

2021

Military Wives' Perspectives of the Impact of Deployment on Marital Satisfaction

Karla A. Morton
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Clinical Psychology Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Karla A. Morton

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Yoly Zentella, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Tony Hobson, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Rodney Ford, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Military Wives' Perspectives of the Impact of Deployment on Marital Satisfaction

by

Karla A. Morton

MS, Central State University, 2003

BA, Virginia State University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

August 2021

Abstract

With the inception of the Global War on Terror in 2001, over one and a half million United States military soldiers have deployed overseas to combat zones. Consequently, soldiers and their spouses have undergone numerous psychological challenges as well as a shift in the marital dynamics during a deployment. Difficulties in relationships created by the demands of deployment may lead to the dissolution of a marriage. Hence, the purpose of this study was to quantitatively examine the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction as experienced by military spouses. This study was grounded in the family systems theory and involved using the ABCX model of family stress and coping to explore the proposed phenomenon. Survey data were collected from 235 participants using the Marital Adjustment Test and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and Depression Anxiety Stress Scales to measure outcomes. Study results showed greater marital satisfaction amongst wives who have never experienced a deployment while married to a service member. Additionally, wives with deployed husbands reported higher levels of psychological distress, such as anxiety and stress. Study results suggest a correlation between military deployment and marital satisfaction. Therefore, this study can impact positive social change by helping to guide the development and implementation of programs designed to offer support to married couples going through military deployment. Marital support can potentially strengthen marital satisfaction and in turn lead to positive social change by affecting the psychological functioning of soldiers, making them more effective on the battlefield.

Military Wives' Perspective of the Impact of Deployments on Marital Satisfaction

by

Karla A. Morton

MS, Central Michigan University, 2003

BA, Virginia State University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

August 2021

Dedication

To my husband Maurice, who has supported me in this dissertation journey from the very beginning. Despite the many disappointments and frustrations, you always offered your full support, encouragement, and love. Thank you for believing in me and for your vision of me as Dr. Morton.

To my three beautiful children, Omari, Marissa, and Myles; I completed this dissertation for you. I wanted to lead by example and show the importance of dedication, hard work, perseverance, and finishing what you started. You are my legacy, and this dissertation is a reminder for you to never give up, and that you can accomplish whatever you set your mind towards accomplishing. May you always pursue your path and allow God to guide you along the way.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to military wives all over the world, who proudly and quietly serve at home while their soldier is away. These incredible women have sacrificed much, and have experienced many birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, special events, and even childbirth, without their soldier/husband by their sides. They have had to be the glue that binds their families together and be both mother and father to their children while their husbands serve, especially during deployments and trainings. The support you give, makes it possible for your soldier to defend and protect our nation, knowing that their household is in good hands. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my family, for without them, this journey would not have been possible. There were many times when I became unavailable to them while I burned the midnight oil or carved out time on the weekends to work on my dissertation. They never once complained about the loss family time and remained my biggest cheerleaders. I am incredibly blessed to have had them by my side.

To my parents, who have taught me that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13). Your prayers were felt and have sustained me throughout this journey. Through your teachings, I have learned to lean on God and allow Him to direct my path. Thus, I knew I was never alone, not even in the midnight hours, or the times of despair.

I would also like to acknowledge my peers who have provided friendship and support along this journey. I met so many phenomenal women during my residency that paved the way in completing their dissertations and for being willing to help whenever I reached out with questions.

I would like to acknowledge those at Walden who have guided me on this PhD journey. Special thanks to Cat Heck, my student success adviser for checking in and pointing me in the right directions. Thanks also to my committee member Dr. Hobson for getting me started on this dissertation journey.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Dr. Yoly Zentella. I am forever indebted to her for getting me on the right track, for without her, I may not have finished this dissertation. Dr. Zentella was consistent, kind, and motivated me to keep going when I faltered. Thank you, Dr. Zentella from the bottom of my heart for your dedication,

caring and investment. Your feedback, guidance, patience, and support have meant the world to me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background.....	3
Problem Statement	9
Purpose of the Study	12
Research Questions and Hypotheses	14
Theoretical Framework.....	15
Nature of the Study	17
Definitions.....	18
Assumptions.....	21
Scope and Delimitations	21
Limitations	23
Significance.....	25
Summary	27
Chapter 2: Literature Review	29
Introduction.....	29
Literature Search Strategy.....	31
Theoretical Foundation	31
Family Stress Theory Overview	31

Literature Review Related to Key Variables	35
Military Demographics and Dynamics	35
Military Lifestyle	37
Military Deployment.....	39
Military Marriages	40
Deployment and Marriage	44
Divorce.....	48
Support for Military Wives.....	49
Support for Deployed Soldiers.....	51
Marital Satisfaction.....	52
Stages of Deployment.....	55
Mental Health.....	59
Resilience.....	61
Review of Methodology Literature.....	63
Summary and Conclusions	64
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	67
Introduction.....	67
Research Design and Rationale	67
Methodology.....	69
Population	69
Sampling and Sampling Procedures	70
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection	71

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs	72
Data Analysis Plan.....	72
Threats to Validity	80
Ethical Procedures	81
Summary.....	83
Chapter 4: Results.....	84
Introduction.....	84
Data Collection	85
Descriptive Statistics.....	87
Results.....	90
Post-Hoc Analyses	95
Summary.....	98
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	99
Introduction.....	99
Interpretation of the Findings.....	100
Limitations of the Study.....	105
Recommendations.....	106
Implications.....	108
Conclusions.....	110
References.....	111
Appendix A: Demographic Survey I	139
Appendix B: Demographic Survey II	140

List of Tables

Table 1	<i>Age-Groups of Survey Respondents</i>	89
Table 2	<i>Education Level of Survey Respondents</i>	89
Table 3	<i>Annual Household Income of Survey Respondents</i>	90
Table 4	<i>Item-Level Group Differences for the MAT</i>	96
Table 5	<i>Item-Level Group Differences for the RDAS</i>	97

List of Figures

Figure 1 *MAT Score Differences for Spouses of Deployed and Non-Deployed Military Members*..... 91

Figure 2 *RDAS Score Difference for Spouses of Deployed and Non-deployed Military Members*..... 92

Figure 3 *DASS-21 Score Differences for Spouses of Deployed and Non-Deployed Military Members*..... 93

Figure 4 *DASS-21 Subscales Scores for Depression (A), Anxiety (B), and Stress (C) ...* 94

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Military deployments to combat zones are a unique experience that military families often face. This is unlike their civilian counterparts, who do not have to contend with the embedded stressors of military deployments. This type of separation can be a source of enormous stress on marital relationships. Months of physical separation can create feelings of loneliness, depression, and anxiety for military wives who must suddenly adjust to life without their husband being physically present. This may include increased decision-making responsibilities, as well as living life as a single parent if the couple has children. A lack of a partner to share certain duties such as transporting children and housework can be daunting. Vasterling et al. (2015) said there are higher instances of mental health problems and loss of family cohesion amongst family members of deployed military service members compared to families of non-deployed military service members. Additionally, a negative effect of military deployment is the strain it places on marriages due to physical separation, distance, and lack of reliable or consistent communication. Nolan et al. (2019) said military deployment puts a couple at risk for increased marital problems. Borelli et al. (2013) stated that although thousands of families are affected by military deployments each year, there is still much unknown about the impact of a nonmilitary spouse and romantic relationships.

The primary aim of this study is to explore military wives' the impact of deployments on marital satisfaction and resiliency. There are undoubtedly various factors that affect some couples' ability to thrive during deployment while other marriages

struggle, and some ultimately dissolve. Gaps in knowledge in this area may impede the provision of adequate services to soldiers deployed to combat zones as well as military wives waiting at home for their return.

The potential for this study to impact positive social change is significant on an individual as well as on an organizational level. As military deployments continue to occur, the result of this study can help to improve marriages of deployed service members. It is essential for military service members to be supported in ways that will promote overall health and wellness so they may be able to focus on the mission at hand. Marital dysfunction and stressors may be a distraction to deployed soldiers and can result in adverse effects, including diminished decision-making processes that can lead to injury or death. Additionally, marital stress experienced by military wives can result in depression, neglect, and abuse of substances and children. Therefore, recognizing potential problems that can affect marriages of deployed soldiers can lead to the creation and implementation of programs and services to help combat and reduce occurrences of these problems. Having support in this area can be beneficial for deployed soldiers and their wives. Knowing that there are services available to them and having opportunities to gain skills to work towards a healthy marriage during deployment would likely produce more favorable outcomes compared to those individuals who do not have access to the same type of interventions. Additionally, the military organization will benefit from gaining a greater understanding of issues that may hinder the optimal performance of service members. Operational readiness is likely to improve for soldiers whose wives experience greater marital satisfaction, thus improving U.S. national security.

Chapter 1 includes an introduction, background information, the problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, theoretical foundation, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, significance, and a summary.

Background

Service in the U.S. military is voluntary, yet the military force is made up of over two million service members (U.S. Department of Defense [DoD], 2011). Although a professional choice, military service involves a unique commitment and high level of dedication to the military institution (Bóia et al.). This includes often putting the mission above family and self. This sacrifice becomes more pronounced during times of conflicts and wars. Most recently, following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the Global War on Terror (GWOT) was initiated, and the U.S. entered major military combat in Iraq and Afghanistan (Barbee et al., 2016; Card et al., 2011; Tubbs et al., 2019). With the inception of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the United States military has seen its highest levels of deployments since World War II. To support these missions, over 2.6 million US military service members have deployed to combat zones (Holliday et al., 2017; Vasterling et al., 2015). Gewirtz et al. (2014) estimated 3 million families have either been directly or indirectly affected by a service member's involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This includes many service members who are married, as well as those with children (Borelli et al., 2019; Chandra et al., 2011; Miller et al., 2018). Consequently, time spent away from family is an unfortunate byproduct of

increased and more frequent deployments for military service members. Many of these men and women have endured multiple deployments, missing key events and milestones in the lives of their families evoking feelings of loss for both the soldier and family member (Barbee et al., 2016; Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015). Rodriguez and Margolin (2015) said limited contact due to deployment has been shown to have long-lasting effects on spousal depression even after the soldier's return.

Bóia et al. (2018) said that the pressures faced by military service members impacted by the GWOT are enormous. Hoyt (2006) stated deployment challenges are largely psychosocial in nature, resulting from the demands of operational missions of the military. These combat missions are unconventional both in terms of strategy and warfare tactics, creating frustration for service members. Soldiers are often required to interact with and gain the trust of locals while knowing there is a real threat of insurgency attack while they are working on the ground. Everly and Castellano (2004) asserted that the nature of counterinsurgency attacks is designed to create a battleground of the mind, instilling a sense of fear, helplessness, and demoralization in soldiers. Nonetheless, this is the environment in which deployed soldiers must work daily. Additionally, Spera et al. (2011) said deployment is a way for active-duty service members to put their training to the test and fulfill their call to duty. Service in any military means there is a possibility of being called upon to engage in combat. This is a risk each individual soldier must consider for themselves and their families.

By military branch, the Army has the most deployments with over one million deployed service members in support of OIF/OEF. According to Leroux et al. (2016),

48% of military service members have deployed to support these missions, with most soldiers having deployed more than once. The Air Force has deployed over 200,000, with half of those deployed having deployed two or more times. The U.S. Marine Corps and Navy have also seen similar statistics (Spera et al., 2011). Deployments typically last between 6 to 15 months, depending on factors such as military branch, career field, and time needed to complete the mission. Leroux et al. (2016) said deployments associated with the GWOT have been longer than deployments for previous wars.

Furthermore, separation often begins prior to deployment, as service members must attend training away from home in preparation for changes in environment and duties while deployed. Orthner (2002) said of 4,755 Army spouses, 90% noted they were separated from service member for at least one week within the 12 months leading up to deployment. Additionally, one-third of those spouses indicated that they had experienced a separation of 17 weeks or more in the past due to deployment or deployment readiness.

Lincoln et al. (2008) said many military marriages end in legal separation and divorce due to the stressors of a deployment. Leroux et al. (2016) said high divorce rates for military service members have been ongoing, as the military divorce rate has been higher than the civilian population for many years. Karney and Crown (2007) stated that within the Air Force population, the probability of divorce increased with the number of days that service members were deployed.

Furthermore, due to the physical separation of deployment and available time for communication, issues such as trust, and betrayal often go unaddressed as couples are unable to talk about these issues at will. There is often a time difference of seven hours or

more plus the demands of the mission that makes daily or frequent communications difficult. Sherwood (2009) stated that the inability to communicate at will often led to feelings of isolation among wives. On the other hand, service members often form strong bonds and camaraderie with other soldiers they are deployed with due to the significant amount of time spent together. Due to these and other stressors, deployments often create an increased need for mental health care amongst military wives (Borelli et al., 2019; Leroux et al., 2016; McNulty, 2005).

While their husbands are deployed, military wives are often encouraged to refrain from burdening their husbands with complications or crises that may arise at home (Hall, 2012). Due to combat nature of deployment, service members must be focused on the mission at hand and not distracted by conflicts at home (Kern, 2017). Therefore, wives must often shoulder burdens alone which may cause strains in marital satisfaction and lead to mental health issues (Hall, 2012). Furthermore, wives may be reluctant to seek help for mental health issues that may arise during deployment. Within the military population, there has been a stigma associated with seeking professional help. Doing so may be perceived as embarrassing and harmful to their husbands' career (Eaton et al., 2008).

As a result of the staggering statistics on military deployments, the American Psychological Association (APA) Presidential Task Force on Military Deployment Services for Youth, Families, and Service Members was created and concluded that family members of deployed service members are at risk for adverse emotional and behavioral health consequences triggered because of a combat zone deployment (APA,

2007). Furthermore, the APA's Presidential Task Force noted that the wellbeing of families has a direct impact on the ability of service members to carry out their duties, and there should be an increase in available psychological services for families of service members across all phases of the deployment cycle (APA, 2007; Wolf et al., 2017). Additionally, recommendations were made to provide support and services to families and children who are at risk of developing negative consequences due to a wartime deployment. Negative consequences include depression, anxiety, and distress (Gewirtz et al., 2011; Leroux et al., 2016). Hence, understanding the nature of resiliency may be beneficial in this regard. Resilience is perceived to be the way in which individuals can adapt psychosocially when faced with adverse conditions (Chernichky-Karcher & Wilson, 2017; Crow, Myers et al., 2017; Punamäki et al., 2011). Consequently, resilience may serve as a protective barrier that shields individuals from potentially negative outcomes of military deployment (Chandra et al., 2010b; Chernichky-Karcher & Wilson, 2017). Renshaw and Campbell (2017) stated that there is very limited research on factors that foster resiliency and enhance relationship functioning in military couples. They identified this as a gap in need of empirical research.

Weber and Weber (2005) said aspects of the military lifestyle such as frequent relocations may foster resilience as individuals are required to adapt to new situations more often. Conversely, frequent parental absences and other aspects of the military lifestyle may negatively impact parenting behaviors, and in turn negatively affect resiliency and marital discord (Card et al., 2011; Chernichky-Karcher & Wilson, 2017).

According to the APA (2007), the entire family is affected by military deployment and deployment-related stress affects various levels of functioning. Families must adapt to the absence of significant members, and marital relationships may become strained due to separation. At times, the difficulties in a relationship created by the demands of deployment may lead to the dissolution of a marriage (Riviere et al., 2012). Hence, the goal of this research is to explore the effects of military deployment on marital strength and factors that make some marriages more resilient than others during deployment. Additionally, the role of family cohesion as it relates to resiliency was studied.

Undoubtedly, marriage quality and stability have been a cause of concern for quite a few decades. It is estimated that as many as two-thirds of first-time marriages end in divorce (Martin & Bumpass, 1989). Therefore, a key consideration when studying the strength, quality, or success of a marriage is to look at factors that may cause some marriages to be more resilient than others. Robinson and Blanton (1993) said characteristics such as friendship, commitment, fulfillment, tolerance, communication, tolerance, and religious orientation were just a few marital strengths to emerge in research findings. When considering marriages where one spouse is in the military and deploys to a combat zone for at least 9 months, other factors may come in play that affect the marital strength. Similarly, family cohesion may be negatively impacted during various stages of the deployment cycle. Bradshaw et al. (2010) noted that the way in which each family member reacts to stressful situations impacts the entire family's ability to cope during times of stress, transition, and crisis.

Furthermore, marital satisfaction affects the mental health of soldiers as well as soldier effectiveness and retention (Axelrod, 2006; Bakhurst et al., 2018; Goff et al., 2007; Karney & Crown, 2007). However, there is a gap in the research in terms of how military wives perceive their marital satisfaction to be impacted throughout deployment. Karney and Trail (2017) said research studying marital satisfaction of military couples impacted by a deployment is sparse. Similarly, Renshaw and Campbell (2017) noted that while there is a growing body of research on the effects of military deployments on service members, research studying relationship functioning of military couples affected by deployments is limited. Therefore, the study is needed because exploring military wives' perspectives of marital satisfaction during military deployment can lead to valuable insights regarding factors that help or hinder marital satisfaction and resiliency in the presence of deployment-related stressors.

Consequently, the study is needed because exploring military wives' perspective of marital satisfaction during a military deployment can offer valuable insight into factors that help or hinder marital satisfaction and resiliency in the presence of deployment-related stressors.

Problem Statement

Frequent deployments are a normal part of today's military lifestyle (Borelli et al., 2013). Deployments affect over 250,000 service members each year, with three-fifths of deployed service members leaving families at home (U.S. DoD, 2011). Military deployments are considered to negatively impact soldiers and family members in many ways. However, research is limited on how military wives perceive changes in marital

satisfaction during a deployment. According to the Military Family Resource Center (2011), divorce rates in the military have seen a steady rise since September 11, 2001. While official divorce statistics are hard to find, it is estimated that the risk of divorce increases for service members who have been deployed, with rates increasing by 10-20% for returning deployed soldiers who exhibit PTSD symptoms (Negrusa & Negrusa, 2014). These assessments are problematic as deployments continue to occur, creating stress for military couples. With over 2 million troops having been deployed, many married couples have endured significant stress on their marriage as a result (Bakhurst et al., 2018; McNulty, 2005; Newby et al., 2005; Olmstead et al., 2009; Orthner & Rose, 2009).

Added stressors involving deployment and military wives include increases in household chores, child-rearing, and financial management (Renshaw & Campbell, 2017). These and other stressors combine to negatively affect many military wives who develop depression and anxiety symptoms, making it difficult to cope and creating a strain on marital relationships. This phenomenon has led many researchers to examine the correlation between military deployment and marital satisfaction (Allen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2010; Karney & Crown, 2007; Lincoln, Swift, & Shorteno-Fraser, 2008). However, these researchers agree that despite the widespread perception that military deployments negatively impact marital satisfaction and success, evidence has been inconsistent in proving this association (Karney and Trail, 2017). Therefore, the recommendation is typically the need for further research that looks at various aspects of functioning as they relate to military deployments.

This quantitative survey-based research study aims to address the gap in the literature regarding the ways in which military wives perceive changes in marital satisfaction during military deployment. Deployment requires a sustained physical separation that creates significant stress for military wives who are different from their civilian counterparts as well as other military wives whose husbands are not deployed. Due to a gap in knowledge in this area, appropriate and effective interventions aimed at fostering skills to maintain healthy marriages are often not provided to military wives of deployed soldiers who are struggling with depression, fear, and anxiety. Research is minimal regarding the needs of military wives during deployment, and support programs and interventions designed to help them cope during various stages of the deployment cycle may be essential in helping them maintain stable and quality military marriages. Furthermore, most of the research on military deployment has been focused on psychological effects on service members, while effects on spouses and their impact on marital relationships is recently emerging (Borelli, et al., 2019). This study will add to this body of evolving knowledge regarding the effects of military deployment on marital satisfaction.

Deployments are highly stressful events in many ways, but Greene et al. (2010) said soldiers reported issues on the home front as being the most significant stressor while they were deployed. Similarly, families of deployed service members also experience a significant amount of stress during deployment (Miller et al., 2018; Negrusa & Negrusa, 2014; Wong & Gerras, 2010). Carter and Renshaw (2016) said research has increased regarding adjustment of couples' post-deployment while research on other

phases of the deployment cycle is lacking. Therefore, they pinpointed a need for additional research on the impact of the deployment itself on military marriages. Researchers also agree that not much is known about the ways in which military deployment affects the romantic relationships of military couples and non-deployed spouses.

During all three broad stages of deployment (pre-deployment, deployment, and post deployment), wives of deployed soldiers often have many fears and doubts regarding the effect deployment will have on their marital relationships. They may experience fears regarding whether their spouse will make it home safely, or if they will be injured, experience personality changes, or their relationship will be the same during post deployment. Riggs and Riggs (1993) said the way in which individuals deal with questions such as these often determines the degree to which couples can navigate life together post deployment.

As military deployments continue to occur, this research may explain issues unique to military families and become a resource to help families successfully cope during deployment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to gather quantitative data from military wives regarding the effects of military deployment on marital satisfaction and resiliency. The overall goal is to determine if wives experience greater levels of psychological distress during deployment that impacts their marital satisfaction as compared to wives whose husbands are not deployed. Military deployment (whether the husband is deployed) is the

independent variable, while wives' perceptions of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable in this study. Marital satisfaction was evaluated using quantitative measurement of variables involving marital satisfaction. Global distress as well as physical symptoms such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, and somatic complaints were also analyzed. Covariants were also examined to isolate global distress from other factors.

Military deployment may make marriages more susceptible to divorce and marital discord (Leroux, Hye-Chung Kum, Dabney, Wells, & Kum, 2016; Vasterling, et al., 2015). Military couples experience challenges typically not faced by their civilian counterparts (Wolf et al., 2017). Separated from familiar sources of support, the couple must set up home in a new area, navigate the complexities of military culture, and continually renegotiate patterns of their relationship while preparing for, coping with, and then recovering from prolonged separations and literal threats to survival (Cigrang et al., 2014). Additionally, Beasley et al. (2012) said frequent deployments strain marital relationships and families of military members. Since 2001, the likelihood of divorce in the Air Force has increased parallel with the number of days airmen are deployed (Karney & Crown, 2007).

According to Pincus et al. (2001), for married military couples there is a progression throughout the various stages of deployment, and adjustments must be made along the way. For example, during the preemployment phase, family members must begin to prepare psychologically for the impending departure of their service member. During the deployment phase, adjustments are made in the service member's absence. For example, spouses must take on roles previously held by the service member and

children adjust to having only one parent present during meals and activities. This phase may also lead to feelings of loss or grief due to the separation and uncertainty of deployment. During the reunification stage (post deployment), families are typically overjoyed by the return of their loved one. However, they may also struggle with negative emotions due to the strain deployment may have caused, as well as changes made in service members' absence (Barbee et al., 2016; Esposito-Smythers et al., 2011). Consequently, the strain placed on marriages during deployment may impact marital satisfaction.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research questions for this study were:

RQ1: Do wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment?

