consequences of the declined motivation and commitment during the service, and specifically, whether poor leadership, negative training experiences, or sociological changes between generations influence the conscripts' lowered commitment levels. The possible research questions are: What are the sociological reasons for "the will to defend the nation" and the attitudinal differences between the generations? What proportion of the declined training motivation and commitment is explained by the social and organizational factors? What are the relations between the changes in motivation, commitment, task importance, and social experiences in the unit? Why do some units avoid the motivational problems? How is the process of group membership related to the soldiers' attitudes and aspirations and how much does social influence affect the personal attitudinal decline? Do the same factors that cause a decline in motivation also cause decreased commitment? Finally, what are the relations between personal commitment and personal performance, between group-level commitment and group performance, and between group-level commitment and personal performance? The last question refers to the need for group level examinations that, in this case, could explain the reasons for decline, maintenance, and even increase of motivation and commitment

As emphasized in this study, conscript service creates experiences through which commitment and "the will to defend the nation" could be created and sustained. However, the growth of commitment and motivation requires positive social and training experiences in service. The results suggest that the service period is ideal for providing personal growth and development for the young men. For example, military service strengthens a sense of responsibility, and prepares the person for the work life by adopting him or her to wake up early, to follow orders and timetables, to interact with peers and leaders, and to work as part of a group to fulfill tasks.⁵⁸⁵ In the military, educational experiences benefit the person due to increased self-confidence, the ability to organize tasks and carry out responsibilities. Furthermore, leadership experiences, and growing up as a person are mentioned by the conscripts as positive experiences in the service.⁵⁸⁶ Sinkko and his colleagues⁵⁸⁷ report positive experiences, quality training, and personal trust in the group's fighting abilities as the components that predict the personal "will to defend the nation." Especially, the soldiers value their strengthened self-confidence, while the leaders benefit from leadership training which has a strong relation to

⁵⁸⁵ Salo 2005

⁵⁸⁶ Elovainio, Metsäranta & Kivimäki 2002, 24-28, 30

⁵⁸⁷ Sinkko et al. 2008, 41-42, 57

the success in the civilian life.⁵⁸⁸ Basically, educational experiences are products of high-quality leadership and training. Therefore, the possibilities for supporting the soldiers' personal growth during the service highlight the efforts of the instructors and the conscript leaders, especially in their exemplary conduct in leadership as well as thoroughness in training.

The research on commitment expresses factors that improve the fit between the personal needs and expectations and the experiences in the unit.⁵⁸⁹ Based on the commitment literature, the recommendation is that conscript service should provide such organizational experiences as clear-cut rules and procedures, comfortable working conditions, rewards, recognition, and encouragement, challenges and feelings of accomplishment, respect by other people, responsibilities, admirable and respectful leadership, and satisfaction with work and social life that all together would positively affect experiences in the service and lead to increasing commitment to the military service. On the other hand, training is a perfect tool for creating memorable experiences. For example, well-organized exhausting exercises that test personal limits, show the importance of the "never leave the friend" spirit, and prove the abilities of the person and the group to survive challenging situations that offer experiences that make service worthwhile and strengthen commitment to the national defense. Even an individual event, such as shooting with different kinds of weapons can foster motivation and commitment due to shared, positive experiences.⁵⁹⁰

In the end, the conscript should sense that he or she benefits from the service, for example, due to the aforementioned skills learnt or strengthened in the military. For example, photos and test results taken over time could visualize improvements of skills and knowledge. Moreover, recognition of the best personal performance and development at the end of service based on the standards that everyone knows already in advance could increase the soldiers' motivation to strive for learning and physical training. In conclusion, the primary objective of training, leadership, and other organizational efforts should be on the *positive, challenging service experiences*⁵⁹¹ since they are vital for supporting adjustment and reinforcing motivation and commitment of the conscripts.

⁵⁸⁸ Elovainio et al. 2002, 29

⁵⁸⁹ Irving & Meyer 1994, 942

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Sinkko et al. 2008, 43-45

⁵⁹¹ Irving & Meyer 1994, 948

Overall, the main contribution of this research is the identification of the essential constructs that explain why people attach to and identify with the military. In conclusion, commitment represents a valuable property of an individual and provides fuel for organizational effectiveness. At the individual level, commitment is increased by disseminating knowledge for supporting realistic expectations and awareness, creating challenges and responsibilities in training, and facilitating social integration and competent leadership in the unit. Every soldier appreciates the feeling of having an important effect and value in the primary group and in the military organization. At the organizational level, commitment is the element that binds the person to the larger entity. Through providing a direction and meaning for the work and goals and opportunities for personal development both the individuals and the organization flourish. The following quotation links this research to the chain of the earlier studies on “the will to defend the nation” and commitment to the military service and tangibly illustrates the importance of personal commitment for a small nation:

“The will to defend the nation is the most significant part of the overall attitude on which rests the freedom of the individual, the society, and the nation. The citizens of an independent country cannot afford to compromise the power [and principles] of this attitude.”⁵⁹²

“Maanpuolustushenki on sen yleisen mielipiteen tärkein osa, jonka varassa on yksilön, yhteiskunnan ja maan vapaus. Tämän mielipiteen voimakkuudesta ei vapaan maan kansalaisilla ole varaa tinkiä.”

