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# Religious Orientation and Communication as Predictors on Military Spouses' Perception of Marital Happiness after a Second Deployments

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Stephanie R. Santana

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2018

Abstract

Religious Orientation and Communication as Predictors on Military Spouses' Perception  
of Marital Happiness after a Second Deployments

by

Stephanie R. Santana

MS, Walden University, 2009

BA, Columbia College of Missouri, 2005

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

General Psychology

Walden University

August 2018

## Abstract

Military spouses are often left at home when their service member deploys to areas outside the United States. These deployments can have a lasting impact on the military spouses' perception of marital happiness. Communication problems can occur within the marriage and military spouses may use their religious orientation to alleviate the stress that comes from deployments. This quantitative study used an online survey method to conduct bivariate correlations and multiple regression analysis from a sample of 128 military spouses. This study focused on the family stress theory and used the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, and Primary Communication Inventory. Bivariate correlations indicated a significant relationship between communication, extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, and marital happiness. Multiple regression indicated a strong significant relationship with communication and a negative significant relationship with extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation. After controlling for the covariates, communication and age of spouse were significant, while the remaining variables were nonsignificant. In addition, binary logistic regression was conducted, and communication and intrinsic religious orientation were significant, while extrinsic religious orientation was nonsignificant with marital happiness. The experiences that military spouses undergo with deployments may be useful for therapists, chaplains, or military leaders to provide learning techniques on coping after deployments, promote longevity with military marriages through premarital workshops, chaplain-sponsored marital retreats, and marriage therapy for military spouses to promote marital happiness.

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## Dedication

I dedicate my work to my husband, Francisco, and my children, Jonathon, Francisco, Abrianna, Analisha, and Amaya. I pray that God will continue to guide them in their life's journey and that all their dreams come true. I pray that no matter what obstacles or stumbling blocks come their way that they continue to persevere and remain committed until they reach the goal they set out to complete. I also dedicate my work to the military spouses who commit their time and efforts in faithfully supporting their military service member before, during, and after deployments.

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I am so grateful to have been able to endure this journey with my husband, Francisco. I thank you for your service to the United States Army for over 22 years and the sacrifices you made, especially on the nights when I spent countless hours on the computer. Without your support and encouragement, this journey would have been lonely.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

When the service member leaves the military and becomes a civilian again, the spouses' perception of marital happiness can carry over into their civilian lives. There are potential factors (e.g. stress, religious orientation, communication, deployments) that might impact military spouses' perception of marital happiness. More than two million US military personnel have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan since the war on terrorism began in 2001 (Manos, 2010; Trail, 2016). The research focus of the wars' impact has mainly been on the military service member (Hoge et al., 2004), however, little is known about how military spouses have been impacted by the deployments. Military spouses experience the service member's deployments differently. Some spouses are anxious and excited that the service member has returned home while others may feel as though they have lost their independence and need to be patient when communicating with each other (Pincus, House, Christenson, & Alder, n.d.). Spouses that communicate regularly during their service member's deployment display a strong relationship with their partner (Seals, Bates, & Therivel, 2017). Studies have examined the effects of deployment on military spouses and have shown an increased rate of marital dissatisfaction, divorce, unemployment, and declining mental health (Mansfield et al., 2010; Seals, Bates, Therivel, 2017). On the other hand, religion has direct (increased social support) and indirect (increased psychological well-being) associations with marital quality (Fincham, Ajayi, & Beach, 2011). This research was conducted to gain an understanding of how

extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication might influence a military spouses' perceptions of marital happiness after a second deployment.

### **Background**

There are many studies that have explored how religion and communication may have an influence on marital happiness. Previous researchers' position on marital happiness and satisfaction understand that marriage consists of two individuals who are joined together as one, with different perspectives (Ellison, Henderson, Glenn, and Harkrider, 2011). This research was conducted to determine if a relationship between religion, communication, and marital happiness exists in military marriages, to add to existing literature.

Mahoney, Pargament, and Hernandez (2013) view marriage or a union with divine significance and character as sanctification. Kusner, Mahoney, Pargament, and DeMaris (2014) found that greater sanctification within the marriage correlates with marital happiness. The mean age of the husbands and wives were  $M = 28.7$  ( $SD = 4.4$ ) and  $M = 27.2$  ( $SD = 4.0$ ), respectively. Ellison, Henderson, Glenn, and Harkrider (2011) discussed the role religion can play in a marriage when understanding the nature of marital satisfaction in a relationship. The correlations between the relationship of religion and marital happiness were statistically significant, ranging from .05 to .11. The prevalence of religion within a marriage can have an impact on the overall satisfaction within a marriage (Sabey, Rauer, & Jensen, 2014). The more wives viewed their marriage as sacred, the more both the wives and their husbands were significantly satisfied with their marriage, ( $\beta = .40$ ) and ( $\beta = .32$ ), respectively (Sabey et al., 2014). Husbands'

sanctification of marriage, however, did not predict their own or their wives' marital satisfaction (Sabey et al., 2014). Sabey et al's (2014) model explained 11.3% in the variance of husbands' marital happiness and 21.2% in the variance of wives' marital happiness.

Allen, Rhoades, Stanley, and Markman (2011) discussed the stress, communication, marital happiness, and deployments that can affect a military spouse. Husband income showed small, but significant, negative correlations with husband and wife stress (Allen et al., 2011). The psychological sense of financial strain was a more potent predictor than rank or income, with stronger negative correlations between economic strain and stress for both husbands and wives. Education level was not significantly related to stress (Allen et al., 2011). Baptist et al. (2011) discussed how spiritual faith and faith in military missions helped spouses maintain and strengthen their marriages after deployments. Results indicated that roles and responsibilities can change after the service member returns home from deployments (Baptist et al., 2011). Open and frequent communication was also shown to be important in how spouses adapt to being in a military marriage relationship.

### **Problem Statement**

When a service member must deploy to areas outside of the United States, the deployments can have a lasting effect on the spouses who are left at home. Deployments are typically associated with prolonged separations from the family member(s) or loved one(s) (Possemato, McKenzie, McDewitt-Murphy, Williams, & Ouimette, 2014). There were more than 2.1 million active duty, reserve, and National Guard members that make

up the military, with more than 2.8 million spouses, children, and adult dependents (Defense Manpower Data Center [DMDC], 2014). As of 2014, there are 51.4% married, 43.3% never married, and 5.2% divorced military members (DMDC, 2014). Currently, there are 1.3 million active duty service men and women (DMDC, 2017). Since the war in Iraq and Afghanistan began in 2001, over 1.8 million service men and women have deployed overseas on multiple occasions with more frequent and longer deployments than previous deployments (Trail, 2016). Military deployments are lengthy, and the reintegration period can affect the mental and physical health of the service member, quality of their marital and the well-being of their children (Troxell, Trail, Jaycox, & Chandra, 2016). Most military families can adapt to the stress of deployments (Troxell et.al, 2016); however, the stress of deployments may be a contributing factor in the spouses' perception of marital happiness (Bergman, Renshaw, Allen, Markman, & Stanley, 2014). Marital satisfaction was considered a key variable in understanding what constitutes marital happiness in individuals (Karampatsos, 2011); however, Previti and Amato (2003) indicated extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication were factors that can possibly influence perceptions of marital happiness.

Gaps that exist in the literature for further exploration are how individuals in military marriages can adapt and cope with the stress that stems from deployments (Baptist et al., 2011). A relationship exists between religion and marital happiness (Oranthinkal & Vansteenwegen, 2006), but it is unclear how extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication are related to marital happiness among military spouses. Religious orientation comprises of extrinsic, intrinsic, nonreligious, and



religious individuals (Merrill, Steffen, & Hunter, 2012). Extrinsic religious spouses are those who use their religion to obtain the emotional and social support they need from other people; intrinsic religious spouses are those who want a closer relationship with God; nonreligious spouses are considered low intrinsic and low extrinsic spouses; and religious spouses are considered high intrinsic and high extrinsic spouses (Merrill et. al., 2012). Most Americans view religion as an important part of their life and 92% of them profess a belief in God (Merrill et. al., 2012). Religion can influence an individual based on their denomination, culture, ethnicity, and location (Merrill et. al., 2012). There are few studies that have examined the effects of extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation on different ethnic groups within the United States (Merrill et. al, 2012), but limited research has examined the effects on military spouses. Therefore, due to the limited evidence that accounts for the negative outcomes of military marriages (Karney & Crown, 2007), this research was conducted to understand extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication as predictors on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

### **Nature of this study**

The nature of the study is a quantitative research approach. It was used to allow me to focus on the data to draw inferences about the correlation between the variables using survey methods when collecting data for statistical analysis. Logistic regression analysis was used in this study to analyze the data from the participants and to determine military spouses' perception of marital happiness in relation to extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication after a second deployment. Sociodemographic

variables, such as the age of spouse, the number of children, household income, and the number of deployments, were controlled to determine if a relationship exists between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The recruitment process that was conducted included posting an announcement on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn), local church announcement board, attaching flyers to mailboxes within the community, and sharing the announcements with leaders of various organizations (principal and teachers at the local high school) that have access to military spouses. Snowball sampling was used to allow voluntary participation from military spouses that are geographically located throughout the United States.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

RQ 1: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>0</sub>1*

There is no relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS), respectively.

*H<sub>a</sub>1*

There is a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the ROS and KMSS, respectively.

RQ 2: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>02</sub>*:

There is no relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS), respectively.

*H<sub>a2</sub>*

There is a relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the ROS and KMSS, respectively.

RQ 3: What is the relationship between communication and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>03</sub>*

There is no relationship between communication and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory (PCI) and KMSS, respectively.

*H<sub>a3</sub>*

There is a relationship between communication and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment as measured by the PCI and KMSS, respectively.

RQ4: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>04</sub>*

There is no relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

*H<sub>a4</sub>*

There is a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ5: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>05</sub>*

There is no relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

*H<sub>a5</sub>*

There is a relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ 6: After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, does extrinsic religious orientation and communication predicts a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>06</sub>*

After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, extrinsic religious orientation and communication are not significant predictors on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

*H<sub>a6</sub>*

After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, extrinsic religious orientation and communication are significant predictors on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ 7: After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, does intrinsic religious orientation and communication predict a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

*H<sub>07</sub>*

After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, intrinsic religious orientation and communication are not significant predictors on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

*H<sub>a7</sub>*

After controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, intrinsic religious orientation and communication are significant predictors on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if a relationship between religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness exists, particularly for military spouses who were affected by the surge of deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001. Spouses report their belief about their relationship being hindered due to military stress and deployments on their marriages (Karney & Crown, 2007). The effects and impact of deployments on families leave them with a period of emotional, physical, and health-related stress (Kelley & Jouriles, 2011). The military spouse uses religion to have emotional support, growth, and coping abilities with the stressors (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). When spouses experience different episodes of stress, the stress itself can be viewed as a response when the spouse must readjust to the military member being home after deployments (Matthieu & Ivanoff, 2006), which in turn may impact the spouses' ability to cope (Rossetto, 2012). Therefore, many individuals turn to religion to alleviate some of the stressors that may be present in their lives (Carver et al, 1989). When the service member leaves the military and becomes a civilian again, the spouses' perception of marital happiness may carry over into their civilian lives as a result of military stress and deployments.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is Hill's (1949) family stress theory. Family stress theory motivated this research based on the ABC-X model. The *A* variable, in this study, is the abnormal event that disrupts the balance in the family (deployments); *B* variable, the internal and external family resources and social support (i.e. church,

community, or other resources); *C* variable, the spouses' belief and perception of marital happiness; and *X* variable, the crisis that could possibly take place if the spouse is unable to adapt and cope with the stressful event (i.e. divorce, health related problems, depression) (Karney & Crown, 2011). Military spouses adapt to and/or cope with the many stressors that are associated with deployments (Lavee, McCubbin, & Patterson, 1985). Due to the stress that can be associated with the changes in the routines, roles, and expectations that take place when the military spouse must adapt to the service member before, during, and after deployments, these changes (Patterson & Garwick, 1994) may predict the way a military spouse perceives marital happiness after a second deployment. This research applied the family stress theory to understand the situational meaning of how religion and communication may possibly influence the military spouses' perception of marital happiness after the nonnormative event of a second deployment.

