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SURFACE WARFARE JUNIOR OFFICER RETENTION: BACKGROUND  
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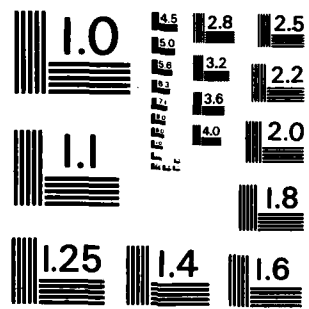
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**SURFACE WARFARE JUNIOR OFFICER  
RETENTION: BACKGROUND AND FIRST  
SEA TOUR FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF  
CONTINUANCE BEYOND OBLIGATED SERVICE**

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January 1983

**SURFACE WARFARE JUNIOR OFFICER RETENTION: BACKGROUND  
AND FIRST SEA TOUR FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF CONTINUANCE  
BEYOND OBLIGATED SERVICE**

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sea tour work experiences and percentages. Career intent, in turn, was found to account for substantial variance ( $R^2 = .25$ ) in the continuance criterion. Results strongly supported the hypothesis that continuance decisions are the product of early Navy work experiences (e.g., opportunities, assignment patterns, etc.). Results are discussed with attention to leadership, assignment, and policy implications.

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## FOREWORD

This research was conducted in order to identify further and understand factors that influence decisions of junior surface warfare officers (SWOs) to continue active service beyond their minimum service requirement (MSR). It responds to a request from the Navy Military Personnel Command (NMPC-4) to determine factors relevant to junior SWO retention.

The report is the fifth in a series regarding junior SWO retention. Previous reports described a research plan designed to explore the factors affecting junior SWO retention, the relationship between the assignment process and career decision making, the influence of wives on junior SWO careers and vice versa, and relationships between background factors, early career preparation/experience, and professional development (NPRDC TRs 79-29, 80-13, 81-17, and 82-59). It is important to note that previous reports addressed relationships within a cross-sectional design where causal inferences could not be made. The research described in this report not only used the same 1978 cross-sectional data but added a 1981 measure of actual continuance; that is, whether or not the officer had resigned within 1 year after MSR. Thus, this effort is the only one in the series to examine predictive relationships that can be used to develop hypotheses regarding causality for future testing.

Appreciation is expressed to RADM John F. Addams (formerly NMPC-41), CDR F. Julian (formerly NMPC-412), and CDRs Richard Curley and Kurt Driscoll (formerly of OP-136D) for their critical support and assistance in the early phases of this project. The cooperation of those junior officers who participated in the research is gratefully acknowledged, as is the significant contribution of Robert F. Holzbach, formerly of this Center.

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## SUMMARY

### Problem and Background

In 1977, the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center (NAVPERSRAND-CEN) initiated research to identify factors related to the continuance on active duty of junior surface warfare officers (SWOs) beyond the initial period of obligated service (MSR). This research has resulted in a series of technical reports that address relationships between a variety of background, experience, and attitudinal variables and such dependent variables as career intent, career decision making, and professional development.

### Objectives

The objective of this research was to develop a preliminary, predictive model of junior SWO continuance beyond MSR by (1) testing the theoretical relationships among two early indicants of turnover (organizational commitment and career intent) and the actual measure of turnover (continuance on active duty), and (2) determining the relationships among background factors, first sea tour assignments and work experiences, organizational commitment, and career intent as predictors of continuance.

### Approach

From a total of 359 junior SWOs who responded to a career development questionnaire in 1979, a subsample (N = 128) was identified (representing commissioning year groups 1974-75) who had not reached MSR at time of assessment (1979) and who would be 1 to 2 years beyond MSR as of September 1981. Of this sample, 58 (45%) had left active service and 70 (55%) remained. Stayers and leavers were compared on their responses to pertinent items included in the questionnaire, composite scales constructed from responses to certain items, and a measure of actual continuance. Hypothesized relationships were examined using cross-tabulation, correlational, and multivariate statistical procedures.

### Results

1. Of those variables tested as predictors of continuance beyond MSR, career intent was found to be the single best predictor, accounting for 25 percent of the variance in the criterion when used by itself. While organizational commitment was also a strong predictor of criterion variance (accounting for 16%), it was highly correlated with career intent. When that portion of the criterion variance shared by career intent and organizational commitment was removed, organizational commitment did not explain a significant amount of criterion variance beyond that accounted for by career intent alone. Thus, career intent was found to be the most powerful predictor of junior SWO continuance decisions.

2. In this sample, officers commissioned from reserve sources were significantly more likely to have remained on active duty than those were from regular sources (68.2 vs. 46.9%).

3. In addition to commissioning source and career intent, the following work experiences were found to be significant predictors of variance in continuance on active duty: first sea tour assignment, and work experiences.

4. Officers with a first sea tour assignment to a high-stress assignment were more likely to resign than those with a first sea tour assignment to a low-stress assignment.

5. Officers with a first sea tour assignment to a high-stress assignment were more likely to remain on active duty than those with a first sea tour assignment to a low-stress assignment.

c. Officers were more likely to stay if they evaluated the performance of their first ship highly.

d. Officers who were dependent upon other JOs to ease their adjustment to geographic location were more likely to resign.

e. Officers who saw the SWO career path as attractive were more likely to remain.

### Conclusions

1. Career intent expressed by junior SWOs 1 to 2 years prior to MSR is the best single predictor available to forecast whether the officers will continue their career beyond their first opportunity to resign. It may be possible to monitor career intent in a simple manner during the first assignment so that the command can develop programs to increase career intent, and headquarters can forecast continuance rates earlier than is now feasible.

2. Junior SWO career decisions are influenced substantially by their first sea tour experiences, perceptions of their work environment, and professional development opportunities. Therefore, it appears that the command can take actions that will increase or decrease the number of SWOs who resign at the first opportunity.

3. The various factors that might have accounted for the significant differences between those commissioned as regular officers and those commissioned as reserves as to (a) continuance rates, (b) the importance of career intent vs. organizational commitment, and (c) the impact of a "split" first sea tour were not investigated in this research. Such factors were present at or prior to attendance at the sources of commissioning.

4. The fact that junior SWOs who are "split-toured" receive significantly lower performance evaluations (fitness reports) than do those remaining in a single tour could indicate that such individuals are either made available by the command for a split tour because of their performance or perform poorly because of the constant adjustments they are facing. Since performance is not related to continuance, career intent, or organizational commitment and split touring is predictive of resignation, it may be that low performance is related to the lack of opportunity to learn the job and become qualified as a result of split touring.

### Recommendations

1. Research should be conducted to establish the career intent of Navy officers prior to and after entering the commissioning sources. The research should identify those early factors that influence career intent.

2. The Surface Warfare Officer School--Basic and Nuclear Power School should initiate workshops that help junior officers plan their first tour so that they achieve the required career development steps.

3. Commands with junior SWOs should initiate programs that increase the commitment to a Navy career of uncommitted quality officers and maintain the commitment of those quality officers who are committed to a Navy career. Research should be conducted to establish procedures for commands to assess career intent.

4. The policy of split touring junior SWOs in their initial sea tour should be continued further to see if it is actually related to better continuance or resignation rates. If the relationship is verified, then the benefits of split touring should be expanded.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Problem

Since 1976, the surface warfare community has continued to experience substantial shortfalls in the voluntary continuance of junior officers on active duty beyond their minimum service requirement (MSR).<sup>1</sup> While continuance rates improved during FYs 1979-1980, they were still approximately 18 percent below official Navy goals and 8 percent below the minimum level necessary to maintain current authorized personnel levels.