⁵⁹² Valtanen 1957, 33

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Table A
Factors at Time 2

[illegible]

Table A (continued)

My squad feels responsible for succeeding as a team	.41
The atmosphere in my company / battery is good	.37
At war my squad members would help me even if it might put them in danger	.35
I feel appreciated in my squad / barrack room	.34
Adjustment and Civilian Impact. I have adjusted to being away from my friends	.83
I have adjusted to being away from my family	.71
Military service has had a negative impact on my civil relationships	.69
My situation in civilian life has deteriorated during my time in the army	.59
The restrictions of freedom in military life have not affected my mood	.37
I have adjusted to dormitory accommodation	.33
Emotional Stability. I have often had feelings that life is not worth living	.89
I have had suicidal thoughts	.52
If I could live my life all over again, I would do almost everything differently	.47
I am often anxious and tense	.46
I often feel depressed	.42
I do not feel a part of this society (system)	low
Social Adjustment. It is easy for me to make new friends	.75
I normally adjust to a new environment	.68
I can adjust to being around people I do not know	.59
I have felt uncomfortable with other people	.58
I usually do not share my thoughts with other people	.52
Belonging to a squad or a group feels pressing	low
I have been able to influence the decisions made in my barrack room / squad	low

Table A (continued)

Physical Health. I have managed the physical demands of military service	.84
My health corresponds to the demands of military service	.70
I am healthy and my physical health is better than in my age group in general	.69
Normative Commitment. Military service is every male citizen's duty	.80
All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense	.75
If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily...	.63
Leaders. During a crisis I would like to work with my current instructor	.60
On part of the regular staff there has been no action that could be classified as degrading	.48
On part of the conscript superiors there has been no action that could be classified as degrading	.48
During a crisis I would like to work with my current conscript superior	.47
An explicit chain of command promotes action in the army	.31
The nearest instructor has been really interested in and enthusiastic about training	low
Military Adjustment. I have adjusted to military discipline	.79
I cannot stand being ordered around and commanded	.72
It is easy for me to obey given orders	.67
I have adjusted to rush and strict timetables	.59
I have adjusted to military service	.45
I have coped with the mental pressure of conscript training	.43
I have been getting along well with my closest conscript superior	.35
Group Performance. The squad that I belong to would do well in real combat	.85
The platoon that I belong to would do well in real combat	.84

Table A (continued)

Hazing. My fellow conscripts have pressured me mentally and physically		.55
Other conscripts have laughed at my failures		.52
I have been hazed in the military		.45
I have felt different from my fellow conscripts		low
Exemptions. I have applied for exemptions from the medical officer or doctor, because		.82
I could not care less about participating in military service		
I have applied for exemption from field exercise even though I was not ill		.58
Regimentation. Discipline during the training situations is too strict		.52
The last two weeks have been too busy		.47
It annoys me that as a conscript I have to compromise over my personal comfort		.44
Intent to Stay. I have considered applying to civilian service	.44	.45
I have considered dropping out of service		.33

Note. $n = 1,224$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. KMO = .96. Total variance explained = 50.4 %.

[illegible]

Table B (continued)

AC: Military service is useless and unnecessary	.65		
NC: All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense	.65		
Mot: I want to learn the things that are taught thoroughly	.62		
CC: I have considered applying to civilian service	.31	.50	
Mot: I have tried to do my best in training	.45		
CC: I have considered dropping out of service	.34	.38	
Mot: I am willing to participate in training that is intellectually demanding	.38		
Peer Bonding and Friends. I have felt appreciated in my squad	.80		
I have been able to influence the decisions made in my squad	.74		
I have made some real friends in the army	.51		.39
In my squad I got help when I needed it	.51		
I have a friend in the army to whom I can talk about anything	.48		.47
I have spent almost all of my free time with my squad / barrack friends	.46		
My squad emphasizes common goals	.44		
It easy for me to make new friends	.35	.43	
My platoon has a good esprit de corps	.37		.36
Platoon Leader. On the whole my platoon leader is a good person	.84		
During a crisis I would like to work under my platoon leader	.79		
My platoon leader masters his or her duties	.78		
During field practice my platoon leader has set an example and tried his or her hardest	.78		
My platoon leader has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me	.71		

Table B (continued)

