

Why Women Join the Military: Exploring What Motivates Women to Join the New Zealand Defence Force

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Roadmap



INTRODUCTION AND
LITERATURE VIEW



RESEARCH DESIGN
AND METHODS



FINDINGS



CONCLUSION

Introduction and Lit. Review

- The military has been, and continues to be, perceived as a male dominated and masculine environment
- Men have accounted for the majority of personnel within Western militaries, which continues to be the case in the modern day
- Military service has been synonymous with being male or masculine which has contributed to the image or perception of a 'soldier'
- Alternatively, women faced sanction and restriction that prohibited them from serving within many aspects of the military

NZ Context

- Despite women being integrated into the organisation in 1977, restrictions remained in place which prevented them from serving in combat roles and units
- These restrictions were removed in 2000
- Despite removing these restrictions, the NZDF has continued to face significant challenges to recruit and retain women in these trades
- Women currently represent 2% of personnel in combat trades

Research Design and Methods

- Qualitative approach
- Purpose (criterion based) sampling and snowball sampling
- Semi-structured interviewing
- Thematic Analysis

Findings - Opportunities

- Skill development and Training
 - Gain or improve skills, knowledge, and sought self-improvement
 - Viewed as being useful for their future careers
- Travel and Deployment
 - Expected to be deployed or experience travel
- Challenge
 - Intrinsic motivator
 - Physical and mental challenges of serving in a combat trade

Findings - Benefits

- Support and Services
 - Food and accommodation (access and affordability)
 - Safe and secure environment
- Lifestyle – Social Aspect
 - Belongingness – friendships, work colleagues, comradeship, and camaraderie
- Lifestyle – Physical Aspect
 - Fitness and physical components of combat roles

Findings - Influence

- Influential people/role models
 - Individuals who served or had served in the NZDF (specifically a combat trade)
 - Not limited to a family member
 - The importance was not so much who the person was, but their ability to share their experiences and create a desire for the same outcomes and experiences
 - Knowing someone helped women with preparation and expectation management

Conclusion

- Sought to aid in addressing underrepresentation of women in combat trades
- Sought to fill a gap in the literature and provide NZ context
- Women join the military and combat trades for a variety of reasons
- The strongest theme was influence – knowing someone who served