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**THE EFFECTS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN THE  
MILITARY: A COMPARISON OF WORK RELATED  
PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN MILITARY AND  
NON-MILITARY ENVIRONMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

Moskos's (1977) model of military organisation argues that the military is moving away from a traditional 'institutional' setting to one resembling a civilian or 'occupational' setting. Previous research has examined how this trend affects individual's military orientation and the social organisation of the military, however the effect of structural changes on the individual's military experience has not been previously examined. Within the framework of Moskos's model the present research examined, with current and ex-Army personnel, the links between individuals, their perceptions of their work environment, and psychosocial and physical health outcomes.

In study one, data collected from current New Zealand Army personnel (N=571) confirmed the existence of both institutional and occupational groups. The institutional group viewed the Army as more highly structured and their jobs as less challenging, autonomous and important than the occupational group. However, they also viewed their leaders as more supportive and their workgroups as more cooperative, friendly and warm than the occupational group. There were no significant differences between these two groups on job satisfaction, psychological well-being or self rated health. Examination of individual level data in regression analyses indicated that personal characteristics, organisational structure and psychological climate (PC) perceptions were important contributors to job satisfaction for Army personnel. PC components reflecting job challenge, job conflict and leader behaviour were strongly related to job satisfaction. Personal characteristics, organisational structure, PC components, job satisfaction and self rated health were associated with psychological well-being. Perceptions of a structured work environment, of positive workgroup relations, and higher job satisfaction and psychological well-being predicted higher self ratings of health. Maori reported higher job satisfaction and psychological well-being than non-Maori in the Army sample. In study two, Moskos' model was applied to data collected from ex-Army personnel who had been discharged in the previous two years (N=235). Individuals discharged from occupational corps were hypothesised to be better adjusted to civilian life than

those discharged from institutional corps. However, there were no significant differences in employment status, job satisfaction, psychological well-being and self rated health between these two groups. Those who had been out of the Army for a longer period of time or who had looked for work prior to discharge were more likely to be in paid employment. Those in paid employment reported higher psychological well-being and higher self rated health than those not in paid employment. Examination of individual level data in regression analyses indicated that PC perceptions were also important contributors to job satisfaction for ex-Army personnel. PC components reflecting job challenge, job conflict and leader behaviour were associated with satisfaction. Altogether personal characteristics, organisational structure, and PC components explained a large amount of variance in job satisfaction. Negative affect and the PC component workgroup cooperation, friendliness and warmth were significant predictors of psychological well-being for the ex-Army sample. Only job satisfaction and income predicted self rated health for ex-Army personnel.

When the two studies were compared, Army personnel perceived their work environments to be more centralised and formalised than the ex-Army personnel. The occupational group's perceptions of Army organisational structure were similar to the ex-Army group's perceptions of civilian organisational structure. Army personnel reported less satisfaction with their jobs and poorer psychological well-being than the ex-Army personnel, however there were no significant differences in self rated health, social support or coping between the two samples.

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