Information and Feedback. After training, an instructor told my squad how well we performed	.77
I have been informed how well I have done in training	.76
After training, we were told what went well and what did not	.73
The instructor's feedback helped me to understand how to perform	.56
I have been aware of how I have done in training compared to others	.54
I have been aware of whether I have achieved the goals of training	.43
At the beginning of training I was clearly told of the training goals	.39
Squad Leader. On the whole my squad leader is a good person	.83
My squad leader masters his or her duties	.79
During a crisis I would like to work with my current squad leader	.74
During field practice my squad leader has set an example and tried his or her hardest	.69
My squad leader has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me	.64
I have been getting along well with my closest conscript superior (weak loadings)	
Physical Training. The conscript service strengthened or inspired a lasting interest in exercising, which will continue after the service	.68
The physical training program took into account the individual differences of the trainees	.52
The physical exertion of the conscript training showed an upward trend	.49
The physical training I received was varied	.46
The training took into account factors related to recovery after physically demanding exercises	.44

Table B (continued)

Training Quality. In training, the weapons and equipment have been appropriate and functional	.73
The training methods have been appropriate for skills trained	.72
Generally, the field practices were organized effectively	.62
The training facilities have been appropriate	.59
The daily program was usually organized effectively	.57
An explicit chain of command promotes action in the army	low
Regimentation. The rush and strict timetables have considerably decreased my motivation	.80
In the mornings the wake up should be later	.60
It annoys me that as a conscript I have to compromise over my personal comfort	.55
The last two week have been too busy	.37
Discipline during the training situations is too strict	.34
Clothes. I believe that the provided outfits fulfill also wartime requirements	.79
The clothing has been adequate and appropriate	.78
The change and care of clothing items has been well organized	.52
The instructions and training I have received concerning the use and care of clothing have been adequate	.50
Instructors. During a crisis I would like to work under my current instructor	.82
My closest instructor has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me	.77
My closest instructor masters his or her duties	.75

Table B (continued)

Group Cohesion at War. In case of war, I would like to be in my current squad			.78
At war my squad members would help me even if it might put them in danger			.69
My current squad has a really good esprit de corps			.68
Challenging Training. During training I have been allowed to try my own ideas and solutions			.89
During training my squad has been allowed to try our own ideas and solutions			.81
In training, one must think a lot			.32
Tough Training. There has been at least one really tough field exercise, where my physical performance was tested			.84
There has been at least one really tough field exercise, where my mental toughness was tested			.82
Too tough. The conscript service has been mentally too tough for me			.76
The conscript service has been physically too tough for me			.60
Hazing. Other conscripts have laughed at my failure	.30		.59
My fellow conscripts have pressured me mentally or physically			.56
I have been hazed in the military			.39
Positive Experiences. I have experienced some really interesting and exciting events / moments during conscript service			.65
I will have some very positive memories of my conscript service			.64
I have learned new things about myself during conscript service			.39
Atmosphere. I am proud of my unit (company / battery)			.66
The atmosphere in my company / battery is good			.62

Table B (continued)

Physical Health. I have managed the physical demands of military service		.75
My health has corresponded to the demands of military service	.32	.56
Social Adjustment. I have adjusted to dormitory accommodation		.65
I can adjust to being around people I do not know	.42	.64
I get along with my barrack mates / squad	.34	.55
I usually do not share my thoughts with other people		.47

Note. $n = 975$. Principal axis factoring with promax rotation. $KMO = .93$. Total variance explained = 52.6 %. AC = *Affective Commitment*; NC = *Normative Commitment*; CC = *Continuance Commitment / Intent to Stay*; Mot = *Achievement Motivation*.

Commitment Indices and Primary Scales at Time 3

A. Commitment and Intent to Stay ($n = 1,534$)

Affective Commitment $\alpha = .82$; item-total r range = .61 - .67; $M = 3.29$; $SD = 1.08$

1. Getting military training is important and significant to me
2. To me it is important to do well in the army
3. Military service is useless and unnecessary
4. I am not interested in military service

Normative Commitment $\alpha = .82$; item-total $r = .69$; $M = 3.98$; $SD = 1.15$

1. All men should carry out military service as a part of total defense
2. Military service is every male citizen's duty

Intent to Stay $\alpha = .80$; item-total $r = .67$; $M = 4.22$; $SD = 1.14$

1. I have considered applying to civilian service
2. I have considered dropping out of military service

B. Competence ($n = 1,534$)

Instructor Ratings of Performance $\alpha = .83$; item-total $r = .71$; $M = 3.63$; $SD = .77$

1. Wartime field proficiency.
2. Overall estimation of military performance.

Expected Group Performance $\alpha = .85$; item-total $r = .75$; $M = 3.49$; $SD = 1.06$

1. The squad which I belong to would do well in real combat
2. The platoon that I belong to would do well in real combat

Expected Personal Performance $\alpha = .78$; item-total r range = .44 - .56; $M = 3.59$; $SD = .76$

1. I have a clear picture of my duty during a war.
2. On the basis of my training I could do my duty during a war.
3. Training has given me the mental skills for battle situations.
4. In all circumstances, I master the weapons and equipment needed for my duty.
5. On the basis of my physical condition I could get through two weeks of battle and three to four days and nights of decisive battle.
6. On the basis of my mental health I could get through two weeks of battle and three to four days and nights of decisive battle.