H₀₁: Wives in military marriages do not experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

H_{a1}: Wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

RQ2: Do military wives experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed?

H₀₂: Military wives do not experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

H_{a2}: Military wives do experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

RQ3: Do military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed?

H₀₃: Military wives with deployed husbands do not experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

H_{a3}: Military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

Theoretical Framework

The family stress theory (Hill, 1958) was used for this quantitative study as it is often used in studies regarding the effects of military deployment on military families. Sullivan (2015) said military deployments have a detrimental effect on not only service members but also family functioning. Combat deployment places the service member at a substantially higher risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder as well as depression and substance use issues (Collins et al., 2017; Hoge et al., 2004; Tubbs et al., 2019). These trauma symptoms, in turn, may create secondary traumatization amongst family members (Pearro & Cosgrove, 2009).

Sullivan (2015) noted that when studying military families, it is important to use theoretical perspectives that are relevant to that population and considers an understanding of military families. Boss (2002) asserts that the family stress theory offers a useful perspective to understanding family stress and coping. The family stress theory was originally used to explain why some families are able to thrive when presented with stressors while others struggle to cope. Hill's original research utilized World War II veterans and their families, using two variables to explain the differences in how families

respond to stressors. Sullivan (2015) stated that the support families receive and the meaning they assign to stressful events determines whether a crisis will ensue.

The family stress theory was used as a theoretical basis for understanding the effects of stress and the ability of military wives to assess resources during deployment. Exploring risks and resiliency factors using this theoretical model was helpful in analyzing the experiences of military wives. Furthermore, the quantitative study design guided by key factors of this theory has proven to be beneficial when studying military families.

Hill originally proposed the family stress theory as a means of understanding why families react differently when faced with stressors, as some families struggle while others thrive. From his original research using World War II veterans and their families, According to Hill (1958), the family stress theory has two variables: the support that families receive and the meaning they assign to the stressful event) to explain the differences in how families react to stressors. With these thoughts in mind, Hill proposed the ABC-X model. This model concludes that a crisis or stressful event (A), along with the family's resources to handle the crises (B), and the meaning families assign to that crisis (C) is the way military families cognitively process events during a deployment. Additionally, given that the U.S. military population is largely diverse, the family stress theory is applicable as this framework can account for cultural sensitivity and take into account the effect of a family's race and culture on the stressors, wives experience.

The contextual model of the family stress theory is especially useful in studying military families, as World War II and Vietnam War families were used in the research to

develop the theory. Therefore, the family stress theory has direct relevance to the military population and may offer useful insight into how military families manage stressors relating to deployment. Sullivan (2015) said that the B factor (family resources) is especially useful in figuring out the ways in which military families navigate stressors. For example, during a deployment, various programs and resources are often available for spouses of deployed soldiers but may not be heavily used. Military spouses are better able to adapt to stressors when they receive and utilize social support (Bowen et al. 2003; Wolf et al., 2017).

The C factor (assignment of the meaning) is also particularly relevant in this study regarding the impact of deployment on military families. For example, the way in which spouses view military deployment may have a significant impact on their overall functioning pre deployment, during deployment, and post deployment (Sullivan, 2015). Some military wives may view deployment with great disdain and resentment compared to others.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative research was to study military wives' perspectives of marital satisfaction when their husband is deployed for 9 months or greater. A non-experimental survey design method was used to gather data to explore the relationship between the independent variable (military deployment) and the dependent variable (marital satisfaction). This involved using a survey design to administer the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT), Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) and Depression and Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS). A non-experimental survey design was

appropriate for this study, as the variables being studied cannot be observed, and no intervention services were provided.

Additionally, a cross-sectional survey methodology was used in this study as data were obtained from one specific point in time (Jaccard & Becker, 2002). The survey methodology has various advantages including the ability to study characteristics of a large population as well as ease of administration when studying remote locations and cost-effectiveness. According to Wright (2005), surveys are an efficient data collection method to conduct correlation analysis. Wright also noted that online surveys provide the ability to reach a significant range of individuals from various geographical locations. This is especially important for this study, as family members of deployed military personnel are stationed in various parts of the U.S. and the world. Added benefits of surveys include ease of access and the ability to maintain the privacy of participant answers.

The target population of this study is military wives whose U.S. Army or Air Force spouses have been deployed for 9 months or greater. My goal for this quantitative study is to fill gaps in current literature regarding the effects of military deployment on family members. The ABC-X model and family stress theory were used to explore concepts related to marital satisfaction and military deployment.

Definitions

Cohesion: Emotional bonding between family members (Rivera et al., 2008).

Deployment: The strategic movement and positioning of military forces from a home base to an area of military operations to support a crisis or military need. A service

member receives orders for deployment and may be deployed to a combat zone or different countries in support of noncombat missions.

Deployment cycle: Refers to the separation process of service members from their permanent home or duty station. The three broad stages of deployment are pre-deployment, deployment, and reintegration or post deployment. Pre-deployment begins with a notice of impending deployment. Deployment is the time that the service member is away from home. Post-deployment is the time at home before news of the next deployment (Louie & Cromer, 2014). This cycle is often extended to five stages (pre-deployment, deployment, sustainment, redeployment, and post-deployment) or a seven-stage cycle (train-up/preparation, mobilization, deployment, employment, redeployment, post-deployment, and reconstitution; Geren, 2007)

Marital satisfaction: Being content and happy with the functioning state of one's marriage (Rusbult et al., 1998).

Military dependent: A DoD employee's spouse (Branch, 2007). Military dependents receive certain benefits, privileges, and rights.

Psychosocial functioning: Individual functioning based on personality, social environment, and behavior (James, 2008)

Resilience: Resilience refers to "one's positive adaptation when experiencing stress or trauma" (Wang et al., 2010, p. 12).

Service member: An individual serving in the US military and/or reserve (Sheerin et al., 2018).

Military dependent – Defined by the Department of Defense (DoD) as a DoD employee's spouse (Branch, 2007). Military dependents often receive certain benefits, privileges, and rights.

Deployment cycle - Refers to the separation process of service members from their permanent home or duty station. The three broad stages of deployment include pre-deployment, deployment, and reintegration or post-deployment. Pre-deployment begins with a notice of impending deployment. Deployment is the time that the service member is away from home. Post-deployment (reintegration) is the time at home before news of the next deployment (Louie & Cromer, 2014). This cycle is often extended to a five-stage cycle: pre-deployment, deployment, sustainment, re-deployment, and post-deployment or a seven-stage cycle: train-up/preparation, mobilization, deployment, employment, redeployment, post-deployment, and reconstitution (Geren,2007)

Marital satisfaction - Being content and happy with the functioning state of one's marriage (Rusbult et al., 1998).

Resilience -resilience refers to “one's positive adaptation when experiencing stress or trauma” (Wang, Shi, Zhang, & Zhang, 2010).

Cohesion -The emotional bonding that family members have toward one another (Rivera et al., 2008).

Stressors: Any event taxing an individual's ability to cope with daily hassles and strains (Everson et al., 2017).

Assumptions

It was assumed that measures used in this study were valid and reliable for the intended population of this study. When conducting quantitative research, participants' credibility is vital. Therefore, it was assumed that survey responses and all data collected involved true and accurate reporting of experiences of participants. It was also assumed that there were no cases of lying and malingering among participants. The assumption was made that respondent answered survey questions in a manner that accurately depicted the dynamics of their marital relationships. Additionally, it was assumed that respondents to the survey were indeed married and members of the military, as these cannot be positively verified. It was also assumed that those responding to the survey were honest in terms of their self-disclosures and chose to participate for reasons that were not malignant. Another assumption is that the survey method used accurately measured marital satisfaction. Another assumption was that research participants were willing to participate in the study because I too am a military spouse who has endured multiple deployments. These assumptions were necessary for me to proceed with research without compiling inaccurate data.

Scope and Delimitations

This study involves the perceptions of military wives regarding effects that military deployment has on their marital satisfaction. These wives were either currently experiencing a military deployment or had experienced a military deployment of 9 months or greater within the past 2 years. The study was limited to the wives of Army and Air Force service members and therefore cannot be generalized across all branches of the

U.S. Armed Forces. These parameters allow for internal validity of the study. Internal validity is based on the assumptions that the trial was properly designed, performed, and analyzed (Costa, Hari, & Kumar, 2016).

Included in this study were wives whose husbands have retired from active-duty service no more than 2 years ago. This study did not include dual-military married couples. Single soldiers with a significant other and same sex married service member were not included in this study. The only purpose of these exclusions was to narrow the scope of the study and not to discriminate. These are threats to the external validity of the study, as this study cannot be generalized to populations that were not included in the research. External validity in a study means that the results of the study are applicable to the affected population at large (Costa et al., 2016). A key factor affecting external validity is the composition of trial participants and how closely it resembles the affected population.

While there may be other effects of a deployment such as substance abuse and PTSD, this study focuses on perceived effects involving military wives' marital satisfaction. This focus was chosen to explain the effects of deployment on spouses as information is lacking compared to the effects of deployment on service members.

Theories related to this study that were not investigated include the double ABCX model (McCubbin, Dahl, Lester, Benson, & Robertson, 1976; McCubbin & Patterson, 1983), interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibault, 1978), and family systems theory (Bowen, 1950). These alternate theories were not included in the study to narrow its

scope and only include the family stress theory as the guiding and foundational theory for this study.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. The most significant limitation is the assumption that participants will be honest and forthcoming about the true state of their marital relationship when answering the questionnaire. Using only Army respondents may limit the scope as the study did not extend to other military branches. In using one specific population amongst all military branches, findings cannot be generalized across all other military branches and populations.

Another limitation of this study was that participants completed the survey without me present to respond to questions that may arise. Thus, there is the possibility that participants could find some questions ambiguous, and answer in a manner that is not truly reflective of the true state of their marital functioning. Furthermore, survey respondents may respond in a socially desirable manner (Van de Mortel, 2008). This may be especially true of military spouses who are often told that their actions could affect their husbands' military careers. Therefore, participants were told all their responses were confidential, with no threat of tracking survey responders.

Additionally, there are other factors that could impact a wives' perceptions of marital satisfaction such as past experiences and family history. Although studying participants' past experiences and family history could lead to valuable insight in this study, this study is limited to wives' current experiences in their marriages. As such, it

was noted that only present experiences and concrete quantifiable outcomes were measured.

Bias issues were also of concern when conducting this study. This includes my own biases impacting the findings of the study as a military spouse with a husband who has deployed multiple times. While biases are likely unintentional, they often lead to prejudicial language and affect outcomes of the study. Edmund Sonuga-Barke (2017) said, “risk of bias distorts the process of generating and interpreting evidence and threatens the validity of psychological and psychiatric research at a number of different levels” (p. 1).

Biases were addressed by not soliciting participation from military wives who I knew personally, or whose husbands were affiliated with my husband’s unit. Additionally, I sought peer review to address bias in any interview questions that were developed by me. I also ensured careful compilation of all results.

In order to account for construct validity, measures in this study were carefully chosen. Construct validity involves whether a test measures what it is supposed to measure. However, Haig (2012) noted that Cronbach and Meehl, who offered early varying views of construct validity stated that the investigation of a test’s construct validity is not essentially different from general scientific procedures for developing and confirming theories (Haig, 2012).

The Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) has been used as a reliable measure of marital satisfaction, while the DASS is an adequate measure of negative emotional states. Additionally, attempts were made to account for confounder variables through

methodological analysis of study outcomes. All responses were reviewed for potential bias and the presence of other variables that may have affected the dependent variable.

Significance

The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of military wives' perspectives regarding the effects of military deployment on marital satisfaction. The study also involves seeking further awareness of the role of resiliency on military wives' functioning and mental health during military deployment.

Military families experience negative effects of deployments on a large scale (Pincus et al., 2001). These effects become evident through reported cases of domestic violence, and murder and suicide rates of service members who have deployed. Post 9/11 divorce rates among veterans are higher than the general U.S. population (Newby et al., 2005b) while domestic violence rates of service members are five times higher than the civilian domestic violence rate (Cockburn, 2002).

Everson et al. (2017) said stressors military spouses face during deployment may create problems for the entire family unit. Furthermore, during deployment, wives must function as single parent heads of household and address problems on their own, thus adding to their stress (Everson et al., 2012; Herzog et al., 2013; Wolf et al., 2017). These added responsibilities and feelings of isolation may create feelings of resentment towards their deployed spouse, thus causing strains on marital relationships. Hence, when it is time for reunion, extended separation may make this a time of great difficulty, tension, and hostility instead of a celebration (Everson et al., 2017).

This research on military wives' perspectives of the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction and resiliency could provide evidence regarding the lasting impacts of military deployment on families. When a marriage is in distress, the deployed soldier will most likely experience a decrease in his sense of awareness. The troubles he faces in his marriage may distract him from the mission at hand, which can be potentially dangerous. Similarly, if wives' mental health is vulnerable due to a decrease in marital satisfaction, wife and mother roles may also be impacted. When stressed, a person's level of functioning is lowered, and mood and behaviors are affected. Additionally, stress greatly impacts the body, manifesting itself via the development of physical symptoms such as headaches, upset stomach, and an inability to sleep. These symptoms stemming from dissatisfaction in a marriage may lead to decreased patience when parenting as well as impairments in decision-making abilities for the family. Conversely, when individuals in a marriage feel supported, their mental stability is likely to improve, and level of functioning is increased. The support of military wives has proven to be vital in terms of the overall success of service members being able to successfully attend to their mission and protect national security.

Therefore, implications for positive social change include the potential to save lives and improve the overall national security of the U.S. Having a better understanding of this dynamic and possible psychological effects on military wives could lead to the development or restructuring of programs to support couples and families before, during, and after military deployment. The development of programs geared towards

strengthening military marriages would most likely have far-reaching positive outcomes on the entire family unit, community, and the country.

Summary

While military service members are fighting to protect the freedoms of the U.S., their spouses must be the glue that hold their families together in their absence. In addition, both parties must also maintain their marital functioning, despite physical separation and combat environments (Borelli et al., 2013). Unfortunately, due to the high and risky demands of deployment, many military marriages are strained during this period and beyond. Military deployment often creates stress and anxiety for couples, and many conflicts go unresolved due to separation and difficulties in communication (Knobloch et al., 2018; Olmstead, et al., 2009). As a result, many military marriages end in divorce or separation due to the unique stressors of deployment.

Continued research regarding the effects of military deployment on married couples is essential to gain a thorough understanding of potentially negative effects. This will be valuable to mental health professionals so that they may develop appropriate and effective intervention strategies specific to the needs of the military population. Additionally, Army support agencies will be able to provide meaningful support programs both for deployed soldiers and their wives at home that help them to navigate the pitfalls of military deployment. These targeted interventions will be beneficial in terms of successful reunification and transition during the post deployment phase.

Chapter 2 includes an introduction, literature search strategies, the theoretical foundation, a literature review related to key variables and concepts, a summary and

conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study is to add to existing scholarly research and broaden the scope of knowledge regarding the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction according to military wives. Existing literature on military deployments and the uniqueness of military life was comprehensively reviewed to identify patterns that may signify the likelihood of stress and maladaptive coping. Examining research will increase awareness of issues faced by military wives when their spouses are deployed. Although deployment-related issues have been reviewed in previous studies (Devoe & Ross, 2012; Erbes et al., 2012; Gabany & Shellenbarger, 2010; Mansfield et al., 2010; Marnocha, 2012; Riggs & Riggs, 2011), more research is needed to study the military wives' perceptions of the effects of deployment on marital satisfaction.

Due to limited research that explores the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction and resiliency, this literature review establishes a need for further research regarding the unique structural dynamics and stressors common in of military marriages that are not faced in civilian marriages. First, an overview of military marriages and challenges faced in some military marriages is provided. This is followed by an examination of factors that signify marital strength and resiliency across the general population. The effect of marital satisfaction on resiliency is also studied. This information can help to fill gaps in current research and provide for a greater understanding of experiences of military wives who endure military deployment.

Over the past 10 years, most of the research on the effects of a military deployment has been focused on the impact to the service member (Renshaw & Campbell, 2017; Vasterling, et al., 2015). However, literature is beginning to emerge that shows family members of deployed military service members experience greater mental health problems than families of non-deployed service members (Eaton et al., 2008; Chandra et al., 2008). Additionally, Mansfield et al. (2010) examined the medical records of over 250,000 military wives and found wives of deployed service members had increased rates of depression. Rates of occurrence of these mental health problems such as depression were comparable to those of service members who endured deployment (Gorman et al., 2011).

While there is a growing body of literature that addresses the impact of a military deployment on family members of deployed service members, a gap remains relating to effects on wives perceived marital satisfaction. In this chapter, I present a comprehensive review of existing literature on military deployment, the deployment cycle, and effects on family members. This review includes insights regarding deployment-related issues and emotional experiences during military deployment. This information also allows for understanding of the gap in research regarding marital satisfaction in this population.

Chapter 2 includes an introduction, literature search strategies, the theoretical foundation, literature review related to key variables and concepts, and a summary and conclusions.

Literature Search Strategy

An online search of literature was performed using multiple databases via the Walden University Library. The primary databases used were EBSCO Host, ProQuest, SAGE Journals, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Military & Government Collection, DefenseLink, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and SocINDEX with Full Text. Filters were used to narrow search results to peer-reviewed journals, books, and government documents. A date range of 2005 to 2019 was selected, with a preference for research published between 2015 and 2019.

In this literature review, these primary search terms were used both individually and combined: *military marriages, military deployment, effect on families, marital strength, marital satisfaction, and family cohesion*. Additional search terms included: *resilience, stress, spouse, separation, mental health, depression, anxiety, uncertainty, deployment cycle, military personnel, coping mechanisms, marital transitions, combat stress, armed forces, community support, demographics, secondary trauma, family stress theory, and ABC-X model*.

Theoretical Foundation

Family Stress Theory Overview

Sullivan (2015) said when studying military families, it is important to use theoretical perspectives that are relevant to that population and considers an understanding of military families. Boss (2002) said the family stress theory offers a useful perspective to understanding family stress and coping. The family stress theory was originally used to explain why some families can thrive when presented with

stressors while others struggle to cope. Hill's original research involved World War II veterans and their families to explain differences in how families respond to stressors. Sullivan (2015) stated that the support families receive and the meaning they assign to stressful events determines whether a crisis will ensue.

The ABC-X model was proposed by Hill. According to the model, a stressful event (A), the way the family perceives that event (C), and resources used to deal with the event (B) results in a crisis (X) if the family is unable to deal with the demands of the stressor based on their capabilities. Families experience stress and crises differently.

The family stress theory was later modified by Boss to a contextual model of family stress and coping. Boss (2002) argued that family dynamics are different as they are influenced by variables such as genetics, culture, values, beliefs, and family structure. The modified contextual model retains primary resources (B) and the assigning of meaning (C) but notes that they significantly affect whether a stressor will trigger a crisis or lead to coping. These factors were grouped into the family's external context, which she lists as variables the family has no control over and internal context, which the family may modify (Boss, 2002). Sullivan noted that family stress theory model has direct relevance to military families as it was developed through research using World War II and Vietnam veterans.

Stressors (A). Stressors may evolve from a positive event such as a marriage or negative event such as financial difficulties. Boss (2004) said most stressors are normal as seen through family developmental contexts. Boss said that as a family moves through

their life cycle, they encounter developmental changes as the family dynamics changes, such as when children enter the adolescence stage.

Resources (B). Family resources are critical for predicting how military families manage stressors (Bowen et al., 2003; Sullivan, 2015). For example, military spouses who receive social support are better able to adapt within the military community and beyond. When a military family encounters a stressor, they search for solutions by accessing their internal and external resources. Internal resources for coping may include communication style and family values. External resources typically come from the community and may include social support, public programs, and societal norms and regulations (Patterson, 2002). When seeking resources, families may choose to use existing resources, or they may search for new resources if they find their existing resources do not adequately meet their needs.

Perceptions (C). Studies have suggested that Meaning military families assign to an event has a significant impact on how stressors affect family functioning. Patterson (2000) said spouses' experience with military life and culture largely affects their perception of stressors that arise.

According to the ABC-X model of the family stress theory, military deployment creates significant stress on civilian family members. This creates a crisis that impacts various aspects of family outcomes and functioning. Hence, a direct correlation is often seen between military deployment and deployment-related stressors for military wives. Researchers such as Collins et al. (2017) and Sullivan (2015) noted that the family stress theory is a useful lens for designing interventions with military families as the theory was

developed through research with World War II and Vietnam veteran families. There appears to be a direct relationship between the family stress theory and military family issues such as those being researched in this study. Furthermore, applying the family stress theory to the research questions posed in this study can provide results that are more specific to a targeted population, rather than making sweeping generalizations.

Sullivan (2015) reviewed the application of the contextual model of the family stress theory in clinical case studies in which families endured military deployment. The goal of this application was to determine how the family stress theory could direct treatment protocols. Sullivan addressed the impact of A, B, and C factors of the family stress theory and how family assignment of meaning to various events were viewed via the lens of that theory. Hypothesis that could be made by the context of the model to the family's situation were also addressed. Sullivan further discussed strengths and limitations of using the family stress theory in work with military families. The theory is particularly relevant to military population and deployment-related stressors, as it is useful in drawing out resources and assignment of meaning which is empirically linked to military family outcomes (Collins et al., 2017). Additionally, the family stress theory is used to predict outcomes for military families with accuracy.

Although Sullivan (2015) found the family stress theory to be a useful framework, it was also noted that there are limitations as well. For example, Sullivan said viewing all families from the same theoretical lens was problematic, as there are often variable factors that make each family unique. Murray et al. (2018) stated that their review of

empirical studies showed a deficit in attention given to cultural assets in the application of family stress theories in ways that highlights strength-based contributions.

Collins et al. (2017) also touted the family stress theory for providing a rather useful framework for their study on military family issues. Like this present study, the researchers conducted a quantitative study of military family experiences during deployment. Some findings of the study supported a hypothesis that stress pileup, informal resources, and level of deployment preparation were related to depressive symptoms of couples. This study utilized a similar structure in which an online survey was used to collect data during a specific time. Their study sample included with 56 married military personnel and assessed for measures such as depressive symptoms. Collins et al. said data being gathered at a single point in time was a limitation. More longitudinal research is needed in this area. While their study focused on the depressive symptoms in military couples, during pre-deployment, this present study will explore the research questions based on the impact of a deployment on marital satisfaction from a wife's perspective.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables

Military Demographics and Dynamics

In 1973, the military transitioned into an all-volunteer force (Clever & Segal, 2013). This ended selective service where all male U.S. citizens between the ages of 18 and 25 were required by law to register for military service. The practice of drafting young men into military service also ended with the transition to an all-volunteer force. Instead, young men and women freely enlisted.