A collateral problem is the substantial decline in continuance rates for those junior surface warfare officers (SWOs) commissioned as regular officers through the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) and the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps-Scholarship (NROTC-S) Program. Continuance rates for these commissioning sources decreased from 59 percent in FYs 1977-1978 to 38 percent in FYs 1979-1980, while the continuance rates for officers commissioned through the reserve sources (NROTC-Contract (NROTC-C) Program and Officer Candidate School (OCS)) actually increased somewhat. If the Navy is to expand the size of the fleet and maintain a high state of readiness in future years, factors that have a negative impact on the career intentions/continuance decisions of competent junior SWOs must be isolated and actions initiated to reverse present trends.<sup>2</sup>

### Background

During 1976, the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center (NAVPERS-RANDCEN) initiated research to determine factors/conditions that influence the career decisions and continuance of junior SWOs. This report, the fifth in a series published as part of the Surface Warfare Junior Officer Retention and Officer Personnel Distribution and Career Development projects, focuses on relationships among background factors, first sea tour assignments/experiences, career intentions, and continuance beyond MSR. Previous reports in this series have described the problem areas and the development of a research strategy, including the administration of a survey questionnaire (Holzbach, 1979), the junior SWO assignment process (Holzbach, Morrison, & Mohr, 1980), spousal influence on junior SWO career decision making (Mohr, Holzbach, & Morrison, 1981), and factors associated with the early professional development of junior SWOs (Cook & Morrison, 1982). A final report in this series will focus on the integration of results from the overall project, emphasizing policy/intervention implications.

Recent research conducted across a number of occupational groups and work settings suggests that intention to remain with an organization (career intent) is a potent predictor of actual continuance behavior (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). Current theory suggests that behavioral intentions result from complex transactions between the individual, the organization, and environmental/cultural factors. Such transactions are

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<sup>1</sup>At present, the MSR is 5 years for Naval Academy graduates and 4 years for all other commissioning sources.

<sup>2</sup>Statistics reported were provided by the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, and Training) (OP-132F). They are based on the present method of measuring continuance as the number of officers present at MSR + 2 years divided by the number of officers present 1 year prior to MSR. Research is being conducted to develop a better means of measuring continuance (Bres & Rowe, 1980).

reflected in such constructs as person-environment fit (Van Harrison, 1978) and organizational commitment (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Steers, 1977). Organizational commitment represents the relative strength of a person's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization. Steers (1977) has proposed a model of commitment that specifies personal, job, and organizational characteristics as antecedents of commitment and career intent and job performance as predictable outcomes of commitment. While this model has received support in several investigations (Porter et al., 1974), there is a continuing need for validation across a range of organizations, occupational groupings, and work environments. Additionally, it is important to recognize that the development of career intent and organizational commitment implies an ongoing exchange or transaction between the individual and the organization. As Steers (1977) notes, individuals enter organizations with needs, skills, and desires and many expect to find a work environment where their basic needs will be met and their abilities utilized. When meaningful or challenging tasks are not present, organizational commitment can be expected to diminish over time, resulting in a decrease in career intent and a lower probability of continuing with the organization.

One attempt to assess the predictive validity of a military junior officer's career intent, as an antecedent of continuance beyond obligated service, was research conducted by the Army research group at the United States Military Academy (Bridges, 1969; Butler & Bridges, 1976). In a series of three longitudinal studies, it was found that career intentions reported by academy seniors (classes of 1966, 1967, 1969) were significant predictors of continuance on active duty in subsequent years. For the classes of 1966 and 1967, where continuance was measured 3 years after completion of obligated service, the average correlation between continuance and career intent was .36. For the class of 1969, where continuance was assessed 1 year after obligated service, the correlation was .26. These studies suggest (1) a causal relationship between career intent and continuance among junior military officers, and (2) the importance of early organizational experiences in the formation of such intentions; however, they provide no information about the nature of such experiences or interactions between early intentions and later work experiences.

A more thorough understanding of the process by which junior officer career intentions are formed and modified will enhance the Navy's ability to make informed decisions regarding actions to improve junior SWO continuance rates.

#### Purpose

The objective of this research was to develop a predictive model of junior SWO continuance beyond MSR by (1) testing the theoretical relationships among two early indicants of turnover (organizational commitment and career intent) and the actual measure of turnover (continuance on active duty), and (2) determining the relationships among background factors, first sea tour assignments and work experiences, organizational commitment, and career intent as predictors of continuance.

#### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses, derived primarily from the general model proposed by Steers (1977), served as a framework for this research. Following from this theoretical model, continuance beyond MSR was expected to be a function of (1) background factors, (2) early assignment and work experiences, (3) organizational commitment, and (4) career intent.

1. Hypothesis 1. Junior SWO career intent, reported 1 to 2 years prior to MSR, will account for substantial variance in continuance beyond MSR.

2. Hypothesis 2. Organizational commitment (OC), reported 1 to 2 years prior to MSR, will be significantly correlated with career intent (CI) and continuance (CN). The magnitude of the correlations among the variables will be:

$$r_{OC \cdot CN} < r_{CI \cdot CN} < r_{OC \cdot CI}$$

This relationship was expected for both those commissioned as regulars and those commissioned as reserves.

3. Hypothesis 3. In addition to career intent and organizational commitment, it was expected that background factors and first sea tour assignments and work experiences would produce unique, significant contributions to the variance accounted for in junior SWO continuance beyond MSR. Hypotheses concerning these variables are provided below.

a. Background Factors:

(1) Commissioning source. Those commissioned as regular officers (USNA, NROTC-S) will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those commissioned as reserve officers (OCS, NROTC-C).

(2) Academic/military class standing. Those who ranked high academically and in military skills prior to commissioning will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those with lower standings.

b. First Sea Tour Assignments and Work Experiences:

(1) Ship type. Those initially assigned to ships staffed with predominantly SWOs (e.g., destroyers, cruisers, frigates) will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those assigned to ships with relatively smaller proportions of SWOs (e.g., carriers, mobile logistics support forces, amphibious, etc.).

(2) Tour type. Those assigned to more than one ship (split-tour) during the first tour will report lower career intent and be less likely to continue on active duty than will those remaining on the same ship throughout the tour.

(3) Ship operational history. Those assigned to ships having a high percentage of deployed time will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those assigned to ships having a high percentage of nondeployed time.

(4) Time devoted to professional development activities. Those reporting the greatest percentage of time devoted to professional development activities will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those with less opportunity for such development.

(5) Personal evaluations of division, department, and ship (initial sea tour). Those who report positive evaluations of their division, department, and ship will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those who report negative evaluations.

(6) Professional Qualification Standard (PQS) progress. Those who progress toward PQS at a fast rate will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those who made slower progress.

(7) Reward structure. Those who report positive evaluations of work reward structure (both intrinsic and extrinsic), while both deployed and not deployed, will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those who report more negative evaluations.

(8) Attractiveness of sea duty. Those who find sea duty attractive will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those who find sea duty unattractive.

(9) Attractiveness of the SWO career path. Those who find the SWO career path attractive will be more likely to continue beyond MSR than will those who find it unattractive.

4. Hypothesis 4. Career intent, organizational commitment, and continuance will be positively associated with self-reports of performance (fitness reports) during the pre-MSR period. Performance, in turn, will be significantly correlated with commissioning source (regulars having higher performance scores) and positive experiences during the first sea tour.

## METHOD

### Sample

The original sample of 359 junior SWOs commissioned during 1968-1977 that comprised the data base for this research has been described in detail by Holzbach et al. (1980). From this sample, several sample reduction procedures were implemented:

1. Those from years 1968-1973 were eliminated since the numbers were too small to be representative of these cohorts and since these officers were either at MSR or beyond at time of assessment in 1979.