C. Personal Characteristics ($n = 1,534$)

Emotional Stability $\alpha = .81$; item-total r range = .48 - .66; $M = 4.18$; $SD = .84$

1. I often feel depressed
2. I have had suicidal thoughts
3. I have often had feelings that life is not worth living
4. I am often anxious and tense
5. If I could live my life all over again, I would do almost everything differently

Sociability $\alpha = .88$; item-total r range = .66 - .83; $M = 4.32$; $SD = .74$

1. I normally adjust to a new environment
2. I can adjust to being around people I do not know
3. I get along with my barrack mates / squad
4. I have adjusted to dormitory accommodation

Physical Health $\alpha = .78$; item-total $r = .64$; $M = 4.15$; $SD = .87$

1. I can manage the physical demands of military service
2. My health corresponds to the demands of military service
3. I am healthy and my physical health is better than in my age group in general

Acceptance of Authority $\alpha = .63$; item-total r range = .41 - .45; $M = 3.80$; $SD = .87$

1. It is easy for me to obey given orders
2. I cannot stand being ordered around and commanded
3. An explicit chain of command promotes action in the army

Adjustment to the Military $\alpha = .88$; item-total r range = .64 - .77; $M = 3.93$; $SD = .85$

1. I have adjusted to military service
2. I have adjusted to rush and strict timetables
3. I have adjusted to military discipline
4. I have adjusted to being away from my friends
5. I have adjusted to being away from my family
6. I can cope with the mental pressure of conscript training

D. Situational Experiences and Institutional Factors ($n = 1,534$)Experienced Hazing $\alpha = .66$; item-total r range = .45 - .50; $M = 3.83$; $SD = .97$

1. I have been hazed in the military
2. Other conscripts have laughed at my failures
3. My fellow conscripts have pressured me mentally or physically

Peer Cohesion $\alpha = .83$; item-total r range = .48 - .63; $M = 3.74$; $SD = .74$

1. In my squad I get help when I need it.
2. I feel appreciated in my squad / barrack room.
3. I can influence the decisions made in my barrack room / squad.
4. My squad emphasizes common goals.
5. My current squad has a really good esprit de corps.
6. My platoon has a good esprit de corps.
7. In war my squad members would help me even if it put them in danger.
8. In case of war, I would like to be in my current squad.

Regimentation $\alpha = .68$; item-total r range = .33 - .60; $M = 3.04$; $SD = .86$

1. It annoys me that as a conscript I have to compromise over my personal comfort
2. The restrictions of freedom in military life have not affected my mood
3. Discipline during the training situations is too strict
4. The last two weeks have been too busy
5. The rush and strict timetables have considerably decreased my motivation
6. In the mornings the wake-up should be later

Training Information and Feedback $\alpha = .83$; item-total r range = .50 - .64; $M = 3.49$; $SD = .76$

1. At the beginning of training I was clearly told of the training goals
2. I have been aware of whether I have achieved the goals of training
3. After training, an instructor has told my squad how well we performed
4. I have been informed how well I have done in training
5. After training, we were told what went well and what did not
6. The instructor's feedback has helped me understand how to perform
7. I have been aware of how I have done in training compared to others

Training Quality $\alpha = .77$; item-total r range = .48 - .61; $M = 3.35$; $SD = .80$

1. The training facilities were functional
2. The training methods were appropriate for the skills trained
3. In training, the weapons and equipment were appropriate and functional
4. Generally, the field practices were organized effectively
5. The daily program was usually organized effectively

Allowed to Think $\alpha = .86$; item-total $r = .75$; $M = 3.11$; $SD = 1.17$

1. During training my squad has been allowed to try our own ideas and solutions
2. During training I have been allowed to try my own ideas and solutions

Quality of Physical Training $\alpha = .72$; item-total r range = .44 - .51; $M = 2.71$; $SD = .84$

1. The physical training I received was varied
2. The training took into account factors related to recovery after physically demanding exercises
3. The physical exertion of conscript training showed an upward trend
4. The conscript service strengthened or inspired a lasting interest in exercising, which will continue after the service
5. The physical training program took into account the individual differences of the trainees

Confidence in Squad Leader $\alpha = .86$; item-total r range = .63 - .75; $M = 3.55$; $SD = .91$

1. My squad leader has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me
2. During field practice my squad leader has set an example and tried his or her hardest
3. On the whole my squad leader is a good person
4. My squad leader masters his or her duties (weapons, equipment, management)
5. During a crisis I would like to work under my current squad leader

Confidence in Platoon Leader $\alpha = .89$; item-total r range = .71 - .79; $M = 3.75$; $SD = .90$

