



Recruiting And Retention Of Military Personnel: Influences of Quality of Life and Personnel Tempo

**RTO HFM-180 Technical Course on "Strategies to
Address Recruiting and Retention Issues in the
Military "**

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Outline

- Introduction
- Ops/Pers Tempo Research
- Quality of Life (QOL) Research
- Impacts for Recruiting



Topic Introduction

Ops/Pers Tempo

- Ops tempo – deployment of military personnel on an operation
- Pers tempo – all activities (including Ops tempo) that take military members away from their unit and home

Quality of Life

- Non-monetary benefits that impact “+” or “-” on the wellbeing and morale of military members and their families



Ops/Pers Tempo

Hosek & Totten (1998)

- Having some long or hostile duty had a positive effect on reenlistment for NCOs
- As duty lengthened or involved danger, it may cause stress and disrupt personal lives, potentially reducing reenlistment

Hosek & Totten (2002)

- 1st term reenlistment was higher for 1 non-hostile deployment than for none but did not rise further with more deployments



Golding, Gasch, Greogry, Hattiangadi, Husted, Moore, Shuford, & Selver (2001)

- found that Navy personnel who have been deployed are more likely to leave the service than those who have not. Also, non-deployed time under way is associated with higher rates of attrition for Navy personnel: for every 10-percent increase in non-deployed time away, the authors estimate an increase in attrition of 0.9 percentage points.



Ops/Pers Tempo

Fricker (2002)

- Examined these relationships with officers
- Positive association between increasing amounts of non-hostile deployments and junior and mid-grade officer retention
- While hostile deployment reduces this positive effect, even those officers with some or all hostile deployment show higher retention rates than do non-deployers



Ops/Pers Tempo

Canadian Research – Dunn & Morrow (2002)

- Qualitative research that linked a number of themes
- 2nd most common reason mentioned for wanting to leave the military
- Ops/Pers tempo was leading to burnout of member and beyond coping skills of families
- Members put in a position of choosing their military career or losing their families.



Ops/Pers Tempo

Jenkins and Morrow (2003)

- CF Exit Survey
 - Found little evidence to support Ops/Pers tempo as a substantial reason for leaving
 - “I have been on too many deployments (UN/NATO/ other out of country taskings)”
 - 73% found it was not important in their decision to leave



Ops/Pers Tempo

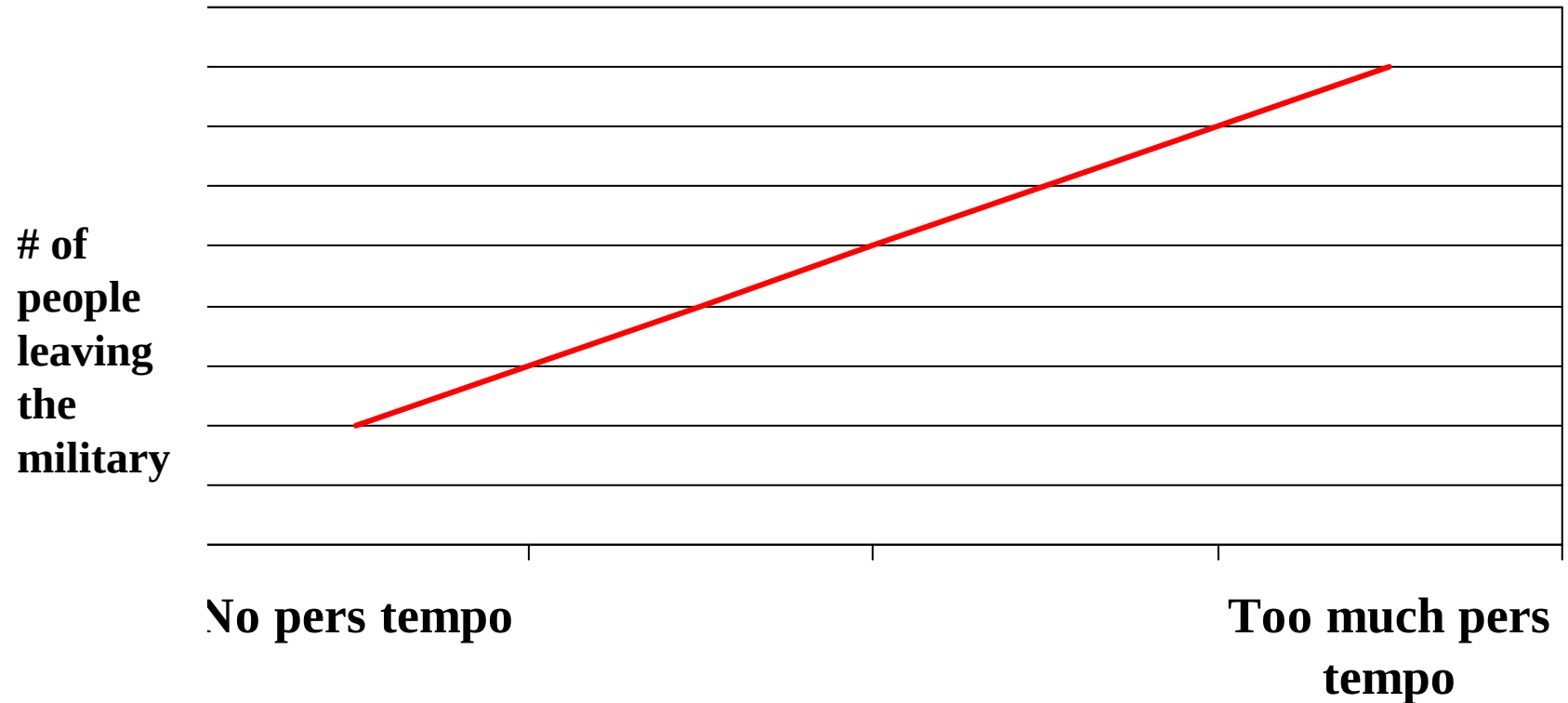
Huffman, Adler, Dolan, & Castro (2005)