There are many time-honored traditions in the military. Hall (2011) said the military is inherently different from the civilian population due to regulations and rules that dictate how the military operates. Core principles embedded in military culture include loyalty, respect, commitment, integrity, honor, courage, and sacrifice (Kern, 2017). Hall (2008) said hyper masculinity, collectivism, group cohesion, and a rigid hierarchy as evidenced by the chain of command are all norms necessary for the successful operation of the military. Hall said these core principles are fundamental to the strengthening of combat readiness. Also, the rigid hierarchal system with emphasis on dominance and subordination serves to protect military personnel from certain stressors during combat and fosters respect and obedience for authority figures.

There are approximately 1.5 million men and women serving in active duty in the U.S. military (DoD, 2012). Of those serving, approximately 726,000 (56.1%) are married (DoD, 2012). The marriage statistics are especially interesting given that in recent years, following the September 11, 2001, attack in New York, many service members were sent to war in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Up until the Gulf War in the early 1990s, the military combat force was made up of single male draftees without any dependents (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). This is a contrast to today's military that consists of service members who are primarily married. Consequently, many spouses and children are left behind during military deployment (Moeller et al., 2015). With Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan, the length of combat deployments has increased, and service members are being deployed more than ever (Moeller et al., 2015). Between those two conflicts, 47% of active-duty service

members are parents with children and have deployed at least once, and 63% of reserve service members with children have been deployed (Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, 2012).

There are multiple times when service members are deployed or go on training away from their families (Moeller et al., 2015). With deployment, there is the large burden of uncertainty for spouses. In addition to physical separation, there is an added fear that service members could be physically injured or killed in combat. Borelli et al. (2013) said the dynamics of military deployment impact marriages and affect individuals' sense of security in ways that very few other life events do.

Military Lifestyle

The military lifestyle is unique in many ways. Military families often face various distinct challenges and have distinctive strengths that helps them to cope with those challenges (Bakhurst et al., 2017). Benefits received by military personnel include stable employment, subsidized housing, various financial incentives, and free support services. Nonetheless, the frequent relocations of family's place stress on all family members. Nonmilitary spouses often face employment difficulties, with periods of unemployment following a move (Karney et al., 2012), and many spouses opt to become stay at home parents. Additionally, children are impacted, as most U.S. military children face six to eight moves between kindergarten and high school graduation (Sherman & Bowling, 2011). For military couples, physical separation due to training and deployment can create difficulties in marriage such as emotional disconnection (Cook et al., 2004).

Additionally, Kern (2017) said the military lifestyle has positive benefits such as healthcare, education assistance, and housing, as well as the ability to travel and experience various cultures in ways one may not otherwise experience as a civilian. When a military family is stationed overseas in countries like Germany, or Japan, the opportunities for travel and cultural exposure are enormous. Military families may be able to travel to countries like France, Italy, and Switzerland that many only dream about. Hall (2008) said the military lifestyle can strengthen family bonds and foster resilience when dealing with various stressors.

Kern (2017) said living a military lifestyle has challenges. Mehta (2012) said military culture can be problematic for civilian spouses. For example, within the military, the civilian's wife's identity often hinges solely on the rank and identity of her military husband. Some sense of individual identity may be lost as the term "military wife" often takes precedence over any other titles for the civilian military wife. Mehta further noted that many activities and benefits provided by the military such as childcare, health care, and the commissary are tied to and regulated by the military spouse's identification. For example, the service member's social security number is required for health care services and the cost of childcare is linked to the service member's rank. Brancaforte (2000) also noted that while the service member wears a uniform, rank, and patches that automatically ties him to a specific unit or group, military wives are not automatically afforded that same sense of identity, belonging or purpose. Hall (2012) stated that feelings of disempowerment and loss of individualism may be common for many wives. Additionally, civilian wives may experience intense feelings of loneliness and isolation as

they relocate to areas away from the support of their family and friends. With the frequent relocations, maintaining a career may also pose problematic for many military wives (Hall, 2008).

Nonetheless, (Brancaforte, 2000; Mehta, 2012) asserted that many military wives also wear that title with honor and pride. They look for or create ways to support their military husbands, create their own purpose and sense of belonging and immerse themselves into their military environment.

Military Deployment

The United States military consists of five armed serves branches: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy. Moeller, Culler, Hamilton, Aronson and Perkins (2015) noted that the various branches deploy their service members for varying reasons during periods of war and peacetime and have different deployment schedules and lengths. The two main types of deployments a service member will face are normative/routine deployments and combat/combat support deployments. A normative or routine deployment is not combat related and may include temporary assignment and training exercises. On the other hand, a combat or combat support deployment takes place in areas around the world where fighting is taking place (Department of Defense, 2010).

Since October 2001 with the inception of the Global War on Terrorism, approximately 2 million U.S. military personnel have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan to support military operations (Bergmann, Renshaw, Allen, Markman & Stanley, 2014). In the earlier phases service members endured long deployments in active combat

environments. Tanielian and Jaycox (2008) reported that 46.5% of military service members reported multiple deployments, with 44.9% deployed an average length of 6 to 11 months each time, and 30.2% deployed an average length of 12 or more months each time. SteelFisher, Zaslavsky and Blendon (2008) also noted that, “nearly one-third of military personnel deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom experienced extended tours and or repeated deployments in 2004.”

A study by Troxel, Trail, Jaycox and Chandra (2016) noted that military families are often stressed by long military deployments and periods of reintegration that follows. The challenges of a military deployment can be a detriment to the mental and physical health of the service member and place great strain on their marital relationships and affect the well-being of children. Some struggles family members may experience during a deployment include difficulty with the separation, threat of injury or death, and shifting responsibilities in the absence of the service member such as changes to routines the changes that occur (Drummet, Coleman, & Cable, 2003).

Military Marriages

By the 1970s, most military service members were married, yet the expression, “if the military wanted you to have a family, it would have issued you one” was common among military personnel (Clever and Segal, 2013). According to the DoD (2010), there are roughly 3.6 million personnel serving within the DoD. Of these, 56% of service members are married with over half of active-duty personnel being 25 years of age or younger. This signifies that many service members are getting married at a relatively early age. Lundquist and Xu (2014) stated that for many Americans, marriage is

occurring later in life with some populations forgoing marriage altogether. However, the U.S. military population appears to operate contrary to this marriage trend as the military is characterized by early, pervasive marriage rates (Hogan & Furst Seifert, 2010).

Lindquist and Xu asserted that service in the U.S. military hastens an early entry into adulthood. Research such as the ones conducted by Drummet et al., (2003) and Lundquist (2004) has continually shown that marriage amongst military service members is significantly higher than their civilian counterparts of the same age.

Hogan and Furst Seifert (2010) said financial incentives and compensation packages provided to married service members and their families may play a significant role on rates of marriage amongst young service members. For example, single soldiers are required to live in the barracks amongst other single soldiers. However, upon marriage, a soldier regardless of age, is afforded the benefit of moving out of the barracks and into a house which may be on or off post (Lundquist & Xu, 2014). Additionally, married soldiers and their family members receive other financial incentives such as BAH (basic allowance for housing) and education benefits as well as having access to various agencies and activities.

Lemmon et al. (2009) noted that the U.S. military is one of the biggest employers in the U.S. providing specific benefits to married personnel to ensure job retention. However, Laser and Stephens (2011) point out that although there are significant benefits available to married military service members and their dependents, they also face many hardships because of being in the armed forces. Challenges faced by military couples include frequent geographical relocations, periodic separations due to training and special

missions and unpredictable hours (Lacks, Lamson, Lewis, White, & Russoniello, 2015). These factors, many of which are unpredictable have the potential of negatively impacting a military marriage. Lacks et al. (2015) stated that the dynamics of a military lifestyle may in fact enhance some marriages and be considered strengths. However, for other couples, these elements of change may place service members and their spouse at risk for marital conflicts and strain. Karney and Crown (2007) asserted that while civilian couples also encounter various stressful events throughout the course of their marriage the challenges faced by military couples are unique in nature. For example, some wives of military service members noted that they would not expect to have the same type of marital conflicts if their husbands were not in the military. Furthermore, they reported that the stressors associated with being in the military hinders their own ability to maintain effective marital relationships (Karney & Crown). Similarly, researchers such as Markman et al. (2010), and Rosen and Durand (2000) have found that the demands of a military lifestyle may impede certain bonds essential for healthy marriages such as closeness and intimacy.

Consequently, the military population, with its young, married soldiers are at significant risk for marital problems (Karney and Crown, 2017) as it is more typical for younger marriages to end in divorce (Trump, Lamson, Lewis and Muse, 2015). Living a military lifestyle can place significant strain on a couple's relationship. Bakhurst, McGuire, and Halford (2017) noted that the challenges experienced by military couples are unique from those typically experienced by civilian couples. Many civilian couples have a stability that is not common amongst military couples. For example, due to

military orders, military couples generally relocate every few years to a different state and sometimes to a different country. Also, there are many separations due to military training and deployments not experienced by civilian couples (Bakhurst et al., 2017).

Trump, Lamson, Lewis and Muse (2015) stated that being involved in the military has significant impacts on husbands, wives, and their marriages in many ways. On one hand, there are mental, and behavioral health risks along with the physical demands required of the service member. On the other hand, Ponder, Aguirre, Smith-Osborne and Granvold (2012) noted that the marital relationship has the potential to be a protective factor against mental health issues and suicides. Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinman and Bunney (2002) noted that individuals who are married have lower suicide rates than those individuals who are divorced or separated.

Furthermore, Kern (2017) asserted that the cohesive nature of military service can foster strong bonds and help to facilitate healthy relationships. Lindquist and Xu (2014) also added that the lives of military service members and their spouses are linked in ways that makes it beneficial for the military to provide financial incentives and programs aimed at strengthening family relationships. Burnham, Meredith, Sherbourne, Valdez and Vernez (1992) noted that according to military research, married soldiers were more likely to reenlist, have fewer symptoms of depression and had less job-related problems than single soldiers. Marriage is also believed to counteract some of the potentially risky elements of young male adulthood as so many enlist at an early age (Lindquist & Xu).

Deployment and Marriage

Farero, Springer, Hollist and Bischoff (2015) stated that military couples face many unique challenges during a deployment cycle. As a result, many military marriages are negatively affected by the numerous stressors presented with during the deployment cycle. It was also noted that not only marital outcomes are impacted negatively but stressors at-home can become distractions for deployed service members, compromising their safety and effectiveness in a combat zone. On the other hand, stated that marriage can be a protective factor during a deployment. Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinman and Bunney (2002) stated that married service members have suicide rates that are lower than those service members who are divorced or separated. The Office of the US Army Surgeon General's (2009) reported that of probable factors resulting in suicide in OIF service members, 68.7% attributed failed relationships in 2007 and 50% in 2008. Furthermore, Eaton, Hoge, Messer, Whitt, Cabrera, McGurk and Castro (2008) indicated that depression and anxiety levels are elevated when family members are separated from one another.

Given the potential power of the marital relationship as a protective factor against mental health problems and suicide, it is important to assess the effects of deployment and combat exposure on a marriage. It is widely known that separation of family members is associated with elevated rates of depression and anxiety, adding to the stress a stateside spouse incurs (Eaton et al., 2008). Steel Fisher, Zaslavsky and Blendon (2008) noted that the effects of deployment separation on today's military families have increased as a result of the longer deployment cycles and the increase in the number of

troops and multiple deployments as compared to prior military conflicts. Steel Fisher et al, further noted that in 2007 what was once a 12-month deployment tour was extended to 15 months. This added to the stress and challenges already faced by military couples.

Eaton et al. (2008) that the demand of a deployment on military couples are numerous. Issues faced by military spouses include frequent family separations, having to adjust to constant moves and relocations, isolation from other family members such as parents, siblings and friends and changing military regulations. In addition, spouses must still meet the demands faced by all families such as household duties and child rearing.

It was found that when men and women were separated due to military service, both groups of wives and fiancées reported negative emotions such as loneliness and had similar levels of attachment (McLeland & Sutton, 2005). In documentation of the impact of traumatic events and stress on relationships, it was found that when couples experience traumatic events in the past it was likely to negatively impact marriage significantly. Therefore, the risks to marital accord may increase with subsequent deployments if traumatic events and stressors were encountered in a past deployment.

Farero, Springer, Hollist and Bischoff (2015) stated that while problems at home and marital discord can be a distraction for service members, positive communication can potentially be a source of support during a deployment. Similarly, various reports also noted that there are benefits to having regular communication with a spouse during a deployment (Baptist, et al., 2011). Farero et al., agrees that positive spousal communication during a deployment can help couples regain a sense of closeness, support, and trust. This allows for both the deployed spouse and at-home partner to cope

throughout the deployment cycle more successfully. Additionally, frequent communication during a deployment helps to broaden communication skills, allowing couples to discuss solutions to challenges that may arise during a deployment such as parenting issues and financial concerns.

Unfortunately, deployments can also be detrimental to not only the deployed service member but to the spouse as well. Studies have shown that marital relationships may suffer throughout all phases of the deployment cycle and negative marital outcomes are reported by both the deployed spouse and non-deployed spouse (Sahlstein et al. 2009). The non-deployed spouse often expresses uncertainty and worry of how the physical separation will impact the state of their marriage in the future (Sahlstein et al. 2009).

Furthermore, Carter, Allen, Loew, Osborne, Stanley and Markman (2015) noted that another challenge military spouses' face during a deployment is concern about how their own actions and behaviors will affect their spouse serving in a combat zone. For example, a spouse may be distressed by issues at home but hesitant to discuss them with her deployed husband out of a fear of causing them to worry and creating an additional burden on them while they are already in a volatile environment. This thinking may be in line with the notion of a spillover effect. Desrochers and Sargent (2004), asserts that stressful experiences in one domain such as marriage may spill over into another domain such as work. Marital discord is more likely to hinder the overall readiness of a service member for combat (Lufkin, 2017) and as Houppert (2006) noted, a distracted soldier is more likely to be a dead soldier. Negative spillover from marital dissatisfaction can be

especially problematic for a deployed soldier. Due to the nature and the environment of the mission, it is essential for deployed serviced members to always maintain focus on their mission and to possess good mental health (Carter & Renshaw, 2015).

Many soldiers have developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to their military deployment to a combat zone. As such Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod and Johnson (2012) noted that marital functioning is often negatively impacted by newly developed mental health issues. They also stated that studies of male Vietnam veterans with PTSD showed problems with family adjustment and marital relationships to be more prevalent than in veterans without PTSD. Similarly, studies of OIF/OEF veterans have found a correlation between mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and PTSD to lower levels of marital satisfaction and intimacy.

There is often a romantic portrayal of a couples' reunion post deployment with them blissfully running into each other's arms. However, Knobloch and Theiss (2011) noted that oftentimes the harsh reality is quite different. The reintegration process and resuming of the romantic relationship are often more difficult and emotionally draining than expected. Bowling and Sherman (2008) pointed out that service members returning home from a deployment may be dismayed by ways in which their family and home has changed in their absence. Knobloch and Theiss also stated that military couples may have feelings of uncertainty about their relationship post deployment which may impact their view of the romantic state of their marriage, perceiving it to be more turbulent and experience less satisfaction with their spouse. Additionally, couples face challenges

renegotiating roles and responsibilities that may have shifted during the service member's absence (McCone & O'Donnell, 2006).

Divorce

Carroll, Orthner, Behnke, Smith, Day and Raburn (2013) stated that there are many disruptions to family life and relationship difficulties due to the many challenges that military families face. These stressors often place family members at increased risks for physical and psychological difficulties as well. Military families endure periods of longer separations, unpredictable working hours and exposure to injury and death that are not typically faced by their civilian counterparts (Burrell, Adams, Durand, & Castro, 2006). According to research, extended periods of military separations may create psychological distress in military spouses as well as increase rates of child and spousal abuse (Orthner & Rose, 2009). Not surprisingly, these challenges of military life often lead to divorce or separation.

According to McCone and O'Donnell (2006), approximately 40 % to 50% of first-time marriages in the U.S. end in divorce. Of those, 40% of divorces happen within the first 5 years of marriage and 67% by 10 years. The divorce rates for military service members are very similar to that of the national norm although fewer divorces are reported amongst military officers (Karacaoglu, 2003). However, with the military conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, the divorce rate in the Army has increased within the last decade (Renshaw, Rodrigues & Jones, 2008). Ponder, Aguirre, Smith-Osborne, and Granvold (2012) noted that between 2001 and 2008 the divorce rates have increased amongst OIF and OEF veterans.

Many studies (Gewirtz, DeGarmo, & Zamir, 2018, Kaplow, et al, 2013; Lufkin, 2017) indicate a stable marriage to be beneficial not just for the couple but for the children as well. Waite and Gallagher (2000) noted that as compared to divorced couples, married couples generally have better health, more financial savings, and higher incomes. On the other hand, divorce creates an increased likelihood for many negative outcomes such as a decrease in work productivity, increased likelihood for physical problems and higher mortality rates and chronic illnesses and slower recovery from serious illnesses (McCone & O'Donnell). Waite and Gallagher also noted that divorced individuals also display riskier behaviors such as alcohol and substance abuse.

There are numerous factors that makes a marriage more susceptible to divorce. These include, poor communication and problem-solving skills, low education level and getting married at a relatively young age (McCone & O'Donnell, 2006). In many instances, these issues are compounded by the many stressors associated with a military lifestyle. Rosen and Durand noted that the most significant stressors leading to divorce for military couples include the young age at which service members marries, frequent relocations and combat deployment. According to Ruger, Wilson and Waddoups (2002), the risk of marital separation is higher for soldiers who have been deployed to combat zone.

Support for Military Wives

During the many challenges of a military deployment, military spouses noted that one thing that helps them to feel encouraged and connected to their deployed spouse is constant and consistent contact (Lapp et al., 2010). Spouses want to feel that they too are

supported and to feel a sense of belonging within the military community. McLeland and Sutton (2005) noted that the level of support spouses receives has an impact on the way in which they can navigate traumatic events and marital happiness.

Due to the interconnectedness of military service members and their dependents, Karney, Loughran and Pollard (2012) noted that family support programs and resource centers were established throughout all branches of the armed forces by the mid-1080s. As the mission and needs of families have changed, these support programs continue to be expanded and refined to meet the growing needs of the military. With over half of service members married, young married men and women, fresh out of high school are provided resources that most other young high school graduates do not have access to (Karney & Crown, 2007).

During a deployment especially, mental health professionals and other military personnel typically connect military spouses to helpful community resources (Cole, 2012). These services are provided by the military free of charge to help families successful cope during all phases of a deployment (McFarlane, 2009). Spouses have access to a wide range of resources ranging from individual counseling to group sessions and even resources that can be accessed online such as Military One Source and Operation Homefront (Lapp et al, 2010). During a deployment, a Family Readiness Group is in place to keep spouses up to date on certain event and dates, as well as to provide activities to foster bonding and friendships amongst military spouses who share a commonality of their husbands being deployed (Di Nola, 2008). Types of services that spouses are often connected with includes academic tutors, businesses, churches, social

services agencies, and mentorship programs that can be helpful and relevant resources for the families of deployed service members (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). Additional resource that may help contribute to a spouses marital and mental stability include programs offering day care and job placement for spouses (Rosen & Durand, 2000).

Orthner and Rose (2003) noted that the armed forces established family readiness to help family members develop and sustain resiliency skills to cope under the pressures of life. This may include skills to strengthen relationships and practical skills necessary for various aspects of life. The resources are plentiful, and many are willing to be a support to military families during a deployment. However, although classes and counseling are offered within the military community to support spouses and family members, it is up to the individuals to seeks out or utilize these resources as they are needed (Carroll, Orthner, Behnke, Smith, Day and Raburn, 2013).

Support for Deployed Soldiers

During a military deployment, soldiers often experience events that are unforgettable and leaves them forever changed. Some may witness the death or injury of a fellow comrade or may have had close calls or injuries themselves. McGraw (2016) stated that when a service member endures military combat they are exposed to hostile conflict and the challenges of war that places them at an increased risk for psychological distress. McGraw noted that combat experiences may lead to shifts in how these soldiers perceive life and cause them to re-evaluate their life's goals and priorities.

Cederbaum et al. (2007) assert that social support is essential to helping service members cope with combat stress. For military personnel, social support may include

formal support from military leadership and informal support from soldiers deployed with them as well as from civilian family and friends. Cederbaum et al., noted that informal support is especially beneficially for overall functioning. They further stated that lower levels of social support are correlated with increase in PTSD depressive symptoms.

While deployed, efforts are often made to increase morale amongst soldiers and activities and concerts are sometimes planned in their honor. Special holidays are typically celebrated with traditional foods. Additionally, behavioral health services are available to soldiers as well as military chaplains who may offer prayer and spiritual guidance. Deployed soldiers also receive support from many organizations back at home. Businesses offer free and discounted services while school children send cards and letters expressing their appreciation and giving thanks to deployed soldiers for fighting to protect them. Oftentimes care packages are sent to soldiers filled with goodies from home.

Marital Satisfaction

According to Karney and Crown (2007), marital satisfaction refers to “the extent to which a spouse perceives the marriage to be personally fulfilling and worth maintaining” (p. 12). Lacks et al. (2015) said all couples will not experience feelings of satisfaction in the same ways. However, research has shown that the level of marital satisfaction is a major predictor for whether couples will choose to end or maintain their marriage. Zainah et al. (2012) said in assessing marital functioning and happiness, marital satisfaction is the most widely used measure. Specific variables that influence marital satisfaction include level of intimacy, amount of disclosure and household chores

(Laurenceau et al., 2005). Also, Zainah et al, found that couples who had been married longer and had higher incomes reported higher levels of marital satisfaction. Lacks noted that the research on marital satisfaction of military couples is limited. However, Karney et al. (2012) noted that studying marital quality and factors that enhance it in the general population can be applied to the military population with very slight differences.

Military couples are unique in that the military life brings with it unique stressors that are typically not faced by civilian couples. Karney and Crown (2007) states that stressful aspects of the military can affect marriages due to their effects on a couple's adaptive processes such as communication and problem resolution skills. Additionally, spouses reported that the stressors of a military life made it more difficult to maintain intimacy in their relationship due to separations and working hours. Spouses also believed that the military generally created more problems they had to solve in a short amount of time.

There are many variables that have a correlation to marital satisfaction. Lundquist (2007) noted demographic variables such as economic level has a positive effect on marital satisfaction. In addition, the length of a military deployment was shown to negatively impact marital satisfaction. Schumm, Bell and Gade (2000) noted that studies have shown that a stable marriage can do well for deployments lasting up to 6 months without experiencing lasting negative effects to marital satisfaction. Furthermore, research has also shown a positive correlation between multiple deployments and a decrease in marital satisfaction (Karney & Crown, 2007).

Ponder, Aguirre, Smith-Osborne, and Granvold (2012) stated that veterans of OIF and OEF are susceptible to certain health risks not just due to combat injuries but because of mental health issues as well as problems due to family separation. Ponder et al., further noted that marital satisfaction has been found to be a protective factor against various mental health ailments. Therefore, since over half of military service members are married, it would be beneficial for the sake of family well-being and resilience for the military to be aware of factors that hinder or enhances marital satisfaction. This knowledge will be essential for developing intervention strategies geared towards enhancing the quality of marital relationships. Riviere, Merrill, Thomas, Wilk and Bliese (2012) asserts that the military can take proactive measures towards strengthening soldier's marriages rather than being reactive to the increases in divorce. Additionally, it was noted that sustaining healthy marriages are important for optimal military functioning. Studies have shown a positive correlation between healthy marriages and better job performance as well as service member retention.