1. My platoon leader has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me
2. During the field practice my platoon leader has set an example and tried his or her hardest
3. On the whole my platoon leader is a good person
4. My platoon leader masters his or her duties
5. During a crisis I would like to work under my current platoon leader

Confidence in Instructors $\alpha = .84$; item-total r range = .67 - .73; $M = 3.78$; $SD = 1.02$

1. My closest instructor masters his or her duties
2. My closest instructor has dealt fairly and straightforwardly with me
3. During a crisis I would like to work under my current instructor

Personal Growth and Development $\alpha = .87$; item-total r range = .55 - .68; $M = 3.39$; $SD = .86$

1. Due to military service I can take other people in to consideration as well
2. My mental stamina has improved considerably during military service
3. The rules and restrictions of the army have been an educational experience
4. My independence has increased during military service
5. In the army I have learned to take responsibility for myself and others
6. The army has taught me self-control
7. During my time in the army, I have learned to organize my schedule
8. The army has a significant education purpose

Career Intentions $\alpha = .87$; item-total r range = .69 - .80; $M = 2.07$; $SD = 1.11$

1. I would consider working in the Defence Forces after my conscript service
2. Experiences in conscript service have increased my interest for staying in the service of the Defence Forces
3. In my view the Defence Forces would be a good employer

Refresher Training Intentions

I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years

$M = 2.56$; $SD = 1.46$

National Defense Attitudes $\alpha = .78$; item-total r range = .61 - .62; $M = 4.34$; $SD = .82$

1. If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves militarily, even if the outcome were uncertain
2. If Finland is attacked, I am ready to participate in military national defense as part of national service duties
3. Finland has to have functioning Defence Forces

Effects of Commitment and Intent to Stay

Table A

Variables That Distinguish the Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers Before Service

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model	1	2
		<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
1) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations	.57	2.53	4.07
2) Acceptance of Authority (S)	.53	3.30	4.32
3) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service	.50	2.99	4.46
4) Military Adjustment (S) ^a	.44	3.51	4.22
5) Intent to Stay (S)	.42	3.95	4.89
6) Desire for duty and service period	.42	1.68	2.82
7) Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships	.40	3.09	4.29
8) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.39	1.98	3.30
9) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.32	2.24	2.89
10) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...	.32	3.54	4.48
10) I do not feel a part of this society ^a	.30	3.88	3.88
11) I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance	.27	3.21	4.10
12) Emotional Stability (S) ^a	.26	3.95	4.39
13) Sociability (S) ^a	.25	3.64	4.13
14) Received enough information about conscription ^a	.24	2.45	2.90
15) Adjustment to Schooling (S) ^a	.23	3.39	3.96
16) Attitude towards drugs	-.22	1.78.	1.37
17) Physical Health (S) ^a	.20	3.33	3.78

Note. 1 = Uncommitted Group $n = 351$. 2 = Committed Group $n = 360$. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (more than .20). (S) = A scale. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

Table B

Variables Distinguishing the Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers During Basic Training

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model	1	2
		<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
1) The training has been challenging and interesting	.59	2.08	3.99
2) Normative Commitment (S)	.58	3.01	4.78
3) I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years	.55	1.50	3.42
4) Organizational Climate (training and atmosphere) (S) ^a	.53	3.24	4.44
5) Regimentation (S)	.51	2.01	3.37
6) Desire for duty and service period	.43	1.62	2.97
7) I am interested in occupations in the field of security	.34	1.72	3.09
8) Basic Training Leaders (S) ^a	.34	3.42	4.10
9) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S) ^a	.33	2.76	4.09
10) Intent to Stay (S) ^a	.32	3.55	4.80
11) Peer Bonding (S) ^a	.30	3.50	4.20
12) I do not feel a part of this society ^a	.27	3.59	4.71
13) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (t1) ^a	.26	2.86	3.84
14) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves... ^a	.26	3.50	4.53
15) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service (t1)	.26	3.26	4.31
16) Sociability (S) ^a	.22	3.77	4.35
17) Emotional Stability (S) ^a	.21	3.98	4.55
18) Group Performance (S) ^a	.21	3.05	3.91
19) My motivation has not decreased (d) ^a	.20	.05	.31
20) Received enough information about conscription ^a	.19	2.19	2.84
21) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service (t1) ^a	.19	2.38	2.77

Note. Uncommitted Group $n = 402$. Committed Group $n = 322$. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (more than .18). (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

The background variables that did not associate with the soldiers' commitment (i.e., less than .05 correlations with the discriminant function): Age, gender, marital status, graduated education level, GPA at school, learning problems at school, working or studying before or after service, parents had divorced, either one or both parents were died, living situation, criminal record, 12-minute run test results, and/or having loans.