2. Those cases with large amounts of missing data were excluded.

3. Those commissioned through the Naval Enlisted Scientific Education Program (NESEP) were excluded since this program has been discontinued.

These reductions resulted in an adjusted sample size of 267. Of this number, 128 (from commissioning years 1974-75) were within 1 to 2 years of MSR at time of assessment (early 1979) and approximately 1 to 2 years beyond MSR as of June 1981. Thus, these 128 cases were designated as the continuance subsample and classified as either "stayers" (N = 70) or "leavers" (N = 58). Regular officers in this sample (N = 81) were typically 6-12 months beyond MSR on June 1981, whereas reserves (N = 47) were typically 12-24 months beyond MSR due to the 1-year difference in original MSR.

### Measures

Measures included responses to pertinent items in the questionnaire developed and administered by Holzbach (1979), composite scales constructed from item responses, and a continuance criterion. These measures are described in the following paragraphs.

### Questionnaire Items

A copy of the survey questionnaire was provided in Holzbach (1979). Those sections/items of interest to this particular effort are reproduced in the appendix and described below.

1. Section I--Background. Two items from this section were included, those asking respondents to indicate commissioning source (No. 7) and academic and military class ranking (10).

2. Section II--Professional qualifications. Only one item (No. 6) from this section was included, that asking respondents to supply certain information from their last six fitness reports. Information supplied was used to construct an index of officer performance (quality) (Holzbach, 1979; Holzbach et al., 1980).

3. Section III--Career intentions. This section consists of only one question: "To what degree are you now certain that you will continue an active military career until mandatory retirement?" Respondents answered this question using the Military Career Commitment Gradient (MCCOG) (a 50-point scale measuring career commitment) developed for the U.S. Military Academy (Bridges, 1969; Butler, 1973; Butler & Bridges, 1976).

4. Section IV--Assignment history and evaluation. This section consists of questions applying to respondent's first sea tour following commissioning as an SWO. Items of interest to this effort concerned the following:

- a. Ship type (1).
- b. Personal assignment history (areas where respondent had been assigned and for how long)(5).
- c. Ship's operational status (e.g., deployed, inport, etc.) (6)
- d. Hours per week spent in types of operational status (7).
- e. Evaluation of 14 aspects of job and related duties while deployed and while not deployed (10 and 11).
- f. Evaluation of commanding officer(s) (12).
- g. Evaluation of ship, department, and division (16).
- h. Help received regarding adjustment to initial assignment and to geographic location of that assignment (19 and 20).

5. Section VI--Decision process. Two items from this section were included, those concerning attractiveness of the SWO career path (4) and evaluation of sea duty (6.c.).

6. Section VII--Supplemental questions. This section asked respondents to indicate how much they agreed with various statements about the Navy. Responses to 15 statements relating to organizational commitment were of interest to this effort (1.g-1.u). These statements were from the organizational commitment scale developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1978) and had been modified for use in the survey questionnaire (Holzbach, 1979).

### Composite Scales

Composite scales were constructed to measure the following constructs:

1. Organization Commitment. A scale constructed from responses of the entire sample (N = 267) to the 15 items on organizational commitment had a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) of .88. Item-total scale (item removed) correlations ranged from .38 to .73, except for item 1.g., which produced a correlation of .09. This item was retained, however, to maintain the integrity of the original scale.

2. Reward Structure--Deployed and Not Deployed. The 14 aspects of job and related duties while deployed and while not deployed (Items 10 and 11, Section IV) were factor analyzed across the entire sample (N = 267) using a principle components solution rotated to a varimax criterion of simple structure. The procedure consisted of selecting independent, random halves of the sample (Samples A and B) and conducting the factor analysis in each. As shown in Table 1, a two-factor structure emerged for both samples while deployed and while not deployed. The major factor was composed of intrinsic rewards associated with the job; and the secondary factor, of extrinsic rewards. The two factors accounted for approximately 70 and 20 percent of the scale variance respectively.

The three items that had factor loadings of less than .40 on either factor were not included in the construction of the composite scale. These items were separation from family/friends, opportunity to complete PQS, and relationships in wardroom. Individual values for items with factor loadings greater than .40 were added to form the composite scale scores.

### Continuance Criterion

For this investigation, continuance was defined as being on active duty 1-2 years beyond the end of obligated service. Those junior officers who had a surface warfare designation in early 1979 and who had changed to a different community (N = 7) were retained in the sample. The criterion was operationalized as a categorical "dummy" variable (0 = not active; 1 = active) based upon a search of the September 1981 Navy officer master tape.

### Analyses

Hypothesized relationships were examined using cross-tabulation, correlational, and multivariate statistical procedures. Multiple regression using a stepwise inclusion criterion was selected as the procedure to assess relationships between predictor variables and continuance. Those commissioned as regulars (USNA, NROTC-S) are required to serve 1 more year of active duty than are those commissioned as reserves (OCS, NROTC-C). Thus, to isolate differences due to commissioning source, analyses were conducted first with the total continuance sample (N = 128), and then according to source of commissioning.

To maintain the total sample size, particularly in the regression analyses, those cases with missing values on any predictor variable were replaced with the sample mean for that variable. Considering the large number of independent variables (35 or 36) used in the analyses and a relatively small sample (N = 128), the results of the analyses may not be readily replicable. Consistency between research conducted by others (Butler & Bridges, 1976; Mobley et al, 1979; Porter et al, 1974; and Steers, 1981) and the results reported herein and similar relationships within the two independent samples (regular and reserve officers) may add credibility to the findings.

Table 1  
Summary of Factor Analyses of Items Related to  
First Sea Tour Job and Related Duties

Factor/Components	<u>Deployed</u>		<u>Not Deployed</u>	
	F1	F2	F1	F2
<b>Sample A Factor Loadings</b> (N = 110 for deployed and 130 for not deployed)				
1. <u>Intrinsic Rewards</u>				
a. Challenge	.74	--	.80	--
b. Use of skills and abilities	.80	--	.72	--
c. Interesting duties	.66	--	.77	--
d. Adventure	.45	--	.56	--
e. Sense of accomplishment	.59	--	.83	--
f. Opportunity to grow professionally	.67	--	.40	--
g. Doing something important	.65	--	.75	--
2. <u>Extrinsic Rewards</u>				
a. Working environment	--	.67	--	.62
b. Hours of work required	--	.71	--	.74
c. Work pressure	--	.63	--	.67
d. Ability to plan and schedule activities	--	.56	--	.60
-----				
Eigenvalue	4.54	1.33	4.78	1.84
-----				
Percent of variance	70.00	20.50	66.00	25.40
<b>Sample B Factor Loadings</b> (N = 116 for deployed and 128 for not deployed)				
1. <u>Intrinsic Rewards</u>				
a. Challenge	.80	--	.74	--
b. Use of skills and abilities	.62	--	.66	--
c. Interesting duties	.56	--	.84	--
d. Adventure	.45	--	.63	--
e. Sense of accomplishment	.75	--	.75	--
f. Opportunity to grow professionally	.56	--	.58	--
g. Doing something important	.65	--	.74	--
2. <u>Extrinsic Rewards</u>				
a. Working environment	--	.59	--	.66
b. Hours of work required	--	.71	--	.72
c. Work pressure	--	.58	--	.61
d. Ability to plan and schedule activities	--	.44	--	.56
-----				
Eigenvalue	4.62	.95	5.57	1.17
-----				
Percent of variance	72.70	15.00	76.50	16.10

**Notes.**

1. Samples A and B refer to independent, random halves of the total sample representing commissioning years 1975-77.

2. Factor loadings of less than .40 are not reported.

## RESULTS

Predictors of junior SWO continuance beyond MSR and career intent are provided in Tables 2 and 3 respectively. Intercorrelations of those predictors are provided in Tables 4 and 5. Data provided in these tables concerning the study hypotheses are described below.

