TRAINING EXPECTATION FULFILMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF TERRITORIAL FORCE ARMY RECRUITS

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ABSTRACT

Territorial Force army recruits (N=184) participated in this study which aimed to determine the influence of pre-training expectation fulfilment on organizational commitment (OC) at the conclusion of, and six weeks after, their basic recruit training course. The study also aimed to identify what aspects of basic training recruits perceived as being better or worse than expected. Recruits filled out three questionnaires over a period of approximately nine weeks and the data was subjected to two hierarchical regression analyses. Results of the first regression analysis showed that the extent of training fulfilment was a significant positive predictor of OC at the end of basic training. More positive affective reactions to recruit training and higher levels of initial OC were also found to be predictive of OC at the conclusion of basic training. In the second regression analysis lower age and greater OC at the conclusion of basic training were found to be significantly predictive of greater OC six weeks after basic training. Fulfilment of expectations during basic training was not found to be predictive of OC at that point. A principal components analysis was conducted on the training fulfilment items in order to identify underlying dimensions of training fulfilment. Results showed that aspects associated with higher order needs (personal development, staff approachability, and physical challenge) were less fulfilled than those associated with lower order needs (living / working conditions, equipment adequacy). Overall, the results tend to question how pervasive the influence of fulfilled expectations during army basic training is on the attitudes of part time recruits after they leave the training environment. Implications for military advertising and realistic recruitment are also discussed.
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