According to Waite and Lehrer (2003), there are abundant benefits to marriage such as increases in physical, mental, and emotional health leading to a higher quality of life and overall satisfaction. In addition, married couples tend to live longer and experience greater life satisfaction as well as increased economic security (Schwartz, 2005). On the other hand, Lacks, Lamson, Lewis, White, and Russoniello (2015) pointed out that the stressors married couples experience has the potential of influencing biological, psychological, and social functioning. When compared to non-distressed married couples, distressed married couples displayed greater levels of depression, stress

and poorer overall health outcomes. Poor marital satisfaction and functioning has been found to be directly linked with negative behaviors such as alcohol use and various psychiatric disorders (Riviere, Merrill, Thomas, Wilk & Bliese, 2012).

Although all married couples generally experience challenging times throughout their relationship, military couples are noted to encounter difficulties that are unique to their military lifestyle as well as strengths not shared by civilian couples. According to Allen, Rhoades, Stanley, and Markman (2011), military couples who have experienced a deployment frequently exhibit combat related stress. It was also noted that when compared to their husbands, wives generally reported higher incidences of stress. Allen et al, also stated that the level of support wives received during a deployment and the behavioral problems of kids generally affects marital satisfaction as well. Another factor affecting marital satisfaction amongst military wives is the level of satisfaction they have with the military itself. If wives perceive that the military has low concern for families, this places more stress on military couples.

Stages of Deployment

There are three broad phases: pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment. In the pre-deployment phase, a military unit receives notification of an impending deployment and begins training service members for the deployment. Service members go through a series of mandatory briefings, receives medical and dental evaluations in addition to mental health evaluations and counseling (Military One Source, 2012). During this phase, Laser and Stephens (2011) noted that families will set aside time to make legal and financial plans. They often consider relocation as some family members

choose to relocate during a deployment to be closer to family or friends. Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) stated that expectations and individual family member responsibilities are discussed during this phase and deployment goals and communication strategies are prepared. The pre-deployment stage may last from several weeks to over a year (Pincus, House, Christenson & Adler, 2008). The stage of making the necessary deployment preparations can be extremely stressful for families as they begin to worry and anticipate the absence of their family member (Lapp et al., 2010).

Siegel and Davis (2013) noted that families often predict deployment difficulties. For example, they may consider past issues during a deployment or family dysfunction issues that surfaced during a deployment. Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) also stated that existing mental health problems of the non-deploying spouses may also be anticipated family difficulty during the deployment.

The deployment phase is the phase in which the physical separation has occurred, and the service member has left his home base and is now serving in a combat zone. During this time, the family must initiate the plans made during the pre-deployment stage. The nondeployed spouse takes on additional duties and responsibilities in the absence of her deployed spouse and becomes a single parent to their children (Barbee, Correa & Baughan, 2016). Many spouses work to keep their traditions intact while also developing new ones' necessary for adjustment. Establishing or maintaining a support system is beneficially during this stage. Communication is also a major concern as they work out the best way to maintain contact whether by email, letter, or phone calls.

The deployment phase is the phase in which the physical separation occurs, and the service member has left his home base and is now serving in a combat zone. During this time, the family must initiate the plans made during the pre-deployment stage. The non-deployed spouse takes on additional duties and responsibilities in the absence of her deployed spouse and becomes a single parent to their children (Barbee, Correa & Baughan, 2016). Many spouses work to keep their traditions intact while also developing new ones' necessary for adjustment. Establishing or maintaining a support system is beneficially during this stage. Communication is also a major concern as they work out the best way to maintain contact whether by email, letter, or phone calls.

The post-deployment phase begins the day service members return from a deployment. This is often called the reintegration phase. Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) noted that like the actual deployment, reintegration periods will vary in length. Yosick et al., 2012 states that for many active-duty service members the deployment cycles repeat itself rather quickly and reintegration time may be limited before the deployment cycle must begin again. Like the pre-deployment phase, service members must go through a series of mandatory medical and psychological evaluations and counseling in an order to help service members have a more successful transition back to their former life (Military One Source, 2012).

Knobloch and Theiss (2011) noted that the post-deployment period can be particularly stressful for military couples as interference in the daily routine often occurs. According to Bowling and Sherman (2008), a returning service member must assimilate back into what's often new schedules and activities that developed during his absence.

Also, the reintegration period often requires reassignment of household chores, a renegotiation of autonomy and control plus the reestablishment of boundaries (Faber et al., 2008; Wiens & Boss, 2006).

Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) points out that during post-deployment, families must readjust and restructure their everyday lives to fit the returning soldier back into their family routine. This can be a slow process as family members must get to know each other again and take the time to communicate. Typically, plans are kept simple, and they may keep a low profile by not scheduling too many activities and keep interactions with others outside the family to a minimum. Holiday expectations may be lowered as well as they maintain flexibility to reintegrate and get their family back on track and functioning normally again.

However, the post-deployment stage may not be the blissfully happy stage couples may have envisioned. During reintegration, both spouses deals with the effects of trauma experienced while also learning to be a part of the family again. Knobloch and Theiss (2011) asserts this stage can be problematic for returning service members who are suffering from depressive symptoms. They may be overwhelmed by the many changes that took place in their home and have difficulty fitting back into family life. These challenges often trickle over into the romantic relationship with the returning service member experiencing decreased levels of marital satisfaction (Bowling & Sherman, 2008).

Cole (2012) noted that resources are also plentiful during the reintegration phase as professional resources such as counselors are available to assist families readjust. Cole

further states that during the deployment, both the service member and spouse have undergone developmental changes due to the new experiences encountered. After being in a combat environment, the returning service member must readjust to life outside of a potentially volatile war zone and somehow find a way to regain his place in the family (Darwin, 2009). It is important for military couples to be prepared emotionally and mentally for the reintegration process. Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) notes this stage can last anywhere from a few months to a few years depending on the length of the deployment and how well the family is able to reintegrate.

Barbee, Correa and Baughan (2016) asserts that the deployment cycle does not always run smoothly as challenges may be present in all stages. However, the actual deployment stage and the post-deployment stage are typically the most stressful stages for families (Trautmann et al. 2015).

Mental Health

With over two million service members having been deployed to combat zones in the past decade Milliken, Auchterlonie and Hoge (2007) states that over 90% reported exposure to+ traumatic events while deployed such as encountering enemy fire. Amongst those service members, 10% - 20% have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (Hoge, 2007). Additionally, Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod and Johnson (2012) reported that 18% of soldiers reported having experienced significant interpersonal disputes with spouses, other family members, friends and or coworkers. Additionally, it was more common for soldiers with existing health concerns such as depression, alcohol

abuse and PTSD to experience interpersonal conflicts than soldiers without health problems.

Bakhurst, McGuire and Halford (2017) noted that during a combat deployment military spouses also experience traumatic experiences. These experiences lead to higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), domestic violence and substance abuse (Foran, Heyman & Slep, 2011). The development of PTSD after a deployment can be very difficult for married couples. PTSD is significantly correlated to lower rates of marital satisfaction, relationship confidence, hostility between spouses and stress during the reintegration phase (Allen et al. 2010). The post-deployment stage is also associated with higher incidences of abuse, domestic violence and spousal isolation as compared to service members who were not recently deployed (Glenn et al. 2002). Additionally, the onset of PTSD had a strong correlation to low marital satisfaction (Allen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2011) as well as increased levels of psychological problems for nonmilitary spouses (McGuire et al., 2012).

Orthner, Behnke, Smith, Day, and Raburn (2013) noted that service members and their families face unique challenges because of the deployment cycle. Approximately one-third of OIF and OEF veterans seek and use mental health services within 12 months post deployment (Hoge et al. 2006). Additionally, as many as 20% of returning service members qualify for health concerns such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), interpersonal conflict, aggression, and suicide ideation (Milliken et al. 2007). Orthner et al also stated that combat deployment is linked to negative mental health outcomes in not only service members but their spouses and children as well.

Furthermore, Mansfield et al. 2010 asserts that during the deployment many spouses may experience a great deal of psychological issues such as depression, anxiety and various sleep and adjustment disorders. Eaton et al. (2008) found that almost 20% of spouses of returning service members from OIF and OEF met the diagnostic criteria for major depression or generalized anxiety disorder.

Unfortunately, according to Farero, Springer, Hollist and Bischoff (2015), the use of mental health services is stigmatized in the military. Numerous studies have shown that less than half of active-duty service members with mental health problems seek treatment (Gorman et al. 2011; Pietrzak et al. 2009). Kern (2017) noted that even military spouses are often hesitant to seek mental health services. Spouses reported that the stigma surrounding mental health issues is an obstacle for seeking professional help as it is often seen as a weakness and they believe seeking help is embarrassing and may be harmful for their husband's military career (Eaton et al., 2008). Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod and Johnson (2012) asserts that there is a great need to relay to soldiers the services available to them post deployment as well as reducing the stigma associated with mental health and seeking treatment.

Resilience

According to Troxel, Trail, Jaycox and Chandra (2016) there is often debate regarding the proper definition of family resilience. McCubbin and McCubbin (1988) offers a strength and adaptability focused definition which defines family resilience as “characteristics, dimensions, and properties of families which help families to be resilient to disruption in the face of change and adaptive in the face of crisis situations” (p. 247).

Active coping was identified as one of the more consistent factors associated with resilience in families as they deal with various stressors such as child illness, death, and separation of a family member (Compas, Jaser, Dunn, & Rodriguez, 2012).

Characteristics of active coping includes the tendency to plan, problem solve or seek social support during times of stress has proved especially useful in studying how military families prepare for deployments (Troxel, et al). When preparing for a deployment, military wives who were engaged in financial and legal planning, sought social support and problem-solved reported lower levels of physical health and depressive symptoms Dimiceli, Steinhardt, & Smith (2010). This correlates with prior research involving civilian families facing significant stressors where higher levels of engagement were considered a positive asset in active coping styles (Gage-Bouchard, Devine, & Heckler, 2013).

Luthar (2006) defines resilience as a dynamic process involving positive adaptation in the face of significant adversity. Saltzman, Lester, Beardslee, Layne, Woodward, & Nash (2011) notes that in early studies of resiliency, emphasis was placed on individual traits that promotes “hardiness” in an individual. This was to explain why some were devastated by adversity while others were able to thrive or emerge intact when faced with the same stressors. Through the years, models of resilience continued to be developed some focusing on specific risk and protective factors associated with adaptation, and psychopathology (Layne et al. 2007, 2009). Saltzman, Lester, Beardslee, Layne, Woodward, & Nash (2011) states that studying military families was very promising for the development of mechanisms of risk and resilience in families. It was

also noted that wartime deployment unlike other traumatic events that affects a large and diverse population is largely predictable. Therefore, opportunities exist to examine the effects of a deployment on families and develop interventions aimed at enhancing resilience amongst military families (Luthar, 2006).

Military families typically face unique challenges due to the demands of a military lifestyle. These families are often expected to be resilient and remain relatively healthy despite the long work hours, relocations, and deployments that place them at grave risk for death or serious injury. Castro, Adler, & Britt (2006) noted that these challenges are often compounded by the fact that a significant number of military service members and spouses are relatively young and living far away from family members and their hometown. However, Chandra et al. (2010) pointed out that even when faced with significant stressors, most military families demonstrate remarkable resistance. This may be largely due to the wealth of resources and support services the military provides to service members and their families (Riviere, Merrill, Thomas, Wilk, & Bliese, 2012).

Orthner and Rose (2009) noted that spouses experiencing a deployment often feel a sense of resilience as well as confusion. According to the risk and resilience theory, spouses may question whether their military spouse is more committed to his job or to their marriage. In many cases, military spouses refer to the military as the mistress and believe their spouse shows greater commitment to the military than to them.

Review of Methodology Literature

When studying marriage and deployment, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used with differing results to certain degrees. Primarily though,

studies have relied on the analysis of existing data to examine the effects of deployment on military marriages (Karney & Crown, 2011; Orthner & Rose, 2009). However, quantitative survey methods have often been utilized. One such study was conducted by Kurdeck (2002) in which he used surveys to study the effects of the timing of the separation on marital satisfaction. Other studies, such as the one conducted by Stafford, et al. (2006) have utilized qualitative methods. In their study, they used a survey method consisting of open-ended questions to explore the effects of a military separation on marriages. Another qualitative study conducted by Sahlstein et al. (2009) examined the challenges for military spouses left at home during a deployment. For their study, they travelled to military installations to interview participants such as chaplains and other participants. It was noted that qualitative approaches enable researchers to gather in-depth, open-ended information but the major drawbacks of this approach are the time and cost associated with it making it impractical. For my research, I intend to use a quantitative study to present an accurate representation of the intended population. I will also develop online surveys to reach a more diverse population in terms of geographic location, ethnicity, and age. This is also a convenient method for participants as they can complete surveys from the comfort of their homes, making it easier for them to answer candidly and honestly.

Summary and Conclusions

Many research literatures about the effects of a military deployment on family members, (Andres, 2014; Chandra et al., 2008; Gorman et al., 2011; Mansfield et al., 2010; Riviere et al., 2012; Schmaling et al., 2011) have reported a correlation between

deployment, mental health issues and marital satisfaction. Additionally, it was noted that the unique challenge of a military deployment often reduces a wife's sense of security and connection to her deployed soldier, making it more difficult to communicate, problem solve and maintain healthy levels of intimacy (Borelli, et al., 2013). Hence, this research is designed to explore variables that positively or negatively impacts marital satisfaction during a deployment. The large numbers of military service members who have deployed since 2001 highlights the need to better understand relationships of military couples. As such, healthy couple functioning should be of great importance to the military community.

The primary goal of this research is to explore a military wives' perception of the effects of a deployment on her marital satisfaction. Troxel, Trail, and Jaycox (2016) and Chandra (2016) noted that military families typically face unique challenges due to the demands of a military lifestyle. These families are often expected to be resilient and remain relatively healthy despite the long work hours, relocations, and deployments that place them at grave risk for death or severe injury. A consensus seems to be present amongst research literature that a military deployment creates a range of stresses, not only for the service member but for family members waiting at home as well. Depression, anxiety, and PTSD of service members as have received a lot of attention early on while literature on the affects to family members have been gaining momentum.

The military typically provides support programs for families before, during, and after a deployment. The absence of a deployed soldier creates unique stressor for a family such as a range of fear and uncertainty surrounding the mission. Additionally, family

members must continue to navigate life without a core member, creating changes to routines and family norms. It is widely recognized that support for the service member, spouse and children is crucial for a successful mission. However, that support may be generalized and lacking in some areas of need such as resources to help sustain marital satisfaction during a deployment.

This chapter synthesized literature pertaining to the effects of a military deployment on service members, their spouses, and the overall marital functioning. The correlation between combat deployments and marital satisfaction was primarily studied with marital satisfaction being how happy a partner is in the marital relationship. Lastly, literature related to the family stress theory was reviewed. The body of research addressing issues related to military deployment is substantial. For example, depressive symptoms in couples during a deployment has been studied. This study can build on that one by determining if depressive symptoms is correlated to marital satisfaction. Studies directly focusing on the effects of a military deployment on marital satisfaction is limited thus creating a gap in the literature. This study will focus on this phenomenon to add to the existing body of literature. Research methods will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative research study is to add to limited scholarly research regarding the effects of military deployment on marital satisfaction from wives' perspectives. Having a broad understanding of military deployment on individual and family functioning has implications for the development of programs and resources that will support the needs of military service members and their family members. As military deployment has increased, so has the need for continued support, interventions, and behavioral support for military families and couples. This study will address the need for further research that explores the impact of military deployment on the marital system. Chapter 3 contains an introduction, research design and rationale, methodology, threats to validity, and a summary.

Research Design and Rationale

This quantitative study involves using a non-experimental survey design to investigate relationships between feelings of marital satisfaction during the three broad stages of husbands' military deployment. This includes factors such as level of support received and communication. A non-experimental survey design is appropriate for this study as marital satisfaction is a studied variable that cannot be observed, and no intervention services were provided. The aim of the study is to collect statistical data using psychometrically sound instruments to evaluate the effects of military deployment on marital satisfaction amongst a military population of varying ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. This research includes hypotheses regarding the

relationship between marital satisfaction and military deployment related stressors. A convenience sample comprised of individuals who have been married for 2 years or longer where the husband is an active-duty service member was used.

A cross-sectional survey methodology was used in this study as data were obtained from one specific point in time. The use of a survey methodology offers various advantages such as the ability to study characteristics of a large population as well as ease of administration in remote locations and cost-effectiveness. According to Wright (2005), surveys are an efficient data collection method to conduct correlation analysis. Wright also noted that online surveys provide the ability to reach a significant range of individuals from various geographical locations. This is especially important for this study, as family members of deployed military personnel are stationed in various parts of the U.S. and world. Added benefits of surveys include ease of access and the ability to maintain privacy of participant answers.

There are also inherent disadvantages of using online surveys. Surveys are limited in that it is only possible to look at variables in isolation as well as participants' perspectives at the time and not the context of the relationship (Iarossi, 2006; Jaccard & Becker, 2002). Ability to evaluate the integrity of data can also be problematic, as surveys depend on participants answering questions truthfully. In fact, Wright (2005) said when answering sensitive survey questions, there is the possibility that participants will forego being truthful to look good. Additionally, when using a survey, the researcher typically relies on a significant number of participants responding to the survey. Limitations are addressed later in this chapter in more detail. Nonetheless, despite various

disadvantages, the use of surveys to provide quantitative data is supported by many researchers (Allen et al., 2010; Kurdek, 2002; Lawrence et al., 2008; Wright, 2005).

Research participants accessed three standardized survey instruments through online, commercial web-host survey providers such as SurveyMonkey. A sociodemographic questionnaire was used for the collection of demographic data such as age, ethnicity, number of years married, number of deployments, length of deployment, number of children, husband military status, and rank.

According to Wright (2005), surveys are an efficient data collection method to conduct correlation analysis. Wright also mentioned the ability of online surveys to reach a wide range of individuals from various geographical locations. Furthermore, surveys can be easily accessed and are useful in keeping the privacy of participants' answers. On the other hand, there are some disadvantages of using online surveys. Disadvantages include the inability to evaluate the integrity of the data, which depends highly on the honesty of participants, and the possibility of participants wanting to look good rather than being truthful (Wright, 2005). Despite some disadvantages, there are many researchers who support the use of surveys as a means to provide quantitative data (Allen et al., 2010; Kurdek, 2002; Lawrence et al., 2008; Wright, 2005).

Methodology

Population

The population for this study is military wives who are 18 years old or older with husbands who were deployed overseas at the time of the survey. It did not matter if this was not the first marriage for participants. The goal was to collect data from participant

representatives of varying age groups, ethical backgrounds, education levels, and socioeconomic levels. Other demographic information that was evaluated included number of years married, husband's rank, number of children, number of deployments since marriage, and length of deployment. These responses served to provide a clearer understanding of participants. Participants were able to comprehend English to adequately complete the survey, as it was translated into other languages and no interpretation services were available.

As military families frequently relocate, participants were recruited from military installations throughout the U.S. as well as overseas military installations. Locally, various military agencies and groups such as the Family Readiness Group (FRG) with direct access to military spouses were contacted. They were asked to share the online survey link with military spouses. Participants also accessed the survey online via the Walden University Research Participant Pool.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

To reduce threats to validity, having a significant sample size is important. Gravetter and Wallnau (2007) said power analyses determine assumptions for sample size, thus creating the best-case scenario for the number of participants needed to identify an effect. In instances where not enough participants are used, statistical power may be compromised. For this study, a sample size of at least 85 participants was desirable. This is based on the literature review. A sample size of 85 for this research improved the likelihood of obtaining significant results. Using an adequate sample in addition to

quality data collection procedures ensures more reliable, valid, and generalizable results (Bartlett et al., 2001).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Once approval is granted to conduct the study, flyers advertising the study were posted at local military installations and agencies with permission. However, participants were primarily recruited through social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn. Information about the study was posted on these sites publicly with a direct SurveyMonkey link to the survey. Recruitment efforts focused heavily on Facebook pages created and sustained by military wives. Participants were encouraged to recommend others for the study. Use of social media groups for recruitment was based on the likelihood of individuals participating in the study due to shared experiences (Yuksel & Yildirim, 2015).

Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Informed consent forms (see Appendices A and B) were required to fill out. This was provided as an online form. The informed consent form explained confidentiality and protection of privacy. Confidentiality was then maintained as stipulated in the consent form.

This study involved collecting quantitative information using a self-administered online survey. Participants completed the informed consent form and sociodemographic questionnaire, along with the 14-item RDAS and MAT, which were used to measure marital satisfaction. Data collection continued until the desired number of participants completed the surveys. Follow-up emails were sent periodically to potential participants reminding them to complete the survey. Surveys were designed to be self-administered

and completed without my assistance. Participants did not have a time limit. The entire process was expected to take approximately 15 minutes to complete. No compensation was provided for completion of the survey.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Along with the assessment instruments, a sociodemographic questionnaire was included. The website link provided both to all participants. Participants completed the online survey anonymously and were not asked to provide identifying information such as name or address. Participants were asked to acknowledge informed consent prior to beginning the survey by accepting risks, benefits, and responsibilities. Participants were also able to skip questions they did not wish to answer or exit the survey at any time by simply closing the window.

Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis was conducted through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a software-based program. This software is designed to perform quantitative analysis. Using this statistical software, a univariate descriptive statistics analysis was conducted. The analysis also included running frequencies and percentages for categorical data and means and standard deviations for continuous variables. Pearson correlation coefficient, independent samples t-test, and multiple linear regression tests were also conducted. Analyzed data were then organized based on emerging themes.

Restatement of Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: Do wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment?

H₀₁: Wives in military marriages do not experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

H_{a1}: Wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

RQ2: Do military wives experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed?

H₀₂: Military wives do not experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

H_{a2}: Military wives do experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

RQ3: Do military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed?

H₀₃: Military wives with deployed husbands do not experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

H_{a3}: Military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

Sociodemographic Questionnaire

Sociodemographic questionnaires (see Appendices C and D) were created specifically for this study and accessed online via SurveyMonkey. Demographic information included age group, ethnicity of both husband and wife, military rank of husband, number of years married, number of children, number of deployments while married, length of deployment, and frequency of deployments.

Race was determined with the following categories: Caucasian, Black or African American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native, Asian or Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic. Educational level was assessed with the following categories: did not complete high school, high school graduate with diploma or equivalent, some college credit, 1 or more years of college with no degrees, associate degree, bachelor's degree, and master's, doctoral, or professional degree. This information was used to determine common themes that emerged during data analysis. These themes can then be used in the development of more effective and relevant support and educational programs.

Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT)

The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Locke and Wallace, 1959) is one instrument that was used for this research. The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test often abbreviated as LWMAT, or MAT is a self-report measure developed to assess relationship adjustments. According to Locke and Wallace, marital satisfaction is achieved when individuals feel satisfied with the marriage and each other, develop common interests and activities, and feel that the marriage is fulfilling their expectations. The MAT involves various issues such as frequency of marital complaints, demonstration of affection, level of loneliness and well-being, involvement in joint activities, and partner agreement on important issues. The MAT consists of 15 items and measures of overall marital satisfaction and adjustment between husbands and wives. The 15 items on the scale were selected from longer scales used to distinguish between happily married and divorced couples. The MAT is comprised of both multiple choice and Likert ratings items that have weighted scores. Items include questions such as: "Do you ever wish you

had never married? and “Do you confide in your mate?” Total scores range from 2 to 158, with higher scores indicated better couple adjustment (Hoopsick et al., 2020). Each partner who obtained a score of less than 100 indicates significant self-reported couple distress, and a score above 100 indicates no distress (Billings, 1979). A score of 100 points is considered the middle point between distressed and non-distressed couples. Scores are obtained by adding all different points awarded based on the responses of participants.

The MAT is widely accepted as a reliable and valid research instrument by researchers and practitioners (Roberts, Leonard, Butler, Levenson, & Kanter, 2013; Homish, Leonard, & Cornelius, 2008; Monga, Alexandrescu, Katz, Stein, & Ganiats, 2004; Freeston & Plechaty, 1997; Locke & Wallace, 1959). When measuring marital satisfaction, the internal consistency reliability of the MAT has been estimated by the developers of the instrument using the split-half technique corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula and was good with an alpha of .90 (Locke and Wallace, 1959). In the original sample population, the mean score for the adjusted group was 136, while the maladjusted group’s mean score was 72. This indicated a significant difference between distressed and non-distressed couples, thus classifying the MAT as a reliable instrument to use to measure marital satisfaction. Prior research has shown that the MAT has a good internal consistency of .88 (Funk & Rogge, 2007; Jeong & Horne, 2009). The criterion validity of this test is supported by evidence of scores discriminating between independently classified adjusted and maladjusted couples (Locke and Wallace 1959).

More recent research has continued to support the validity of the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test. This instrument has been used in numerous studies of marital adjustment and satisfaction. Additionally, due to its brevity and availability, it is also commonly used by clinicians to assess couples' relational dynamics (Haque & Davenport, 2009).

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)

The DAS was designed to explore levels of marital satisfaction. As marital satisfaction is the dependent variable in this study, the DAS was deemed an appropriate instrument for this research. The DAS was largely shown to possess strong psychometric properties, theoretical alignment, and dimensional features in addition to its well-known standardized scale. Busby et al. (1995) then introduced the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS). The 14 item RDAS is a shorter version of the original 32-item DAS (Spanier, 1976). The DAS as developed by Spanier, is designed to measure the quality of dyadic relationships. Dyadic adjustment is defined as the degree of the dyadic differences; personal tensions, interpersonal anxiety, the dyadic satisfaction, cohesion, and the consensus in a relationship (Graham, Liu & Jeziorski, 2006). Research has identified the DAS as the most widely used unidimensional indicator of relationship quality (Graham, Liu, & Jeziorski, 2006; Menchaca & Dehle, 2005; South, Krueger, & Iacono 2009). Research has shown the DAS possess good construct validity, satisfying basic research assessments for the quality of married couple's general levels of satisfaction (Yelsma & Marrow, 2003). Furthermore, the DAS has been utilized in over 1,000 studies due to its strong construct validity (Rosen Grandon et al., 2004).

According to Spanier (1989), the DAS has demonstrated good consistency, reliability, and validity with a test-retest coefficient of .96. Many studies have used the DAS to measure marital satisfaction or relationship functioning of participants (Coop Gordon, Hughes, Tomcik, Dixon, & Litzinger, 2009; Monson, Schnurr, Stevens, & Guthrie, 2004; Nelson Goff et al., 2007; Riggs, Byrne, Weathers, & Litz, 1998; Rusbult et al., 1998). Coop Gordon et al. (2009) used the DAS to assess the marital satisfaction of their participants. The researchers noted that the DAS has demonstrated good reliability and validity. Monson et al. (2004) also choose the DAS in their study measuring military couples' marital satisfaction. After Nelson Goff et al. (2007) used the DAS to assess relationship functioning of their participants, they noted that the instrument demonstrated strong reliability and validity.

While the DAS has been widely used to access marital functioning, Busby et al. (1995), stated that the RDAS is an improved shorter version of the original DAS. The RDAS' purpose is to measure marital satisfaction, adjustment quality in an intimate relationship as well as relationship functioning. The RDAS was shown to demonstrate a strong correlation with the DAS (Crane, Middleton, & Bean, 2000). Furthermore, the RDAS has proven successful in meeting the same purposes as the DAS, in distinguishing between distressed and non-distressed marriages (Crane et al., 2000). Busby et al., also asserted that the RDAS has shown strong validity and reliability.

The RDAS is comprised of the dyadic consensus subscale, the dyadic satisfaction subscale, and the dyadic cohesion subscale. According to Busby et al. (1995), the RDAS had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .90 and a Guttman split-half reliability coefficient

of .94. One question on the RDAS used to assess marital satisfaction is: “How often do you discuss, or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?” To measure the answer, the RDAS uses a Likert scale ranging from Most of the time (1) to Never (5). The subscale scores are then added to obtain a t score. Crane et al. (2000), noted the cutoff score for the RDAS is 48 for the wives. A score below 48 means that the marriage may be in distress, while a score above 48 may determine that the marriage is not distressed.

Studies using the RDAS typically surveys both partners. However, for this study, it is not deemed necessary to secure both partners feelings on the quality of their relationship. Rosen-Grandon, Myers and Hattie (2004) noted that based on research, when one partner in a relationship feels dissatisfaction in their marriage, it creates a tension that strains marital interactions thus creating difficulties for both.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS)

The DASS was developed as a psychological instrument to measure three negative emotional states, depression, anxiety, and stress (Widyana, Sumiharso, & Safitri, 2020). Lovibond and Lovibond (1995) originally designed the DASS, a 42-item measurement using a four- point Likert Scale method, as a modified version of the Self Analysis Questionnaire (SAQ), with responses ranging from “0” never to “3” very often. Each of the three DASS scales component, depression, anxiety, and stress contains 14 items. Those items are further divided into subscales containing 2-5 items with similar content.

Lovibond and Lovibond (1995) later published the DASS-21, a shorter version of the DASS-42. The DASS-21 is comprised of the same three subscales, depression, anxiety and stress. However, there are only 7 items for each scale (Lovibond & Lovibond). The scales are also designed to measure negative emotional states in both clinical and non-clinical samples and is suitable for use in assessing adults and adolescents (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995; Tran, Tran, & Fisher, 2013).

There are several advantages for utilizing the shorter version of the DASS. With only 21 items versus 42, the DASS-21 takes less time to complete. Gibbons et al. (2008) stated that brief, internet-based instruments may be more acceptable and desirable for individuals. For this study, participants are required to respond to two additional measures along with the demographic survey and consent form. Therefore, being less time consuming is a benefit of the DASS-21. Another advantage of the DASS-21 is the omission of problematic items included in the full version, which provides a more concise structure (Henry & Crawford, 2005).

Even though the DASS-21 is relatively short, it still maintains high reliability, consistency, and integrity (Henry & Crawford, 2005). The original study of the DASS-21 showed good internal consistency. The Cronbach alpha were identified as .88, .82, .90, and .93 for Depression, Anxiety, Stress, and Total scale respectively (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Additionally, the three subscales of the DASS-21 have moderate to high correlation levels with the BAI, BDI, and STAI-T, which suggests strong concurrent validity (Antony et al., 1998). Henry and Crawford also noted that the reliability coefficient for the DASS scale measured by the test-retest method is good at 0.48.

Similarly, the DASS-21 illustrates good convergent and discriminant validity when compared to other validated measures such as the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Personal Disturbance Scale (Henry & Crawford), MHQ-14 subscales, and the total HoNOS scores (Ng, Trauer, Dodd, Callaly, Campbell, & Berk, 2007).

Finally, Rasch analysis used to analyze the internet administered DASS-21 showed good internal consistency (Shea, Tennant, & Pallant, 2009). Likewise, other modern and classical psychometric studies show that the DASS -21 (a) has good classical psychometric properties, (b) contains sets of items with similar item-functioning, and (c) is most suitable to measure mild-moderate severity levels as is relates to dimensional depression severity variations in population samples. Additionally, the DASS-21 has also been validated in various populations such as American, Hispanic, Australian, and British adults (Crawford et al., 2009; Norton, 2007).

Threats to Validity

In research where data analysis is conducted, reliability and validity are highly expected (Welsh, 2002). If procedures used to collect research data are not done using reliable and valid means, the research will not be considered credible (Creswell, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative that during the research process that accuracy and reliability are maintained to ensure a quality research.

A primary goal of scientific research is to determine if a relationship exists between variables and to explore the nature of the relationship. Internal, external, and construct validity must be accounted for. Measuring hypothetical constructs in a valid way is important. Westen and Rosenthal (2003) noted that there should be an evaluation

of the fit between theoretical expectations and the observable associations between measures of evaluating the fit between theoretical expectations and the observed associations among measures.

On the other hand, internal validity refers to the causality of a relationship as well as the ability to draw reasonable conclusions from the results of the study. When determining internal validity, it is imperative to control for any extraneous variables (Rubin & Babbie, 2007). Having strong internal validity helps to ensure that the study's results reflect positive as well as negative correlations between variables. Additionally, an adequate sample size will help to reduce threats to internal validity.

External validity relates to factors that makes it possible to generalize to the real world (Creswell, 2014; Leedy et al., 2013) as well as the ability to represent the desired population and situation. For strong external validity to exist, the research sample must be chosen from a clearly defined population and situation. For this study, the sample consisted solely of military wives with husbands who were deployed at the time of the survey. Rubin and Babbie (2007) noted that major threats to external validity include individuals, locations, and time. As military families are located throughout most states, the location threat to external validity will not apply.

Ethical Procedures

The APA (2002) offers ethical codes and guidelines for researchers to follow when conducting research. Additionally, the Institutional Review Board of Walden University (2009) has set forth guidelines that a researcher much follow. During this study, these ethical standards will be strictly adhered to. Prior to the collection of data,

Walden University IRB approval was obtained. Participants were not asked to provide personal information such as name and address that will make it possible to identify them. Their privacy and confidentiality will be protected throughout the entire study.

The purpose of the study as well as study procedures was explained to participants. They then reviewed the informed consent form, which was written in clear, concise language. The informed consent forms also explained the intent, risks, and benefits of the study.

As the study required participants to answer questions relating to marital satisfaction, it is recognized that these questions may create emotional stress. An individual who becomes distressed while answering the questions has the right to cease participation in the study. Once participants have had the opportunity to review the informed consent form, they indicated their agreement to participate in the study by selecting "1- Yes, I agree to the above consent form" prior to participation. The consent form outlined the voluntary nature of participation in the study as well as the rights to withdraw at any time. Through the consent form, participants were assured that their answers will be kept confidential and that the results will not include personal data. Participants were also assured that their personal responses will not be directly provided to the military and cannot be traced back to their spouse or spouse's unit.

My email address was provided to participants, and they were encouraged to contact me if they had any questions or concerns pertaining to the study. Efforts were made to inform participants fully about the study. Participants will also have the option of emailing me to request a copy of the study results.

Until reviewed, data collected will be stored on my personal computer which will be password protected. Once reviewed, and results obtained, all email correspondences will be deleted from my personal computer. The consent form also informed participants that all data collected will be destroyed once the required 5 years period for storing data has passed.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology of the research study. The research questions along with the purpose of the study guided the development of this quantitative study. Population sampling was chosen as wives of military service members who deployed to a combat zone were invited to participate. These participants were recruited through social media sites such as Facebook. The Marital Adjustment Test and Revised Dyadic Scale are used to assess marital satisfaction perceptions of wives who have experienced a military deployment. The results of this quantitative study will add to the body of literature on the effects of a military deployment on marital satisfaction. The results of the study will be provided and discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to add to the limited body of research regarding the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction as perceived by military wives. Existing research suggests that military deployment often creates conflicts between military couples as they grapple to cope with various issues such as mistrust, infidelity, financial disagreements, and disagreements over parenting issues (Knobloch et al., 2018; Lincoln et al., 2008). Many researchers also noted that deployments have the potential to create higher levels of stress, depression, and anxiety among couples (Bóia et al., 2017; 2018; McNulty, 2005; Miller et al., 2018; Olmstead et al., 2009; Orthner & Rose, 2009). The scope of this study was limited to military wives. Also excluded were dual military married couples and same sex couples. To ensure deployment experiences were recent, deployed husbands could not have been deployed more than 2 years earlier, and the deployment had to have been 9 months in length or greater.

Three overarching research questions guided this study:

RQ1: Do wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment?

H₀₁: Wives in military marriages do not experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

H_{a1}: Wives in military marriages experience more marital distress during military deployment than military wives who have not experienced deployment.

RQ2: Do military wives experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed?

H₀2: Military wives do not experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

H_a2: Military wives do experience higher levels of psychological distress when their husbands are deployed.

RQ3: Do military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed?

H₀3: Military wives with deployed husbands do not experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

H_a3: Military wives with deployed husbands experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, or stress than military wives whose husbands are not deployed.

This chapter includes results of the quantitative analysis designed to answer the research questions. The results section includes information regarding data collection and data analysis techniques. Results include descriptive statistics, evaluation of assumptions, and statistical analyses. Data were presented via tables, charts, and graphs to illustrate findings. Findings are followed by a short summary of information presented in the chapter.

Data Collection

Prior to beginning data collection, I sought and obtained the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this study with military wives. My study included a survey created using Survey Monkey. This survey opens with information

about informed consent, followed by a demographic survey and two study measures. The three questionnaires totaled 67 response items with an estimated completion time of 11 minutes. The premise of my survey was to compare military wives who have experienced military deployment with those who have not. Therefore, two separate surveys had to be created and disseminated. Due to the nationwide shut down and COVID-19 restrictions, flyers were not posted around nearby military bases as originally planned. Social media and primarily Facebook were the sole means of recruitment, along with the Walden Participant Pool.

Recruitment officially began on September 30, 2020. For the first round of recruitment, I posted the link to the survey for military wives who had experienced a military deployment on the Walden Participant Pool, along with various military wives Facebook pages such as Fort Carson Army Spouses, Fort Hood Army Family Support, Fort Bragg Army Spouses Support Group, and Hawaii Military Wives pages. The survey was well-received and many expressed interests in the results of the study. There was also evidence of snowball sampling where survey participants recruited other participants from their list of acquaintances and military wives' groups. A few days later, I then posted the second survey for military wives who had never experienced a deployment. The non-deployed group was more prevalent as I quickly surpassed my intended population size of 85 participants. I reposted the first survey a few times and then broadened the recruitment area to include wives stationed overseas in Japan, Germany, and South Korea. After a few weeks, recruitment was concluded on November 3, 2020.

A total of 138 participants accessed or attempted the first survey for military wives who have experienced military deployment. Once first survey responses were evaluated for completion, a total of 94 out of the original 138 were found eligible for inclusion in the study, a completion rate of 68%. The second survey had a greater number of participants. Of the 176 individuals who accessed and began the survey, 141 completed it in its entirety and were included in the study. a completion rate of 80%. Once data were collected, they were transferred from SurveyMonkey to SPSS version 25.

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine if MAT, RDAS, and DASS-21 scores met the assumption of normality. Two-sample t-tests were used to assess differences between respondents who did and did not have a deployed spouse during the previous 2 years. When data did not meet the assumption normality, the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used. Frequency differences for age group, education group, and income level were assessed using the Chi-square test. Additional exploratory analyses were used to examine item-level group differences on the MAT and RDAS were conducted using the Kruskal-Wallis test, and the False Discovery Rate (FDR) was used to correct for multiple comparisons.

Descriptive Statistics

For the entire sample of respondents ($N = 234$) most were between the ages of 25 to 34 (55.3%) followed by 18 to 24 (28.9%), 35 to 44 (14.5%), and 45 to 54 (1.3%). Slightly more than half reported being married between 1 and 3 years (50.6%) followed by 4 to 6 years (20.4%), 7 to 9 years (12.8%), 10 to 12 years (8.5%), 13 to 15 years (4.3%), and 15 years or more (3.4%). Approximately one-third of respondents reported having no

children (32.3%) while those respondents with one or two children comprised 24.7% and 26.4% of the sample, respectively. 11.9% of respondents reported having three children, while 3.8% reported having four children, and 0.9% reported having five or more children. In terms of ethnicity, most respondents reported being White or Caucasian (69.8%) followed by Hispanic or Latino (14.5%) and Black or African American (7.2%). Asian or Asian American and another race each comprised 3% while Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander comprised 1.7% and 0.9% of respondents identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. 36.6% of respondents reported having earned a bachelor's degree (36.6%) and 24.3% reported having completed some college. 8.5% reported having trade/technical/vocational training and 8.9% reported having an associate degree. 14.4% reported having a doctoral level degree. More than half of respondents reported annual household income levels of either \$35,000 to \$49,999 (27.4%) or \$50,000 to \$74,999 (25.6%). 17.5% reported an income level of \$75,000 to \$99,999, and 14.1% reported a household income of \$20,000 to \$34,999, while 2.6% reported their income was less than \$20,000. 12.8% reported that their household income was at least \$100,000.

Almost all respondents' spouses serve in the Army (95.7%) followed by the Air Force (3.4%) and Marine Corps (0.9%). 76.6% of respondents reported that their spouse is enlisted, while the other 23.4% reported that their spouse is an officer. The distribution of reported years of service was as follows: 1 to 2 years = 15.3%, 3 to 4 years = 20.9%, 5 to 8 years = 29.4%, 9 to 12 years = 16.6%, 13 to 15 years = 6.8%, 16 or More years = 11.1%.

Demographic characteristics for respondents who did and did not have deployed spouses are shown in Table 1. The two groups did not differ with respect to age ($X^2 = 5.89$ (3), $p = 0.12$), education level ($X^2 = 6.40$ (7), $p = 0.49$), or annual household income ($X^2 = 4.93$ (6), $p = 0.55$).

Table 1

Age-Groups of Survey Respondents

Age Group	Not Deployed	Deployed	p-value
18-24	48	20	
25-34	75	55	
35-44	16	18	
45-54	2	1	
Total	141	94	0.12

Table 2

Education Level of Survey Respondents

Education	Not Deployed	Deployed	p-value
Some high school	1	0	
High school diploma	11	5	
Trade/Technical/Vocational	11	9	
Some college	33	24	
Associate degree	11	10	
Bachelor's degree	53	33	
Master's or Doctorate	21	28	
Total	141	94	0.49

Results

Table 3

Annual Household Income of Survey Respondents

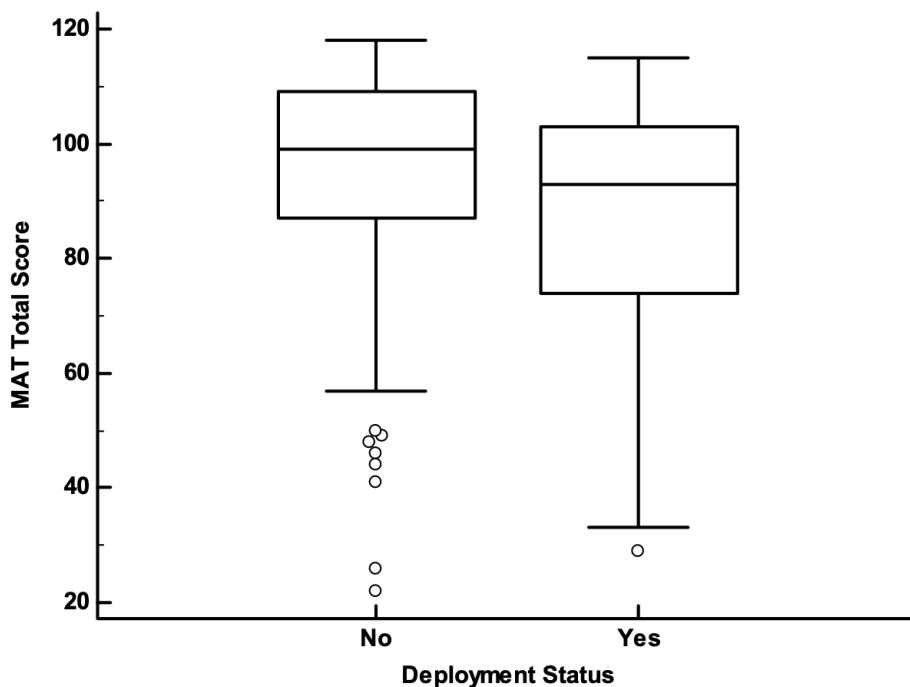
Annual Household Income	Not Deployed	Deployed	p-value
Less than \$20,000	4	2	
\$20,000 - \$34,999	17	16	
\$35,000 - \$49,999	36	28	
\$50,000 - \$74,999	38	22	
\$75,000 - \$99,999	24	17	
\$100,000 - \$149,999	15	7	
\$150,000 or more	7	1	
			0.55

RQ1

Both MAT and RDAS total scores failed to meet assumption of normality and were analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis test. For the MAT, respondents whose spouses were deployed had significantly lower scores relative to those whose spouses were not deployed ($KW = 8.42 (1), p = 0.004$ (see Figure 1). The median MAT score for the deployed group was 93 ($IQR = 74-103$) compared to the non-deployed group's median of 99 ($IQR = 87-109$).