### Hypothesis 1

As hypothesized, career intent, measured approximately 1 year prior to MSR, was significantly associated with continuance beyond MSR in the total sample ( $r = .50, p < .01$ ) (Table 4). When broken down according to commissioning source, the correlations were  $r = .52$  ( $p < .01$ ) for regular officers and  $r = .43$  ( $p < .01$ ) for reserves.

### Hypothesis 2

Career intent, measured approximately 1 year prior to MSR, was significantly associated with organizational commitment in the total sample ( $r = .67, p < .01$ ) (Table 4). When broken down according to commissioning source, the correlations were  $r = .59$  ( $p < .01$ ) for regular officers and  $r = .78$  ( $p < .01$ ) for reserves.

In the total sample, both career intent and organizational commitment were significantly ( $p < .01$ ) associated with continuance beyond MSR (Table 4). As shown in Figure 1a, the correlation between career intent and continuance ( $r = .50$ ) was marginally greater ( $t(125) = 1.60, p < .10$ ) than that between organizational commitment and continuance ( $r = .40$ ). The correlation between organizational commitment and career intent was significantly greater ( $t(125) = 2.66, p < .01$ ) than that between career intent and continuance. Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported. These relationships were examined using a test of the significance of the difference between two correlation coefficients for correlated samples (Ferguson, 1971).

To test further the relative strengths of career intent and organizational commitment as predictors of continuance, a multiple regression procedure was used with continuance regressed on both predictor variables using stepwise inclusion criteria. Results of this analysis confirmed that career intent is the best predictor of continuance, accounting for 25 percent of the variance, while the inclusion of organizational commitment only yields an additional 1.8 percent.

These relationships were further examined according to commissioning source. As shown in Figure 1b, there was a significant difference ( $z = 1.95, p < .01$ ) between the career intent-organizational commitment relationship across commissioning sources (regulars,  $r = .59$ ; reserves,  $r = .78$ ). For regular officers, career intent emerged as a more powerful predictor of continuance than did organizational commitment ( $t(125) = 2.97, p < .01$ ), but there was no significant difference ( $t(125) = 1.16, n.s.$ ) between the two predictors' ability to predict continuance for reserves. The first relationship was examined using Fisher's  $z_r$  transformation for testing the significance of differences between two correlation coefficients for independent samples; the last two were assessed as previously noted for correlated samples (Ferguson, 1971).

### Hypothesis 3

#### Background Factors

1. Commissioning source. Contrary to hypotheses 3.a(1), those commissioned as reserve officers (OCS, NROTC-C) were more likely to remain on active duty beyond MSR

Table 2  
Background, First Sea Tour, and Selected General Factors  
as Predictors of Junior SWO Continuance Beyond MSR  
(Continuance Sample)

Predictors in order of entry into the regression	r	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Δ</sub>	F
Total Sample (N = 128)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	-.21	.21	.04	.04	7.27*
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.23	.29	.08	.04	7.27*
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.22	.35	.12	.04	7.27*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.27	.41	.17	.05	9.09*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.19	.45	.20	.03	5.45**
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.35	.52	.27	.07	12.73*
7. Career intent	.50	.58	.34	.07	12.73*
8. Organizational commitment	.40	.59	.34	.00	.55
Total		.59	.34		7.78*
Regulars Only (N = 81)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.22	.22	.05	.05	5.88**
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.26	.32	.10	.05	5.88**
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.29	.41	.17	.07	8.24*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.18	.46	.21	.04	4.71**
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.38	.54	.29	.08	9.41*
7. Career intent	.52	.61	.37	.08	9.41*
8. Organizational commitment	.32	.61	.34	.00	.06
Total		.61	.34		6.23**
Reserves Only (N = 47)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.20	.20	.04	.04	2.26***
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.19	.28	.08	.04	2.26***
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.12	.28	.08	.00	
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.16	.34	.12	.04	2.26***
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.29	.43	.19	.07	3.95**
7. Career intent	.43	.48	.23	.04	2.26***
8. Organizational commitment	.49	.54	.29	.06	3.39**
Total		.54	.29		2.30***

Note. F values for each variable reflect the unique contribution to explained variance (R<sup>2</sup><sub>Δ</sub>) in continuance. Overall F values reflect the total contribution of all entered variables to explained variance (R<sup>2</sup>) in continuance.

<sup>a</sup>Commissioning source was entered as follows: Regular (USNA, NROTC-S) = 1; Reserve (OCS, NROTC-C) = 0.

<sup>b</sup>Split tour was entered as follows: No = 0; Yes = 1.

\*p < .01.  
\*\*p < .05.  
\*\*\*p < .10.

Table 3  
Background, First Sea Tour, and Selected General Factors as Predictors  
of Junior SWO Career Intent (Continuance Sample)

Predictors in order of entry into the regression	r	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Δ</sub>	F
Total Sample (N = 128)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	-.13	.13	.02	.02	5.26**
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.20	.22	.05	.03	7.89*
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.28	.35	.12	.07	18.42*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.25	.40	.16	.04	10.53*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.12	.42	.17	.01	2.63**
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.53	.61	.37	.20	52.63*
7. Organizational commitment	.67	.73	.54	.17	44.74*
Total		.73	.54		19.95*
Regulars Only (N = 81)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.19	.19	.04	.04	5.48**
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.25	.30	.09	.05	7.14*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.24	.37	.13	.04	5.48**
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.09	.38	.15	.07	2.86**
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.47	.55	.31	.16	22.86*
7. Organizational commitment	.59	.70	.49	.18	25.71*
Total		.70	.49		11.65*
Reserves Only (N = 47)					
<u>Background Factors</u>					
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--
<u>First Sea Tour Factors</u>					
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>	-.17	.17	.03	.03	2.73
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status	.34	.37	.14	.11	10.00***
4. Overall evaluation of first ship	.23	.40	.16	.02	1.82
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location	-.14	.43	.19	.03	2.73
<u>General Factors</u>					
6. Attractiveness of the SW career path	.61	.71	.50	.31	28.18*
7. Organizational commitment	.78	.81	.66	.15	13.64*
Total		.81	.66		12.75*

Note. F values for each variable reflect the unique contribution to explained variance (R<sup>2</sup><sub>Δ</sub>) in continuance. Overall F values reflect the total contribution of all entered variables to explained variance (R<sup>2</sup>) in continuance.

<sup>a</sup>Commissioning source was entered as follows: Regular (USNA, NROTC-S) = 1; Reserve (OCS, NROTC-C) = 0.

<sup>b</sup>Split tour was entered as follows: No = 0; Yes = 1.

\*p < .01.  
\*\*p < .05.  
\*\*\*p < .10.

Table 4  
Intercorrelations of Predictors of Junior  
SWO Continuance Beyond MSR  
(Continuance Sample)

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total Sample (N = 128)								
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	.14	.21*	-.20*	.08	-.11	-.13	-.16	-.21*
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		-.06	-.06	-.04	-.01	-.20*	-.18	-.23*
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.15	.07	.23*	.28**	.15	.22*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				-.02	.18	.27**	.13	.77**
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					-.03	-.12	-.03	-.19*
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.53**	.59**	.35**
7. Career intent							.67**	.50**
8. Organizational commitment								.40**
9. <u>Criterion:</u> Continuance beyond MSR								--
Regulars Only (N = 81)								
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		.09	-.02	-.07	-.03	-.19*	-.11	-.22*
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.13	.09	.07	.25*	-.02	.26*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				-.03	.24*	.24*	.10	.29**
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					-.08	-.09	-.04	-.18
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.47**	.45**	.38**
7. Career intent							.59**	.52**
8. Organizational commitment								.32**
9. <u>Criterion:</u> Continuance beyond MSR								--
Reserves Only (N = 47)								
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		-.02	-.09	-.02	.08	-.17	-.25	-.20
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.24	.07	.36*	.34*	.29*	.19
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				.05	-.01	.23	.13	.12
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					.05	-.14	.01	-.17
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.61**	.75**	.29*
7. Career intent							.78**	.43**
8. Organizational commitment								.49**
9. <u>Criterion:</u> Continuance beyond MSR								--

<sup>a</sup>Commissioning source was entered as follows: Regular (USNA, NROTC-S) = 1; Reserve (OCS, NROTC-C) = 0.