- Examined the research came up with reasons to explain the different research results
 - Different operational definitions of turnover used in the research
 - Measuring role overload or subjective perceptions of OPSTEMPO versus workload or an objective assessment of workload.
 - Different operational definitions of OPSTEMPO
 - The lack of control over key demographic and organizational variables
 - The possible curvilinear nature of the OPSTEMPO–turnover relation

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

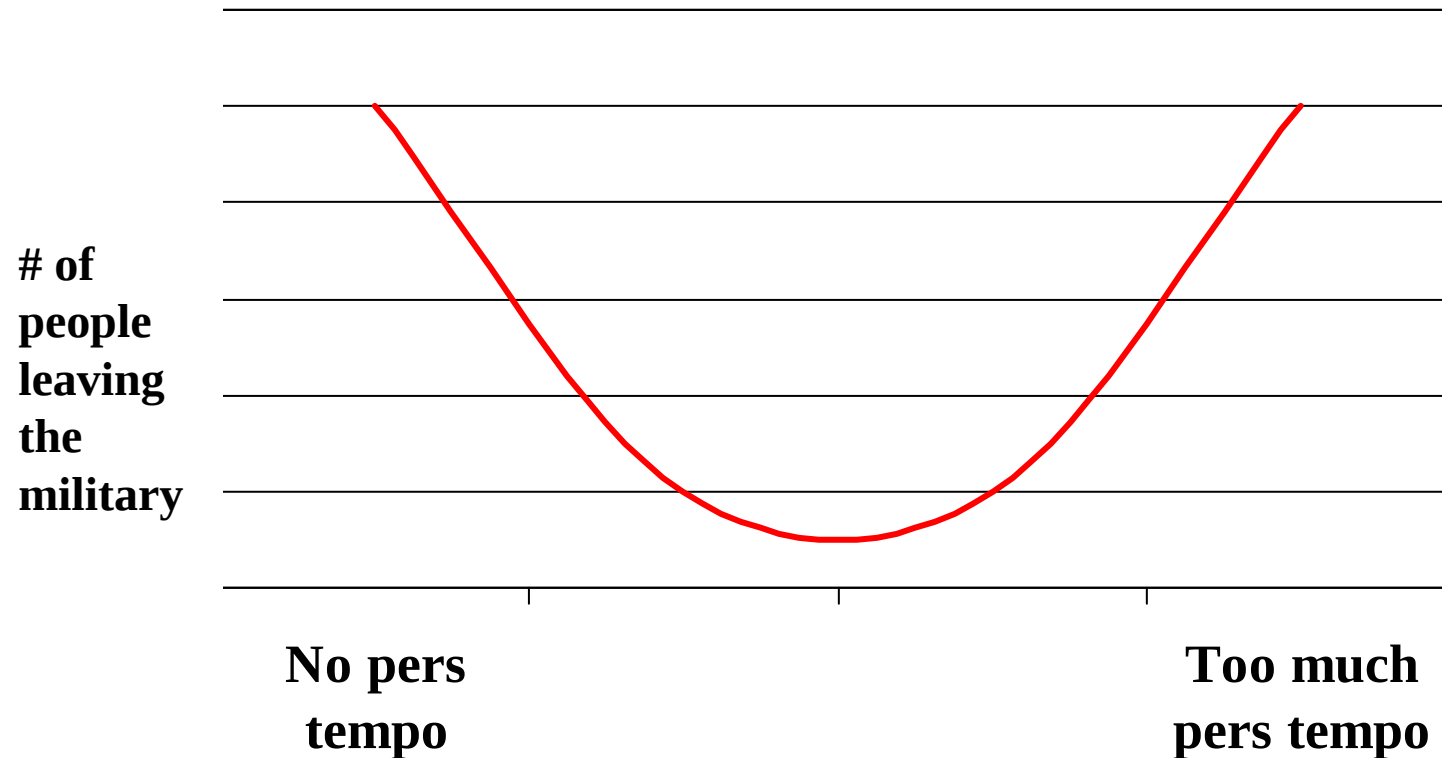


Linear Relationship





Curvilinear Relationship





Huffman, Adler, Dolan, & Castro (2005)

- Showed that role overload related to work hours was tightly linked with turnover, and that the relation between OPTEMPO and turnover is curvilinear
- Basically, a soldier who with a very low OPTEMPO is likely to depart the organization, while a soldier with too high OPTEMPO is also likely to leave the organization.
- Analysis of the study would suggest that it is important to find the ideal amount of OPTEMPO in order to avoid unwanted employee turnover



Ops /Pers Tempo

Huffman, Adler, Dolan, & Castro (2005)

- Found that people who were uncertain about upcoming career decisions were more likely to stay in the military than leave.
- Intentions to stay were more accurate than intentions to leave.
- Found that the workload aspects of OPTEMPO were less important than the attitudes towards the work, training and deployments.
- Another component to the nature of deployments and their impacts was the context within which it occurred.



Hosek, Kavanagh, & Miller (2006)

- showed that frequently working longer than the usual duty-day increases the likelihood of higher-than-usual work stress and personal stress, and decreases the intention to stay. Without a doubt, personnel who are deployed work long days more frequently, but non-deployed personnel often must put in 60- to 80-hour weeks as well. These findings were confirmed by focus group discussions
- Found similar contextual factors as Huffman et al. (2005)



Olsen & Heilmann 2009

- Replicated Huffman et al study on US Air Force personnel to test if there was a curvilinear relationship between OPTEMPO and turnover;
- Results indicated that this relationship was insignificant;
- Further, the U.S. Air Force may be better served by focusing on job satisfaction and organizational commitment as a means to increase personnel retention.



Ops/Pers Tempo

- Summary
 - Non-hostile deployments positively influence retention at the NCO level
 - As the number, length and severity increase, retention is affected negatively
 - Deployments positively influence officer retention
- Limitations
 - Career progression policies may confound this relationship
 - Nature of the deployment may also explain results – ROTO 0 vs. ROTO 5