Military and veteran spouses deal with their own challenges. Some of the challenges that they deal with stem from deployments and reintegration (Nichols, Martindale-Adams, Graney, Zuber, & Burns, 2013). Family stress theory was used to understand the demands that are placed on service members and their families from the time of departure for war until the time of reintegration from war (Hill, 1949; Price, Price, & McKenry, 2010). While understanding the prevalence of extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication, by using family stress theory I noted how the resources of the family (household income), previous history of deployments, the age of the spouse and the number of children may have an influence on the spouses' perception of marital happiness. Although deployments can be considered stressful for the spouses,

it is how they view the stressor as well as how they adapt to the changes in their life that may determine if extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication predict a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The meaning of stressful events can lead an individual to have a changed view of the event, a changed view of the family structure, and possibly a changed view of the world around them (Patterson & Garwick, 1994).

### **Definitions of terms**

*Deployments:* Tours of duty for military service members to move from one location to a specified destination in various locations in the world as part of a war or peaceful mission (Military.com, 2017; Vocabulary.com Dictionary, n.d.).

*Extrinsic Religious Orientation:* The external focus of religious beliefs, in which individuals engage in religious practice for social or personal reasons (Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990).

*Family readiness groups (FRG):* A command-sponsored organization in which family members are associated with the unit during peacetime and wartime (Army One Source, 2017). Family members receive information about upcoming events (i.e. deployments, unit sponsored functions), provided with mutual support and assistance, and a network of communications among the family members, the chain of command, and community resources (Army One Source, 2017).

*Intrinsic Religious Orientation:* A person with intrinsic religious orientation views religion as a form of religious devotion in which the individual internalizes their religious beliefs (Hughes & Dickson, 2005).



*Marital happiness:* A judgment that a spouse gives to the satisfaction that is experienced or received in their marriage (Fincham, n.d.). An overall appraisal of the degree of happiness with various aspects of one's marriage (Kamp Dush, Taylor, & Kroeger, 2008).

*Military spouse:* A male or female that is currently married to an active duty, retired, or veteran military member.

*Service member:* A current member of the armed forces (e.g. Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy).

### **Assumptions**

This study was based on multiple assumptions. It was assumed that the web-based surveys would produce more results than the traditional mailed surveys. It was assumed that the participants would answer the self-report surveys in a truthful manner based on their marital relationship with the military service member. It was assumed that the participants would answer all the questions to prevent tainted results. It was also assumed that the surveys were completed by married military spouses who have experienced at least two deployments that ranged from 6 months or longer for each. These assumptions are important for this study to prevent selection bias, maintain the integrity of the participants, and produce results that can benefit the military spouse, service member, religious and military leaders.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The study focused on using the KMSS, ROS, and PCI scales to examine the variables (religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness) and to determine

the relationship between them using military spouses of active duty, retired, and veteran service members. The study consisted of military spouses that were located throughout the United States. The study did not cover National Guard or Reserve military spouses since their deployments and relocations are not as frequent as active duty or retired military members. This study did not imply that only military spouses are challenged by frequent relocations or deployments. This study was designed for military spouses that have experienced their service member's second deployment. It was not designed for military spouses that have experienced only one deployment, nor was it designed for military spouses that have been married less than 2 years. Whatever information was retrieved from the surveys, quality in this research remained intact by not compromising my position as a researcher and ensuring the facts are interpreted and reported accordingly.

### **Limitations to Internal and External Validity**

The impact on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after the first deployment may be very different from findings of military spouses that have experienced more than one deployment. Internal validity can occur when events outside of the study (e.g. natural disasters, deaths, political changes, or economic challenges) can have an impact on participants' responses to the study's questions, thus making it unlikely to determine if the change in the extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation or communication is due to the perception of a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The variables in a study can be extraneous or confounding. Extraneous variable may compete with the independent variable when

explaining the cause and effect outcome of the study (Statistics.laerd.com, 2012). Confounding variables may influence the dependent and independent variables (Statistics.laerd.com, 2012). A causal relationship can never be determined using correlational and multiple regression analysis (Statistics.laerd.com, 2012), however, relationship strength and direction can be established between two variables (Statistics.laerd.com, 2012).

External validity can occur when a convenience sampling is conducted since there is no way to determine if the sample represents a larger military population (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Self-reports are considered a valid source of gathering information from participants, they are widely used in research (Gigliotti, 2011; Ramo, Hall, & Porchaska, 2011). One limitation of this study was the use of self-report surveys. This posed an issue as it was possible the respondents were not truthful on the self-report measures. Another limitation of the study was the snowball sampling design; although it was used to prevent the study from being compromised, the recruitment process was conducted on three separate occasion to reach the desired number of participants. A small sampling size can be a limitation to external validity if the desired number of participants was not acquired (Faber & Fonseca, 2014).

### **Significance**

This research was conducted to identify if a connection between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication influenced a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The results of this study contribute to the research by other scholars and professionals by potentially informing

professionals that help military spouses with learning techniques on coping with the demands of a military lifestyle and promoting longevity and marital happiness. This research will be made available to military chaplains, military leaders, therapists, counselors, and psychologists to increase the knowledge and understanding of how extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication influences a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The research can lead to effective premarital workshops, chaplain-sponsored marital retreats, or marriage therapy for military spouses.

### **Summary**

Military deployments have a lasting impact on service members, spouses, and children. This chapter highlighted the importance of evaluating the extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and quality of communication on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. Although spouses report their belief about their relationship being hindered due to military stress and deployments on their marriages (Karney & Crown, 2007), the impact of deployments leaves families with a period of emotional, physical, and health-related stress (Kelley & Jouriles, 2011). As previously stated, the family stress theory discussed how religious orientation, communication, the resources of the family (household income), previous history of deployments, the age of the spouse and the number of children may have an influence on the spouses' perception of marital happiness.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature review and provides an in-depth look at religious orientation, communication (verbal and nonverbal), and marital happiness with

relation to military spouses. Very little research was available on extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication amongst military spouses. However, there is a wealth of information on marital happiness, but limited research focuses on military spouses. Chapter 3 reviews and explains the measures, the design, and rationale of the study. Chapter 4 reports in detail the statistical findings of the study. Chapter 5 discusses the possible conclusions that are produced from the current research study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Military spouses experience many changes in their lives when the service member is deployed, as well as when they return home from deployments, which can possibly predict the marital happiness within the relationship. Throughout this review, marital happiness and marital satisfaction are used interchangeably. Marital satisfaction has been defined as a variety of different terminologies such as marital quality, relationship satisfaction, marital success, marital adjustment, marital well-being, and marital happiness (Graham, Diebels, & Barnow, 2011). Although marital happiness has been a topic of discussion for researchers for several decades, an earlier study by Lewis and Spanier (1979) provided evidence to support how marital satisfaction is considered an important component in the quality of the marriage. The model of marital satisfaction, as described by Lewis and Spanier, includes personal and social resources that are shared with outcomes that are considered satisfying by the spouse. This can be achieved through sharing their lives with another and reaping the rewards of marital interactions (Hünler & Gencöz, 2005). In this study, marital happiness is used to see if it correlates with the extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, gender, income, children, and the age of spouse, which may potentially impact the perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The perceptions of marital happiness, as noted by Boss (1992), may be altered depending on the way a person thinks, behaves, and uses the resources that are available to them. This chapter begins with a description of the literature search strategy. I also discuss family stress theory and types of stress followed by an exploration

of religious orientation, communication, deployments and their relationship with marital happiness. Emotional changes occur within military marriages because of deployments (Marnocha, 2012); however, determining if a relationship exists between the independent variables (extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication) and the dependent variable (marital happiness) could possibly give a better understanding of how or if a military spouses' perception of marital happiness may be influenced after deployments.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

A search of the literature related to religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness was presented from books and articles. The time period for the literature review search was between 1949 and the present date, in which a focus is on the last 5 years. References to religion, communication, marital happiness, and measurement scales are used as they are related to the literature of the current study. A thorough search of research projects related to religion, religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness was conducted using the Walden University online library databases (EBSCO databases, Sage Journals, ProQuest, and Google Scholar). The databases used to locate research for the literature review were: Academic Search Premiere, ERIC, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, Military & Government Collection, and SAGE Premier. Key terms used were *marital happiness*, *marital satisfaction* (80), *religion* (13), *religious orientation* (*extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation*) (22), *communication* (8), *military spouse*, *stress* (28), *family stress* (11), and *deployments* (32).

### **Family Stress Theory**

The family stress theory got its origins from Hill (1949) to understand how some families can cope with the stress while others may have some difficulties. Family stress theory, as it relates to this study, was used as a model for understanding how families can become disorganized after a deployment when the roles, patterns, and normal activities disrupt the family interactions with one another, or when extreme stress or crises (e.g. deployment, separation, reintegration, or postdeployment) exist (Hill, 1949). Families that are experiencing stress may need to find ways to alleviate the stressful situations to avoid having negative physical, mental, or relational outcomes (Karney, Story, & Bradbury, 2005). The military spouses' coping effectiveness has been linked to family adjustment during and after deployments (Pittman, Kerpelman, & McFayden, 2004), which in turn may explain why some families are able to cope and adapt to deployments and stress (Rossetto, 2015; Meadows & Karney, 2016). Families often assign a meaning to a stressful event, which in turn can result in a crisis when there is no support from others. Hill's family stress theory was proposed as the ABC-X model. This model states that (A) a precipitating event or hardship (postdeployment stress) interacts with (B) the family's personal, family system (adaptability, cohesion, communication), and social support resources (people or institutions outside the family); which subsequently interacts with the perceptions and meaning the family assigns to the event (C) producing a crisis (X) (divorce, marital discord) (Hill, 1958).

Family stress theory dates to the Great Depression, World War II, and Vietnam War (Boss, 1992). The vast amount of literature on family stress encompasses many



disciplines, such as counseling, family studies, family therapy, military journals, nursing, sociology, and social work (Fincham, n.d.). Family stress theory was originally proposed by Hill, who focused his research on World War II veterans and their families. Hill aimed his research at explaining how families could meet the stressful challenges of their loved one being deployed (1949).

Although families may assign a meaning to a stressful event, when there is no support from others, the stressful event of deployments could possibly result in a crisis (Hill, 1958). When Hill (1949) discussed the family stress theory, he proposed the theory as the ABC-X model; (A) a precipitating event or hardship (post-deployment stress) interacts with (B) the family's personal, family system (adaptability, cohesion, communication), and social support resources (people or institutions outside the family); which subsequently interacts with the perceptions and meaning the family assigns to the event (C) producing a crisis (X). The underlying issue of the ABC-X model is that it only incorporated major critical issues that had many variables that could possibly make it too complex and limits the practicality of the model (Sullivan, 2015). While the ABC-X model discusses the event, interactions, meaning, and crisis, the meaning a military spouse assigns to the event, as noted by Sullivan (2015), suggest that the meaning of the stressful event of deployments can possibly alter the spouses' perception of marital happiness postdeployment. When the focus is on marital happiness, understanding deployment stress and the impact on the military spouses' perceptions of marital happiness after a second deployment may be achieved when researchers understand how military spouses adapt to change (Sullivan, 2015).