Figure 1

MAT Score Differences for Spouses of Deployed and Non-Deployed Military Members



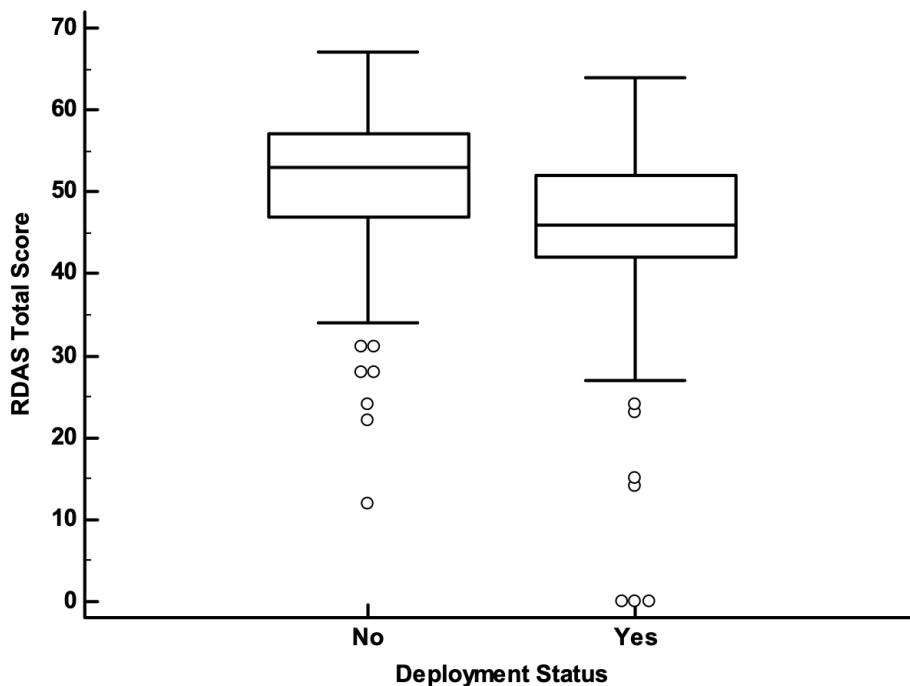
For the RDAS, respondents whose spouses were not deployed had significantly higher scores ($KW = 18.07 (1), p < 0.001$). The median RDAS score for the non-deployed group was 53 ($IQR = 47-57$) compared to the deployed group's median of 46 ($IQR = 42-52$; see Figure 2).

Responses on the MAT indicated that military wives with deployed spouses reported lower levels of marital satisfaction than wives who have not experienced deployment. Therefore, marital distress was greater for the deployed spouses' group than the non-deployed spouses' group. Similarly, responses on the RDAS indicated that

military wives whose spouses have not deployed while they were married reported higher levels of marital satisfaction than wives who have experienced deployment.

Figure 2

RDAS Score Difference for Spouses of Deployed and Non-deployed Military Members

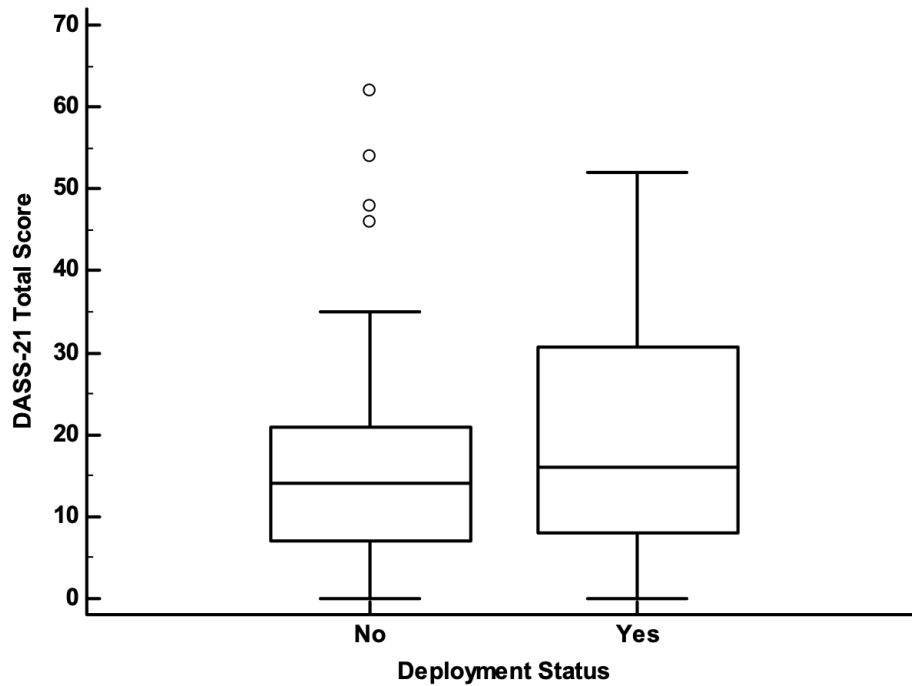


RQ2

The DASS-21 total score did not meet the assumption normality and was analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis test. No significant difference was noted between the deployed and non-deployed groups (KW = 3.34 (1), $p = 0.07$) (Figure 3). The median DASS-21 score for the non-deployed group was 14 (IQR = 7– 21) and the deployed group's median was 16 (IQR = 8 – 30.75). This suggests that Military wives with a deployed husband do not typically report higher levels of psychological distress than spouses whose husband is not deployed as measured by the DASS-21.

Figure 3

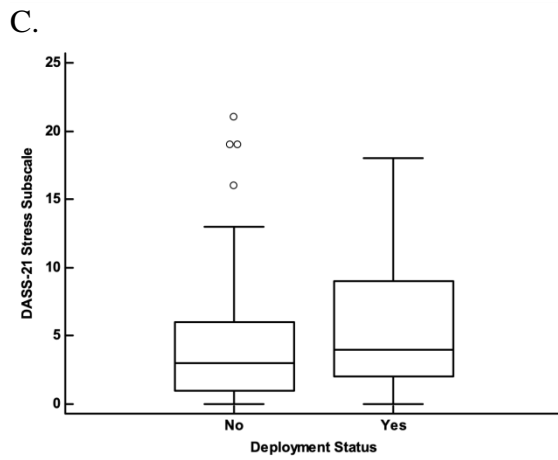
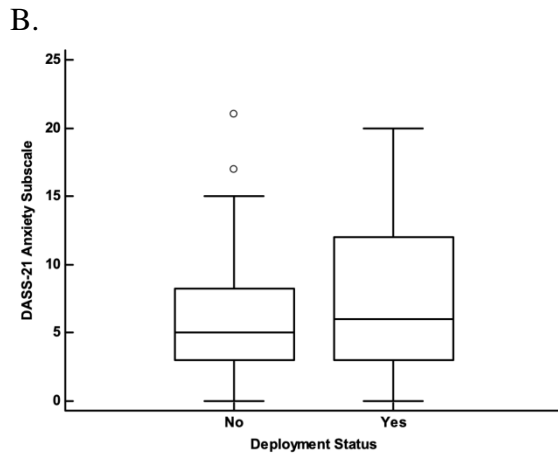
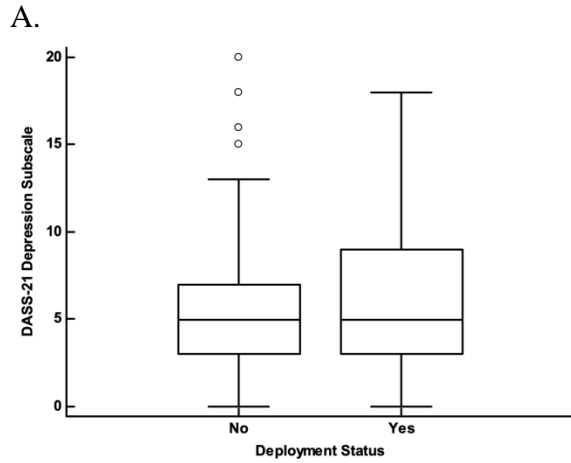
DASS-21 Score Differences for Spouses of Deployed and Non-Deployed Military Members

**RQ3**

When the subtests (Depression, Anxiety, Stress) of the DASS-21 were analyzed the Depression subscale showed no significant group difference (KW = 2.16 (1), $p = 0.14$) while the Anxiety (KW = 4.52 (1), $p = 0.03$) and Stress (KW = 4.36 (1), $p = 0.04$) did. These analyses are displayed in Figure 4.

Figure 4

DASS-21 Subscales Scores for Depression (A), Anxiety (B), and Stress (C)



Post-Hoc Analyses

Since the analyses in each of the initial research questions did not adjust for demographic characteristics, a set of post-hoc regression models were used to determine if demographic adjustment had any effect on the observed differences between the deployed and non-deployed groups. Since the distributions of the MAT, RDAS, and DASS-21 total scores did not meet the assumption of normality, robust regression was used in place of linear regression since the median is used as the regressor instead of the mean (Yohai et al, 1991). In these regression models age, years married, number of children, education, and household income level were included to account for their effects.

For the MAT total score, the deployed respondents' scores were significantly lower than the non-deployed respondents' scores ($\beta = -6.86$, 95% CI: -12.86, -0.86, $p = 0.03$). A similar pattern was found for the RDAS total score ($\beta = -4.89$, 95% CI: -7.24, -2.55, $p < 0.001$), however the DASS-21 total scores did not differ between the groups ($\beta = 3.94$, 95% CI: -0.86, 8.75, $p = 0.11$). Among the DASS-21 subscales there no significant group differences for Depression ($\beta = 0.95$, 95% CI: -0.41, 2.32, $p = 0.17$), Anxiety ($\beta = 1.78$, 95% CI: -0.15, 3.72, $p = 0.07$), or Stress ($\beta = 1.30$, 95% CI: -0.36, 2.96, $p = 0.12$).

Exploratory analyses of the item-level group differences on the MAT and RDAS are shown in Tables 2 and 3. For the MAT, the only item that was significantly different pertained to leisure time preferences where the non-deployed respondents reported higher levels of agreement with their spouse. For the RDAS, none of the items showed significant group differences after adjusting for multiple comparisons.

Table 4*Item-Level Group Differences for the MAT*

	Deployed	Nondeployed	p-value
Handling Family Finances	3.85±0.95	3.98±0.81	0.41
Matters of Recreation	3.80±0.91	3.80±0.85	0.84
Demonstration of Affection	5.15±2.29	5.77±2.03	0.05
Friends	3.78±1.09	3.99±0.86	0.18
Sex Relations	10.56±4.8	11.46±3.54	0.46
Conventionality (right, good, or proper conduct)	3.97±1.02	4.06±0.90	0.65
Philosophy of Life	3.91±1.01	4.04±0.81	0.55
Ways of dealing with in-laws	3.69±1.11	3.74±1.04	0.77
When disagreements arise, they usually result in:	7.06±4.25	7.36±4.10	0.59
Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	7.27±2.25	6.59±2.60	0.01
In leisure time do <i>you</i> generally prefer:	2.29±0.90	5.56±3.90	<0.001
Do you ever wish you had not married?	10.17±5.4	11.43±4.71	0.08
If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:	11.63±6.1	12.86±5.14	0.10
Do you confide in your mate?	9.23±2.37	9.66±1.62	0.10

FDR significance level: $\alpha = 0.004$

Table 5*Item-Level Group Differences for the RDAS*

	Deployed	Nondeployed	p-value
Religious Matters	3.87±1.17	3.90±1.09	0.89
Demonstrations of Affection	3.69±1.05	3.87±1.00	0.18
Making Major Decisions	3.93±1.05	4.25±0.75	0.03
Sex Relations	3.90±1.03	3.88±1.02	0.83
Conventionality (correct or proper conduct)	4.00±0.83	4.06±0.90	0.44
Career decisions	3.90±1.03	4.16±0.83	0.08
How often do you discuss, or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	4.23±0.87	4.51±0.86	0.06
How often do you and your partner quarrel?	3.19±0.82	3.31±0.78	0.24
Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?	4.25±0.97	4.42±0.92	0.14
How often do you and your mate “get on each other’s nerves”?	3.04±0.83	3.13±0.88	0.38
Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	2.35±1.11	2.50±1.08	0.33
Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	3.19±1.15	3.32±1.08	0.34
Work together on a project	1.97±1.14	2.24±1.24	0.13
Calmly discuss something	3.48±1.39	3.77±1.24	0.14

FDR significance level: $\alpha = 0.004$

Summary

This chapter explained data collection and analysis designed to examine the impact of a military deployment on marital satisfaction from military wives' perspective. The findings yielded some conflicting results. In some cases, the wives who have not experienced a deployment indicate greater marital satisfaction, while there were instances of greater marital satisfaction reported amongst wives who have experienced a deployment. As there appear to be no overall significant difference in the distribution levels of responses that measures marital satisfaction, the findings did not support the hypothesis that a military deployment negatively impacts marital satisfaction as perceived by military wives. Therefore, the null hypothesis could be accepted, and the alternate hypotheses rejected. Chapter 5 will offer in depth interpretations of the findings, discuss limitations, recommendations for future research, and explore implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to explore the effect of a military deployment on marital satisfaction as perceived by military wives. While there have been extensive research studies aimed at examining the effects of military deployment on military families, including children and especially service members, there were gaps in the literature regarding the effects on military wives. In this study, military wives who have experienced deployment were recruited along with military wives who have never experienced deployment to complete a survey. The marital satisfaction of military wives was assessed using the MAT along with the RDAS. Types of psychological distress such as depression, anxiety, and stress were measured using the DASS-21. Demographic variables included length of marriage, rank, years of service, wives' education level, children, and income. The total sample included 94 military wives who have experienced a deployment and 141 wives who have not experienced a deployment. Once multiple statistical analysis was conducted, it was found that deployed wives' marital satisfaction scores were significantly lower than non-deployed wives' scores on both the MAT and RDAS. No significant group differences were found among the DASS-21 subscales. This chapter includes further interpretation of the research findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, conclusions, and recommendations.

Interpretation of the Findings

Military deployments are thought to negatively impact marriage, with some ending in divorce (Lincoln et al., 2008). Karney and Trail (2017) noted that research linking military deployments directly to marital satisfaction is few and far between. Thus, the aim of this study was to measure marital satisfaction from wives' perspectives. Deployment was the independent variable in this study, with marital satisfaction the dependent variable. According to findings in Chapter 4, greater marital satisfaction was reported among wives who have never experienced military deployment while married to military service members. This was not surprising as the research in Chapter 2 indicated that a military deployment often has negative effects on various family members and areas of family functioning (APA, 2007). Additionally, wives with deployed spouses reported higher levels of anxiety and stress in comparison to non-deployed spouses.

To measure marital satisfaction, participants were asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire as well as answer 15 questions on the MAT questionnaire and 14 questions on the RDAS. On the MAT, wives were asked to rate the degree of happiness they get from their marriage in areas such as handling family finances, matters of recreation, and sex relations. The item with the most significant difference on the MAT between groups was whether respondents preferred to be on the go or stay home in leisure time. There was a higher level of agreement amongst the non-deployed spouses' group regarding what they like to do in their leisure time. Overall, military wives who have experienced deployment preferred to be on the go, while military wives who had not experienced a deployment preferred to stay at home. This may suggest that military wives who

experienced deployment stay busy or on the go as a coping mechanism to take their minds off deployment. While being on the go may not necessarily be construed as negative, some partners in a military marriage use avoidance to deal with stressors related to deployment (Blow et al., 2017; Riolli & Savicki, 2010; Romero et al., 2020).

Furthermore, avoidance coping strategies led to less healthy outcomes when compared to approach-based coping (Giff et al., 2020). On the contrary, Rossetto (2015) said keeping busy by participating in activities was a way to prevent nonmilitary spouses from becoming preoccupied with deployment and can be beneficial in helping them maintain their identities. With two extremely different ways of looking at this phenomenon, one would have to delve deeper into the meaning of staying on the go for a particular spouse to ascertain positive or negative intent.

With a p-value of 0.5, differences in military wives' perspectives between the two groups in terms of demonstration of affection was statistically significant. Military wives with a deployed spouse reported lower levels of satisfaction in terms of how their spouse demonstrated affection. Similarly, there were higher rates of dissatisfaction with engaging in outside interests among the deployed spouses' group. This make sense as it is more challenging to demonstrate affection or engage in outside interests with one's spouse when he is deployed. Therefore, although significant differences were reported between the two groups, those specific questions might not be the best indicators of the impact of a military deployment on marital satisfaction.

Notable questions that trended towards significant were:

Do you ever wish you had not married?

If you had your life to live over, do you think you would?

Do you confide in your mate?

Since these questions scored more negative for spouses with deployed spouses, this indicates that military deployment negatively affects marital satisfaction. This is in line with prior research stating that deployments often place increased and significant stress on military couples (Hosek et al., 2006; Karney & Trail, 2017).

Similarly, responses on the RDAS indicated that wives who have experienced a military deployment reported overall lower levels of marital satisfaction as compared to wives who have not. In this instrument, the items which showed the greatest disparities between the two groups were: making major decisions career decisions, and frequency of discussion of divorce, separation, or terminating relationships. During military deployment, the at home spouse is often faced with making decisions that were once shared with their military service member. According to Saltzman et al. (2011), there is a shift in the family's organizational structure during deployment. Additionally, roles are reorganized, with wives assuming roles and responsibilities that were once shared or belonged to the deployed spouse. Wives in turn may feel that they are responsible for taking on dual functions (Lapp et al., 2010; Paley et al. 2013). Consequently, major decision making may fall to wives of deployed spouses as they are often unavailable due to military missions, time zone differences, and not being physically present to share in decision-making processes. With these added responsibilities and confusing roles, tension may arise within marriages, contributing to divorce or separation. Additionally,

relationship difficulties are linked with poorer prognosis for PTSD, along with decreased treatment-seeking of PTSD (Renshaw & Campbell, 2017).

Karney and Trail (2017) said military deployments can have a negative effect on service members' psychological functioning. This is often a result of traumatic experiences, with many soldiers developing post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). Furthermore, a clear correlation exists between psychological distress and relationship satisfaction (Giff et al., 2020; Knobloch & Theiss, 2011). While military wives are not exposed to the direct trauma of combat, they struggle to cope with various stressors that arise because of their husbands' exposure. Psychological distress, anxiety, depression, and stress for military wives were measured in this study using the DASS-21. Results showed that overall, wives with deployed husbands did not typically report higher levels of psychological distress compared to spouses whose husbands were not deployed as measured by the DASS-21 overall. However, deeper analyses of the subscales revealed that while no significant differences were found for the depression subscale, military wives with deployed spouses reported higher instances of anxiety and stress.

One possible reason for a lack of reporting regarding depression-related symptoms may be the longstanding stigma of mental health within the military. Barr et al. (2019) said there are negative judgements, beliefs, and attitudes surrounding depression and treatment for mental health illnesses. Nonetheless, the data shows significantly higher reporting for anxiety and stress for wives who have experienced deployment. This was expected, as it is in line with literature that shows a correlation between military deployments and increased psychological dysfunction. During military deployment, there

are many serious and unique stressors such as fear of injury or death of a deployed spouse. In addition, wives are left to navigate many aspects of life, including the rearing of children without their partner. Many of the intimate parts of a marriage are also absent during deployment. These factors, combined or individually, may impact individual psychological wellbeing, leading to heightened anxiety and stress.

Findings of this research study add to the existing body of literature regarding the impact of military deployment on family members. This study did not find evidence that would disconfirm the hypotheses. However, findings disconfirm the notion that there may be benefit-finding in deployment and that couples may in fact find greater marital satisfaction through the deployment experience (Renshaw & Campbell, 2017). This is derived from the theory that resiliency and protective factors may act as a buffer between the negative and stressful effects of deployment and marital satisfaction.

Use of the family stress theory (Hill, 1958) to provide a theoretical basis for understanding the effects of stress on military wives during a deployment, confirms that a Military deployment often has a detrimental effect on not only service members but also family functioning. The ABC-X model was used as to evaluate military deployment and pileup stressors (A factor or crisis-precipitating event), resources or support systems available to wives during deployment (B factor), the reaction of wives or assignment of meaning to deployment (C factor), and how they may produce a crisis (X factor). Overall results trended towards this model as military wives who experienced deployment and the stressors that come with it reported lower levels of marital satisfaction. Furthermore, military wives who indicated a lack of support during deployment had lower levels of

marital satisfaction compared to those who had support, including family, friends, and military support groups, spiritual, or psychological.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study were previously discussed in Chapter 1. This study involved using a survey design method to explore the relationship between military deployment and marital satisfaction. It is important to note that although predictions can be made from the results, correlation does not mean causation.

Social media platforms (primarily Facebook) were used for participant recruitment. With this type of anonymous recruitment, I had to rely solely on the honesty and integrity of participants when answering questions. There is no way for me to know if respondents were truly military wives, or had deployed husbands, although recruitment took place on military wives' social media platforms. Additionally, marriage is a sensitive subject, and I had to trust that participants responded in a truthful manner and did not over or underreport the extent of agreement or disagreement on the scales to respond in a socially desirable manner. Similarly, it was not known if wives responded with how they were feeling at the time of taking the survey, as opposed to their feelings of overall marital satisfaction. Similarly, the possibility that some participants completed the survey twice was considered.

Another limitation of this study was that participants completed the survey without me present to respond to questions that may arise. If a participant found a question to be confusing, ambiguous, or not fully understandable, there was no way to

ask for clarification. Thus, it is possible that some may have answered in a way that is not truly reflective of their marital satisfaction.

Finally, although the sample had a sufficient size, with a total of 235 participants, generalizability should be acknowledged. The perceptions of all military wives may not be fully represented in this study. Findings also cannot be generalized across all other military branches and populations, as an overwhelming majority of respondents were affiliated with the Army, although the study was open and available to all branches of the military.

Recommendations

Despite the acknowledgement of various limitations to this study, the findings add to the empirical body of literature about the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction. Research currently exists regarding the effects of military deployment on service members primarily as it relates to PTSD. Additionally, family members are negatively impacted by military deployment. However, few studies have focused on the impact of military deployment on marital satisfaction as perceived by military wives. Military wives are often said to be the ones left behind during a deployment. Hence, a strength of this study is that the scope was narrowed and limited to study the perceptions of military wives alone. This eliminated other significant other groups who may have experiences that differs from wives. In this study, military wives provided insight regarding their marital satisfaction as wives who have either had a military spouse deploy or have not experienced deployment during their marriage.

Recommendations emerged during analyses of study data. One recommendation for future research is to explore the extent of the effect of social support during military deployment on marital satisfaction. The family stress theory maintains that the primacy of resources is vital to determining how an individual will cope and whether certain stressors will lead to a crisis (Sullivan, 2015). It is believed that accessing services and utilizing various tools is important for psychological adjustment and well-being. However, are all resources and types of support created equal? Thus, future research can involve comparing effectiveness among types of internal and external resources or supports such as family, friends, and military groups, spiritual, and psychological as it relates to resiliency and coping during military deployment.

Another recommendation for future study is due to an expressed need to explore marital satisfaction amongst other groups such as dual military and same sex relationships. During the recruitment and data collection phase, various individuals reached out to inquire if a similar study was available for civilian husbands who were married to military spouse, as well as same sex couples, and military enlisted individuals who is married to another military enlisted individuals. As each of these subgroups may have unique challenges, it may be beneficial to study each one separately. For example, a same sex married couple may have had to deal with a lack of equity amongst benefits and resources available to them during a deployment. Similarly, Huffman and Payne (2006) stated that dual military marriages are demographically different and have spillover/crossover effects that may impact the marriage. Challenges of dual military partners may be work and family experiences, role overload as compared to single-

military earner marriages (Schumm et al., 1996). Balancing home responsibilities and career decisions may also look different for this demographic. Another tenant of the family stress theory is the role of pile up stressors on family members. Boss (2001) stated that an aggregation of stressors on an individual may be even more detrimental to that individual being able to assign positive meaning to a deployment and access resources.