<sup>b</sup>Split tour was entered as follows: No = 0; Yes = 1.

\*p < .05 (two-tailed).

\*\*p < .01 (two-tailed).

Table 5  
Intercorrelations of Predictors of Junior SWO Career Intent  
(Continuance Sample)

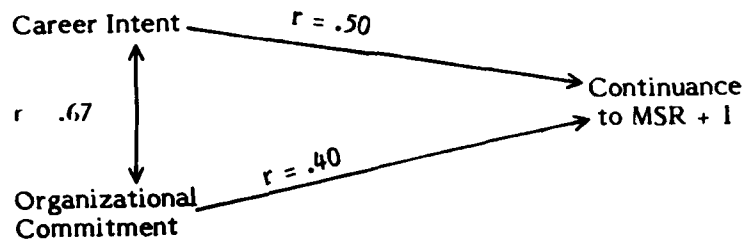
Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Total Sample (N = 128)							
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	.14	-.04	-.20*	.08	-.11	-.16	-.13
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		.09	-.06	-.04	-.01	-.18	-.20*
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.15	.07	.23*	.15	.28*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				-.02	.18	.13	.25*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					-.03	-.03	-.12
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.59**	.53**
7. Organizational commitment							.67**
8. <u>Criterion:</u> Career intent							--
Regulars Only (N = 81)							
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		.09	-.02	-.07	-.03	-.11	-.19
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.13	.09	.07	-.02	.25*
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				-.03	.24*	.10	.24*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					-.08	-.04	-.09
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.45**	.47**
7. Organizational commitment							.59**
8. <u>Criterion:</u> Career intent							--
Reserves Only (N = 47)							
1. Commissioning source <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Split tour <sup>b</sup>		-.02	-.09	-.02	.08	-.25*	-.17
3. Percent of time devoted to professional development activities--upkeep status			.24*	.07	.36**	.29**	.34**
4. Overall evaluation of first ship				.05	-.01	.13	.23*
5. Helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to geographic location					.05	.01	-.14
6. Attractiveness of SW career path						.75**	.61**
7. Organizational commitment							.78**
8. <u>Criterion:</u> Career intent							--

<sup>a</sup>Commissioning source was entered as follows: Regular (USNA, NROTC-S) = 1; Reserve (OCS, NROTC-C) = 0.

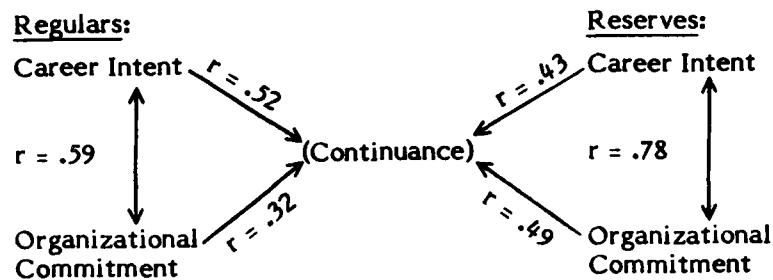
<sup>b</sup>Split tour was entered as follows: No = 0; Yes = 1.

\*p < .05 (two-tailed).

\*\*p < .01 (two-tailed).



a. Across total continuance sample.



b. Across commissioning sources.

Figure 1. Correlations between career intent, organizational commitment, and continuance.

than were those commissioned as regular officers (USNA, NROTC-S). This relationship is weak, however, with commissioning source accounting for only 4 percent of the variance in the total continuance sample (Table 2). Due to the relatively small cell sizes, differences between specific commissioning sources (e.g., USNA vs. NROTC-S) were not assessed.

2. Academic/military class standing. Contrary to hypothesis 3.a.(2), academic and military class standings (commissioning) were not found to be significant predictors of continuance beyond MSR (Tables 2 and 3) or to be significantly associated with career intent or organizational commitment.

Neither hypothesis involving background factors was supported.

#### First Sea Tour Assignment and Work Experience

1. Ship type. In contrast to hypothesis 3.b.(1), first tour ship type was not a significant predictor of continuance for either regulars or reserves.

2. Tour type. Hypothesis 3.b.(2) was supported. Those receiving a split tour were significantly less likely to remain beyond MSR and less committed to a career (Tables 2 and 3). The correlations between split-tour and career intent and between split-tour and continuance were similar for both regulars and reserves; however, only those for regulars were significant ( $p < .05$ ), possibly due to the smaller number in the reserve category.

3. Ship operational history. Contrary to hypothesis 3.b.(3), the percent of time deployed during first sea tour was not related to either continuance beyond MSR or career intent (Tables 2 and 3).

4. Time devoted to professional development activities. Hypothesis 3.b(4) was supported: The percentage of time devoted to professional development activities while in an upkeep status made a significant, unique contribution to variation in continuance beyond MSR in the total sample (Tables 2 and 3). This finding was also obtained for both regulars and reserves; however, the F-ratio for reserves was marginally significant ( $F(1,45) = 2.26, p < .10$ ), possibly due to the smaller number in this category. For both commissioning sources, significant correlations ( $p < .05$ ) were obtained between percent of time devoted to professional development (upkeep status) and career intent (Table 4).

5. Personal evaluations of division, department, and ship. Personal evaluations of department to which assigned and ship were both significantly associated with continuance beyond MSR and career intent; however, both evaluations were highly correlated. Of the two, evaluation of first ship emerged as the single unique predictor of continuance (Table 2). When this relationship was examined according to source of commissioning, it was evident that this relationship was true for regulars but not for reserves. Therefore, hypothesis 3.b(5) was partially supported.

6. PQS progress. Confirming results of previous analyses (Cook & Morrison, 1982), progress toward completion of PQS was significantly correlated with career intent ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ) in the continuance sample. This relationship was true for both regulars ( $r = .32, p < .01$ ) and reserves ( $r = .35, p < .05$ ). However, when this variable was entered into the regression equation as a predictor of continuance, it did not produce a unique contribution to the variance accounted for, due to the substantial intercorrelations between PQS progress and other first sea tour variables. Hypothesis 3.b(6) was supported, but any unique contribution was compromised by its relationship to other environmental measures.

7. Reward structure. While personal evaluations of work reward structure (intrinsic and extrinsic), both while deployed and not deployed, were significantly correlated with career intent (average  $r = .30, p < .01$ ) and organizational commitment (average  $r = .40, p < .01$ ), the relationship between these factors and continuance was typically small; the highest association being between extrinsic rewards (deployed) and continuance ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ). The inclusion of these in the regression equation did not produce unique, significant contributions to explained variance in continuance. Hypothesis 3.b(7) could not be considered to be supported.