McCubbin and Patterson (1983) redefined Hill's ABC-X model by including the classification of variables that followed the crisis and how the family adjusted after the crisis (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009), thus naming it the double ABC-X model. Family response to stressful situations was based on the stressful event (deployment) and associated hardships (periods of separation, communication problems) (Burlison & Denton, 1997), the outcome of the stress (divorce, health-related problems), and intervening factors (counselors, religious leaders, support groups) (Lavee, McCubbin, & Patterson, 1985). Adapting to the stressors and strains of deployments can produce a positive relationship when the family resources, family system resources, and social support has an influence on the way a spouse adapts to change (Lavee et al., 1985). Military spouses that have positive coping and communication skills before, during, and after a deployment may be better equipped at handling the different stressors that are associated with deployments, to impact their perception of marital happiness.

### **Deployment stress and reintegration**

When military members are deployed, they are separated from their families for prolonged periods of time (Possemato et al., 2014). In 2008, 46.5% of military personnel reported multiple deployments, 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 (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). In recent years, studies on the effects of war and deployments on military families have increased due to the multiple and lengthy deployments that military families have experienced (Lester et al., 2012) and the impact the deployments have on the functioning of families (Sullivan, 2015). As of 2015, there were 2,120,505

military personnel and 2,783,141 family members, including spouses, children, and adult dependents. Table 1 depicts the total Department of Defense force family status (U.S. Department of Defense, 2015).

Table 1

*Total Department of Defense Force Family Status in 2015*

Dual – military marriage, no children	<i>N</i> = 49,131	3.8%
Dual-military marriage, with children	<i>N</i> = 34,478	2.6%
Married to civilian, no children	<i>N</i> = 182,534	14.0%
Married to civilian, with children	<i>N</i> = 441,090	33.9%
Single, no children	<i>N</i> = 535,221	41.1%
Single, with children	<i>N</i> = 58,989	4.5%

Note. *N* = 1.7 million family members.

The spouses of the active duty members comprise of 92% females (U.S. Department of Defense, 2015). The separation due to deployments can be stressful on military couples (Bergmann et al., 2014) because of the length of time and frequency of the deployments (Everson, Herzog, Figley, & Whitworth, 2014).

**Postdeployment (reintegration)**

Military spouses may struggle with the return of the military member from a deployment and adjustments within the family take place (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). The military spouse, as well as the service member, will need to readjust to one another after a year-long deployment. The military spouse may need help

understand that it is okay to have mixed emotions (nervousness, excitement, worriedness, or concerns) and need to be as realistic as possible when the service member returns home from deployments. (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). When military spouses can alter their perceptions of having a perfect, normal life when the soldier returns from deployment, they are able to cope with adjustments and can possibly have a smooth transition (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). It takes a great deal of effort and understanding for a military spouse to know that the soldier has changed and may not be the same person before he/she deployed (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). The need to be flexible and create a different environment that is conducive to both the military spouse and the service member may prove beneficial for a successful reintegration of the service member back into the home.

Service members undergo different changes before, during, and after deployments. During deployments, the spouse may worry about the service member that is deployed, feel isolated, lonely or sad, has added responsibilities, feel for the safety of their service member, and may feel overwhelmed at home (Gottman, Gottman, & Atkins, 2011; Meadows et al, 2016a). After the service member returns home from deployments, the emotional and psychological process may be impacted due to the extended absence from family, the constant threat of surprise attacks, and loss of a friend or fellow soldier (Davis, 2012), in which the soldier and the spouse may need support (Irving, 2016). Transitioning from deployments back into the family can be difficult for some returning service members, which adds stress to the family (Davis, 2012; Meadows, & Karney, 2016) because they are not sure what to discuss and may feel that they are weak

(Sahlstein, Maguire, & Timmerman, 2009). Military spouses undergo a sense of purpose while the service member is deployed such as new roles and responsibilities, community support, and emotional changes (Davis, 2012; Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, 2004). During the reintegration phase, concerns about the relationship can surface and become a challenge for the spouse and service member. Researchers have found that building a shared sense of purpose and a stronger family can be done by taking timeouts, enjoying life, giving thanks, communicating, being patient, being positive, and knowing when to seek outside help (Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, 2004; U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016).

Stress has been defined as an event that occurs in individuals that can affect their well-being (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Stress is associated with challenging events that may concern both individuals in a close relationship (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Military spouses that are confronted with the same stressors, such as deployments, can be impacted just as well as the service member that has deployed. The stress can originate in both the spouse and military member and spill over from one individual to the next, thus influencing both individuals within the relationship (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Spousal stress comes in many forms and is classified in three dimensions: the way a spouse can be affected by the stressful event, the origin of the stress, and the time frame of the stress (Randall and Bodenmann, 2009). Although deployments can be considered a stressful event for military spouses, a military spouses' perception of stress may possibly predict their marital happiness after a second deployment. Deployment stress can occur

during predeployment, deployment, and post (reintegration)-deployment phases and can be classified as major, minor, external, or internal stress.

### **Major and minor stress**

Major stressors have been associated with normative and nonnormative life events that may be critical, such as severe illnesses, special needs, unemployment, death or accidents (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974). Minor stress, such as everyday stressors that may cause a person to be irritated, frustrated, or even distressed, can range from taking care of children, the environment or neighborhood they live in, to being late for appointments or work (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). After the service member returns from deployments, this would seem to be a joyous occasion, but Baptist et al (2011) considered it a stressful time, mainly due to adjustments made within the family. Those adjustments are sharing the responsibility within the home (e.g. paying bills, making decisions concerning the children while the service member was deployed). Once the service member returns home, sharing responsibilities again may possibly cause stress within the relationship if the military spouse is not ready to share those responsibilities again. Military spouses face unique demands like frequent separations from their service member because of peacetime and combat deployments, rules and regulations of military life, and frequent relocations (Eaton et al. 2008). Military spouses that view their life as being stressful has shown less overall psychological well-being and an increase in their vulnerability to distress than other spouses (Eaton et al., 2008). The spouses are often faced with prolonged separations from their service member and families, they may feel isolated from the civilian community, and continuously have to adjust to military rules

and regulations (Eaton et al., 2008). Husbands are generally sensitive to stress in a marriage because of their ability to control their emotions (Gottman, 1994). When the husband becomes negative, the negativity can influence the way they respond to their spouse (Gottman, 1994); this notion seems to insist that men are better able to control how they react to stress and are able to control their emotions than that of women.

### **External and internal stress**

External stress occurs outside of the spouses' relationship with their partner that has an indirect effect on the relationship. However, the indirect effect of the external stress can spill over into the relationship a spouse may have with their partner, resulting in arguments and conflicts that can affect the way a spouse communicates (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Stress comes in many different forms that can include stress at work, stress with the children, financial stress, or stress from their partner (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Military spouses that have the support of their families, friends, and community are able to overcome adversities; on the other hand, the military spouses that do not have the support may need help from professionals to assist in strengthening their resiliency and adjust to life after deployments (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016).

Internal stress originates internally for individuals and can be associated with conflicts between a couple due to individual differences, goals, needs, or habits that bother the other individual (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009). Studies show that military families are resilient when faced with deployments. Although resilient, family relationships tend to return to normal after the deployments (Meadows, Tanielian, &

Karney, 2016a). Researchers have focused on how deployments are linked to divorce while little evidence exists to understand how deployments are related to marital happiness (Trail, 2016). This is mainly due to the fact that all deployments are not the same (Meadows et al, 2016b; Trail 2016). Marital satisfaction was lower in marriages that experienced one deployment than that of military couples that had experienced no deployments; however, marital satisfaction was not any lower for couples that experienced more than one deployment (Trail, 2016).

The reintegration phase, as an internal stress, may have an impact on the marital relationship because of the prolonged separation of the deployments, even though the service member nor the spouse has any control over the number and length of deployments (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). For example, Sullivan (2015) noted that when spouses have a difficult time with the reintegration of the returning service member back into the family, there can be a struggle for the military spouse and the service member to reconnect with one another, thus having an impact on the marital relationship. The overall adaptation and coping abilities can be influenced in military spouses due to the ongoing stress of being a part of the military community.

### **Religious Orientation and Marital Happiness**

The link between religious affiliations and marital happiness has been studied empirically by other researchers (Heaton, 1984; Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001; Mullins, 2016). When military spouses experience different episodes of deployment stress, the stress from a deployment itself can be viewed as a cognitive or behavioral effort to cope with the stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This occurs when



the spouse must readjust to the military member being home after deployments (Matthieu & Ivanoff, 2006), which in turn may impact the spouses' ability to cope (Rossetto, 2012). Therefore, many individuals turn to religion to alleviate some of the stressors that may be present in their lives (Carver et.al, 1989). Couples that share the same type or joint religious belief or religious activities (church attendance) decreased conflicts that arose within the relationship (Fiese & Tomcho, 2001), thereby having greater marital happiness. In some cultures, a husband's marital satisfaction is closely linked to their family roles, routines, and ritual meanings of religious holidays while the wife's satisfaction is linked to their routine practices with religious holiday rituals (Fiese & Tomcho, 2001). Individuals in a relationship may share similar religious or spiritual beliefs, however, spouses, whether male or female, may have a different perception of religion and how their perception impacts their marital happiness.

Self-reports have linked religiosity to an individual's perception of marital happiness (Archuleta, Britt, Tonn, & Grable, 2011), in which they were merely designed to measure the degree of satisfaction in the marriage (Fincham, Ajayi, & Beach, 2011). The connection lies when the individuals possess the ability to forgive one another (Archuleta, et. al, 2011). The greater the religiosity, the more the individual is satisfied (Archuleta, et. al, 2011), however, religiosity had very little effect on marital satisfaction (Booth, 1995). Some researchers believe that religion and marital satisfaction has an indirect relationship (Hatch, James, & Schumm, 1986) while Hunt & King (1978) believe that other researchers have found a direct connection. Booth et al, (1995) found in their study that the more the individuals incorporated religion in their marriage, the less likely

they were to think about divorce, while on the other hand, Sullivan (2001) found that an individual's religious belief was not linked to their marital happiness. The paradox by Sullivan (2001) stems from the idea that information received from the individuals was conflicting as well as weak at times. Although there have been ongoing studies about the effects of religion and marital satisfaction, Sullivan's (2001) study originally focused on newlyweds but was later replicated to understand the effects of religion and marital satisfaction on middle age couples. The findings indicated that other variables (i.e. communication skills and attitudes) may play a role in the link between religious orientation and marital happiness.

Religious orientation comprises of extrinsic, intrinsic, nonreligious, and religious individuals (Merrill, Steffen, & Hunter, 2012). Extrinsic religious spouses are those who use their religion to obtain the emotional and social support they need from other people, intrinsic religious spouses are those who want a closer relationship with God, nonreligious spouses are low intrinsic and low extrinsic, and religious spouses are high intrinsic and high extrinsic. In this literature review, religious orientation will focus on extrinsic and intrinsic religious individuals. Understanding the type of religious orientation, a military spouse identifies with, may determine how they perceive marital happiness after a second deployment.

### **Extrinsic Religious Orientation**

Extrinsic religious orientation refers to the external focus of religious beliefs, in which individuals engage in religious practice for social or personal reasons (Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990). Extrinsic religious individuals are those who use external sources (social

or personal) to get the emotional and social support they need from other people (Steffen, 2014). Older spouses tend to use self-protection and the ability to direct conflict away from themselves to cope when stress is high (Palmer & Seby, 2003). On the other hand, when the stress level is high, extrinsically spouses can possibly direct their aggression towards other individuals (Palmer & Seby, 2003). An individual's personal religious commitment was explored psychosocially by Allport and Ross (1967) due to different orientations that are exhibited by others. Allport and Ross (1967) believed that extrinsically religious individual's practice and profess a religious belief that is based on the satisfaction they receive that is useful or practical rather than what is considered attractive by others. An extrinsically religious spouse viewed religion as a means to a different end. For example, when marital problems exist or death within the family occurs, some military spouses may seek individuals in the church (i.e. chaplain, pastor, ministers) to assist them throughout their time of need. Extrinsic religious individuals are more prejudiced individuals that are dependent upon others, need comfort and security, and attend religious services every now and then (Hughes & Dickson, 2005).