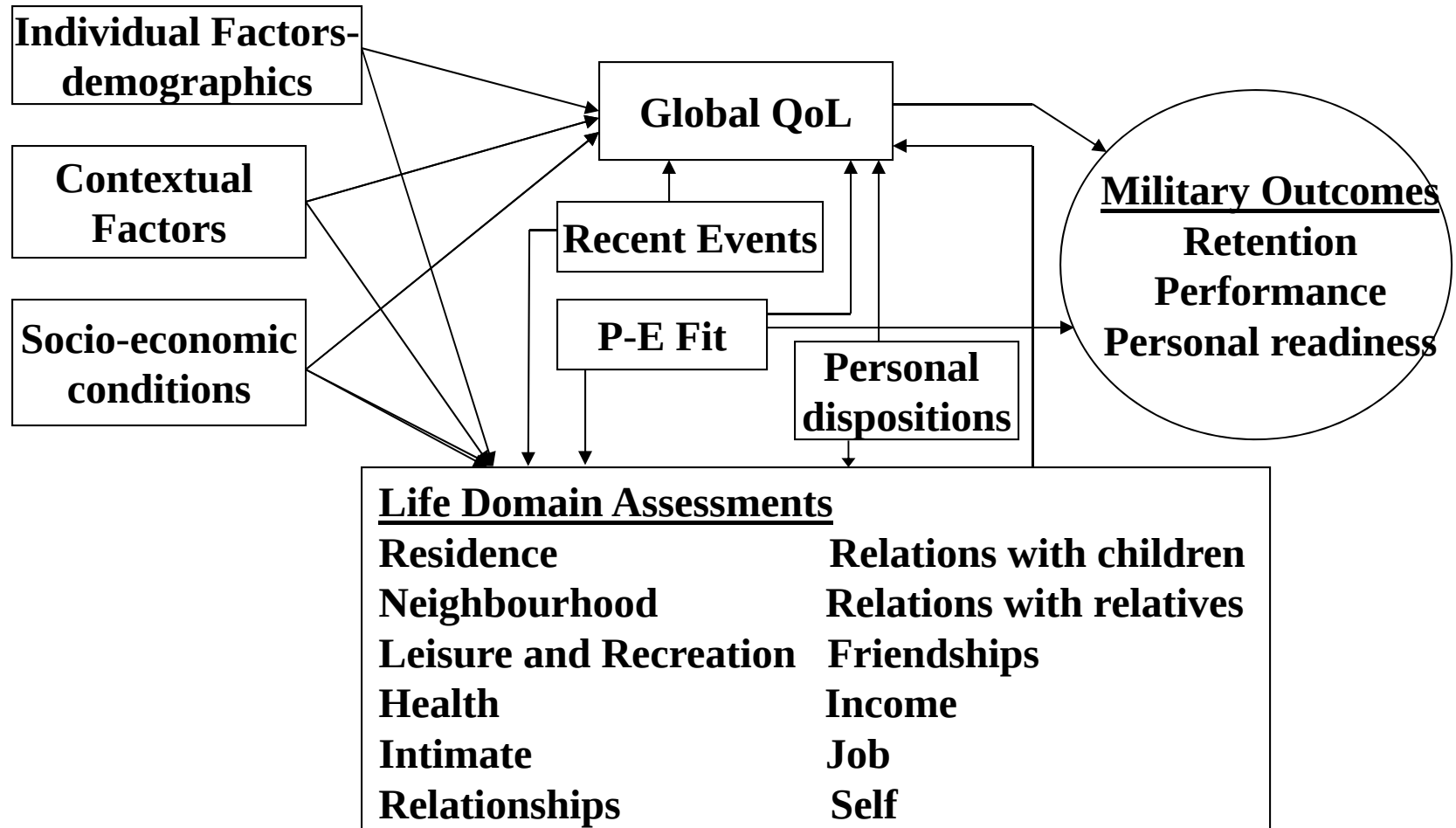


Quality of Life (QoL)

- Definition – difficult to determine standard
- Many single issues that would fall under QoL have been associated with retention
 - Role conflict (family/work)
 - Work scheduling
 - Expected vs. achieved salary
 - Expectations of services provided for families of deployed soldiers
 - Spouses' wishes that the military member stay or leave

