Special issue for International Journal of Human Resource Management

"Human Resource Management & Employing Service Leavers, Reservists and Veterans"

For more information:

Will be available on the IJHRM website from 1 August 2020:
https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijh20/current

Please also visit:

www.agediversity.org/ijhrm where you can join our email group.

Guest Editorial Team

Matt Flynn, Centre for Research into the Older Workforce, University of Hull, m.c.flynn@hull.ac.uk

Matt Fossey, Veterans and Families Institute, Anglia Ruskin University, matt.fossey@anglia.ac.uk

Emma Parry, Cranfield School of Management, emma.parry@cranfield.ac.uk

Carol Ma Hok-Ka, Gerontology Programmes, Singapore University of Social Science, carolmahk@suss.edu.sg

Timetable

1 August 2020: Call for papers issued

31 May 2021: Deadline for submissions and submissions sent to reviewers

31 August 2021: Papers shortlisted and feedback sent to submitting authors

30 November 2021: Deadline for revisions of short-listed submissions

28 February 2022: Deadline for final drafts of submissions

May 2022: Publication of special issue

Veterans and HRM Network

In order to bring together academics from a variety of disciplines, the editors have set up a 'community of practice' of people who are interested in the topics of veterans and HRM. The network is intended to:

- Keep participants updated on the special issue, including deadlines and milestones
- Provide authors the chance to receive support from colleagues in the development of their manuscripts

- Provide a venue for sharing ideas, information, and research outputs through webinars, seminars, and discussion groups
- Facilitate the collaboration of colleagues across disciplines to collaborate
- Ensure the sustainability of the research network beyond the publication of the special issue.

Please note:

- You do not need to be a member of the network in order to make a submission to the special issue.
- You do not need to make a submission to the special issue in order to be a member of the network.
- You can join or leave the network at any time.
- By agreeing to join the network, you agree to receive emails from the group. You can opt out at any time.
- Protocols will be maintained to ensure the integrity of the special issue's review process.

To join the network and find out more information about the special issue, click here: www.agediversity.org/ijhrm

Call for papers

This special issue will focus on the HRM implications in relation to the employment of military Service leavers[1] and Reservists including HRM interventions of employers in facilitating their transitions into secure civilian work; making best use of military acquired skills; and supporting workers in reconciling civilian work and military service. People with a military background face a variety of challenges in securing and maintaining civilian employment. First, employers' perceptions of Service leavers and Reservists can be mixed and often contrast with reality. While many of employers' views are positive (e.g. loyalty, dedication, having integrity) (Stone and Stone, 2015, Stone et al., 2018), there are nevertheless negative stereotypes which can block Service leavers in finding meaningful work and deter employers from supporting Reservists. Chief amongst these is the assumption that military service is associated with PTSD and Service people are 'mad, bad and sad' (Pike, 2016), assumptions not backed up by evidence (Murphy et al., 2019). Second, the transfer of skills from military service to civilian employment can be challenging as military training is not often accredited or recognised by prospective employers (Hardison et al., 2015). Employers tend to value 'cultural fit' with their workplaces (Bouton, 2015) and are reluctant to recruit employees who may require additional training to repurpose their skills (Fleischmann and Koster, 2018). Third, although employers say that they are flexible in supporting Reservists who are deployed, many report difficulty in keeping jobs open for long periods, and struggle to utilise the competencies that Reservists obtain as a result of their military roles (Burnett-Zeigler et al., 2011). Finally, finding civilian work is one of a number of challenges Service leavers face when transitioning out of the Armed Forces including managing health issues,

---

[1] Service leaver to signifies either someone who has recently left Regular military service or for whom Regular military service represents a significant part of their career. The term veteran, while more commonly used, applies more broadly to people with any military experience. Throughout the call for papers, we use the term Service leaver because we are seeking papers which focus on the interplay of military service with civilian employment.

supporting families and making a cultural shift (Castro and Dursun, 2019, Mamon et al., 2020).