### **Intrinsic Religious Orientation**

Intrinsically religious spouses are committed to their faith, view religion as a sense of meaning in their life and views religion as primarily important (Hughes & Dickson, 2005). These individuals are not prejudiced, can tolerate others viewpoint, are more mature than extrinsic religious individuals and attend religious services more frequently (Hughes & Dickson, 2005). A person with intrinsic beliefs viewed religion as a form of religious devotion in which the individual internalizes their religious beliefs.

Meaning that they internalize how they feel about religion, how they live their life based on religious beliefs, and how they are engaged in religion (Allport & Ross, 1967; Donahue, 1985; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990). Military spouses come from a variety of different religious backgrounds, in which some military spouses may be considered intrinsically religious when they rely on the strength and meaning due to the internal feeling they have because of their religious beliefs. Religious intrinsic individuals communicate more effectively than extrinsically religious because they are more tolerate of others and accept religious differences (Hughes & Dickson, 2005). This belief was based on the internal meaning that a spouse gives for certain events that take place in their lives; however, the belief differed from one individual to the next. Younger individuals are expected to display intrinsically religious orientation by mastering stressful events (Palmer & Sebb, 2006) while Mullins (2016) found that older adults spend time in thought and prayer.

### **Communication and Marital Happiness**

Communication is associated with providing individuals with positive interactions with one another, the ability to resolve conflicts, and increases the level of intimacy and satisfaction with their spouse and the relationship (Kotrla & Dyer, 2008). Several studies have linked marital happiness and communication in military marriages (Gottman et al., 2011; Meadows et al, 2016b;) Although marital happiness and communication were linked, if the communication was poor, then marital happiness was reduced (Ngazimbi et al, 2013). When a military spouse can communicate with the service member during a deployment, the satisfaction in the marriage was higher after the deployment (Meadows

et al, 2016b). Spouses have been known to use verbal and nonverbal language when giving and receiving information and when trying to understand each other (Leigh, 1999). When individuals and couples can communicate with one another, relationship satisfaction improves and can lead to quality and stability in a relationship (Carroll et al., 2013). Communication that is associated with success in a relationship may lead individuals to understand one another in an effective and productive manner (Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd, 2016). The effectiveness, productivity, understanding, and positive interactions may possibly influence a spouses' perception of marital happiness and lead to rewarding interaction, conflict resolution, and levels of satisfaction when communication is positive.

When a high communication exists as a primary tool in maintaining marital happiness, the communication, and marital happiness are highly correlated (Aube & Linden, 1991) and effective and clear communication is a direct correlation in determining marital happiness (Gray, 1992). On the other hand, communication behaviors and interaction patterns are related to marital satisfaction, however, the literature reveals that communication skills are not the sole determinants of marital happiness (Litzinger & Gordon, 2005). Communication skills (self-disclosure, accuracy of nonverbal communication, frequency of successful communication, understanding between spouses, and empathy) may be positively related to relationship quality (Carroll, Hill, Yorgason, Larson, & Sandberg, 2013), however, researchers such as; Gottman & Levenson (1992); Gottman & Krokoff (1989); and Litzinger & Gordon (2005), have

proven in cross-sectional and longitudinal observational studies how couples' communication is consistently and significantly related to their satisfaction.

Although communication can be an important factor in relationships, the nonverbal communication plays a role in the success or failure of a relationship (Burgoon et.al, 2016). When military spouses can communicate with the service member during deployments, it has been reported that marital satisfaction is higher after deployments (Price, Bush, Price, 2015). Military spouses, however, have the option to choose if the communication will be positive, negative, productive, or non-productive, based on the way spouses view their relationship with their partner, shows the importance of communication within a relationship (Bloch, Haase, & Levenson, 2014). For example, several studies indicated that spouses were better at problem-solving when they interacted with strangers than when they interacted with their partners (Noller, 1980; Van Buren, 2002; Litzinger & Gordon, 2005). Couple communication patterns are qualitatively different for distressed and non-distressed couples (Gottman, 1994), implying that how a couple interacts is a key indicator of the quality and stability of their relationship. Furthermore, the communication has been found to be one of the best predictors of relationship satisfaction (Holman, 2001). Therefore, in an examination of marital happiness, a spouses' communication is a relevant variable to examine regarding a religious orientation. (Carroll, et.al, 2013).

### **Verbal and nonverbal communication**

Only seven percent of meaning comes from verbal communication (Burgoon et al., 2016). Nonverbal behaviors are associated with how a person expresses their feelings

and attitudes without speaking verbally (Argyle, 1988) and is a foundation of communication (Hertenstein, Verkamp, Kerestes, & Holmes, 2006). However, Henley (1977) suggested that nonverbal communication could be related to the expression of power and dominance in certain relational contexts (Seeman Smith, Vogel, Madon, & Edwards, 2011). It is estimated that 66% of communication is nonverbal (Burgoon et al., 2016). Nonverbal communication has been a topic of discussion for many disciplines (i.e. psychology, psychiatry, sociology, biology) and is approached from different perspectives (Burgoon et.al, 2016). People tend to place more emphasis on the nonverbal communication to express themselves as well as interpret what another individual may actually say (Burgoon et al., 2016). The nonverbal communication has a profound impact on individuals, works with or without verbal communication, is omnipresent, multifunctional, forms a universal language system, can lead to misunderstanding or understanding and expresses what verbal communication cannot (Burgoon et al., 2016).

### **Conclusion**

Marital happiness has been an area of exploration for many decades. Finding the connection between religion, communication, and marital happiness is an area that has intrigued my curiosity with military spouses. This study aimed to understand the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication on a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. To understand the dynamics that surround military spouses, the number of deployments experienced, the ever-changing roles and responsibilities that coincide with returning soldiers after deployments, and the impact religion and communication may have on a

military spouses' perception of marital happiness can be discussed from different perspectives. The family stress theory was used in this study to address the impact different stressors have on military spouses. The vast amount of information regarding military members has been explored by other scholars but understanding how military spouses perceive marital happiness after a second deployment has yet to be discussed from a religious and communication standpoint. When an individual believes that their marriage is a manifestation of their beliefs and experiences with God in a relationship, the more understanding a spouse has about what constitutes marital happiness. Therefore, the predictors within a marriage can be strengthened and viewed as a good thing and produce an outcome that can be positive. When military spouses understand that the communication within the marriage is a shared responsibility, then the communication may be accomplished and obtained when the spouse and service member are able to communicate at various times, even after deployments.

In Chapter 3, the research methods used for this study, starting with a review of the design and rationale of the study are discussed. This review also includes the setting and sampling, procedures, and instrumentation; followed by the data collection and analysis of the study. Finally, a review of the threats to validity and ethical considerations are discussed.



## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to examine the relationship between religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness, particularly in military spouses. The focus was on the influence of religion and communication on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. This chapter discusses the research methods that were used for this study, starting with a review of the design and rationale of the study. This chapter also includes the setting and sampling, procedures, and instrumentation, followed by the data collection and analysis of the study. Finally, a review of the threats to validity and ethical considerations are discussed.

### **Research design and rationale**

In the present study, I used three standardized instruments: (a) Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) (Schumm et al., 1986), (b) Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) (Allport & Ross, 1967; Donahue, 1985; Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990), and (c) Primary Communication Inventory (PCI) (Locke, Sabaght, & Thomes, 1967; Navran, 1967). A demographic survey was created and delivered along with the instruments through Survey Monkey. The website link to the survey was provided to all participants via social networking websites (Facebook, LinkedIn), flyers were placed on the local elementary and high school bulletin board, the local church announcement board, and distributed to mailboxes within the local community.

Participants completed the surveys anonymously and were asked not to provide identifying information (name, address, IP address, etc.). The participants gave informed consent prior to beginning the survey by accepting the risks, benefits, and responsibilities of the participants. If at any time the participant chose not to answer a question, they skipped the question as well as exited the survey at any time.

I used a logistic regression analysis of all participants to determine if a relationship exists between religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness. I also used multiple regression analysis to determine if a relationship exists between the marital happiness and the following covariates: gender, income, children, and the age of the spouse. A quantitative approach was used for this study to examine the hypotheses effectively. A qualitative approach was not used for this study because the interest was in examining the relationship between the variables instead of themes based on interviews.

### **Sociodemographic Questionnaire**

For my study, a sociodemographic questionnaire (see Appendix D) was administered online in Survey Monkey to obtain data on age group, branch of the military (Army, Air Force, Marine, Navy, or Coast Guard), spouses' ethnicity, service members' military rank, number of years married, number of deployments (to include past and current deployments), household income, gender, and number of children. The geographical area was not of interest because of the frequent relocations of military families.

### **Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS)**

The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale was used to assess the satisfaction within the marriage, the partner as a spouse, and the relationship with the spouse. The three item self-report instrument asks individuals to rate each item on a 7-point scale ranging from *extremely dissatisfied* (1) to *extremely satisfied* (7). This scale provided a global satisfaction rating without including other aspects of relationship functioning (Schumm et al., 1986). The participant's responses on all three items were tallied to give the individual's total score. Crane et al. (2000) conducted a study in which a score of 17 or higher represented a higher level of marital satisfaction. In Crane et al's study, there were 486 married individuals; 142 were considered clinical because they were in marriage therapy and the other 344 were not in therapy (2000). The average age of the participants was 34.4 with at least 2 years of higher education (Crane et al., 2000). The scores ranged from 3 to 21, in which the cutoff score was 17 to consider an individual satisfied in their marriage (Crane et al., 2000). Another study that was conducted by Schumm (2008) revealed that 16 was the cutoff score for distress/nondistress. A score of 16 or higher represented individuals that are satisfied in their marriage (Schumm, 2008). A score ranging from 8 to 15 represented marriages that have a possibility of divorce (Schumm, 2008). A score of 3 to 7 represented couples that have a very high probability of divorce (Schumm, 2008). Schumm et al. (1986), acknowledged that the KMSS is a reliable and valid instrument designed to measure the level of marital satisfaction of an individual, in which the coefficient alpha of .93 indicates a high internal consistency reliability.

The research of Schumm et al. (2008) proved that the internal consistency reliability of the KMSS exceeded the .90 level after conducting an estimation of the Cronbach alpha. Researchers (Allen et al., 2010; Kudek, 2002; Lawrence et al. 2008, Stanley et al. 2005,) have used the KMSS to measure marital satisfaction of their participants. Kurdek (2002) conducted a study in which the Cronbach's alpha of the KMSS in the study was high for both husbands and wives (.97). The coefficient alpha for wives was high (.94) in a study conducted by Lawrence et al. (2008). Stanley et al.'s (2005) study consisted of 380 couples in which the alpha for males and females were .94 and .96, respectively. Allen et al. (2010) mentioned the usefulness and simplicity of the KMSS to measure and obtain a rating of marital satisfaction. Therefore, in my study, a score of 16 or higher reflects a higher level of marital happiness and a score of less than 16 reflects a lower level of marital happiness.

### **Religious Orientation Scale**

The Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) is a 20-item scale that was used to measure an individual's religious beliefs or practices within the marriage from an intrinsic (I) and extrinsic (E) religious orientation. The 20-item self-report instrument asks individuals to rate each item on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). A sample question for the intrinsic scale is: *What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike*. A sample question for extrinsic scale is *I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life*. The religious orientation scale is the most widely used instrument to measure religious orientation (Allport & Ross, 1967; Donahue, 1985; Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989;

Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990). The intrinsic subscale consists of nine items while the extrinsic subscale consists of 11 items. The ROS has demonstrated good Cronbach's alpha reliability, ranging from .69 to .93, (Donahue, 1985; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990; Masters, Hill, Kircher, Benson, & Fallon, 2004). In their studies, Cronbach's alpha reliability was .80 for the intrinsic subscale and .62 for the extrinsic subscale (Donahue, 1985; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990; Masters, Hill, Kircher, Benson, & Fallon, 2004).