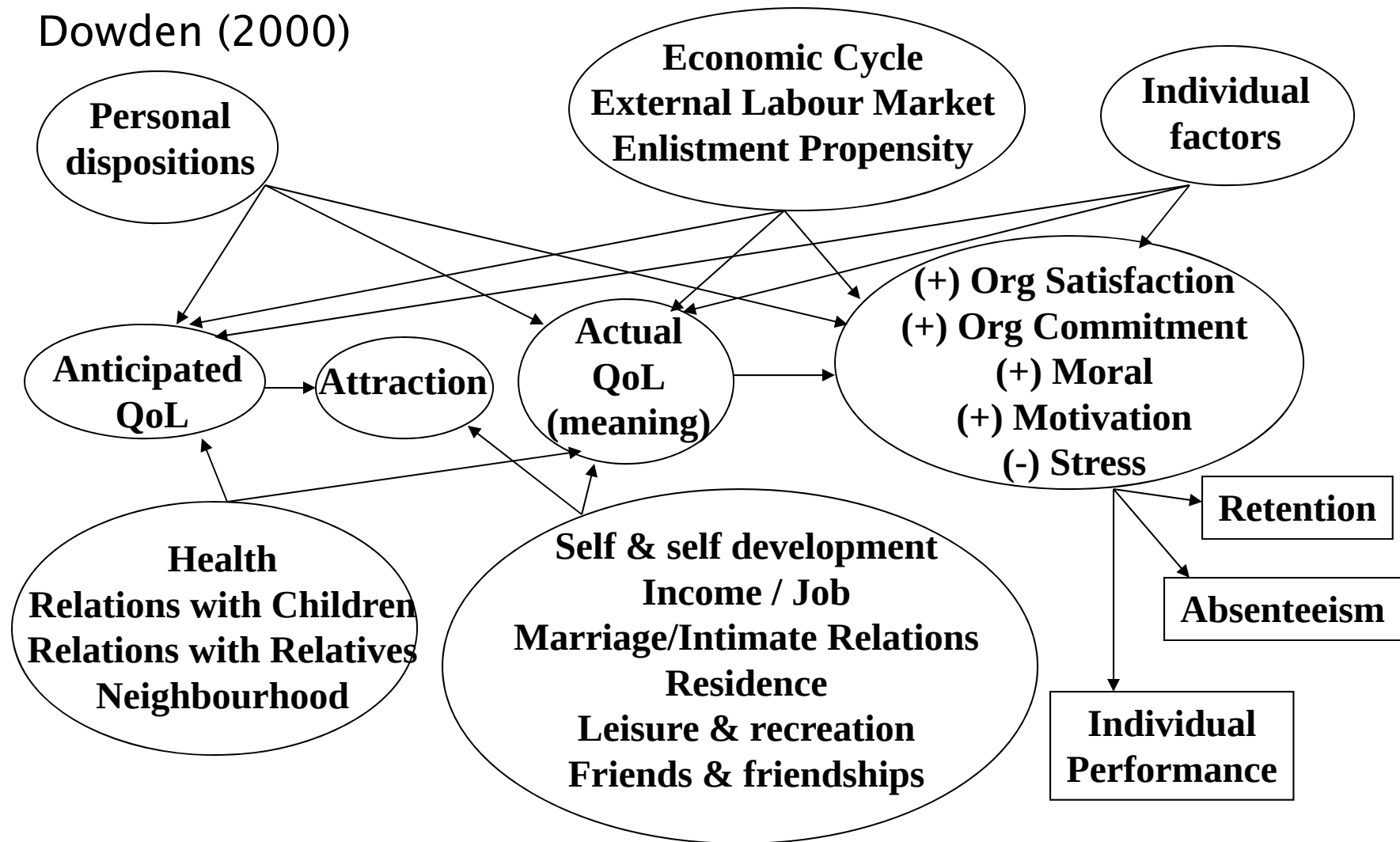


Kerce QoL Model