8. Attractiveness of sea duty and the SWO career path. As hypothesized (3.b(8) and (9)), attractiveness of sea duty and of the SW career path were significantly intercorrelated and were both correlated with continuance and career intent. Significant correlations resulted for the total continuance sample, regulars only, and reserves only. Due to the high correlation between attractiveness of sea duty and of the SW career path ( $r = .47$ ), attractiveness of sea duty did not enter significantly into the regression equation and, thus, is not shown in Tables 2 and 3. The resulting coefficients between attractiveness of sea duty and continuance were  $.36 (p < .01)$ ,  $.38 (p < .01)$ , and  $.21 (p < .05)$  for the total sample, regulars only, and reserves only respectively, and those between attractiveness of sea duty and career intent were  $.40 (p < .01)$ ,  $.47 (p < .01)$ , and  $.26 (p < .05)$ . The resulting coefficients between attractiveness of the SW career path and continuance were  $.35 (p < .01)$ ,  $.38 (p < .01)$ , and  $.29 (p < .05)$  for the total sample, regulars only, and reserves only respectively (Table 4), and those between attractiveness

of SW career path and career intent were .53 ( $p < .01$ ), .47 ( $p < .01$ ), and .61 ( $p < .01$ ) (Table 5).

While not specifically hypothesized, the obtained negative relationship between the junior SWOs evaluation of the helpfulness of peers in easing adjustment to the geographic location of their first assignment and continuance is worth noting (Table 4). While the coefficient for the total sample is of low magnitude (-.19), the relationship is consistent across commissioning sources, accounting for 3 to 4 percent of explained variance. Thus, it appears that junior officers who experience few problems adjusting are less likely to perceive a need for support from peers and are more likely to continue on active duty.

#### Hypothesis 4

Contrary to expectations, junior SWO performance prior to MSR was not significantly related to (1) career intent, (2) organizational commitment, or (3) most first sea tour experiences or perceptions. Performance evaluations were marginally related to whether the junior SWO had a split tour, with those having a split tour receiving lower evaluations than those remaining on a single ship. For the total sample, the correlation coefficient for performance and split tour was  $r = -.17$  ( $p < .10$ ). According to commissioning source, the coefficients were  $r = -.28$  ( $p < .02$ ) for regulars and  $r = .04$  ( $p < = \text{n.s.}$ ) for reserves. For the reserve subsample, no significant predictors of performance were isolated; for the regular subsample, split-tour was found to be the single variable that accounted for significant variance ( $R^2 = .08$ ;  $F(1, 70) = 5.59$ ;  $p < .05$ ) in performance.

#### Summary of Results

Summarizing the results obtained from testing hypotheses 1-4, the following relationships emerge:

1. Career intent and organizational commitment are the best single predictors of junior SWO continuance beyond MSR. However, an analysis of selected background and first sea tour factors strongly suggests that both intent and commitment are, to a substantial degree, a function of experiences (and perceptions formed) during the first sea tour.

2. Those who (a) remain on one ship for the tour, (b) have the opportunity to pursue professional development when not deployed (e.g., upkeep status), and (c) form positive perceptions of their ships are more likely to view sea duty as attractive, be positive about the SW career path, and report higher organizational commitment and career intent.

3. The regression format used to test Hypothesis 3 called for the inclusion of career intent and organizational commitment at the last entry step, and it is known that career intent captures a large proportion of the variance in organizational commitment. Therefore, it was possible to evaluate the extent to which knowledge of background factors and first sea tour experiences add to an understanding of continuance behavior (beyond that explained by career intent). Resulting increases in explained variance in continuance using this approach are 9, 7, and 11 percent for the total sample, regulars only, and reserves only.

4. Surprisingly, performance prior to MSR was not significantly associated with career intent, organizational commitment, or continuance. For regulars, however, receiving a split-tour assignment was associated with lower performance evaluations.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research has been to isolate background and early Navy work experiences that influence junior SWO decisions to remain on active duty beyond MSR. Clearly, the single best predictor of continuance is career intent expressed prior to MSR, which, in turn, appears to reflect in large measure the sum of first sea tour experiences and perceptions. As a result, this research gives strong support to the proposition that junior officers, especially those who may not be strongly committed to either a Navy or a non-Navy career at time of commissioning, are influenced by the type and quality of early shipboard experiences and that the individual's evaluation of such experiences can be readily assessed by measuring career intentions.

It is also apparent that the one-item career intent scale is a more parsimonious predictor of continuance behavior than is the 15-item organizational commitment scale. Thus, career intent can be monitored at various career stages without having to resort to complex scales or questionnaires. For example, COs may be able to ask junior SWOs about their career intentions on a periodic basis and use responses to gain further knowledge about individual needs, desires, and perceptions. (The feasibility of this should be tested.) Assessment of career intentions would provide valuable information to Navy planners who are responsible for ensuring that adequate numbers of quality officers are present in the fleet at the right time and place.

Differences in the associations among career intent, organizational commitment, and continuance according to commissioning source suggest that split touring, professional development opportunity, evaluation of the first ship, and attractiveness of the SWO career path directly affect the career intent (and later continuance) of regular officers without having a major impact on organizational commitment. This relationship would be consistent with the set of values of individuals who see themselves as professionals. Such a set of values may be developed during the intensely involving program used to complement the academic curriculum at the Naval Academy and, to a degree, in the NROTC-S program. For officers commissioned via a reserve source, it appears that organizational commitment and career intent are the same operationally. Both have similar correlations with continuance as well as with professional development opportunity and the attractiveness of the SWO career path. Apparently, reserve officers see organization as synonymous with career while regular officers differentiate the two more clearly and see the career as more important.

This research has not established all of the factors throughout the early career that influence a junior SWO's career intent, because it is not known when that intent is formed and how it changes over time. For example, the regular officer source programs provide a high level of financial support to an individual who desires a good college education. The individual who enters such a program may have less initial intent to make the Navy a career than someone who provides for his/her own education and then enters the Navy. Thus, career intent for those in regular officer programs is relatively low at the start and stays that way. Another explanation could be that the regular officer source programs develop unrealistic expectations in the individuals who are enrolled. If these expectations are not met, career intent drops, even though it was initially high. In contrast, those in the reserve source programs may have held civilian jobs prior to joining the Navy and thereby developed realistic expectations as to working in a large organization. It is also possible that regular officers with low career intent are assigned to the SWO community or that career intent is lowered when officers who desired a different community (aviation, etc.) are assigned as SWO trainees.

The finding that junior SWOs who are "split-toured" are less committed to a career has important implications for the Navy. It takes considerable time for the new officer to become oriented to shipboard life, to learn the technical aspects of the assignment(s), and to complete PQS; thus, disruption of this learning/socialization process is likely to have a negative impact on the junior officer. This would be especially true once aboard the second ship, since a new social/organizational structure must be learned and the demands of the new assignment are likely to be different than those aboard the first ship. It is reasonable to speculate that the extra time necessary for this transition will impede PQS progress and have a negative impact on the individual's perception of the Navy as a "concerned" organization for which to work. Regular officers who are "split-toured" appear to be particularly affected, which is substantiated by the positive relationship between negative evaluations of first ship and low career intent. In addition, the negative relationship between split-tour and performance for regular officers has important implications, even though performance was not related to career intent or continuance. If such an assignment pattern does have a negative impact on fitness reports, or low performing junior SWOs are the ones made available by the command for a split tour, this condition can be expected to have an influence on later assignments and opportunities for those who are career committed. While these junior officers may not be aware of their relative standing with regard to contemporaries early in the career, such an awareness can be expected at some later point (e.g., through assignment decisions, promotion, etc.), resulting in negative consequences for both the individual and the organization (e.g., resignation, decreased motivation, etc.).

In summary, results of this research strongly suggest that: (1) the Navy place increased emphasis on the identification and optimization of early shipboard experiences/assignments and (2) leadership at all levels place a priority on the concerns, desires, and professional needs of junior SWOs. Such priorities include minimizing split-tour assignments, providing accurate career development information to junior officers, arranging career development opportunities during upkeep status, and increasing personal contact between leadership and junior officers so that an ongoing, informal assessment of individual career intent can be made. If department heads, XOs and COs are aware of individual career intentions from the time that the junior officer reports aboard ship, leadership actions can be initiated to (1) reinforce expressions of high intent, and (2) correct conditions associated with low expressed intent or dissatisfaction. COs should be made aware of the fact that a high performing ship can contribute to the continuance of junior officers.