Gorsuch and McPherson revised the religious orientation scale in 1989. It has strong psychometric properties and is considered the best current measure of religious orientation (Hill, 2005) with reliability for intrinsic and extrinsic, .83 and .65, respectively, (Hill, 1999). However, Gorsuch and McPherson (1989) revised the religious orientation scale as the I-E/R as a response to the analysis of the original scale conducted by Kirkpatrick (1989). The validity of the religious orientation scale is generally well supported; however, the nature of the scale and the evolving definition of intrinsic and extrinsic over time has been open to discussion (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989; Hill, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990).

### **Primary Communication Inventory Scale**

The Primary Communication Inventory (PCI) is a 25-item scale that was used to gather self-report measures from spouses on how they can communicate with their spouse. The 25-item self-report instrument asked individuals to rate each item on a 5-point scale ranging from *never* (1) to *very frequently* (5). This instrument was adapted by Navran (1967) to measure married couples' communication practices through self-report and spouse-report statements (i.e., how a husband perceives his communication and the

communication of his wife). The scale included 7 items that explored nonverbal communication (expression of messages using body language, whether physical behavior or facial expressions) and 18 items that examined verbal communication, (whether audible transmission, reception and retention of messages) of the spouse. Navran (1967) reported the validity of the verbal and nonverbal items to be .91 and .66, respectively; whereas the test-retest reliability of the PCI is .73.

The questions were used to test the individual's perception of his/her communication ability. The questions were geared to measure verbal and nonverbal communication. Although this scale was designed for a spouse to answer questions about how they communicate with their spouse, there are 5 items that are partnered questions. Meaning that questions 21-25 were the results from the other spouse. In my study, only one spouse (military spouse) completed survey questions 1-20. Based on the results of the survey, the mean and total score of items 1-20 were scored. PCI was scored by finding the individual mean and total score of the 20 items. In my study, the highest potential score was 100 and the lowest potential score was 20. Questions 8, 15, and 17 (which are considered the negative question) were reverse recoded in IBM SPSS.

### **Setting and sampling**

A snowball sampling was obtained by posting an announcement on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn), a local church announcement board, local elementary and high school bulletin boards, and attaching flyers to mailboxes within the community that had access to military spouses. The leaders, social media, and local church bulletin boards shared the website link to the study's online survey with military spouses. Individuals

that were interested in participating in the study were encouraged to invite other military spouses to participate in the study. Participants accessed the survey through Survey Monkey.

The requirements for the participants in this study consisted of married military spouses (male and female) that were at least 18 years of age. They had to be married to a military service member that has been deployed at least twice for a period of 6 months or longer for each deployment. The individuals comprised of a racially diverse group of participants to prevent selection bias by including diverse racial groups on the sociodemographic questionnaire (e.g. American Indian/Alaskan Native, White/Caucasian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino). Military spouses were not geographically located in one region; but their location was within the United States. Responses from the sociodemographic questionnaire were not considered an inclusion or exclusion criteria, it was merely designed to gain a clearer understanding of the participants. The sampling time frame to collect the data was tentatively 14-21 days. This timeframe changed and was extended from 21 days to 82 days to obtain the estimated sample size for the study.

### **Data collection**

The survey method was the chosen method of data collection. The sources of data for the variables were acquired using the KMSS to measure the spouses' satisfaction within the marriage, the ROS to measure the spouses' religious beliefs and practices within the marriage, and the PCI to measure how military spouses could communicate with their military service member. The online survey was made available for 82 days in

Survey Monkey. This time allowed for data collection from a small proportion of the intended population of military spouses within a short period of time.

After conducting a G\*Power 3.1.9.2 analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2009), the estimated sample size necessary to detect an odds ratio of 2.25,  $\alpha = .05$ , and a power of at least .80 was available. The overall significance of the model was tested using a z-test with logistic regression analysis before an actual study took place, therefore the type of analysis was set to *priori* in which an estimated sample size for the study was 131 for two-tailed analysis. The number of independent variables (intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation and communication) and covariates (gender, income, children, and age of spouse) was seven.

### **Data analysis**

I used IBM SPSS Statistics software version 24.0 to analyze the raw data collected. Data were analyzed using standard descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. The logistic regression model that was tested included three predictors (extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, and communication), with four covariates: gender, income, children, and the age of spouse. Logistic regression was used to understand if extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication influenced a military spouses' perception of marital happiness. The logistic regression model was used to describe the relationship between the independent and dependent variables after controlling for the covariates (Faul et al., 2009). In my study, logistic regression was used to determine whether extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, were predictors on a military



spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment; controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of the spouse. Marital happiness was measured on a dichotomous scale *satisfied* (coded as 1) or *not satisfied* (coded as 0) with three independent variables (a) intrinsic religious orientation, (b) extrinsic religious orientation, (c) communication, and four covariates (a) gender (coded 0 for males, 1 for females), (b) income (coded 0 for income less than \$65,000 annually, 1 for income greater than \$65,001), (c) number of children (coded 0 for two or fewer children, 1 for three or more children), and (d) age of the spouse (dummy variable; 0 = 25 to 35 year old, 1 = 36 to 46 year old, 3 = 47 to 62 years of age).

Bivariate correlations, multiple regression and logistic regression were conducted in this study. I used bivariate correlations to answer research questions one, two, and three. Bivariate correlations were conducted to understand the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Pearson  $r$  correlations assessed the strength of the relationship between the variables.

I also used multiple regression to explain the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables, in research questions four, five, six, and seven. It was used to assess how and to what extent the factors impact the outcome. The assumptions for multiple linear regression were: (1) there must be a linear relationship, (2) the residuals are normally distributed, (3) there is no multicollinearity, (4) there is homoscedasticity.

I used logistic regression as an additional analysis because the dependent variable was dichotomous. I used logistic regression to model the probability that individuals are

maritally satisfied or not satisfied, estimate the probability that extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication were predictors of marital happiness, predict the effects of extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication on marital happiness, and classified observation by estimating the probability that after controlling for gender, income, children, and age of the spouse, extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication influencing a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The assumptions of logistic regression can be violated if they are not met (Foltz, 2015). The first assumption for logistic regression was to ensure that the dependent variable was measured on a dichotomous scale. The second assumption was that one or more of the independent variables were measured on a continuous or categorical scale. In this study, the independent variables were measured on a categorical scale whereas the covariates were measured on an interval scale. These scales were measured on a 5- and 7-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The total scores of the scales were used to determine if a relationship exists between religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness. The third assumption was that the dependent variable and independent variables were mutually exclusive. The KMSS total score of 16 or higher assures the researcher that the military spouses were maritally satisfied. The outcome variable was coded as 0 and 1. A goodness of fit test was performed to ensure the assumptions were met for logistic regression (Field, 2013).

The goal of this research was to understand if a relationship existed between extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness, particularly in military spouses. The instruments used for this study addressed the following research questions and hypothesis:

RQ 1: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{01}$ , bivariate correlation was conducted to determine if extrinsic religious orientation influenced marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ 2: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{02}$ , bivariate correlation was conducted to determine if intrinsic religious orientation influenced marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ 3: What is the relationship between communication and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{03}$ , bivariate correlation was conducted to determine if communication influenced marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ4: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{04}$ , multiple regression was conducted to determine if a relationship existed between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ5: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{05}$ , multiple regression was conducted to determine if a relationship existed between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness after a second deployment.

RQ 6: After controlling for gender, income, children, and age of the spouse does extrinsic religious orientation and communication predict a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{06}$ , multiple regression analyses was conducted to determine if gender, income, children, and age of the spouse influenced the perception of marital happiness when extrinsic religious orientation and communication were predictor variables.

RQ 7: After controlling for gender, income, children, and age of the spouse does intrinsic religious orientation and communication predict a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

To examine  $H_{07}$ , multiple regression analyses was conducted to determine if gender, income, children, and age of the spouse influenced the perception of marital happiness when intrinsic religious orientation and communication were predictor variables.

### **Threats to validity**

The KMSS has been proven to produce strong reliability and validity, while the ROS and PCI have been proven to produce good reliability and validity. The purpose of

this scientific research includes determining whether there was a relationship between the variables and if so, to explore the causality of such relationship. Internal validity occurs when an experiment is conducted and addresses the causality of relationships; however, this study is not an experimental study, therefore internal validity can be somewhat assured. To determine internal validity, it was critical to control for any extraneous variables (Rubin & Babbie, 2007). To achieve strong internal validity, this study's results should depict a positive or negative causality between variables. To reduce the likelihood of statistical regression, I aimed at obtaining a sample size of at least 131 participants.

External validity addresses the ability for the study to represent the desired population and situation (Rubin & Babbie, 2007; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). To have strong external validity, it was critical to choose the sample from a clearly defined population and situation. In the present study, the sample was military spouses. Rubin and Babbie (2007) and Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias (2008), asserted that the main threats to external validity were individuals, locations, or times. The present study employed an online survey, which required participants to have internet access. As far as location of military spouses, it was not a threat to external validity because military spouses were located and relocated throughout the United States. The recruitment plan did not affect external validity because military spouses were geographically located throughout the United States.

### **Ethical considerations**

Ethical standards were followed in the present study, as instructed by Section 1.07 of the American Psychological Association (2012) code of ethics. Walden University

IRB approval was obtained prior to collecting any data. The Walden University approval number for this study is 10-06-2017-0125432 and it expires on October 5, 2018. Participants did not provide identifying information; therefore, their privacy and confidentiality remain protected. The main page on the survey site clarified the purpose and the procedures of the study. Participants reviewed a clear, concise, and easy to understand consent form, in which they clicked “OK” prior to participation. The consent form offered a deeper explanation about the voluntary nature of participation in the study and the rights of participants to withdraw at any time. Participants received assurance that their answers were kept confidential and that results would not include personal data. A certificate of training on Human Research Protection was completed with the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

In the event where participants had questions or concerns pertaining to the study, they could reach the researcher via e-mail. If the participants were interested in receiving a copy of the study results, they were given the option to request a copy. Data was stored in my password-protected computer and flash drive. Five years after completion of the study, all correspondences will be deleted from my personal computer and hard drives. To ensure the protection of confidentiality and privacy of participants, all survey information will be destroyed 5 years following the completion of the study.

### **Summary**

This quantitative study employed a survey method consisting of a sociodemographic questionnaire and three instruments to examine the relationship between marital happiness, extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, and

communication on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment through a snowball sampling of military spouses. Word of mouth recruitment from participating spouses shared the survey web link with other military spouses of soldiers. I gained IRB approval for the study, prior to the start of data collection. Logistic regression was used to analyze the collected data. The present study contributes to the current body of literature related to marital happiness, specifically looking at extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication after a second deployment.

A better understanding of extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness can empower professionals, and chaplains or pastors to address marital functioning of military families. It was necessary for research related to military marriages to increase the current knowledge and understanding of how extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication may influence or impact military spouses' perception of marital happiness. It was also necessary to lead to effective pre-marital workshops, chaplain-sponsored marital retreats, or marriage therapy for military spouses that help combat the stress within the marriage and promote longevity especially with the increased divorce rates of military families.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine and determine if extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation and communication were predictors on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. A quantitative research design was selected for this study, in which data was collected through Survey Monkey. The online survey included a demographic questionnaire, the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Survey (Schumm, 1986), Religious Orientation Scale (Allport & Ross, 1967), and the Primary Communication Inventory (Locke et al., 1967). This chapter presents results of the data collected from October 9, 2017 until December 27, 2017. This chapter also includes data collection, descriptive and sociodemographic characteristics, scale reliability, correlations, and results of the statistical analysis. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings of the statistical analysis and a preview of Chapter 5.