Implications

The goal of this research was to expand the current body of literature that explores the effects of a military deployment. The deployed service member is already faced with enormous stress and uncertainty during a military deployment. As such, the marital satisfaction of a service member may have a direct impact on his ability to safely perform the required duties of a combat deployment and remain alert at the task on hand. According to the family stress theory's cross over effect premise, there are no boundaries between family members behaviors or feelings. Emotions of one family member transfers directly to another member within the family system. Also, when an individual experiences distress in one area of life, it often spills over into other areas. A military deployment is dangerous and volatile on many levels, and it was stated earlier that a distracted soldier may be a dead soldier. Therefore, this research and the family stress theory would be effective models to guide programs to help military couples by focusing on how the military deployment (A factor), along with the wives' resources (B factor) and values and feelings placed on the deployment (C factor) all interact to precipitate a crisis (X factor).

The wife of a military soldier can be a tremendous source of support in helping him to maintain healthy levels of psychological functioning. On the other hand, a military wife, facing dissatisfaction in her marriage may in turn add additional stress, and pressure to her deployed husband as she voices or shows her dissatisfaction with the marriage. Hence, efforts to strengthen marital satisfaction through psycho education and the provision of outside resources for military couples could positively impact a service members' psychological functioning as well as their effectiveness in combat environments. Thus, the potential for this study to impact positive social change is significant not only on an individual level but on a military organizational level as well. Developing programs and resources to strengthen marital satisfaction of military wives has the potential to save lives, and increase military service reenlistment, which will in turn improve the overall national security of the United States.

The results of this study confirm that military deployments do impact marital satisfaction. It is the hope that as this body of evidence grows, interventions can be planned for military wives at various stages of the deployment cycle to preserve marital satisfaction. Clinicians working with military couples can help them to navigate and prepare for logistic tasks that may be helpful before, during, and after a deployment. Hopefully, the more the military organization recognizes the detrimental effect decreased marital satisfaction may have on a soldier's performance in carrying out his military duties, the more providing aide to military wives will be prioritized. The wife is a crucial member of a military family structure, whose psychological functioning may impact that of her husband and children. As such, efforts should be made to provide resources and

support to aid in developing coping mechanisms to intervene and avoid the possibilities of the stressors of a deployment from becoming a crisis.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study examined the effects of a military deployment on marital satisfaction as perceived by military wives. This was done by comparing two groups of military wives' agreement or disagreement on standardized instruments. Military wives who had experienced a military deployment participated in this study, along with military wives who had never experienced a military deployment. Results of the study showed that there is an overall correlation between military deployment as military wives generally reported higher levels of marital satisfaction. The same was true for reporting of psychological anxiety and stress. The results of this study add to the growing body of literature that points to family functioning being affected by a military deployment. This verifies the need for the developing of programs and resources that will be specifically tailored to aid military wives in strengthening marital satisfaction.

An individual's psychological functioning is likely to have an impact on their marital satisfaction, with lower levels of marital satisfaction leading to anxiety and stress. Healthy levels of marital satisfaction provide greater benefits for the family unit, including the service member serving in combat. Additionally, higher levels of marital satisfaction will likely contribute to the lowering of divorce and separation rates. Psychoeducation is key to helping military couples navigate the unique stressors of a deployment. However, continued research is needed to better understand the impact of specific factors such as social support during a deployment on marital satisfaction.

References

- Adler-Baeder, F., Pittman, J. F., & Taylor, L. (2005). The prevalence of marital transitions in military families. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 44(2), 91-106. <https://doi.10.1300/J087v44n01-05>
- Alfano, C. A., Lau, S., Balderas, J., Bunnell, B. E., & Beidel, D. C. (2016). The impact of military deployment on children: Placing developmental risk in context. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 4317-4329. <https://doi.10.1016/j.cpr.2015.11.003>
- Allen, E. S., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., Loew, B., & Markman, H. J. (2012). The effects of marriage education for army couples with a history of infidelity. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 26(1), 1-10. <https://doi.10.1037/a0026742>
- Allen, E. S., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2011). On the home front: Stress for recently deployed army couples. *Family Process*, 50, 235-247.
- Allen, E., Rhoades, G., Stanley, S., & Markman, H. (2010). Hitting home: Relationships between recent deployment, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and marital functioning for army couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24, 280-288. <https://doi.10.1037/a0019405>
- Antony, M. M., Bieling, P. J., Cox, B. J., Enns, M. W., & Swinson, R. P. (1998). Psychometric properties of the 42-item and 21-item versions of the depression anxiety stress scales in clinical groups and a community sample. *Psychological Assessment*, 10, 176-181. <https://doi.10.1037/1040-3590.10.2.176>
- Bakhurst, M. G., McGuire, A. L., & Halford, W. K. (2017). Relationship education for military couples: A pilot randomized controlled trial of the effects of Couple

CARE in Uniform. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*, 16(3), 167-187.

<https://doi.10.1080/15332691.2016.1238797>

Baptist, J. A., Amanor-Boadu, Y., Garrett, K., Nelson Goff, B. S., Collum, J., Gamble, P., et al. (2011). Military marriages: The aftermath of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) deployments. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 33, 199–214. <https://doi.10.1007/s10591-011-9162-6>

Barbee, E. K., Correa, V. I., & Baughan, C. C. (2016). Understanding the effects of deployment on military families: Implications for early childhood practitioners. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 44(3)4-11.

Barr, N., Davis, J. P., Diguisseppi, G., Keeling, M., & Castro, C. (2019). Direct and indirect effects of mindfulness, PTSD, and depression on self-stigma of mental illness in OEF/OIF veterans. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*. <https://doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1037/tra0000535>

Bartlett, J. E., Kotrlik, J. W. & Higgins, C. C. (2001). Organizational research: Determining appropriate sample size in survey research. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, 19(1), 43-50.

Beasley, K. S., MacDermid Wadsworth, S. M., & Watts, J. B. (2012). Transitioning to and from deployment. In D. K. Snyder & C. M. Monson (Eds.), *Couple-based interventions for military and veteran families: A practitioner's guide* (pp. 47–62). New York: Guilford Press.

- Bergmann, J. S., Renshaw, K. D., Allen, E. S., Markman, H. J., & Stanley, S. M. (2014). Meaningfulness of service and marital satisfaction in Army couples. *Journal of Family Psychology, 28*(5), 701-706. <https://doi.10.1037/fam0000013>
- Billings, A. (1979). Conflict resolution in distressed and non-distressed married couples. *Journal of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, 47*, 368-376.
- Blow, A. J., Bowles, R. P., Farero, A., Subramaniam, S., Lappan, S., Nichols, E., Gorman, L., Kees, M., & Guty, D. (2017). Couples coping through deployment: Findings from a sample of national guard families. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 73*, 1753–1767. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22487>
- Borelli, J. L., Sbarra, D. A., Randall, A. K., Snavelly, J. E., St John, H. K., & Ruiz, S. K. (2013). Linguistic indicators of wives' attachment security and communal orientation during military deployment. *Family Process, 52*(3), 535-554. <https://doi.10.1111/famp.12031>
- Boss, P. (2007). Ambiguous loss theory: Challenges for scholars and practitioners. *Family Relations, 56*(2), 105-111. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00444.x>
- Boss, P. (2006). *Loss, trauma, and resilience: Therapeutic work with ambiguous loss*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Boss, P. (2004). Ambiguous loss research, theory, and practice: Reflections after 9/11. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 66*(3), 551-566. <https://doi.10.1111/j00222445.2004.00037.x>
- Boss, P. (2002). *Family stress management: A contextual approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Boss, P. (1992). Primacy of perception in family stress theory and measurement. *Journal of Family Psychology, 6*(2), 113-119. <https://doi.10.1037/0893-3200.6.2.113>
- Bowen, G. L., Mancini, J. A., Martin, J. A., Ware, W. B., & Nelson, J. P. (2003). Promoting the adaptation of military families: An empirical test of a community practice model. *Family Relations, 52*(1), 33–44. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1741-3729.2003.00033.x>
- Bowling, U. B., & Sherman, M. D. (2008). Welcoming them home: Supporting service Members and their families in navigating the tasks of reintegration. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 39*, 451–458. <https://doi.10.1037/0735-7028.39.4.451>
- Brancaforte, D. B. M. (2000). *Camouflaged identities and Army wives: Narratives of self and place on the margins of the United States military family* (UMI No. 9962008) [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Bryan, J., & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). An examination of school counselor involvement in school-family-community partnerships. *Professional School Counseling, 10*(5), 441-454.
- Burrell, L. M., Adams, G. A., Durand, D. B., & Castro, C. A. (2006). The impact of military lifestyle demands on well-being, army, and family outcomes. *Armed Forces & Society, 33*, 43-58.
- Cafferky, B., & Shi, L. (2015). Military wives emotionally coping during deployment: Balancing dependence and independence. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 43*(3), 282-295.

- Carroll, E. B., Orthner, D. K., Behnke, A., Smith, C. M., Day, S., & Raburn, M. (2013). Integrating life skills into relationship and marriage education: The Essential Life Skills for Military Families Program. *Family Relations: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies*, *62*(4), 559-570. <https://doi.10.1111/fare.12027>
- Carter, S. P., & Renshaw, K. D. (2016). Spousal communication during military deployments. *Journal of Family Issues*, *37*(16), 2309-2332. <https://doi.10.1177/0192513X14567956>
- Carter, S. P., Allen, E. S., Loew, B., Osborne, L., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2015). Distraction during deployment: marital relationship associations with spillover for deployed Army soldiers. *Military Psychology*, *27*(2), 108-114. <https://doi.10.1037/mil0000067>
- Carter, S., & Renshaw, K. (2015). Spousal communication during military deployments: A review. *Family Issues*. Advance online publication. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0192513X14567956>
- Carter, S., Loew, B., Allen, E., Stanley, S., Rhoades, G., et al. (2011). Relationships between soldiers' PTSD symptoms and spousal communication during deployment. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *24*, 352-355. <https://doi.10.1002/jts.20649>
- Cederbaum, J. A., Wilcox, S. L., Sullivan, K., Lucas, C., & Schuyler, A. (2017). The influence of social support on dyadic functioning and mental health among military personnel during post-deployment reintegration. *Public Health Reports*, *132*(1), 85-92. <https://doi.10.1177/0033354916679984>

- Cigrang, J. A., Talcott, G. W., Tatum, J., Baker, M., Cassidy, D., Sonnek, S., Slep, A. M.S. (2014). Intimate partner communication from the war zone: A prospective study of the relationship functioning, communication frequency, and combat effectiveness. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 40*(3), 332-43. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1551133459?accountid=14872>
- Clever, M., & Segal, D. R. (2013). The demographics of military children and families. *The future of children, 23*(2), 13-39.
- Cole, R. (2012). Professional school counselors' role in partnering with military families during the stages of deployment. *Journal of School Counseling, 10*(7). <http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v10n7.pdf>
- Collins, C. L., Lee, K., & MacDermid Wadsworth, S. M. (2017). Family stressors and resources: Relationships with depressive symptoms in military couples during pre-deployment. *Family Relations, 66*(2), 302.
- Compas, B. E., Jaser, S. S., Dunn, M. J., & Rodriguez, E. M. (2012). Coping with chronic illness in childhood and adolescence. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 8*, 455– 480. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-032511-143108>
- Cook, J. M., Riggs, D. S., Thompson, R., Coyne, J. C., & Sheikh, J. I. (2004). Posttraumatic stress disorder and current relationship functioning among World War II ex-prisoners of war. *Journal of Family Psychology, 18*(1), 36–45.
- Crawford, J. R., Garthwaite, P. H., Lawrie, C. J., Henry, J. D., MacDonald, M. A., Sutherland, J., & Sinha, P. (2009). A convenient method of obtaining percentile

norms and accompanying interval estimate for self-report mood scales (DASS, DASS-21, HADS, PANAS, and SAD). *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 48(2), 163-180. <https://doi.10.1348/014466508X377757>

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crow, J. R., Myers, D. R., Ellor, J. W., Dolan, S. L., & Morissette, S. (2016). Military deployment of an adult child: Ambiguous loss and boundary ambiguity reflected in the experiences of parents of service members. *Marriage & Family Review*, 52(5), 481-509. <https://doi.10.1080/01494929.2015.1115454>

Crum-Cianflone, N. F., Fairbank, J. A., Marmar, C. R., Schlenger, W. (2014). The Millennium Cohort Family Study: A prospective evaluation of the health and well-being of military service members and their families. *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*, 23(3), 320-330. <https://doi.10.1002/mpr.1446>

Darwin, J. (2009). Families: "They Also Serve Who Only Stand and Wait." *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 79(3), 433-442.
<https://doi.10.1080/00377310903131454>

Defense Manpower Data Center. (2008). Active-duty demographic profile. Retrieved from www.deomi.org/home/saveCountFiles.cfm?fileid=280.

Department of Defense. (2010). "Report on the impact of deployment of members of the Armed Forces on their dependent children: Report to the Senate and House Committees on Armed Services pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 Section 571". available at:

www.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/Report_to_Congress_on_Impact_of_Deployment_on_Military_Children.pdf

Department of Defense. (2009). *Demographics 2009: Profile of the military community*.

<http://www.militaryfamily.org/publications/community-toolkit/3-educators.html>.

Desrochers, S., & Sargent, L. D. (2004). Boundary/ border theory and work-family integration. *Organizational Management Journal*, *1*, 40–48.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1057/omj.2004.11>

Dimiceli, E. E., Steinhardt, M. A., & Smith, S. E. (2010). Stressful experiences, coping strategies, and predictors of health-related outcomes among wives of deployed military servicemen. *Armed Forces and Society*, *36*, 351–373.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0095327X08324765>

Di Nola, G. M. (2008). Stressors afflicting families during military deployment. *Military Medicine*, *173*(5), v-vii.

Dolan, C. A., & Adler, A. B. (2006). Military hardiness as a buffer of psychological health on return from deployment. *Military Medicine*, *171*(2), 93-98.

Durham, S. W. (2010). In their own words: Staying connected in a combat environment.

Military Medicine, *175*, 554–559. <https://doi.10.7205/MILMED-D-09-00235>

Eaton, K. M., Hoge, C. W., Messer, S. C., Whitt, A. A., Cabrera, O. A., McGurk, D., & Castro, C. A. (2008). Prevalence of mental health problems, treatment need, and barriers to care among primary care-seeking spouses of military service members involved in Iraq and Afghanistan deployments. *Military Medicine*, *173*, 1051–1056. <https://doi.10.7205/MILMED.173.11.1051>

- Esposito-Smythers, C., Wolff, J., Lemmon, K. M., Bodzy, M., Swenson, R. R., & Spirito, A. (2011). Military youth and the deployment cycle: Emotional health consequences and recommendations for intervention. *Journal of Family Psychology (JFP): Journal of the Division of Family Psychology of the American Psychological Association (Division 43)*, 25(4), 497–507. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0024534>
- Everson, R. B., Darling, C., Herzog, J. R., Figley, C. R., & King, D. (2017). Quality of life among U.S. Army spouses during the Iraq war. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 20(2), 124-143. <https://doi.10.1080/10522158.2017.1279578>
- Everson, R. B., Herzog, J. R., Figley, C. R., & Whitworth, J. D. (2014). A model for assessing the impact of combat-related deployments on U.S. Army spouses. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 24(4), 422-437.
- Farero, A., Springer, P., Hollist, C., & Bischoff, R. (2015). Crisis management and conflict resolution: Using technology to support couples throughout deployment. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, 37(3), 281-290. <https://doi.10.1007/s10591-015-9343-9>
- Figley, C. R. (1993). Coping with stressors on the home front. *Journal of Social Issues*, 49(4), 51-71. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1540-4560.1993.tb01181.x>
- Foran, H.M., Heyman, R.E., & Lep, A.M.S. (2011). Hazardous drinking and military community functioning: Identifying mediating risk factors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 79(4), 521–532. <https://doi.10.1037/a0024110>
- Gage-Bouchard, E. A., Devine, K. A., & Heckler, C. E. (2013). The relationship between

- sociodemographic characteristics, family environment, and caregiver coping in families of children with cancer. *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*, 20, 478-487. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10880-013-9362-3>
- Gewirtz, A. H., DeGarmo, D. S., & Zamir, O. (2018). Testing a military family stress model. *Family Process*, 57(2), 415–431.
- Gibbs, D. A., Clinton-Sherrod, A. M., & Johnson, R. E. (2012). Interpersonal conflict and referrals to counseling among married soldiers following return from deployment. *Military Medicine*, 177(10), 1178-1183.
- Gibbons, R. D., Weiss, D. J., Kupfer, D. J., Frank, E., Fagiolini, A., Grochocinski, V. J., et al. (2008). Using computerized adaptive testing to reduce the burden of mental health assessment. *Psychiatric Services*, 59, 361–368.
- Giff, S. T., Renshaw, K. D., Carter, S. P., & Paige, L. C. (2020). Deployment-related coping strategies in military couples: Associations with relationship satisfaction. *Military Psychology (American Psychological Association)*, 32(6), 432–440. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/08995605.2020.1803725>
- Glenn, D. M., Beckham, J. C., Feldman, M. E., Kirby, A. C., Hertzberg, M. A., & Moore, S. D. (2002). Violence and hostility among families of Vietnam veterans with combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder. *Violence and Victims*, 17, 473–489. <https://doi.10.1891/vivi.17.4.473.33685>
- Goldsmith, S., Pellmar, T., Kleinman, A., & Bunney, W. (Eds.). (2002). *Reducing suicide: A national imperative*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

- Gorman, L., Blow, A., Ames, B., & Reed, P. (2011). National Guard families after combat: Mental health, use of mental health services, and perceived treatment barriers. *Psychiatric Services, 62*, 28–34. <https://doi.10.1176/appi.ps.62.1.28>
- Graham, J. M., Liu, Y. J. & Jeziorski, J. L. (2006). The dyadic adjustment scale: A reliability generalization meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 68*, 701-717.
- Gravetter, F. J. & Wallnau, L. B. (2007). *Statistics for the behavioral sciences* (7th ed.). CA: Wadsworth.
- Greene, T., Buckman, J., Dandeker, C., & Greenberg, N. (2010). How communication with families can both help and hinder service member' mental health and occupational effectiveness on deployment. *Military Medicine, 175*, 745-749. <https://doi.10.7205/MILMED-D-09-00278>
- Hall, L. (2012). The military lifestyle and the relationship. In B. A. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of counseling military couples* (pp. 137–156). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hall, L. (2011). The importance of understanding military culture. *Social Work in Health Care, 50*, 4–18. <https://doi.10.1080/00981389.2010.513914>
- Hall, L. (2008). *Counseling military families: What mental health professionals need to know*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Haque, A., & Davenport, B. (2009). The Assessment of Marital Adjustment with Muslim Populations: A Reliability Study of the Locke–Wallace Marital Adjustment Test. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal, 31*(2), 160–168.

<https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1007/s10591-009-9087-5>

- Henry, J. D., & Crawford, J. R. (2005). The short-form version of the depression anxiety stress scales (DASS-21): Construct validity and normative data in a large nonclinical sample. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 44*(2), 227-239.
- Herzog, J., Scott, D., Lewis, M., & Everson, R. (2013). Deployment related stress processes in National Guard families: A qualitative analysis. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review, 2*(3), 243–253.
- Hill, R. (1958). Generic features of families under stress. *Social Casework, 39*, 139–150.
- Hochberg, Y., & Benjamini, Y. (1990). More powerful procedures for multiple significance testing. *Statistics in Medicine, 9*(7), 811-818.
- Hogan, P. F., & Furst Seifert, R. (2010). Marriage and the military: Evidence that those who serve marry earlier and divorce earlier. *Armed Forces & Society, 36*, 420–438.
- Hoge, C. W., Castro, C. A., Messer, S. C., McGurk, D., Cotting, D. I., & Koffman, R. L. (2004). Combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, mental health problems, and barriers to care. *New England Journal of Medicine, 351*, 13–22.
- <https://doi.10.1056/NEJMoa040603>
- Homish, G., Leonard, E., & Cornelius, R. (2008). Illicit drug use and marital satisfaction. *Addictive Behaviors, 33*(2), 279-291.
- Hoopsick, R. A., Homish, D. L., Collins, R. L., Nochajski, T. H., Read, J. P., & Homish, G. G. (2020). Is deployment status the critical determinant of psychosocial problems among reserve/guard soldiers? *Psychological Services, 17*(4), 461–471.

<https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1037/ser000033>

Houppert, K. (2006). *Home fires burning: Married to the military—for better or worse*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Hoyt, G. B. (2006). Integrated mental health within operational units: Opportunities and challenges. *Military Psychology (Taylor & Francis Ltd)*, 18(4), 309-320.

https://doi.10.1207/s15327876mp1804_520

Huffman, A. H., & Payne, S. C. (2006). The challenges and benefits of dual military marriages. In C. A. Castro, A. B. Adler, & T. W. Britt (Eds.), *The Military Life. Military life: The psychology of serving in peace and combat: The military family* (p. 115–137).

Iarossi, G. (2006). *The power of survey design: A user's guide for managing surveys, interpreting results, and influencing respondents*. DC: World Bank.

James, R.A. (2008). *Crisis Intervention Strategies*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Jenkins, D.M. & Barry, M.J. (2007). Relationship 101: Couples therapy in theater. *Military Medicine*, 172, iii–iv. Retrieved from <http://publications.amsus.org/>

Jeong, J. Y., & Horne, S. G. (2009). Relationship characteristics of women in interracial same-sex relationships. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 56(4), 443–456. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/00918360902821445>

Kanzler, K. E., McCorkindale, A. C., & Kanzler, L. J. (2011). U.S. Military women and divorce: Separating the issues. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy: An International Forum*, 23(3-4), 250-262.

<https://doi.10.1080/08952833.2011.604866>

- Kaplow, J. B., Layne, C. M., Saltzman, W. R., Cozza, S. J., & Pynoos, R. S. (2013). Using multidimensional grief theory to explore the effects of deployment, reintegration, and death on military youth and families. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 16*(3), 322–340.
- Karney, B. R., & Trail, T. E. (2017). Associations between prior deployments and marital satisfaction among army couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 79*(1), 147–160. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1111/jomf.12329>
- Karney, B. R., Loughran, D. S., & Pollard, M. S. (2012). Comparing marital status and divorce status in civilian and military populations. *Journal of Family Issues, 33*(12), 1572-1594. <https://doi.10.1177/0192513X12439690>
- Karney, B. R., & Crown, J. S. (2007). Families Under Stress: An Assessment of Data, Theory, and Research on Marriage and Divorce in the Military. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e660632007-001><https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2003.00033.x>
- Kern, E. (2017). Systemic barriers faced by women attempting to leave abusive military marriages. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 95*(3), 354-364. <https://doi.10.1002/jcad.12149>
- Knobloch, L. K., & Theiss, J. A. (2011). Depressive symptoms and mechanisms of Relational turbulence as predictors of relationship satisfaction among returning service members. *Journal of Family Psychology, 25*, 470–478. <https://doi.10.1037/a0024063>
- Kurdek, L. A. (2002). Predicting the timing of separation and marital satisfaction: An

eight-year prospective longitudinal study. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *64*(1), 163-179. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1741-3737.2002.00163>

Lacks, M. H., Lamson, A. L., Lewis, M. E., White, M. B., & Russoniello, C. (2015).