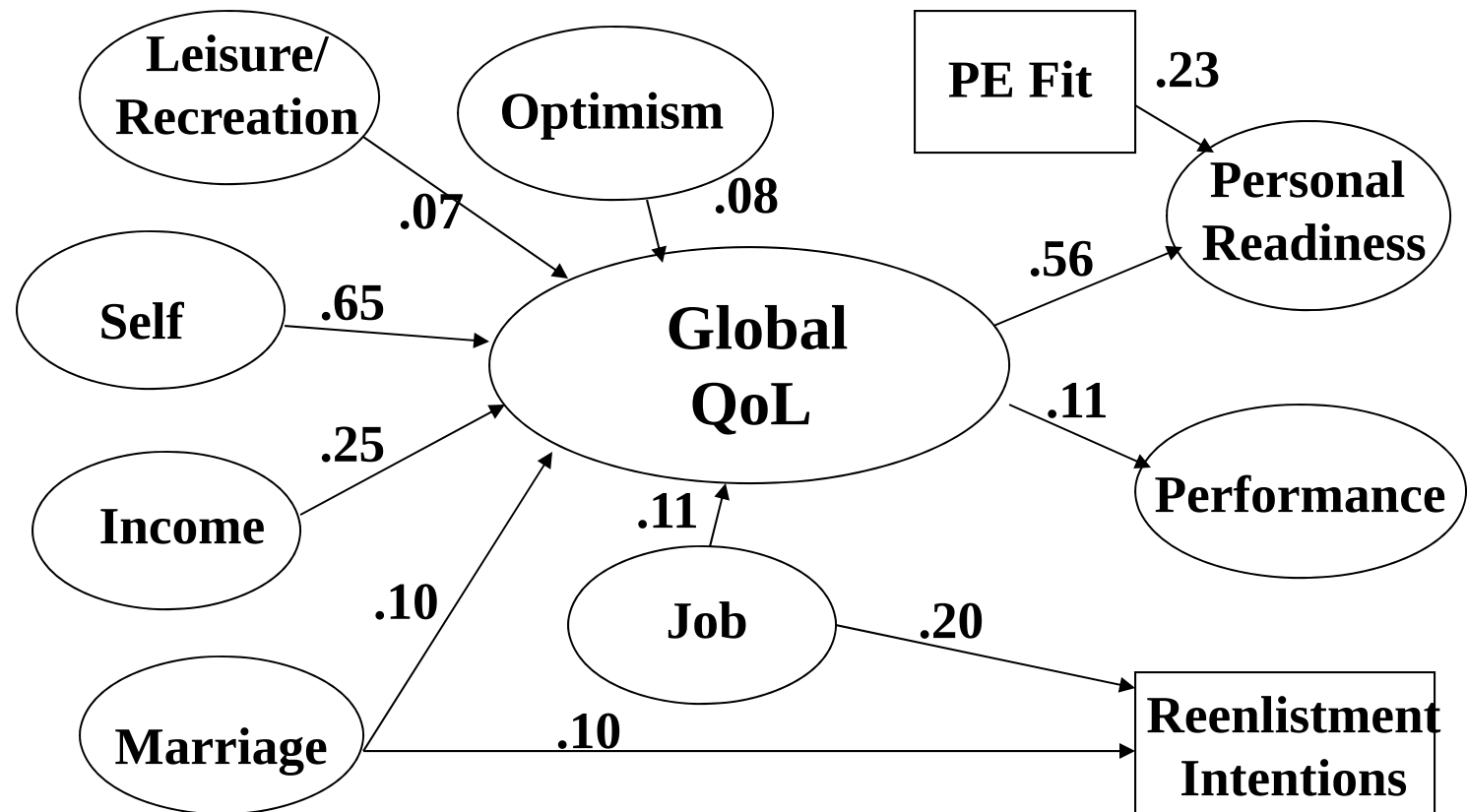
CF Conceptual QoL Model

Dowden (2000)