There is a growing interest both amongst military and civilian employers on ways to improve the support Service leavers and Reservists receive in securing and maintaining work (Davis and Minnis, 2017, Hardison et al., 2015, Ford, 2017). Military service can be encapsulated by the mantra of the UK MOD as *'join well, serve well, leave well'* (MOD, 2019). Personal development plans, training and accreditation, and career advice are all ways in which military services prepare Service people for what for the vast majority is the inevitable day they are navigating the civilian job market. Many civilian employers are also developing bespoke approaches to employing Service leavers and Reservists including systematic matching of military skills with job requirements; appointing mentors; return to work programmes for reservists; and guaranteed job placements (for a review of HRM interventions, see Ford 2017). Employers support Service leavers both for CSR reasons and in order to tap into military acquired skills (Blank, 2019).

The objectives of this special issue are to explore:

- Employers' perceptions of Service leavers and Reservists
- HRM interventions which can support Service leavers and Reservists in work, in particular in relation to the transition from military to civilian work either permanently or between civilian and Reservist roles.
- How military skills are matched with the needs of, and utilised by, employers
- HRM policies and practices to support employers in reconciling civilian work with armed services.

This special issue is significant for three reasons. First, the sheer number of people leaving or have left the Armed Forces justifies a focus on their experiences in making career transition and adapting to civilian work. Second, Service leavers represent a large cohort of people who systematically make mid-career job transitions. As work becomes more precarious and employment protections diminish, there is a growing interest in how people do and can make successful transitions from one employer to another. Understanding of how the mid-career job market works can be enhanced by a special issue focus on a cohort of workers who already systematically makes mid-career job transitions or, in the case of Reservists, are having to reconcile the two worlds of military and civilian life. Third, as the number of regular Service people diminishes, militaries around the world are increasingly becoming dependent on Reservists. Employers need to find ways to offer flexible careers for people who may be deployed for long periods of time while also making best use of skills and experience which Reservists gain while on active duty.

Theoretical contributions

The editors of the special issue see the greatest potential for theoretical contributions around three areas of research on HRM and careers:

Intersectionality of military service with other characteristics

Intersectionality has been a useful methodological instrument for understanding how multiple forms of discrimination unfold in terms of marginalisation beyond their cumulative and respective effects (McBride et al., 2014). Research has explored how perceptions of military status intersects with other characteristics such as age (Flynn and Ball, 2020) and gender (Parry et al., 2019) and those with disabilities (Gonzalez et al., 2019). A special issue focused on Service leavers and Reservists with different backgrounds, characteristics and experiences can show how multiple forms of discrimination create unique sets of barriers faced by those leaving the Armed Forces, or balancing it with other civilian careers.

Reconciling military life with civilian employment

Service leavers provide a rich source of experiences to show the relationship between structure and agency. Although they are all facing the same major turning point (a transition out of military service into civilian work), they have a range of experiences in managing the career transition process with other cultural, family, health related and age-graded trajectories. Further, Reservists have ongoing experience reconciling military service and civilian life across the life course. Most military work cultures are hypermasculine and disciplinarian and adhere to a highly structured hierarchy which is often out of kilter with the civilian workplace. Inculcation into this military culture is rapid, as civilians become soldiers, but less regard is paid to equipping personnel with the skills they need to navigate life when they eventually leave the armed forces (Kirke, 2009, Cooper et al., 2018).

Macro and micro career transitions, and employer support for mid-career job changers and Reservists

There is a growing interest in academic, HRM and policy communities about how workers are able to manage their careers and make successful job transitions from one employer to another (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001, Bravo et al., 2017, Rodrigues et al., 2016) or between multiple jobs as part of a portfolio or boundaryless career. Some have suggested that the State should intervene to support mid-career job changers in the forms of lifelong learning, career advice, temporary job placements which is reflected in European 'Flexicurity' welfare state interventions (Kovalenko and Mortelmans, 2016, Bekker, 2018) and even a universal basic income (UBI) (De Wispelaere, 2016). A focus on Service leavers can provide insight into career change since Service leavers are not only workers making a major career change, but also receive *substantial* support from the employer from which they are departing (i.e. the Armed Forces) (Ashcroft, 2014). Further, many Service leavers receive an occupational pension which provides a cushion to reduce the financial stress of having to secure the first job available. Additionally, Reservists provide a good platform by which to investigate boundaryless careers that are multi-faceted and involve the maintenance of career paths and identity across two or more, sometimes very different, roles. Rather than the macro career transitions experienced by Service leaver moving from one role to another, Reservists undertake frequent micro transitions as they move between multiple work-related roles, as well as between these and other roles related to their family and personal lives. Supporting these individuals can be challenging for HRM practitioners. For example, employers may well find a 'business case' (Urwin et al., 2013) for supporting boundaryless careerists (e.g. portfolio workers, those in bridge employment, or the self-employed), but are often reluctant to invest in training if they are unsure about whether they will see a return on that investment through increased productivity (José Chambel and Sobral, 2011). In addition, Reservists are often penalised in relation to their career prospects because of their regular absences from the civilian workplace, struggle to apply their leadership and other skills learned through Reserve Service in their civilian roles and may experience identity crises due to the liminal nature of their positions (e.g. Griffith 2009).