Table C

Variables Distinguishing the Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers at End of Service

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model	1	2
		<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
1) Refresher Training Intentions	.51	1.71	2.93
2) Military Adjustment (S)	.46	3.35	4.30
3) Positive Experiences (S) ^a	.43	3.04	3.94
4) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (t2)	.43	1.96	3.17
5) Intent to Stay (S)	.41	4.53	4.71
6) Personal Growth and Development (S) ^a	.37	2.78	3.80
7) Normative Commitment (S) ^a	.34	3.12	4.67
8) Perceived Personal Performance (S) ^a	.33	3.13	3.84
9) Regimentation (S) ^a	.31	2.52	3.27
10) Physical Health (S) ^a	.31	3.82	4.39
11) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.31	3.43	3.43
12) Had Friends in the Military (S) ^a	.30	3.24	3.99
13) I do not feel a part of this society (t2)	.30	3.86	4.56
14) Training Quality (S) ^a	.29	3.04	3.63
15) My friends in military service have helped me significantly in adjusting to military life (t2) ^a	.28	3.21	3.82
16) Emotional Stability (S) ^a	.28	3.93	4.34
17) After basic training I received the training I wished for (t2)	.27	2.98	3.79
18) National Defense Attitudes (S) ^a	.27	3.83	3.90
19) Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S) ^a	.26	3.45	4.65
20) Sociability (S) ^a	.26	3.98	4.57
21) Performance Ratings (S) ^a	.24	3.32	3.66
22) Confidence in Squad Leaders (S) ^a	.24	3.19	3.72
23) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...(t2) ^a	.23	3.77	4.52
24) Desire for duty and service period (t2) ^a	.22	1.80	2.58
25) Perceived Group Performance (S) ^a	.22	3.12	3.81
26) Unit Climate (S) ^a	.21	3.02	3.93

Note. 1 = Uncommitted Group $n = 312$. 2 = Committed Group $n = 195$. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than $r = .20$). (S) = A scale. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

The background variables that did not associate with the soldiers' commitment (i.e., less than .10 correlations with the discriminant function): Age, gender, marital status, graduated education level, GPA at school, learning problems at school, working or studying before or after service, parents had divorced, either one or both parents were died, living situation, criminal record, 12-minute run test results, received enough information about conscription (t2), felt different from the fellow conscripts (t3), and frequency of drinking.

Table D

Model for Discriminating Consideration to Quit or Stay Before Service

Best Discriminators	Standardized Coefficients	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Affective Commitment (S)	.48	.71
2) I do not feel a part of this society	.36	.63
3) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service	.29	.54
4) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...	.20	.41
5) Emotional Stability (S)	.17	.48
6) Thinks drug tests should not be allowed (d)	-.17	-.29
7) 12-minute run test	.15	.09
8) Conscript did get along with parents	.13	.37

Note. *n* = 1,025. Variables are ordered by stepwise inclusion in the model. (S) = scale. (d) = A dummy variable. Wilk's Lambda = .62; Eigenvalue = .62; Canonical Correlation = .62.

Table E

Predicting Considerations to Quit or Stay in the Military Before Service

Actual Group	<u>Predicted Group</u>		Total
	Considered to Quit	Considered to Stay	
Considered to Quit (1-4.5 in Likert scale)	146 (57.9 %)	106 (42.1 %)	252 (100 %)
Considered to Stay (5 in Likert scale)	50 (6.4 %)	734 (93.6 %)	784 (100 %)
<i>n</i>	196	840	1,036

Note. The first number in each cell is *n*; the second number, in parentheses, is the percentage based on the row total. 84.9 % of original grouped cases were correctly classified.

Table F

Variables That Distinguish Considerations to Quit or Stay Before Service

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Affective Commitment (S)	.71
2) I do not feel a part of this society	.63
3) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service	.54
4) Acceptance of Authority (S) ^a	.52
5) Emotional Stability (S)	.48
6) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (t1) ^a	.42
7) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.42
8) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...	.41
9) Military Adjustment (S) ^a	.40
10) Sociability (S) ^a	.39
11) Conscript did get along with parents	.37
12) Military service is going to have a negative impact on my civil relationships ^a	.34
13) Adjustment to Schooling (S) ^a	.32
14) Thinks drug tests should not be allowed (d)	-.29
15) Physical Health (S) ^a	.26
16) Desire for duty and service period ^a	.25
17) I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance ^a	.25
18) Attitude towards drug use ^a	-.23
19) Received enough information about conscription ^a	.22
20) I am interested in occupations in the field of security ^a	.22
21) I was hazed at school ^a	.21

Note. 1 = Considered to Quit, *n* = 251. 2 = Considered to Stay, *n* = 774. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than *r* = .20). (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

The following background variables did not associate with the soldiers' considerations to quit or stay in the military before service (i.e., less than .05 correlations with the discriminant function): Age, gender, marital status, graduated education level, parents' divorce, either one or both parents were died, living situation, working or studying before and after service, having loans, and/or criminal record.