### **Data Collection**

I screened data prior to conducting analysis to ensure that the information from the instruments was complete. One hundred fifty-one participants assessed the survey through Survey Monkey. As stated in Chapter 3, the power analysis that was conducted prior to data collection required 131 participants. By the end of December 2017, a sampling size of 139 participants was reached and the data collection was discontinued.

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS v24. Data cleaning was needed to address any errors that may have occurred during the data collection and exporting of data. Twelve cases were immediately removed from the analysis due to missing data from the scales. Of the 139 participants that completed the online survey, eight



participants reported that their military service member did not have two or more deployments, two other participants did not answer the deployment question, and one participant reported they were affiliated with the Army National Guard; therefore, those 11 participants were excluded from the analysis because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. The remaining participants ( $n = 128$ ) were included in the data analysis as a result of partial completion or completion of the surveys. Of the 128 participants, seven participants skipped one or more questions on either the survey instruments or demographic survey.

### **Descriptive and Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample**

The survey (see Table 2) is comprised of military spouses whose ages ranged from 25 to 62 years of age, of which 28.1% were males ( $n = 36$ ), 71.9% were females ( $n = 92$ ). Military spouses were divided into three groups: spouses that were 25 to 35 years of age ( $n = 34$ , 26.6%), spouses that were 36 to 46 years of age ( $n = 70$ , 54.7%), and spouses that were 47 to 62 years of age ( $n = 23$ , 18%), however, only one spouse did not reveal their age. This allowed me to gain an understanding of different age groups to see if there is a difference in the ages of military spouse perception of marital happiness. The vast age range also prevented the distribution from being skewed. Military spouses ( $n = 128$ ) reported that their service member deployed at least twice. The level of education for the military spouses ranged from high school to graduate degrees. Those with a college degree ( $n = 68$ ) comprised of 53.2% of the spouses that were surveyed. The ethnicity of the military spouses comprised of mainly three different ethnic groups: Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites (42.2%, 21.9%, 22.7%, respectively). The three ethnic

groups comprised of 86.8% of those surveyed, while the remaining 13.3% were Asian, American Indian, or another ethnic group. The participants also reported their number of children, in which some participants reported having 3 or more children ( $n = 84$ , 65.6%), while others reported having 2 or less children ( $n = 44$ , 34.4%). The income reported ranged from under \$25,000 to more than \$105,000. There were 75% of the military spouses who reported that their income was \$65,001 or more, annually and the remaining 25% reported their income was less than \$65,000 annually. The clear majority of the military spouses were affiliated with the Army (74.2%) who were currently active duty, retired military, or veterans (35.9%, 32%, 32%, respectively). Enlisted ( $n = 109$ ) and officer ( $n = 19$ ) military spouses were surveyed (85.2%, 14.8%, respectively). The number of years married ranged from 2 years to more than 16 years of marriage. A vast number of military spouses ( $n = 61$ ) reported they were married to their service member 16 years or more, which comprised of 47.7% of the participants. See Table 2 for demographic characteristics of the sample.

Some of the demographics were coded for the analysis to gain a better understanding of how the demographics relates to the dependent and independent variables. Gender was coded 0 for males, and 1 for females. Income was coded as 0 for yearly household less than \$65,000 and 1 for yearly household income more than \$65,001. Children was coded as 1 for two or fewer children and 2 for three or more children. Age of spouse was coded as 1 for 25 to 35 years of age, 2 for 36 to 46 years of age, and 3 for 47 to 62 years of age.

Table 2  
*Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

Variable	Group	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	36	28.1
	Female	92	71.9
Age of Spouse	No age	1	.8
	25 – 35	34	26.6
	35 – 45	70	54.7
	46 – 62	23	18.0
Education	High School	13	10.2
	Some College	47	36.7
	College Degrees	68	53.1
Race	Other	15	11.7
	2 or more races	2	1.6
	Black	54	42.2
	Hispanic	28	21.9
	White	29	22.7
Number of Children	0 – 2 children	44	34.4
	3 or more children	84	65.6
Income	<\$65,000	32	25.0
	>\$65,001	96	75.0
Branch of Military	Air Force	21	16.4
	Army	95	74.2
	Marines	9	7.0
	Navy	3	2.3
Spouse's Military Service Member Affiliation	Active Duty	46	35.9
	Retired Military	41	32.0
	Veteran	41	32.0
Spouse's Military Service Member Status	Enlisted	109	85.2
	Officer	19	14.8
Number of Years Married	2 – 5	9	7.0
	6 – 10	28	21.9
	11 – 15	30	23.4
	16 or more	61	47.7

*Note.*  $N = 128$ .

### Scale Reliability

There are three scales that were used in this study: Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, Religious Orientation Scale, and Primary Communication Inventory. All three scales (as shown in Table 3) indicated good internal consistency.

The statistics of the scales mean, standard deviation, range, number of items, and reliability are presented in Table 3. The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale is a 3-item questionnaire, developed by Schumm (1986), was used to measure how satisfied an individual is with their marriage, their partner as a spouse, and the relationship with their spouse. For each item, the respondent (military spouse) is asked to indicate if they are *extremely dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, mixed, somewhat satisfied, very satisfied to extremely satisfied* (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, respectively) (Schumm, 1986). In this study, the scale's range was 18, with a minimum score of 3 and a maximum score of 21 ( $M = 17.55$ ,  $SD = 3.29$ ) and the KMSS yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .98, which indicates high internal consistency and reliability. Previously, Schumm's (2008) study indicated a Cronbach's alpha level of .93, which indicated high internal consistency reliability. For the logistic regression analysis, I modeled the analysis based on Schumm (2008) study in which the researcher dichotomized marital happiness. In my study, a score of 16 or more was coded as 0 and classified as maritally satisfied individuals. A score of less than 16 was coded as 1 and classified as not maritally satisfied individuals. In my study 76.3% was satisfied and 23.7% were not satisfied.

The Religious Orientation Scale is a 20-item questionnaire developed by Allport and Ross (1967), was used to measure an individual's religious beliefs or practices within

the marriage from an intrinsic (I) and extrinsic (E) religious orientation. For each item, the respondent is asked to indicate if they *strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain/neutral, agree, strongly agree, not applicable* with each question (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, respectively) (Allport & Ross, 1967). The extrinsic religious orientation subscale's range was 37, with a minimum score of 11 and a maximum score of 48 ( $M = 30.02$ ,  $SD = 10.08$ ), in which the Cronbach's alpha was .88. The intrinsic religious orientation subscale's range was 25, with a minimum score of 19 and a maximum score of 44 ( $M = 36.02$ ,  $SD = 5.51$ ), in which the Cronbach's alpha was .79.

The Primary Communication Inventory, developed by Locke et al. (1967), was used to gather self-report measures from spouses on how they can communicate with their spouse. For each item, the respondent is asked to indicate *never, seldom, occasionally, frequently, very frequently* (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, respectively) (Locke et al., 1967) the extent to which the respondent and spouse behaved in a specified way. In this study, the minimum scale score for the 20 items was 20, and the maximum scale score was 100. Primary communication inventory was scored by finding the mean of the 20 items. Questions 8, 15, and 17 was reverse recoded so that 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, and 5 = 1. The scale minimum score was 49 and the highest score was 92, with a range of 43. Navran (1967) and Byers (2005) found the primary communication inventory scale to have good internal consistency at .81. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha for the primary communication scale was .86 ( $M = 73.73$ ,  $SD = 9.71$ ).

Table 3

*Statistics and Scale Reliability for KMSS, PCI, Extrinsic ROS, and Intrinsic ROS*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	<i>N</i> of Items	Scale Reliability
Marital Satisfaction	17.55	3.29	18	3	.98
Primary Communication Inventory	73.73	9.71	43	20	.86
Extrinsic Religious Orientation	30.02	10.08	37	11	.88
Intrinsic Religious Orientation	36.02	5.51	25	9	.79

**Correlations**

Correlation coefficient analysis was used to identify significant bivariate relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Table 4 demonstrates the Pearson's bivariate correlations that were conducted to examine the relationships between the variables. Pearson *r* correlations assessed the strength of the relationship between the variables in research questions 1, 2, and 3. For the remainder of the research questions, I conducted multiple regression analysis.

Table 4

*Pearson's Correlations between Marital Happiness, Communication, Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation*

Marital Happiness		.54**	-.25*	.25**
Primary Communication Inventory	.54**		-.09	.20*
Extrinsic Religious Orientation	-.25*	-.09		-.14
Intrinsic Religious Orientation	.25**	.20*	-.14	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

c. Listwise  $N = 128$

### Research Questions

The research questions and hypotheses were developed to have participants complete a self-report online survey with three standardized instruments: Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS), Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, and Primary Communication Inventory (PCI). The sociodemographic survey was also administered to collect data on the participants age, number of deployments, number of children, ethnicity, military status, branch of military service, gender, number of years married, household income, and level of education.

The research questions tested determined if a relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness was supported. The

three scales used were the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS), Primary Communication Inventory (PCI), and the Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscales. The KMSS measured whether a military spouse is maritally satisfied or not maritally satisfied. The Religious Orientation Scale measured two categories, extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation. The Primary Communication Inventory measured an individual's communication with their spouse. In order to correlate the data, five scores were calculated for each participant regarding marital happiness, extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, and primary communication. The scores were calculated by summing up each individual item on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS), Primary Communication Inventory (PCI), Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale, and Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale. The scales were then correlated using a two-tailed correlational test at the .05 level.

### **Research Question 1**

RQ 1: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In the first research question, I examined whether there was a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness. Bivariate correlations revealed a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness (as measured by the Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale). The results of the analysis indicated a negative significant relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness ( $r = -.25, p = .005$ ).



**Research Question 2**

RQ 2: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In the second research question, I examined whether there was a relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness. Bivariate correlations revealed a relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness (as measured by the Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale). The results of the analysis indicated a positive significant relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness ( $r = .25, p = .004$ ).

**Research Question 3**

RQ 3: What is the relationship between communication and military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In the third research question, I examined whether there was a relationship between communication and marital happiness. Bivariate correlations revealed a relationship between communication and marital happiness (as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale). The results of the analysis indicated that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between communication and marital happiness ( $r = .54, p < .001$ ).

**Research Question 4**

RQ4: What is the relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In the fourth research, I examined whether there was a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness. Extrinsic religious orientation (as measured by the Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale) was negatively correlated, and communication (as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory) was positively correlated with marital happiness. Results of the multiple linear regression was significant between marital happiness, extrinsic religious orientation, and communication,  $F(2, 125) = 25.53, p < .001, R^2 = .290$ .  $R^2$  significance accounted for 29% of the variance in the model. The individual predictors were examined further and indicated that communication significantly predicted marital happiness,  $b = .50, t(125) = 6.54, p < .001$ ) and extrinsic religious orientation was a negative significant predictor of marital happiness,  $b = -.17, t(125) = -2.28, p = .02$ ).

### **Research Question 5**

RQ5: What is the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In the fifth research question, I examined whether there was a relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness. Intrinsic religious orientation (as measured by the Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale) and communication (as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory) were positively correlated with marital happiness. Results of the multiple linear regression was significant between marital happiness, intrinsic religious orientation, and communication,  $F(2, 125) = 25.93, p < .001, R^2 = .293$ .  $R^2$  significance accounted for 29.3% of the

variance in marital happiness. The individual predictors were examined further and indicated that communication significantly predicted marital happiness,  $b = .47, p < .001, t(121) = 6.18, p < .001$ , and intrinsic religious orientation was a negative significant predictor of marital happiness  $b = .19, t(121) = 2.41, p = .02$ .