Reporting for double duty: A dyadic perspective on the bio psychosocial health of dual military Air Force couples. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, *37*(3), 302-315. <https://doi.10.1007/s10591-015-9341-y>

Lapp, C. A., Taft, L. B., Tollefson, T., Hoepner, A., Moore, K., & Divyak, K. (2010).

Stress and coping on the home front: Guard and reserve spouses searching for a new normal. *Journal of Family Nursing*, *16*(1), 45-67.

<https://doi.10.1177/1074840709357347>

Laser, J., & Stephens, P. (2011). Working with military families through deployment and

beyond. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *39*(1), 28–38. <https://doi.10.1007/s10615-010-03105>

Laurenceau, J. P., Barrett, L. F., & Rovine, M. J. (2005). The interpersonal process model

of intimacy in marriage: A daily diary and multilevel modeling approach. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *19*(2), 314–323. <https://doi.10.1037/0893-3200.19.2.314>

Layne, C. M., Saltzman, W. R., Poppleton, L., Burlingame, G. M., Pasalic´, A.,

Durakovic´-Belko, E., Music, M., Campara, N., Dapo, N., Arslanagic, B.,

Steinberg, A., & Pynoos, R. (2008). Effectiveness of a school-based group

psychotherapy program for war-exposed adolescents: A randomized controlled

trial. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, *47*,

1048–1062.

- Lemmon, M., Whyman, M., & Teachman, J. (2009). Active-duty military service in the United States: Cohabiting unions and the transition to marriage. *Demographic Research, 20*(10), 195–208. <https://doi.10.4054/DemRes.2009.20.10>
- Lester, P., & Flake, E. (2013). How wartime military service affects children and families. *Future of Children, 23*(2), 121-141.
- Lester, P., Peterson, K., Reeves, J., Knauss, L., Glover, D., Mogil, C., & Beardslee, W. (2010). The long war and parental combat deployment: Effects on military children and at-home spouses. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 49*, 310–320.
- Lincoln, A., Swift, E., & Shorteno-Fraser, M. (2008). Psychological adjustment and treatment of children and families with parents deployed in military combat. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 64*(8), 984-992. <https://doi.10.1002/jclp.20520>
- Locke, H. J., & Wallace, K. M. (1959). Short marital-adjustment and prediction tests: Their reliability and validity. *Marriage and Family Living, 21*, 251-255.
- Louie, A. D., & Cromer, L. D. (2014). Parent–child attachment during the deployment cycle: Impact on reintegration parenting stress. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 45*(6), 496-503. <https://doi.10.1037/a0036603>
- Lovibond, P. F., & Lovibond, S. H. (1995). The structure of negative emotional states: Comparison of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) with the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventories. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 33*, 335–343.
- Lundquist, J., & Xu, Z. (2014). Reinstitutionalizing families: Life course policy and

marriage in the military. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(5), 1063-1081.

<https://doi.10.1111/jomf.12131>

Lufkin, K. (2017). An exploratory study of marital and quality of life ratings among male spouses of military members. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, 39(3), 162–171.

Mansfield, A. J., Kaufman, J. S., Marshall, S. W., Gaynes, B. N., Morrissey, J., & Engel, C. C. (2010). Deployment and the use of mental health services among U.S. Army wives. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 362, 101–109.

Markman, H. J., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., Ragan, E. P., & Whitton, S. W. (2010). The premarital communication roots of marital distress and divorce: The first five years of marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(3), 289–298.

<https://doi.10.1037/a0019481>

McCone, D., & O'Donnell, K. (2006). Marriage and divorce trends for graduates of the U.S. Air Force Academy. *Military Psychology (Taylor & Francis Ltd)*, 18(1), 61-75.

McCubbin, H. I., & McCubbin, M. A. (1988). Typologies of resilient families: Emerging roles of social class and ethnicity. *Family Relations*, 37, 247– 254.

McFarlane, A. C. (2009). Military deployment: The impact on children and family adjustment and the need for care. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 22, 369-373.

<https://doi.10.1097/YCO.06013e32832c9064>

McGraw, K. (2016). Gender differences among military combatants: Does social support, ostracism, and pain perception influence psychological health? *Military*

- Medicine*, 181(1 Suppl), 80-85. <https://doi.10.7205/MILMED-D-15-00254>
- McLeland, K. C., Sutton, G. W., & Schumm, W. R. (2008). Marital satisfaction before and after deployments associated with the global war on terror. *Psychological Reports*, 103(3), 836-844. <https://doi.10.2466/PR0.103.7.836-844>
- McLeland, K. C., & Sutton, G. W. (2005). Military Service, Marital Status, and Men's Relationship Satisfaction. *Individual Differences Research*, 3(3), 177-182.
- McNulty, P. A. F (2005). Reported stressors and health care needs of active-duty Navy personnel during three phases of deployment in support of the war in Iraq. *Military Medicine*, 170(6), 530-535. Retrieved from <http://publications.amsus.org/>
- Mehta, M. S. (2012). *Work, self, and military life: The experiences of U.S. Air Force wives* (UMINo. 3502622). [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database.
- Menchaca, D. & Dehle, C. (2005). Marital quality and physiological arousal: How do I love thee? Let my heartbeat count the ways. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 33, 117-130. <https://doi.10.108001926180590915897>
- Miller, A. B., Schaefer, K. E., Renshaw, K. D., & Blais, R. K. (2013). PTSD and marital satisfaction in military service members: Examining the simultaneous roles of childhood sexual abuse and combat exposure. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 37(11), 979-985. <https://doi.10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.05.006>
- Milliken, C., Auchterlonie, J., & Hoge, C. (2007). Longitudinal assessment of mental health problems among active and reserve component soldiers returning from the Iraq war. *Jama-Journal of The American Medical Association*, 298(18), 2141-

2148.

Military Child Education Coalition. (2003). How to prepare our children and stay involved in their education during deployment. Retrieved from <http://www.militarychild.org/files/pdfs/DeploymentBooklet.pdf>

Military One Source. A 24/7 resource for military members, spouses, and families. Retrieved from [http://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/MilitaryFamilies Gateway.aspx](http://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/MilitaryFamiliesGateway.aspx)

Moeller, J. D., Culler, E. D., Hamilton, M. D., Aronson, K. R., & Perkins, D. F. (2015). The effects of military-connected parental absence on the behavioural and academic functioning of children: A literature review. *Journal of Children's Services, 10*(3), 291-306. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1716208492?accountid=14872>

Monga, M., Alexandrescu, B., Katz, S. E., Stein, M., & Ganiats, T. (2004). Impact of infertility on quality of life, marital adjustment, and sexual function. *Urology, 63*(1), 126-130.

Murry, V. M., Butler, B. S. T., Mayo, G. T. L., & Inniss, T. M. N. (2018). Excavating new constructs for family stress theories in the context of everyday life experiences of Black American families. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 10*(2), 384-405.

Negrusa, S., Negrusa, B., & Hosek, J. (2014). Gone to war: Have deployments increased divorces? *Journal of Population Economics, 27*(2), 473-496. <https://doi.10.1007/s00148-013-0485-5>

- Ng F, Trauer T, Dodd S, Callaly T, Campbell S, & Berk M. (2007). The validity of the 21-item version of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales as a routine clinical outcome measure. *Acta Neuropsychiatrica*, *19*, 304–310.
- Norton, P. J. (2007). Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS-21): Psychometric analysis across four racial groups. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, *20*(3), 253-265.
<https://doi.10.1080/1061800701309279>
- Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (2012). *Demographics: Profile of the military community, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy)*, ICF International, Washington, DC, available at: www.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2012_Demographics_Report.pdf
- Office of the US Army Surgeon General. (2009). *Mental Health Advisory Team VI report*. Retrieved from http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat_vi/MHAT_VI-OIF_EXSUM.pdf
- Office of the US Army Surgeon General. (2008). *Mental Health Advisory Team V report*. Retrieved from http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat_v/mhat-v.cfm
- Olmstead, S. B., Blick, R. W., & Mills, L. I. (2009). Helping couples work toward the forgiveness of marital infidelity: Therapists' perspectives. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, *37*(1), 48–66. <https://doi.10.1080/01926180801960575>
- Orthner, D. K., & Rose, R. (2009). Work separation demands and spouse psychological

- well-being. *Family Relations*, 58, 391–402.
- Orthner, D. (2002). Deployment and separation adjustment among army civilian spouses. *Army Family Separation Report-SAF IV*. Retrieved from [http://www.armymwr.com/corporate/doc\\$/planning/SAFIVSeparation.pdf](http://www.armymwr.com/corporate/doc$/planning/SAFIVSeparation.pdf)
- Paley, B., Lester, P., & Mogil, C. (2013). Family systems and ecological perspectives on the impact of deployment on military families. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 16, 245–265.
- Paris, R., DeVoe, E., Ross, A., & Acker, M. (2010). When a parent goes to war: Effects of parental deployment on very young children and implications for intervention. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 80, 610-618. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01066>
- Pearrow, M., & Cosgrove, L. (2009). The aftermath of combat-related PTSD: Toward an understanding of transgenerational trauma. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 30, 77–82. <https://doi.10.1177/1525740108328227>
- Pincus, S., House, R., Christenson, J., & Adler, L. (2008). The emotional cycle of deployment: A military perspective. Retrieved from <http://hooah4health.com/deployment/familymatters/emotionalcycle2.htm>
- Ponder, W. N., Aguirre, R. P., Smith-Osborne, A., & Granvold, D. K. (2012). Increasing marital satisfaction as a resilience factor among active-duty members and veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). *Journal of Family Social Work*, 15(1), 3-18.
- Renshaw, K. D., & Campbell, S. B. (2017). Deployment-Related Benefit Finding and

- Post-deployment Marital Satisfaction in Military Couples. *Family Process*, 56(4), 915–925. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1111/famp.12249>
- Renshaw, K. D., Rodrigues, C. S., & Jones, D. H. (2008). Psychological symptoms and marital satisfaction in spouses of Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans: Relationships with spouses' perceptions of veterans' experiences and symptoms. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22(3), 586-594. <https://doi.10.1037/0893-3200.22.3.586>
- Riulli, L., & Savicki, V. (2010). Coping effectiveness and coping diversity under traumatic stress. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 17, 97–113. <https://doi.10.1037/a0018041>
- Rivera, F., Guarnaccia, P., Mulvaney-Day, N., Lin, J., Torres, M., & Alegria, M. (2008). Family cohesion and its relationship to psychological distress among Latino groups. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 30(3), 357-378.
- Riviere, L. A., Merrill, J. C., Thomas, J. L., Wilk, J. E., & Bliese, P. D. (2012). 2003-2009 marital functioning trends among U.S. enlisted soldiers following combat deployments. *Military Medicine*, 177(10), 1169-1177.
- Roberts, N. A., Leonard, R. C., Butler, E. A., Levenson, R. W., & Kanter, J. W. (2013). Job stress and dyadic synchrony in police marriages: A preliminary investigation. *Family Process*, 52(2), 271-283.
- Romero, D. H., Riggs, S. A., Raiche, E., McGuffin, J., & Captari, L. E. (2020). Attachment, coping, and psychological symptoms among military veterans and active-duty personnel. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping: An International Journal*, 33, 326–341. Advance online publication.

<https://doi.10.1080/10615806.2020.1723008>

- Rosen-Grandon, J. R., Myers, J. E., & Hattie, J. A. (2004). The relationship between marital characteristics, marital interaction processes, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 82*(1), 58-68.
- Rosen, L. N., & Durand, D. B. (2000). Coping with the unique demands of military family life. In J. Martin, L. Rosen, & L. Sparacino (Eds.), *The military family: A practice guide for human service providers* (pp. 55–72). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Rossetto, K. R. (2015). Developing conceptual definitions and theoretical models of coping in military families during deployment. *Journal of Family Communication, 15*(3), 249–268. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/15267431.2015.1043737>
- Ruger, W., Wilson, S. E., & Waddoups, S. L. (2002). Warfare and welfare: Military service, combat, and marital dissolution. *Armed Forces & Society, 29*, 85–107.
- Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., & Agnew, C. R. (1998). The Investment Model Scale: Measuring commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. *Personal Relationships, 5*(4), 357-391.
<https://doi.10.1111/j.14756811.1998.tb00177.x>
- Sahlstein, E., Maguire, K. C., & Timmerman, L. (2009). Contradictions and praxis contextualized by wartime deployment: Wives' perspectives revealed through relational dialectics. *Communication Monographs, 76*(4), 421-442.
<https://doi.10.1080/03637750903300239>
- Saltzman, W. R., Lester, P., Beardslee, W. R., Layne, C. M., Woodward, K., & Nash, W.

- P. (2011). Mechanisms of risk and resilience in military families: Theoretical and empirical basis of a family-focused resilience enhancement program. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *14*(3), 213-230.
<https://doi.10.1007/s10567-011-0096-1>
- Schumm, W. R., Gade, P. A., & Bell, D. B. (2003). Dimensionality of military professional values items: An exploratory factor analysis of data from the spring 1996 sample survey of military personnel. *Psychological Reports*, *92*(3), 831-841.
<https://doi.10.2466/PR0.92.3.831-841>
- Schumm, W. R., Bell, D. B., & Gade, P. A. (2000). Effects of a military overseas peacekeeping deployment on marital quality, satisfaction, and stability. *Psychological Reports*, *87*(3, Pt 1), 815-821.
<https://doi.10.2466/pr0.2000.87.3.815>
- Schumm, W. R., & Hammond, P. M. (1986). Self-reported marital quality of military families living off-post in a midwestern community. *Psychological Reports*, *59*(2, Pt 1), 391-394. <https://doi.10.2466/pr0.1986.59.2.391>
- Schwartz, J. (2005). The socio-economic benefits of marriage: A review of recent evidence from the United States. *Economic Affairs*, *25*(3), 45–51.
<https://doi.10.1111/j.1468-0270.2005.00571.x>
- Shea, T. L., Tennant, A., & Pallant, J. F. (2009). Rasch model analysis of the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS). *BMC Psychiatry*, *9*, 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-9-21>
- Sherman, M., & Bowling, U. (2011). Challenges and opportunities for intervening with

- couples in the aftermath of the global war on terrorism. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, *41*(4), 209–217. <https://doi.10.1007/s10879-011-9181-5>
- Sherwood, E. (2009). Clinical assessment of Canadian military marriages. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *37*(4), 332-339. <https://doi.10.1007/s10615-007-0108-2>
- Siegel, B., & Davis, B. (2013). Health and mental health needs of children in US military families. *American Academy of Pediatrics*, *131*(6), 2002-2015.
- South, S. C., Krueger, R. F., & Iacono, W. G. (2009). Factorial invariance of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale across gender. *Psychological Assessment*, *21*(4), 622-628. <https://doi.10.1037/a0017572>
- Spera, C., Thomas, R. K., Barlas, F., Szoc, R., & Cambridge, M. H. (2011, January). Relationship of military deployment recency, frequency, duration, and combat exposure to alcohol use in the Air Force. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, *72*(1), 5-14. Retrieved from <http://go.galegroup.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/ps/i.do?p=EAIM&sw=w&u=minn4020&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA249876953&asid=0f97c249409b57d8d3c6f8d3050cc0cd>
- SteelFisher, G. K., Zaslavsky, A. M., & Blendon, R. J. (2008). Health-related impact of deployment extensions on spouses of active-duty Army personnel. *Military Medicine*, *173*, 221–229.
- Sullivan, K. (2015). An application of Family Stress Theory to clinical work with military families and other vulnerable populations. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *43*(1), 89-97. <https://doi.10.1007/s10615-014-0500-7>

- Tanielian, T.L. and Jaycox, L.H. (2008), *Invisible wounds of war*. RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA.
- Teachman, J. D., & Tedrow, L. (2008). Divorce, race, and military service: More than equal pay and equal opportunity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70(4), 1030-1044. <https://doi.10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00544.x>
- Theiss, J. A., & Knobloch, L. K. (2013). A Relational Turbulence Model of military service members' relational communication during reintegration. *Journal of Communication*, 63(6), 1109-1129.
- Tracey, B., & Jeremy D., M. (2015). The effects of military-connected parental absence on the behavioural and academic functioning of children: A literature review. *Journal of Children's Services*, 10(3), 291-306. <https://doi.10.1108/JCS-05-2015-0017>
- Tran, T. D., Tran, T., & Fisher, J. (2013). Validation of the depression anxiety stress (DASS) 21 as a screening instrument for depression and anxiety in a rural community-based cohort of northern Vietnamese women. *BMC Psychiatry*, 13(24). <https://doi.10.1186/1471-244X-13-24>
- Trautmann, J., Alhusen, & Gross, D. (2015). Impact of deployment on military families with young children: A systematic review. *Nursing Outlook*, 63, 656-679.
- Troxel, W. M., Trail, T. E., Jaycox, L. H., & Chandra, A. (2016). Preparing for deployment: Examining family- and individual-level factors. *Military Psychology*, 28(3), 134-146. <https://doi.10.1037/mil0000110>
- Trump, L. J., Lamson, A. L., Lewis, M. E., & Muse, A. R. (2015). His and hers: The

interface of military couples' biological, psychological, and relational health. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, 37(3), 316-328. <https://doi.10.1007/s10591-015-9344-8>

U. S. Department of Defense. (2010). Profile of the military community: Demographics 2010.

van de Mortel, T.F. (2008). Faking it: Social desirability response bias in self report research. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 25(4), 40-48. Retrieved from http://epubs.scu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=hahs_pubs

Vasterling, J. J., Taft, C. T., Proctor, S. P., Macdonald, H. Z., Lawrence, A., Kalill, K., Fairbank, J. A. (2015). Establishing a methodology to examine the effects of war-Zone PTSD on the family: The family foundations study. *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*, 24(2), 143–155. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1002/mpr.1464>

Wadsworth, S. M., Lester, P., Marini, C., Cozza, S., Sornborger, J., Strouse, T., Beardslee, W. (2013). Approaching family-focused systems of care for military and veteran families. *Military Behavioral Health*, 1, 31–40. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21635781.2012.721062>

Warner, C. H., Appenzeller, G. N., Warner, C. M., & Grieger, T. (2009). Psychological effects of deployments on military families. *Psychiatric Annals*, 39, 56–63. <https://doi.10.3928/0048571320090201-11>

Warner, C. H., Breitbach, J. E., Appenzeller, G. N., Yates, V., Grieger, T., & Webster, W. G. (2007). Division mental health in the new brigade combat team structure:

Part I. Pre deployment and deployment. *Military Medicine*, 172, 907–911.

Retrieved from <http://publications.amsus.org/>

Waite, L. J., & Lehrer, E. L. (2003). The benefits from marriage and religion in the United States: A comparative analysis. *Population and Development Review*, 29(2), 255–276. <https://doi.10.1111/j.17284457.2003.00255.x>

Whisman, M. A., Snyder, D. K., & Beach, S. R. (2009). Screening for marital and relationship discord. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 23, 247–254. <https://doi.10.1037/a0014476>

Widyana, R., Sumiharso, & Safitri, R. M. (2020). Psychometric properties of internet-administered version of Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS-42) in sample Indonesian adult. *Talent Development & Excellence*, 12(2), 1422–1434.

Wong, L., & Gerras, S. J. (2010). *The effects of multiple deployments on Army adolescents*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College.

Yohai, V., Stahel, W.~A. and Zamar, R. (1991) A procedure for robust estimation and inference in linear regression; in Stahel and Weisberg (eds), *Directions in Robust Statistics and Diagnostics, Part II*, Springer, New York, 365–374.

https://doi.10.1007/978-1-4612-4444-8_20

Zainah, A., Nasir, R., Ruzy, S., & Yusof, N. (2012). Effects of demographic variables on marital satisfaction. *Asian Social Science*, 8(9), 46–

49. <https://doi.10.5539/ass.v8n9p46>

Appendix A: Demographic Survey I

Please complete this demographic questionnaire before proceeding to the next section of the survey. It is important that you answer each question carefully and accurately as they apply to you currently. No identifying or personal information will be revealed in the study results.

1. Sex Male _____ Female _____
2. Your Current Age _____
3. Your Ethnicity or Race (please check one) White _____ African American _____ Hispanic _____ Native American _____ Asian-Pacific Islander _____ Other _____
4. How many years have you been legally married to your current spouse? _____
5. How many times have you been legally married? _____
6. How many times have your spouse been legally married? _____
7. How many children currently lives with you? _____
8. What is your highest level of completed education? (Circle your response)
a) Some High School b) High School diploma c) Some college
d) College degree e) Higher degree
9. Are you currently employed or stay at home? _____ Employed _____ Stay at Home.
10. What is your annual income? (Check the correct answer)
Under \$25,000 _____ \$40,000 to \$49,000 _____
\$25,000 to \$29,000 _____ \$50,000 to \$59,000 _____
\$30,000 to \$39,000 _____ \$60,000 or more _____
11. How many years of service does your husband currently have? _____
12. Please check whether your husband is enlisted or commissioned and what branch of the military he currently serves in.
Officer _____ Enlisted _____
Branch of military _____
13. Have you husband deployed in the past two years? Yes _____ or no _____
14. For how long was he deployed? Total months? _____
15. Is your husband currently deployed? _____
16. If yes, for how long will he be deployed? _____
17. Did you have a support system during the deployment?
18. If yes, what was you source (s) of support? Check all that applies.
Family _____ Friends _____ Therapy _____ Military support group (such as FRG) _____
Spiritual _____ Other _____

Appendix B: Demographic Survey II

Please complete this demographic questionnaire before proceeding to the next section of the survey. It is important that you answer each question carefully and accurately as they apply to you currently. No identifying or personal information will be revealed in the study results.

1. Sex Male _____ Female _____
2. Your Current Age _____
3. Your Ethnicity or Race (please check one) White _____ African American _____ Hispanic _____ Native American _____ Asian-Pacific Islander _____ Other _____
4. How many years have you been legally married to your current spouse? _____
5. How many times have you been legally married? _____
6. How many times have your spouse been legally married? _____
7. How many children currently lives with you? _____
8. What is your highest level of completed education? (Circle your response)
a) Some High School b) High School diploma c) Some college
d) College degree e) Higher degree
9. Are you currently employed or stay at home? _____ Employed _____ Stay at Home.
9. What is your annual income? (Check the correct answer)
Under \$25,000 _____ \$40,000 to \$49,000 _____
\$25,000 to \$29,000 _____ \$50,000 to \$59,000 _____
\$30,000 to \$39,000 _____ \$60,000 or more _____
10. How many years of service does your husband currently have? _____
11. Please check whether your husband is enlisted or commissioned and what branch of the military he currently serves in.
Officer _____ Enlisted _____
Branch of military _____
12. Have you husband deployed while you were married? Yes _____ or No _____