Table G

Variables That Distinguish Considerations to Quit or Stay During Basic Training

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Affective Commitment (S)	.69
2) Normative Commitment (S)	.65
3) Regimentation (S)	.59
4) I do not feel a part of this society	.57
5) Emotional Stability (S)	.51
6) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S) ^a	.51
7) Organizational Climate (training and atmosphere) (S) ^a	.50
8) Desire for duty and service period	.45
9) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.45
10) The training has been challenging and interesting	.44
11) Sociability (S) ^a	.44
12) I have felt different from my fellow conscripts	.43
13) Experienced Hazing (S)	.43
14) Stressful Life Changes (S)	.42
15) Basic Training Leaders (S) ^a	.40
16) Malingering (S)	.39
17) I want to participate in refresher training in a couple of years ^a	.38
18) Physical Health (S) ^a	.34
19) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...	.30
20) My motivation has not decreased (d) ^a	.30
21) I was admitted to the brigade that I had wished for in advance ^a	.29
22) Received enough information about conscription ^a	.29
23) Group Performance (S) ^a	.29
24) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations (t1) ^a	.28
25) Attitude towards drug use	-.27
26) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.26
27) I am interested in occupations in the field of security ^a	.23
28) Parents have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.21

Note. 1 = Considered to Quit, $n = 383$. 2 = Considered to Stay, $n = 612$. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than $r = .20$). (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

The following background variables did not associate with the soldiers' considerations to quit or stay in the military during basic training (i.e., less than .10 correlations with the discriminant function): Age, gender, marital status, education level, GPA at school, parents' divorce, either one or both parents were died, living situation, working or studying before and after service, having loans, criminal record, and 12-minute run test results.

Table H

Variables That Distinguish Considerations to Quit or Stay at the End of Service

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Normative Commitment (S)	.58
2) Emotional Stability (S)	.47
3) Affective Commitment (S)	.45
4) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S)	.43
5) Military Adjustment (S) ^a	.41
6) Regimentation (S) ^a	.34
7) Personal Growth and Development (S) ^a	.32
8) I do not feel a part of this society ^a	.31
9) National Defense Attitudes (S) ^a	.31
10) Physical Health (S) ^a	.29
11) Had Friends in the Military (S) ^a	.27
12) Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S)	.26
13) Sociability (S) ^a	.25
14) Perceived Personal Performance (S) ^a	.24
15) Friends have a positive attitude towards military service ^a	.24
16) I am stepping into military service with positive expectations ^a	.22
17) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.22
18) Attitude towards drugs (t1) (S) ^a	-.22
19) Unit Climate (S) ^a	.21

Note. 1 = Considered to Quit, *n* = 72. 2 = Considered to Stay, *n* = 120. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than *r* = .20). (S) = A scale. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

The following background variables did not associate with the soldiers' considerations to quit or stay in the military at the end of service (i.e., less than .10 correlations with the discriminant function): Age, graduated education level, GPA at school, learning problems at school, parents' divorce, either one or both parents were died, living situation, working or studying before and after service, criminal record, attitudes toward drug use, 12-minute run test results, frequency of exercising, confidence in the instructors, quality of physical training, career intentions, and/or receiving training that was wished for after basic training.

Table I

*Strongest Differences Between Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers at the End of Service
(Based on the Commitment Levels Before Service)*

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Military Adjustment (S)	.74
2) National Defense Attitudes (S)	.60
3) Regimentation (S) ^a	.50
4) Career Intentions (S)	.46
5) Sociability (S) ^a	.45
6) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (i)	.42
7) Positive Experiences (S) ^a	.41
8) Perceived Personal Performance (S) ^a	.40
9) Physical Health (S) ^a	.39
10) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.39
11) Personal Growth and Development (s) ^a	.38
12) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...(i) ^a	.36
13) Unit Climate (S)	.34
14) Training Quality (S) ^a	.34
15) Normative Commitment (S) ^a	.33
16) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S) ^a	.33
17) My friends in military service have helped me significantly in adjusting to military life (i) ^a	.32
18) Had Friends in the Military (S) ^a	.30
19) Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S) ^a	.28
20) Refresher Training Intentions (S) ^a	.27
21) Experienced Hazing (S) ^a	.26
22) Malingering (i.e., Seeking Exemptions) (S) ^a	.25
23) Emotional Stability (S) ^a	.25
24) Confidence in Squad Leaders (S) ^a	.23
25) Allowed to Think in Training (S) ^a	.21
26) Perceived Group Performance (S) ^a	.20

Note. 1 = Uncommitted (before service), *n* = 85. 2 = Committed (before service), *n* = 85. (S) = A scale. (i) = An individual item. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than *r* = .20). (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

Table J

*Strongest Differences Between Committed and Uncommitted Soldiers at the End of Service
(Based on the Commitment Levels During Basic Training)*