Questions for consideration

These are only examples of possible questions – submissions that address other issues related to HRM and Service leavers, Reservists and veterans will be welcomed.

1. To what extent and how do employers value the skills, knowledge and experiences of Service leavers and Reservists? What is the 'business case' for employers to support Service leavers into jobs which they value or to support Reservists in managing their dual careers? What are the implications of employing military veterans or Reservists for talent management, for example?

2. To what extent are Armed Forces around the world equipping Service leavers with the technical, managerial and employability skills which they need to secure work which they value?
3. How does the "veteran" identity intersect with other aspects of identity such as gender, ethnicity or age? Do Service leavers and Reservists in particular demographic groups have specific challenges or experiences in civilian employment? What can we learn from this group in relation to broader diversity or intersectionality issues?
4. How and when do Service people start to plan their civilian careers while in military service? Do their experiences suggest that workers think long term about their careers? How can they be best supported with this planning process?
5. How are the career choices of Service leavers different from other mid-career job changers? For example, does having access to military-provided pensions and/or health benefits provide an added layer of financial security to enable them to be more discerning of their job choices?
6. To what extent are Service leavers and Reservists equipped with skills, knowledge and experience which prospective employers need? Are Service people making rational choices in terms of upskilling, experience and career planning which lead to work which they value once they become civilians? How can HRM professionals support them in developing these skills?
7. What are the implications of Reserve Service for work-life balance, career progression and identity development? How can employers best support Reservists in balancing these different facets of their careers (and broader lives) and managing the frequent micro-transitions between roles?
8. How can employers provide support for Reservists who are re-entering civilian employment after a period of military deployment? What additional support is needed, in relation to adjustment or mental health for example, in these scenarios?
9. How do approaches to managing Service leavers and Reservists differ across countries? What are the macro level drivers and organisational and individual level outcomes of such differences in approach?

Practical importance

A wide variety of employers are interested in finding ways to support Service leavers and Reservists in relation to secure and meaningful work. Military service employers also have an interest and responsibility in managing Service leavers' careers and their contributions are particularly focused on portfolio building so that Service leavers are equipped with the training, experience and accreditation which they need to secure high-quality civilian work. A special issue can complement other measures such as the exchange of good practice, employer networks and monitoring and target setting.

References

ARTHUR, M. B. & ROUSSEAU, D. M. 2001. *The boundaryless career: A new employment principle for a new organizational era*, Oxford University Press.

ASHCROFT, M. 2014. *The Veterans' Transition Review,* London, Biteback Publishing.

BEKKER, S. 2018. Flexicurity in the European Semester: still a relevant policy concept? *Journal of European Public Policy,* 25**,** 175-192.

BLANK, H. D. 2019. Corporate Treatment of Veterans as an ESG Factor and a Potential Source of Incremental Returns. *Review of Business,* 39**,** 75-93.

BOUTON, K. 2015. Recruiting for cultural fit. *Harvard Business Review,* 17.

BRAVO, J., SEIBERT, S. E., KRAIMER, M. L., WAYNE, S. J. & LIDEN, R. C. 2017. Measuring career orientations in the era of the boundaryless career. *Journal of Career Assessment,* 25**,** 502-525.

BURNETT-ZEIGLER, I., VALENSTEIN, M., ILGEN, M., BLOW, A. J., GORMAN, L. A. & ZIVIN, K. 2011. Civilian Employment Among Recently Returning Afghanistan and Iraq National Guard Veterans. *Military Medicine,* 176**,** 639-646.