### **Research Question 6**

RQ 6: After controlling for gender, income, children, and age of spouse, does extrinsic religious orientation and communication predicts a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In Table 5, a multiple linear regression was calculated to predict marital happiness based on communication and extrinsic religious orientation, with gender, income, children, and age of spouse, as control factors. A significant regression equation was found ( $F(6, 121) = 11.100, p < .001$ ) with an  $R^2$  of .355.  $\Delta R^2$  significance accounted for 20.3% of the variance resulting from the addition of predictors to the regression model. The results indicated that communication significantly predicted marital happiness  $b = .48, t(121) = 5.87, p < .001$ ) and age of spouse significantly predicted marital happiness,  $b = .16, t(121) = 2.00, p = .05$ , after controlling for other variables in the model. Extrinsic religious orientation, gender, income, and children did not contribute to the regression model.

Table 5

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables (Communication, Extrinsic Religious Orientation, and control factors) Predicting Marital Happiness*

Measures	B	S.E.	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig</i>
(Constant)	-1.100	.307		-3.588	.000
Gender	.090	.071	.094	1.267	.208
Income	.090	.075	.091	1.202	.232
Children	.135	.070	.149	1.933	.056
Age of Spouse	.099	.050	.158	2.004	.047
Communication	.020	.003	.447	5.867	.000
Extrinsic Religious Orientation	-.005	.003	-.115	-1.495	.137

### Research question 7

RQ 7: After controlling for gender, income, children, and age of spouse, does intrinsic religious orientation and communication predict a military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment?

In Table 6, A significant regression equation was found ( $F(6, 121) = 11.082, p = .001$ ) with an  $R^2$  of .355.  $\Delta R^2$  significance accounted for 20.3% of the variance resulting from the addition of predictors to the regression model. The results indicated that communication significantly predicted marital happiness  $b = .44, t(121) = 5.69, p < .001$ , and age of spouse significantly predicted marital happiness,  $b = .16, t(121) = 2.07, p$

=.04, after controlling for other variables in the model. Intrinsic religious orientation, gender, income, and children did not contribute to the regression model.

Table 6

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables (Communication, Intrinsic Religious Orientation, and control factors) Predicting Marital Happiness*

Measures	B	S.E.	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig</i>
(Constant)	-1.520	.303		-5.020	.000
Gender	.098	.071	.102	1.382	.169
Income	.070	.075	.071	.944	.347
Children	.126	.071	.140	1.789	.076
Age of Spouse	.102	.049	.163	2.070	.041
Communication	.019	.003	.438	5.684	.000
Intrinsic Religious Orientation	.009	.006	.115	1.472	.144

### **Additional Analysis**

I used binary logistic regression, as an additional analysis, to investigate the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness.

The study was designed to understand, from the sample of (n = 128), the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Marital satisfaction from the questionnaire were categorized into two groups, maritally satisfied and not maritally satisfied. Of the one hundred and twenty-eight respondents, 76.3% reported they were maritally satisfied, whereas 23.7% reported they were not maritally satisfied.

To examine the direct effect of each of the predictor variable on marital happiness, a binary logistical analysis was conducted in which extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, and communication were the predictor variables, and marital happiness, coded 1 for maritally satisfied and 0 for not maritally satisfied, was the outcome measure. In Table 7 are the odds ratio ( $Exp(\beta)$ ) and 95% confidence interval for the odds ratio for each of the predictors.

Table 7

*Regression Summary: PCI, EROS, IROS, KMSS*

		$\beta$	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp( $\beta$ )	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	PCI	.164	.037	20.104	1	.000	1.178	1.097	1.266
	Int ROS	.104	.049	4.496	1	.034	1.110	1.008	1.222
	Ext ROS	-.054	.029	3.488	1	.062	.948	.896	1.003
	Constant	-12.462	3.258	14.628	1	.000	.000		

### Results of Logistic Regression Findings

The results for the model were statistically significant ( $p = .001$ ) indicating that the set of predictor variables reliably distinguished maritally satisfied individuals from not maritally satisfied individuals. Classifications were somewhat impressive but asymmetrical, with 94.8% of maritally satisfied and 48.4% not maritally satisfied, with an overall success rate of 83.6%.

The regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), Wald statistics ( $W$ ), odds ratio ( $\text{Exp}(\beta)$ ), and 95% confidence intervals for odds ratio for each predictor. The results indicated that communication ( $\beta = .164$ ,  $W = 20.10$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(\beta) = 1.17$ ), intrinsic religious orientation ( $\beta = .104$ ,  $W = .049$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\text{Exp}(\beta) = 1.11$ ) were both significantly related to marital happiness; however, extrinsic religious orientation ( $\beta = -.054$ ,  $W = .029$ ,  $p = .06$ ,  $\text{Exp}(\beta) = .948$ ) was nonsignificant but negatively related to marital happiness. As communication increases by one-unit, the likelihood of marital happiness increases by a factor of 1.178 (increases by 19%) as intrinsic religious orientation increases by one unit, marital happiness increases by a factor of 1.110 (increases by 12%); and as extrinsic religious orientation increases by one-unit, marital happiness is reduced by .948 (decreases by 5%). These findings indicate that increase in communication and intrinsic religious orientation increases the likelihood of marital happiness. These findings also indicate that a decrease in extrinsic religious orientation decreases the likelihood of marital happiness. These predictors with marital happiness were statistically significant, with an *OR* effect size for each predictor being small.

The results, interpretations, and implications for social change will be further discussed in Chapter 5. Additionally, a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study, theoretical considerations, recommendations for future research and actions, and a summary of the study will conclude the chapter.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter includes a summary of the study, a review of the results, an interpretation of the findings, and a discussion of how this study relates to the current body of literature on extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness of military spouses after a second deployment. Chapter 5 also includes the limitations and strengths of the study, implications for social change, and concludes with recommendations for further research.

### **Study Overview**

The purpose of this nonexperimental, quantitative study was to explore the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness of military spouses, after a second deployment. In addition, to control for external factors, gender, income, children, and age of spouse were assessed in relationship to the variables. The primary aim of this study was to determine if independent variables were related to the dependent variable. This study was conducted to understand the influence on marital happiness to increase marital functioning and longevity.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

This study examined the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness after a second deployment. When Allport (1967) began studying religious orientation, his focus was on mature versus immature religion (Krauss & Hood, 2013). Over time, Batson et al. (1993) interpreted Allport's original study as intrinsic (committed religion) versus extrinsic (uncommitted).



Kirkpatrick and Hood (1990) viewed intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation as a single dimension. Later, Pargament (1992) identified them as predictors that will form two distinct dimensions.

The results in research question one, indicated a negative significant relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness as measured by the Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. The extrinsic scale was designed to measure religion of individuals in which they used external resources to gain security, comfort, sociability, distraction, status and self-justification (Allport & Ross, 1967; Krauss & Hood, 2013). Religion, as indicated by Brimhall and Butler (2007), was not considered a central part of an individual's identity but was used as a way to secure a mean to an end. Previous researchers, such as Kirkpatrick, Hood (1990) shared the same idea as Allport (1967), however, Krauss and Hood (2013) indicated individuals using religion as the central focus in their life, steered away from using religion in an extrinsic manner. My study provided evidence that military spouses used external resources to gain the happiness they sought in their marriage, using an extrinsic religious orientation.

The results in research question two indicated a positive and significant relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and marital happiness as measured by the Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. Intrinsic religious orientation significance indicated individuals used their internal feelings to gain the happiness they sought in their marriage. The use of the intrinsic subscale was incorporated in my study to measure the religious orientation of individuals

that produced a consistent believer (Krauss & Hood, 2013). In my study, military spouses indicated that their belief provided them with the marital happiness they were seeking within the marriage. The military spouses' responses to the subscale was consistent with previous researchers who indicated individuals' religious practice defined their sense of identity and their approach to life (Brimhall & Butler, 2007), as well as viewed their religious practice as the end and not a means to an end (Gorsuch, 1994).

The results in research question three indicated a strong, positive significant relationship between communication and marital happiness as measured by the Primary Communication Inventory and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. Carter et al. (2015) related communication to a pipeline. The pipeline was interpreted as a positive support system or perceived as a stressful entity, depending on the type of information that was received through it (Carter et al., 2015). Military couples deal with situations based on how their relationship was going (Carter et al., 2015); meaning, if the military spouse was maritally satisfied and had little to no marital issues, they communicated with one another. On the other hand, if the individual was not satisfied with the marriage and communication was hindered, then they communicated less frequently. Communication was the strongest predictor in the model; therefore, in my study, military spouses communicated with their service member and were maritally satisfied.

The results in research question four indicated a significant relationship between extrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness as measured by the Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale, Primary Communication Inventory, and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. Communication indicated a strong significant with marital

happiness, while extrinsic religious orientation indicated a negative significant with marital happiness. The results indicated that military spouse communication skills strongly influenced their marital happiness; while extrinsic religious orientation had a negative, yet significant influence on marital happiness. Table 8 lists the questions from the extrinsic religious orientation subscale as they were presented to the participants.

Table 8

*Extrinsic Religious Orientation subscale questions*

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1	Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in my life
2	It doesn't matter so much what I believe so long as I lead a moral life
3	The primary purpose of prayer is to gain relief and protection
4	The church is most important as a place to formulate good social relationships
5	What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike
6	I pray chiefly because I have been taught to pray
7	Although I am a religious person I refuse to let religious considerations influence my everyday affairs
8	A primary reason for my interest in religion is that my church is a congenial social activity
9	Occasionally I find it necessary to compromise my religious beliefs in order to protect my social and economic well-being
10	One reason for my being a church member is that such membership helps to establish a person in the community
11	The purpose of prayer is to secure a happy and peaceful life

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The results in research question five indicated a significant relationship between intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness as measured by the Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale, Primary Communication Inventory, and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. The results indicated that military spouses' communication and intrinsic religious orientation had a significant influence on marital happiness. Intrinsic religious orientation indicated individuals that were high in this trait broke free

from extrinsic beliefs (Krauss & Hood, 2013). Multiple regression indicated military spouses that were intrinsically religious oriented used their intrinsic religious orientation to achieve marital happiness. Their perception of how they internally viewed their intrinsic religious orientation allowed them to be satisfied in their marriage as well as communicate with their service member. These individuals place their moral values before anything else, use religion to encompass all aspects of their life, their beliefs and actions are consistent, and they hold their beliefs until proven otherwise. Table 9 lists the questions from the intrinsic religious orientation subscale, as they were presented to the participants.

Table 9

*Intrinsic Religious Orientation subscale questions*

12	It is important for me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and meditation
13	If not prevented by unavoidable circumstances, I attend church
14	I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life
15	The prayers I say when I am alone carry as much meaning and personal emotion as those said by me during services
16	Quite often I have been keenly aware of the presence of God or the Divine Being
17	I read literature about my faith
18	If I were to join a church group I would prefer to join a Bible study group rather than a social fellowship
19	My religious beliefs are really what lie behind my whole approach to life
20	Religion is especially important because it answers many questions about the meaning of life

The results of my study for research question six, after controlling for the gender, income, children, and age of spouse, communication was significant while extrinsic religious orientation was nonsignificant. The results also indicated extrinsic religious

orientation had a negative influence on marital happiness. After controlling the covariates, gender, income, and children were nonsignificant and did not influence the independent variables relationship with marital happiness. On the other hand, communication and age of spouse had a significant influence on marital happiness.

The results of research question seven, indicated after controlling for the covariates, communication had a strong, positive significant relationship with marital happiness, while intrinsic religious orientation was nonsignificant. Also, after controlling the covariates, gender, income, and children were nonsignificant and did not influence the independent variables relationship with marital happiness. On the other hand, communication and age of spouse had a significant influence on marital happiness.