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Perceived Personal Performance (S)	.65
2) Refresher Training Intentions (S)	.51
3) Military Adjustment (S)	.49
4) Period of a conscript service (i)	.46
5) Normative Commitment (S)	.46
6) Positive Experiences (S) ^a	.45
7) I am interested in occupations in the field of security (i)	.41
8) Personal Growth and Development (S) ^a	.37
9) Physical Health (S) ^a	.36
10) Performance Ratings (S) ^a	.36
11) National Defense Attitudes (S) ^a	.35
12) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.35
13) Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S) ^a	.35
14) Perceived Group Performance (S) ^a	.34
15) Regimentation (S) ^a	.31
16) Training Quality (S) ^a	.31
17) Malingering (i.e., Seeking Exemptions) (S) ^a	.28
18) Training Information and Feedback (S) ^a	.28
19) Was promoted (i) ^a	.27
20) Sociability (S) ^a	.27
21) Career Intentions (S) ^a	.25
22) Allowed to Think in Training (S) ^a	.25
23) Confidence in Squad Leaders (S) ^a	.25
24) Unit Climate (S) ^a	.25
25) If Finland is attacked, Finns should defend themselves...(i)	.24
26) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S) ^a	.24
27) Had Friends in the Military (S) ^a	.24
28) Emotional Stability (S) ^a	.23
29) Confidence in Instructors (S) ^a	.22

Note. 1 = Uncommitted (during basic training), *n* = 87. 2 = Committed (during basic training), *n* = 83. (S) = A scale. (i) = An individual item. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than *r* = .22). (S) = A scale. (d) = A dummy variable. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model.

Table K

Strongest Differences Between the Soldiers at the End of Service (Based on Their Intentions to Quit or Stay Before Service)

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Emotional Stability (S)	.77
2) Normative Commitment (S)	.64
3) Period of a conscript service (i)	.54
4) Physical Health (S) ^a	.47
5) Military Adjustment (S) ^a	.45
6) Sociability (S) ^a	.39
7) Performance Ratings (S) ^a	.39
8) Affective Commitment (S) ^a	.39
9) Experienced Hazing (S) ^a	.39
10) National Defense Attitudes (S) ^a	.37
11) Friends (S) ^a	.36
12) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.36
13) Personal Growth and Development (S) ^a	.34
14) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S) ^a	.33
15) Was promoted during service (i) ^a	.31

Note. 1 = Considered to Quit (before service), *n* = 51. 2 = Considered to Stay (before service), *n* = 178. (S) = A scale. (i) = An individual item. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than *r* = .30). (S) = A scale.

^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model (cf., Table L).

Table L

Effects of Before Service Intent to Stay on Attitudes and Performance at the End of Service

Measures at the End of Service	Standardized Coefficients	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Emotional Stability (S)	.64	.77
2) Normative Commitment (S)	.44	.64
3) Period of Conscript Service	.41	.54

Note. *n* = 229. 1 = Considered to Quit (before service), *n* = 51. 2 = Considered to Stay (before service), *n* = 178. Variables are ordered by stepwise inclusion in the model. (S) = scale. Wilk's Lambda = .89; Eigenvalue = .13. Canonical Correlation = .34.

Table M

Strongest Differences Between the Soldiers at the End of Service (Based on Their Intentions to Quit or Stay During the Basic Training Period)

Strongest Discriminating Variables	<i>r</i> with the Model
1) Normative Commitment (S)	.63
2) Affective Commitment (S) ^a	.53
3) Service Impact on Civilian Life (S)	.53
4) Perceived Personal Performance (S)	.51
5) Military Adjustment (S) ^a	.51
6) Emotional Stability (S)	.49
7) Performance Ratings (S)	.45
8) Personal Growth and Development (S) ^a	.44
9) National Defense Attitudes (S) ^a	.42
10) Positive Experiences (S) ^a	.42
11) Physical Health (S) ^a	.41
12) Peer Cohesion (S) ^a	.38
13) Sociability (S) ^a	.37
14) Perceived Group Performance (S) ^a	.36
15) Malingering (i.e., Seeking Exemptions) (S) ^a	.36
16) Regimentation (S) ^a	.36
17) Was promoted (i) ^a	.34
18) Interested in occupations in the field of security (i)	.34
19) Allowed to Think in Training (S) ^a	.32
20) Confidence in Squad Leaders (S) ^a	.32
21) Had Friends in the Military (S) ^a	.32
22) Period of a conscript service (i) ^a	.31
23) Training Quality (S) ^a	.31
24) Confidence in Platoon Leaders (S) ^a	.31

Note. 1 = Considered to Quit (during basic training), $n = 86$. 2 = Considered to Stay (during basic training), $n = 146$. (S) = A scale. (i) = An individual item. Variables are ordered by absolute size of correlation with the discriminant function (the items that had the correlation more than $r = .30$). (S) = A scale. ^a = The item was not part of the discriminant function model. Wilk's Lambda = .70; Eigenvalue = .43. Canonical Correlation = .55.