CASTRO, C. & DURSUN, S. 2019. *Military Veteran Reintegration: Approach, Management, and Assessment of Military Veterans Transitioning to Civilian Life* London, Academic Press.

COOPER, L., CADDICK, N., GODIER, L., COOPER, A. & FOSSEY, M. 2018. Transition from the military into civilian life: An exploration of cultural competence. *Armed Forces & Society,* 44**,** 156-177.

DAVIS, V. E. & MINNIS, S. E. 2017. Military veterans' transferrable skills: An HRD practitioner dilemma. *Advances in Developing Human Resources,* 19**,** 6-13.

DE WISPELAERE, J. 2016. The struggle for strategy: On the politics of the basic income proposal. *Politics,* 36**,** 131-141.

FLEISCHMANN, M. & KOSTER, F. 2018. Older workers and employer-provided training in the Netherlands: a vignette study. *Ageing & Society,* 38**,** 1995-2018.

FLYNN, M. & BALL, C. 2020. *The Challenges and Barriers Faced by Servicemen and Women Seeking Employment Upon Leaving the UK Armed Forces Aged 50 or Over,* Cambridge, FIMT.

FORD, D. 2017. Talent management and its relationship to successful veteran transition into the civilian workplace: Practical integration strategies for the HRD professional. *Advances in Developing Human Resources,* 19**,** 36-53.

GONZALEZ, K., TILLMAN, C. J. & HOLMES, J. J. 2019. Coming home: Why veterans with disabilities withhold workplace accommodation requests. *Human Relations***,** 0018726719875810.

HARDISON, C. M., SHANLEY, M. G., SAAVEDRA, A. R., CROWLEY, J. C., WONG, J. P. & STEINBERG, P. S. 2015. *Translating Veterans' Training into Civilian Job Skills,* Santa Monica, Rand Corporation.

JOSÉ CHAMBEL, M. & SOBRAL, F. 2011. Training is an investment with return in temporary workers: A social exchange perspective. *Career Development International,* 16**,** 161-177.

KIRKE, C. 2009. *Red coat, green machine: Continuity in change in the British Army 1700 to 2000*, A&C Black.

KOVALENKO, M. & MORTELMANS, D. Employment security in non-traditional careers: Exploring the dynamic of long-term work trajectories in thirteen European countries. Proceedings of the International Conference on Sequence Analysis and Related Methods (LaCOSA II), 2016. 105-128.

MAMON, D., SCOGLIO, A. A. J., CALIXTE, R. M., TUVAL-MASHIACH, R., PATTON, B. & DREBING, C. E. 2020. Connecting Veterans and Their Community Through Narrative: Pilot Data on a Community Strengthening Intervention. *Community Mental Health Journal,* 56**,** 804-813.

MCBRIDE, A., HEBSON, G. & HOLGATE, J. 2014. Intersectionality – Are we taking enough notice in the field of work and employment relations? *Work, Employment and Society,* 29**,** 331-341.

MOD 2019. *Defence support services – based around Defence People Mental Health and Well-being Strategy 2017-2022 – Join well, Serve well, Leave well,* London, MOD.

MURPHY, D., ASHWICK, R., PALMER, E. & BUSUTTIL, W. 2019. Describing the profile of a population of UK veterans seeking support for mental health difficulties. *Journal of Mental Health,* 28**,** 654-661.

PARRY, E., BATTISTA, V., WILLIAMS, M., ROBINSON, D. & TAKALA, H. 2019. *Female Service Leavers and Employment,* Cambridge, FIMT.

PIKE, A. 2016. *Deployment to Employment,* London, Royal British Legion.

RODRIGUES, R., GUEST, D. & BUDJANOVCANIN, A. 2016. Bounded or boundaryless? An empirical investigation of career boundaries and boundary crossing. *Work, Employment and Society,* 30**,** 669-686.

STONE, C. & STONE, D. L. 2015. Factors affecting hiring decisions about veterans. *Human Resource Management Review,* 25**,** 68-79.

STONE, C. B., LENGNICK-HALL, M. & MULDOON, J. 2018. Do stereotypes of veterans affect chances of employment? *The Psychologist-Manager Journal,* 21**,** 1.

URWIN, P., PARRY, E., DODDS, I., KARUK, V. & DAVID 2013. *The Business Case for Equality and Diversity: a survey of the academic literature,* London, BIS.