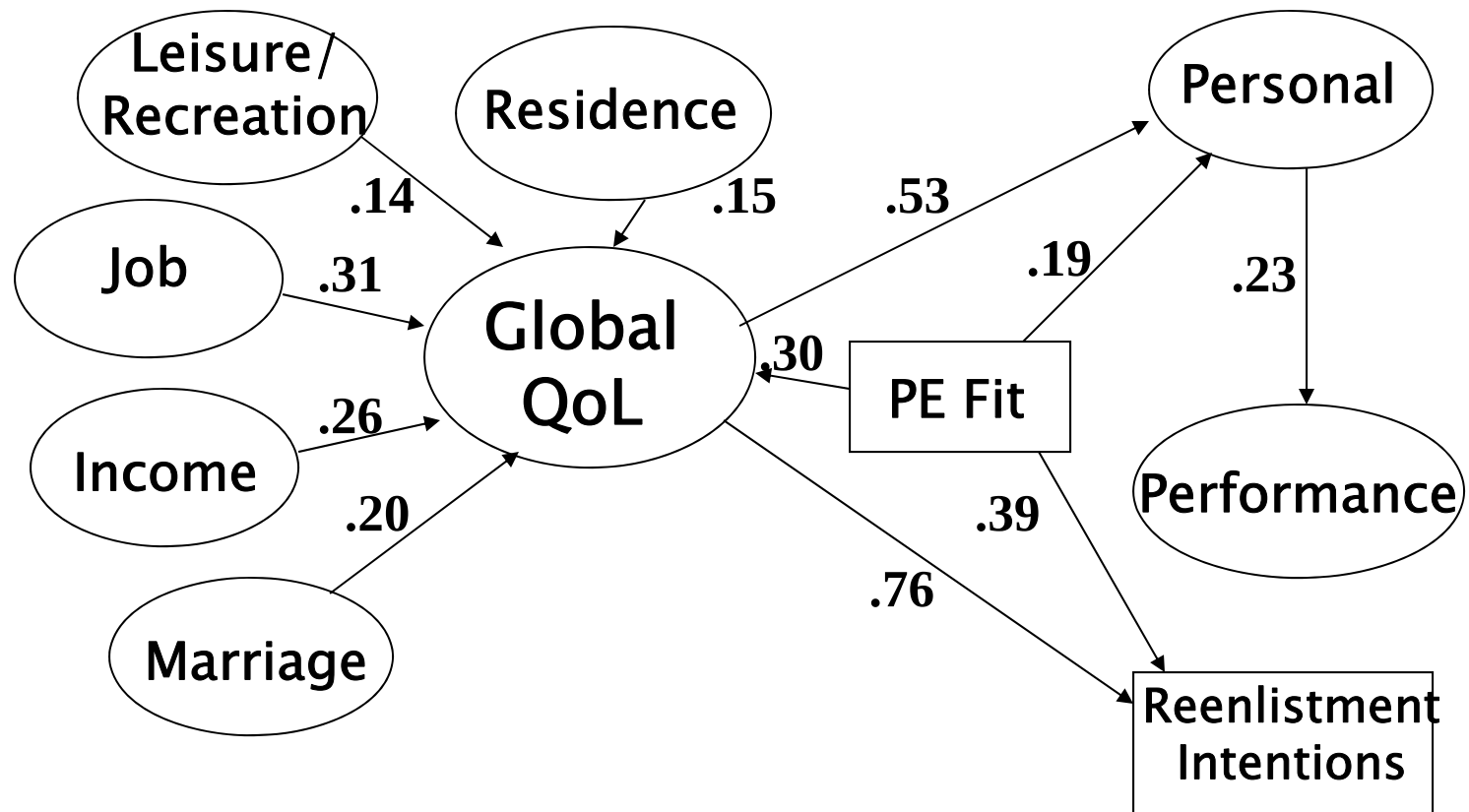
QoL Model of Married Marines with Children

Wilcove, Schwerin, and Wolosin (2003)