While these findings have direct applications for the management and leadership of the junior SWO community, there are several important limitations inherent in this research. First, a cross-sectional or "snap-shot" approach limits the ability to generalize to other year groups and to account for changes in Navy policy and procedures. Second, the number of subjects included in these analyses is relatively small and relationships found should be viewed as preliminary; replication across different year-group cohorts with more representative sample sizes is needed. Given these limitations, the results do form a basis for future hypothesis testing and the further specification of factors that influence the career decisions of junior SWOs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Programs should be implemented at all commissioning sources (e.g., USNA, NROTC, OCS) to help prospective junior officers clarify their career goals, and provide timely, factual information regarding a Navy career.

2. Entry level professional schools (e.g., Surface Warfare Officer School-Basic and Nuclear Power School) should initiate career goal clarification workshops to (a) assess the career intentions of each class in order to detect significant trends in career intent and expectations that may impact on future continuance rates and (b) help newly commissioned officers develop a plan to actualize their career aspirations and maximize their opportunities while in the Navy. Such a plan should focus on what the officers should do during the first sea tour to enhance their future career opportunities.

3. COs of all ships with junior SWOs assigned should initiate a career intent assessment program in an atmosphere where both the command and the individual junior officers can participate toward achieving mutual goals. For example, junior officers who express low intent due to non-Navy career aspirations should be responded to in the same manner as those with positive Navy career intentions to (a) ensure maximum motivation and performance during their obligated service, and (b) provide a positive environment where the junior officer can maintain the option of changing from a civilian career to a Navy career.

4. Completely standardized programs should not be used to implement recommendations 1-3. Different programs should be developed to cope with the requirements imposed by different commissioning sources, ship types, and individual career goals.

5. Conditions that result in the "split-touring" of junior SWOs (e.g., policy, expediency, etc.) should be carefully examined by the Naval Military Personnel Command and a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis conducted. If additional evidence is found that such assignment decisions are resulting in the decreased probability of the junior SWO continuing on active duty, official Navy policy should discourage such personnel actions except in cases of extreme need.

6. Research should be initiated in all commissioning sources to (a) assess changes in career intent and organizational commitment over the 4-year undergraduate period and isolate factors associated with such changes, (b) determine the relationships between career intent, organizational commitment, and assignment to a primary designator (e.g., surface, air, submarine), and (c) catalogue factors that prospective junior officers consider in their career plans.

7. Research should be conducted to establish a procedure for a command to measure the career intent of its officers.

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**APPENDIX**  
**SURFACE WARFARE JUNIOR OFFICER CAREER QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**(EXTRACT)**

SURFACE WARFARE JUNIOR OFFICER  
CAREER QUESTIONNAIRE

Privacy Act Notice

Under the authority of 5 USC 301, information regarding your background, attitudes, experiences, and future intentions in the Navy is requested to provide input to a series of studies on officer retention. The information provided by you will not become part of your official record, nor will it be used to make decisions about you which will affect your career in anyway. It will be used by the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center for statistical purposes only. You are not required to provide this information. There will be no adverse consequences should you elect not to provide the requested information or any part of it.

INSTRUCTIONS

The following questionnaire is being distributed to a random sample of Surface Warfare Junior Officers. Its purpose is to identify and document the concerns and experiences of officers in the Surface Line as they relate to career motivation and career development. Your frank, honest, and forthright answers on the questionnaire are encouraged. Your name and SSAN is requested to provide a basis for a longitudinal evaluation of actual career decisions. The provisions of the Privacy Act will be strongly enforced.

Some of the questions may appear to be personal in nature. They are necessary to obtain a full and accurate picture of the factors affecting career motivation and career development of Surface Junior Officers. However, if any question appears unreasonably personal or too intrusive into your privacy, please omit it and continue with the balance of the questionnaire.

Thank you for your assistance. Please mark your answers on the questionnaire itself and return it directly to the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center, San Diego, CA 92152 by using the return envelope provided.

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NOTE: If you would like to receive an information letter on the general findings from the questionnaire, please print your name and address in the space provided:

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### III. CAREER INTENTIONS

#### MCCOG

This item concerns the intensity of your desire for a career as an officer in the military service. It consists of (1) a question and (2) a response gradient extending continuously between two defined extreme values.

Selected areas on the gradient are described, both verbally and in terms of probabilities, to provide you with some meaningful, reference points and to provide for more precision in scalar interpretation.

At selected scalar points, percentages beside the gradient indicate the judged probability (number of judged chances in 100) of one voluntarily continuing his active military career until mandatory retirement. Note, however, you definitely should not limit yourself to the few points for which descriptions are provided.

Due to the procedures for analyzing this item, it is very important that you follow these instructions precisely.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Step one. Read carefully the statement of the question in the box at the bottom of this page.

Step two. At the bottom of the gradient, read the definition of that extreme point on the gradient.

Step three. At the top of the gradient, read the definition of that extreme point.

Step four. At the middle of the gradient, the 50% point, read the description of that point.

Step five. Locate the general area on the gradient which seems to correspond best with your current commitment; thoughtfully read the descriptions of the near points and decide on the exact point on the gradient that most closely represents your current level of commitment.

Step six. Blacken the response space between the nearest pair of dotted lines; thus, if the point you initially selected is about midway between two response spaces, mark the response space which most nearly reflects your degree of commitment.

#### QUESTION:

To what degree are you now certain that you will continue an active military career until mandatory retirement?

MILITARY CAREER COMMITMENT GRADIENT  
A MILITARY CAREER VS. A NON-MILITARY CAREER

100%---There is infinite probability that I will continue my active military career as long as I possibly can, a career as an officer in active military service is more important to me than is anything else in the world. There is absolutely no chance at all that anything in the world could ever develop that could cause me to voluntarily resign.

99.995%

99.9%---I am virtually certain that I will continue my active military career as long as I am allowed to do so--that I will NOT voluntarily resign.

99%---I am almost certain I will make a continuing military career if possible

95%

90%---I am confident that I will make a continuing military career and NOT voluntarily resign.

85%

75%---I am very likely to continue my military career as long as possible.

65%---I probably will remain in the military service after completion of my military obligation as an officer.

50%---I am not inclined the least bit either way at present.

35%---I am not sure but probably will resign after completing my military obligation as an officer.

25% I am very likely to resign when I can honorably do so after completing my military obligation as an officer.

15%

10%---At this time, I am confident I will resign my commission after completing my military obligation.

5%

1%---As of now, I am almost certain that I will get out of the military service as soon as I possibly can.

0.1%---I am virtually certain that I will resign when I can.

0.005%

In my personal feelings, attitudes and thoughts, I am utterly committed to a completely non-military occupational career and life as soon as it is at all possible. There is absolutely no possibility whatsoever that I will continue as an officer in the military service beyond my minimal obligated military duty.

0%---

IV. ASSIGNMENT HISTORY AND EVALUATION

A. First Sea Tour

In this section (pages 5 through 10) a number of questions are presented that seek information about your first sea tour. Please answer these questions as they apply to your first full sea tour following commissioning as a Surface Warfare Officer. If you were split-toured, first sea tour applies to your first ship assignment.