### **Implications of Findings**

Family stress theory is a development theory I used as the theoretical framework for this study. It is a theory that was designed to explore why some families are able to cope with stress while others may have difficulties adjusting and adapting to different stressors or events (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983). This research was motivated by the ABC-X model of the family stress theory. Deployments disrupting the balance in the family system, church, community, or other resources as the internal and external family resources and social support, the spouses' belief and perception of marital happiness, and the possibility of divorce, health-related problems, or depression as a result of the crisis that could possibly take place if the spouse is unable to adapt and cope with the stressful event (deployment). The family stress theory indicated that the reaction to deployments or stress may influence the military spouses' interpretation or perception of the

deployments (Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod, & Johnson, 2012). This may impact how the military spouse views marital happiness. When a military spouse perceives that the support within the relationship is not acquired, levels of insecurity can occur (Sullivan, 2015). Insecurity can result in personal and family crises, which are not limited to physical, emotional, or relational trauma (Sullivan, 2015). Although the family stress theory was developed and used with populations from the World War II and Vietnam War, it is still relevant for military families that have experienced long-term absences of the military service member due to the wars that have taken place since 2001 and the multiple deployments within families (Meadows et al., 2016b, Sullivan, 2015). Patterson (2002) indicated that families that have enough resiliency are more likely to be competent in managing normative demands (e.g. their extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication). The military spouses, in this research, were competent in making the transitions of maintaining marital happiness even after experiencing a second deployment. Family stress theory was helpful in this research and it assisted me in understanding that military spouses may use their extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication abilities to maintain marital happiness even after experiencing a second deployment.

This theory continues to educate clinicians and scholars on the influence of stressors that may affect family functioning, but it is also useful in developing programs that can aid in the success of spouses and families becoming more resilient when faced with different stressors. The meaning an individual chooses to identify with the stressor can determine if they are able to adapt to and adjust to the stressor that may present itself

to the family and the marriage. Negatively defined stressors may cause stress, depression, anxiety, which can decrease the functioning of the family. When a positive association is initiated, this can result in families avoiding anything that can be considered negative (Rosino, 2016). Although other researchers (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983; Boss, 1988) have refined the ABC-X model of family stress theory, Hill (1949) family stress theory is still widely used as a theory to understand family stress (deployments) and coping (extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication).

### **Limitations of the Study**

Limitations are indicative of any study and this dissertation makes no exception. This study examined the predictors of extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation and communication on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. The study's design limited the data pool to military spouses within the continental United States. A limitation that could have affected this study is the population that completed the online, and self-report surveys to measure extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation, communication, and marital happiness. The sampling population was predominately Black, which makes the generalization of this sample limited. The size of the sampling could have produced different results if the sampling size was larger. It would have been interesting to see if individuals that attend religious services would produce different results than only military spouses'. Self-report was based on assumptions that the participant will give accurate and honest answers. Self-report surveys require a level of understanding; however, there was no way to determine if an individual will answer questions honestly or if they were giving random answers.

Another limitation of the study was the need to determine if marital happiness, communication, extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation are connected over a period of time. Military spouse could have a difficult time answering questions that measure their reflection of themselves on how they communicate with their service member, how satisfied they are in their marriage, or if their extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation was a factor in how they perceive marital happiness. Although the majority of the military spouses indicated they were maritally satisfied, there were a few that were not satisfied. Those individuals that were not maritally satisfied should be contacted to conduct a follow-up interview to gain an understanding of what can be done to improve their marital happiness.

The use of a bivariate correlation, multiple regression, and logistic regression were conducted to understand the correlations and relationships between the variables. However, because the strongest relationship was between communication and dependent variable, the relationship between the variables should be examined with other factors that can influence military spouses' perception of marital happiness (i.e. health, depression, anxiety, stress).

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Future research may provide additional information if the scales are used in conjunction with interviews. Future research should be conducted with military spouses over time. This study was completed by military spouses of active duty, retired, and veteran military service members that reside off the military installation. This research may indicate different results if the study focused on one particular group (i.e. spouses of



active duty, retired, or veterans). This research may also indicate different results if the study included more males participants, and/or military spouses that reside on the military installation. This research can be used with military spouses of National Guard and Reservist that experience deployments or assignments that separate them away from their families. This research makes no claim of military spouses from different cultures or ethnicity; however, if more ethnicities completed the online survey, the outcome of the results may have also been different.

### **Implications for Social Change**

This study was conducted because there are military spouses that experience divorce, separations, anxiety, depression, and other related issues that are associated with service members deployments. As a military spouse and as a Veteran of the U.S. Army, I felt inclined to conduct research on military spouses to determine if their extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication influenced their perception of marital happiness. Far too many programs and research has been conducted primarily on military service members, however, I wanted to get the spouses perception of their reality from self-report surveys. I understand the dynamics of being a military spouse as well as how deployments may influence a spouse's perception of marital happiness. I have experienced the impact of three deployments on marriages but being a former soldier assisted me with remaining resilient as a military spouse.

Military marriages endure separations from family members, frequent relocations, and deployments. The military spouses in my study that have been married more than 16 years provided evidence that indicates multiple deployments, frequent relocations, stress,

or other contributing factors did not influence their lack of marital happiness. What has been indicated is the ability to remain intact in their marriages and face the challenges that are associated with deployments. Wisdom comes in many forms, but to gain that insight from military spouses that have been married for many years is inspirational and can aid younger spouses in their quest for happiness and longevity in military marriages.

The social implication is that the findings from this research can lead to effective pre-marital workshops, chaplain-sponsored marital retreats, and marriage therapy for military spouses. The addition of this research to the existing body of literature and knowledge may inform military and civilian religious leaders about the impact that extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation and communication has on military spouses' perception of marital happiness after a second deployment. Marital happiness is a prime indicator of marital success or marital dissolution (Bello, Brandau-Brown, & Ragsdale, 2008). The importance of this research is to inform professional that assist military spouses with learning techniques on coping after deployments, adding to the existing body of literature, and promoting longevity in military marriages.

### **Conclusion**

Extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation was designed to measure motivation and cognitive style, not content (Batson, 1993). The extrinsic religious orientation scale measured an individual's social gain and personal comfort and protection (Krauss & Hood, 2013), while the intrinsic religious orientation scale measured an individual's internal religious beliefs. The family stress theory is a model that is still considered to be useful in analyzing and assessing stress and coping abilities within families. The family

stress theory model still remains influential and useful to researchers that are studying the dynamics within a family. There may be limitations to the use of theoretical frameworks when it comes to military spouses because of the diversity of military spouses. The experiences that the spouses undergo with deployments may be useful for therapists, chaplains, or military leaders to promote marital happiness, provide learning techniques on coping after deployments, and to promote longevity in military marriages.

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## Appendix A: Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale

Domain: Relationship/Marital Satisfaction

Measure: Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMS; Schumm et al., 1986)

1 = Extremely Dissatisfied

2 = Very Dissatisfied

3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied

4 = Mixed

5 = Somewhat Satisfied

6 = Very Satisfied

7 = Extremely Satisfied

1. How satisfied are you with your marriage?
2. How satisfied are you with your husband/wife as a spouse?
3. How satisfied are you with your relationship with your husband/wife?

## Appendix B: Religious Orientation Scale

Domain: Religion

Measure: Religious Orientation Scale (ROS; Allport & Ross, 1967)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item below by using the following rating scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable

Extrinsic Orientation Subscale\*:

1. Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in my life.
2. It doesn't matter so much what I believe so long as I lead a moral life.
3. The primary purpose of prayer is to gain relief and protection.
4. The church is most important as a place to formulate good social relationships.
5. What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike.
6. I pray chiefly because I have been taught to pray.
7. Although I am a religious person I refuse to let religious considerations influence my everyday affairs.
8. A primary reason for my interest in religion is that my church is a congenial social activity.



9. Occasionally I find it necessary to compromise my religious beliefs in order to protect my social and economic well-being.

10. One reason for my being a church member is that such membership helps to establish a person in the community.

11. The purpose of prayer is to secure a happy and peaceful life.

Intrinsic Orientation Subscale\*:

12. It is important for me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and meditation.

13. If not prevented by unavoidable circumstances, I attend church.

14. I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life.

15. The prayers I say when I am alone carry as much meaning and personal emotion as those said by me during services.

16. Quite often I have been keenly aware of the presence of God or the Divine Being.

17. I read literature about my faith.

18. If I were to join a church group I would prefer to join a Bible study group rather than a social fellowship.

19. My religious beliefs are really what lie behind my whole approach to life.

20. Religion is especially important because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.

## Appendix C: Primary Communication Inventory

Domain: Communication

Measure: The Primary Communication Inventory (PCI; Locke, Sabaght, & Thomes, 1967)

Below is a list of items on communication between you and your spouse. Using the scale described here, fill in the blank space next to each item with the number which best represents the extent to which you and your spouse behave in the specified way.

1 = Never

2 = Seldom

3 = Occasionally

4 = Frequently

5 = Very frequently

1. How often do you and your spouse talk over pleasant things that happen during the day? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How often do you and your spouse talk over unpleasant things that happen during the day? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you and your spouse talk over things you disagree about or have difficulties over? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you and your spouse talk about things in which you are both interested? \_\_\_\_

5. Does your spouse adjust what he/she says and how he/she says it to the way you seem to feel at the moment? \_\_\_\_\_
6. When you start to ask a question, does your spouse know what it is before you ask it? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you know the feelings of your spouse from his/her facial and bodily gestures? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you and your spouse avoid certain subjects in conversation? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Does your spouse explain or express himself/herself to you through a glance or gesture? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you and your spouse discuss things together before making an important decision? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Can your spouse tell what kind of day you have had without asking? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Your spouse wants to visit some close friends or relatives. You don't particularly enjoy their company. Would you tell him/her this? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Does your spouse discuss matters of sex with you? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Do you and your spouse use words which have a special meaning not understood by outsiders? \_\_\_\_\_
15. How often does your spouse sulk or pout? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Can you and your spouse discuss your most sacred beliefs without feelings of restraining or embarrassment? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you avoid telling your spouse things that put you in a bad light? \_\_\_\_\_

18. You and your spouse are visiting friends. Something is said by the friends which causes you to glance at each other. Would you understand each other? \_\_\_\_

19. How often can you tell as much from the tone of voice of your spouse as from what he/she actually says? \_\_\_\_\_

20. How often do you and your spouse talk with each other about personal problems? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Sociodemographic Survey

Please complete this sociodemographic section of the survey. No personal information will be revealed in the study results.

**1. Are you male or female?** Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What is your Age?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Your Ethnicity or Race (please select all that apply)**

American Indian or Alaskan Native \_\_\_\_\_ Asian or Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_

Black or African-American \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic or Latino \_\_\_\_\_

White/Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to answer \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Has your military service member been on at least two deployments for a period of six months or longer?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ or No \_\_\_\_\_

**5. How many children do you have that are in the following age groups?**

a) less than 1-year old \_\_\_\_\_ b) 2 – 5 years old \_\_\_\_\_ c) 6 – 10 years

old \_\_\_\_\_ d) 11 – 17 years old \_\_\_\_\_ e) over 18 \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What is your highest level of completed education?**

a) High School \_\_\_\_\_ b) Some college \_\_\_\_\_ c) College degree

\_\_\_\_\_ e) Some graduate school \_\_\_\_\_ f) Graduate degree \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your approximate annual household income?**

Under \$25,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25,001 to \$45,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$45,001 to \$65,000 \_\_\_\_\_

\$65,001 to \$85,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$85,001 to \$105,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$105,001 or more

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Please check your spouse's military affiliation and list the branch of**

**military?** Officer \_\_\_\_ Enlisted \_\_\_\_ Branch of military (i.e. Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy) \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What is your spouse's military service status?** Active Duty \_\_\_\_ Retired

Military \_\_\_\_ Veteran \_\_\_\_\_

**10. How many years have you been married to your current spouse?**

a) less than 1 \_\_\_\_ b) 2-5 \_\_\_\_ c) 6-10 \_\_\_\_ d) 11-15 \_\_\_\_ e) 16 or more \_\_\_\_