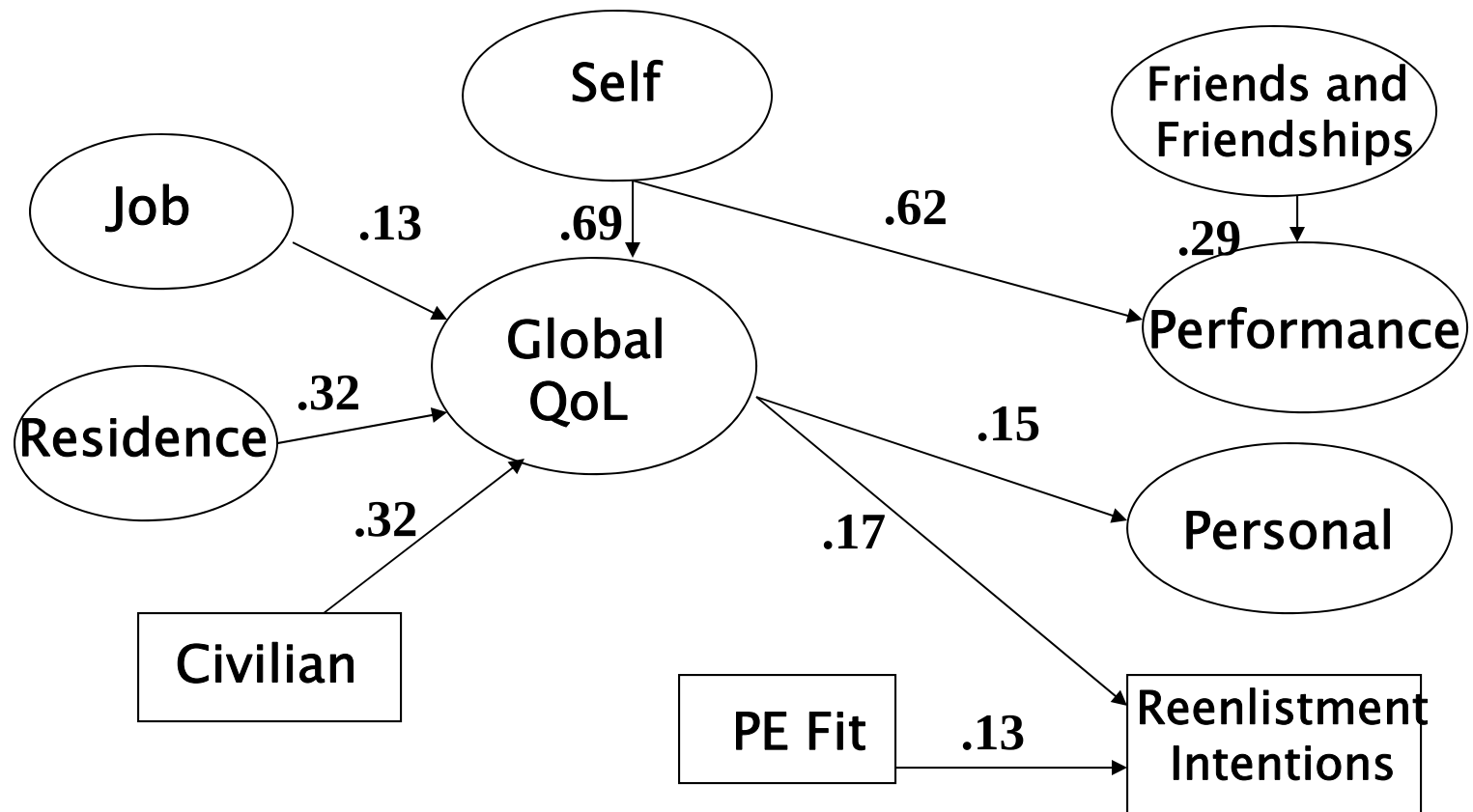


QoL Model of Married Marines without Children

Wilcove, Schwerin, and Wolosin (2003)



QoL Model of Single Marines without Children





More Recent Research

Dursun 2008 – Perceived spousal support

- Members who perceived greater spousal support were less likely to reported wanting to leave the CF, were more likely to show higher organizational commitment, higher morale and a greater willingness to deploy.



Kline, Schwerin, Olmsted, Wilcove, & Rosenfeld 2008

Comparing Alternative Models of Retention Among U.S. Navy Personnel

- Compared Job Embeddedness Conceptual Model with Work/Nonwork QOL Model
- Both frameworks result in adequate fitting models
- Overall QOL may be an important aspect to understanding retention, and it is not accounted for in the job embeddedness model



Schwerin, 2008

Quality of Life in the U.S. Navy: Impact on Performance and Career Continuance Examined QOL as it relates to shipboard life

- Examined Impact of QOL on Career Continuance
- Of 15 domains examined, The largest number of officers identified as decreasing their desire to stay in the Navy:
 - Shipboard Life (35%),
 - Current Job (33%),
 - Relationship with Children (33%), and
 - Spiritual Well-Being (32%)



Recruiting

- Perstempo

- Person–Environment (PE) fit (Wicker, 1996)

- how well do personal qualities match the demands and opportunities in situations people find themselves in
 - suggested self–report of sufficient fit

- QoL

- Anticipatory QoL (Rice et al., 1985)

- what effect does the anticipated QoL in the military have on new recruits joining the organization
 - Has implications for recruiting advertising
 - “employer of choice “



Recommendations

- Monitor the duration and quantity of deployment that personnel complete;
- Focus attention on the nature and context of deployments as much as the actual quantity of deployments;
- Make the work that personnel conduct on deployments more meaningful, relevant, and challenging;
- Re-align policy, tasks and missions (where required) to ensure that deployments are personally and professionally rewarding for those who participate;



Recommendations

- Ensure that personnel know how long they will be deployed and (whenever possible), do not lengthen that time commitment;
- Ensure that personnel are trained properly for the missions for which they are sent and that the tasks they perform are related to that mission.
- Military personnel policy should support family relationships, especially as it relates to OPSTEMPO
- Military personnel policy should support personal development, health & an adequate standard of living



Recommendations

- Military culture should instill and reinforce commitment to the organization.
- Realistic expectations of the quality of life that military members should be included in realistic job previews.
- Quality of life aspects needs to be present in advertising to set applicant expectations
- Where possible, as part of balancing operational effectiveness, workload and working conditions should be augmented to decrease the risk of WFC.



Recommendations

- Physical fitness, optimal health and good morale can be used as mitigation strategies to decrease the likelihood of WFC occurring.
- Strong leadership may be used to reduce the likelihood of WFC occurring.