- 1. Ship Type (e.g., AOE, CVN, DD, LST): \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Homeport: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Date reported (month, year): \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. PRD (month, year): \_\_\_\_\_

5. During your first sea tour, in which of the following areas have you been assigned, and for how long?

- ( ) Deck \_\_\_\_\_ (months)
- ( ) Engineering \_\_\_\_\_ (months)
- ( ) Navigation \_\_\_\_\_ (months)
- ( ) Operations \_\_\_\_\_ (months)
- ( ) Weapons \_\_\_\_\_ (months)
- ( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_ (months)

6. What has been the operational status, in months, of your ship since you reported aboard?

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>MONTHS</u>
a. Underway while deployed	_____
b. Inport while deployed	_____
c. Local operations	_____
d. Inport upkeep (homeport)	_____
e. Shipyard overhaul (including non-homeport upkeep)	_____

7. Approximately how many hours per week do you typically work while your ship is in each of the five operational status types identified in Question 6? Please break the time down into the time devoted to watch station, billet duties, collateral duties, and professional development (PQS).

	TOTAL HRS/WK	WATCH STATION (%)	BILLET DUTIES (%)	COLLATERAL DUTIES (%)	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (%)
a. Underway while deployed	<input type="text"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Inport while deployed	<input type="text"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Local operations	<input type="text"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Inport upkeep (homeport)	<input type="text"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Shipyard overhaul (including non-homeport upkeep)	<input type="text"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____

8. Have you been (or will you be) extended in this sea tour beyond your initial PRD?

N/A    NO    YES - how long? \_\_\_\_\_ (months)

9. If you answered YES to Question 8, what was (is) the reason?

- ( ) Complete PQS/attain SWO designator
- ( ) Attain Department Head Course selection
- ( ) Awaiting relief
- ( ) Shortage of PCS funds
- ( ) Own request not included under (a) or (b)
- ( ) No reason given
- ( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. When on a deployment, what is your evaluation of the following aspects of your job and related duties?

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
a. Challenge	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Separation from family/friends	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Use of skills & abilities	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. Working environment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. Hours of work required	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
f. Work pressure	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
g. Interesting duties	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
h. Ability to plan & schedule activities	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
i. "Adventure"	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
j. Opportunity to complete PQS	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
k. Sense of accomplishment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
l. Opportunity to grow professionally	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
m. Doing something important	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
n. Relationships in wardroom	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

11. When not deployed, what is your evaluation of the following aspects of your job and related duties?

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
a. Challenge	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Separation from family/friends	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Use of skills & abilities	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
d. Working environment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. Hours of work required	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
f. Work pressure	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
g. Interesting duties	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
h. Ability to plan & schedule activities	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
i. "Adventure"	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
j. Opportunity to complete PQS	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
k. Sense of accomplish- ment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
l. Opportunity to grow professionally	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
m. Doing something important	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
n. Relationships in wardroom	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

12. Using the following scale, what is your evaluation of your CO's in the following areas? (1=Very Negative, 2=Negative, 3=Neutral, 4=Positive, 5=Very Positive )

	<u>1st CO</u>	<u>2nd CO</u>	<u>3rd CO</u>
a. Seamanship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Management ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Interest in JO professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Interest in welfare of his crew	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Interest in welfare of his wardroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Which of the following officers had the greatest influence on your career decisions?

CO      XO      DEPARTMENT HEAD      OTHER DEPARTMENT HEADS      OTHER JO's

14. What is your evaluation of the individual identified in Question 13 in the following areas as they apply to you?

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
a. Working relationship	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Leadership	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Career guidance	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. Professional development	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

15. What is your overall evaluation of the following groups?

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
a. Wardroom	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Immediate superiors	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Immediate subordinates	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. CPO's and PO1's	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. PO2's and below	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

16. Based on fleet competitions, exercises, inspections, meeting commitments, general reputation, etc., how good is your--

	<u>One of the Worst</u>	<u>Below Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>One of the Best</u>
a. Ship	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Department	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Division	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

17. What is your evaluation of the geographic location of your duty assignment?

VERY NEGATIVE      NEGATIVE      NEUTRAL      POSITIVE      VERY POSITIVE

18. Approximately how long (in months) did it take you to feel that you "fitted in" with your--

- a. Command/activity \_\_\_\_\_  still don't
- b. Local community \_\_\_\_\_  still don't

19. How helpful were the following people or groups in easing your adjustment to your initial assignment on this ship?

	<u>Very Unhelpful</u>	<u>Unhelpful</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Helpful</u>	<u>Very Helpful</u>
a. CO	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. XO	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Department Head	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. Other JO's	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. CPO/PO's	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
f. Other _____	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

20. How helpful were the following people or groups in easing your adjustment to the geographic location of your assignment?

	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Very Unhelpful</u>	<u>Unhelpful</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Helpful</u>	<u>Very Helpful</u>
a. CO	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. XO	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Department Head	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. Other JO's	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. Spouse of CO or XO	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
f. Other spouses	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
g. Family services	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
h. Friends in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
i. Family/relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
j. Church/community	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
k. Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

VI. DECISION PROCESS

1. About how long prior to your PRD do you typically start--
  - a. thinking about your next assignment? \_\_\_\_\_ months
  - b. actively seeking advice from friends, peers, XO, CO, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_ months
  - c. communicating with your detailer? \_\_\_\_\_ months
2. From the time you reported to your first full assignment (e.g., first sea tour), when did, or will, you make the following decisions:

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Months Since Reporting</u>	<u>N/A - Have not/will not consider this</u>
a. Complete SWO PQS	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Apply for the Department Head Course	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Apply for the PG School	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Remain indefinitely in the Navy past initial obligated service	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Seek a designator change from Surface Warfare	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Looking ahead to a career as a SWO, for approximately how many years from now do you have a relatively clear idea of what your career path (billets, promotions, etc.) will be? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
4. How attractive does this career path appear to you?  
 VERY UNATTRACTIVE    UNATTRACTIVE    NEUTRAL    ATTRACTIVE    VERY ATTRACTIVE
5. If you were able to change your designator from Surface Warfare, how attractive would that career path appear to you?  
 VERY UNATTRACTIVE    UNATTRACTIVE    NEUTRAL    ATTRACTIVE    VERY ATTRACTIVE

6. What is your evaluation of the following aspects with regard to a Navy career:

	<u>Very Negative</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Very Positive</u>
a. Change of billets at 2-3 year intervals	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. Possibility of change of geographic location with billet changes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. Sea duty	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. Shore duty	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

VII. SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

1. What is your level of agreement to the following statements?

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	MODERATELY DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	UNCERTAIN	SLIGHTLY AGREE	MODERATELY AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
a. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b. The most important things that happen to me involve my work	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c. I'm really a perfectionist about my work.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d. I live, eat, and breathe my job.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e. I am very much involved personally in my work.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
f. Most things in life are more important than work.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
g. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the Navy be successful.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
h. I talk up the Navy to my friends as a great organization to work for.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
i. I feel very little loyalty to the Navy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
j. I would accept almost any type job assignment in order to remain in the Navy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
k. I find that my values and the Navy's values are very similar.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
l. I am proud to tell others that I am part of the Navy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
m. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work were similar.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	MODERATELY DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	UNCERTAIN	SLIGHTLY AGREE	MODERATELY AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
n. The Navy really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
o. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
p. I am extremely glad that I chose the Navy to work for, over other organizations I was considering at the time I joined.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
q. There's not too much to be gained by staying with the Navy indefinitely.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
r. Often, I find it difficult to agree with the Navy's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
s. I really care about the fate of the Navy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
t. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
u. Deciding to join the Navy was a definite mistake on my part.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
v. I agree with the effort to change policies to permit women to serve aboard Navy ships.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
w. Women officers should be given the same opportunity as their male counterparts, including sea duty and flying status.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
x. Managing sexually integrated crews aboard ship will raise leadership issues for which my experience and training has not prepared me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

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