

CDP



Research Update -- May 30, 2019

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<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0095327X19845030>

Communities Serve: A Systematic Review of Need Assessments on U.S. Veteran and Military-Connected Populations.

Ryan D. Van Slyke, Nicholas J. Armstrong

Armed Forces & Society

First Published May 20, 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X19845030>

Military veterans and their families face a multiplicity of challenges once they transition from service. Even though more American private and public-sector organizations are engaged in studying the needs of veterans and their families through need assessments, few assessments are comprehensive analyses of the challenges they face. This systematic review of 61 need assessments from 2007-2018 in the United States summarizes findings on 18 veterans issues. While most studies addressed issues relating to accessing U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health and benefit services, mental health, employment, and homelessness, gaps in the literature emerged, particularly regarding ethnic and sexual minority, rural and elderly veterans, and National Guard/Reserve servicemembers. Large cities and states with varying degrees of military presence were frequent regions of study, with national think tanks, nonprofit organizations, and public universities conducting most need assessments. Future assessments should address persistent inequities in coverage among communities and topics of study using mixed-method research and survey design.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0095327X19848013>

Exploring the Role of Depressive Symptoms, Service Members, and Spousal Demographic Characteristics on Military Spousal Employment.

Sandraluz Lara-Cinisomo, Bing Han, Rachel Neuhausen

Armed Forces & Society

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Military spouses, most of whom are women, often contend with a number of factors that can influence their employment status. Previous studies have examined the role of service-member and spousal demographic characteristics on wives' employment. However, little is known about the role spousal mental health has on employment while controlling for demographic characteristics. Using repeated-measures logistic regressions, this longitudinal study explored associations between spousal mental health and employment while controlling for service-member and spousal characteristics in a sample of 1,164 women. Fewer depressive symptoms were significantly associated with employment ($p < .05$). Spouses of enlisted personnel, women who were older, racial/ethnic minorities, homeowners, or had city stability, had higher odds of employment ($p < .05$). Military spouses of active duty service members and those less educated had lower odds of employment ($p < .05$). Depressive symptoms and demographic characteristics should guide employment opportunity programs for military spouses.

<http://journalofinterdisciplinarysciences.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/3.-Differences-in-the-Perception-of-Educational-Benefits-between-Male-and.pdf>

Differences in the Perception of Educational Benefits between Male and Female Veterans in the United States: A National Study.

Cassandra D. Boyd, John R. Slate, and Wally Barnes

Journal of Interdisciplinary Sciences

May 2019; Volume 3, Issue 1; 27-36

Following their military service, veterans in the United States are eligible to take advantage of federally guaranteed educational benefits. These benefits would certainly enhance the academic skills and potential employability of veterans. As such, information is needed regarding their perceptions of educational benefits and the degree to which differences might be present as a function of gender. In this study, archival data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (V.A.), National Survey of Veterans, Active Duty Service Members, Demobilized National Guard, and Reserve Members, Family Members, and Surviving Spouses were analyzed to determine whether male and female veterans differed with respect to the level of importance they assigned to educational benefits. A statistically significant difference was yielded between male and female veterans related to the importance they assigned to their educational benefits. Female veterans who were surveyed regarded educational benefits as being more important to meeting their educational goals or obtaining better employment, when compared to male veterans. One important recommendation for practitioners is that academic advisors, career counselors, and college administrators should consider these results when offering guidance to male veterans who may view educational benefits as less important in comparison to female veterans.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40653-019-00259-z>

Military Life Stressors, Family Communication and Satisfaction: Associations with Children's Psychosocial Outcomes.

Briggs, E.C., Fairbank, J.A., Tunno, A.M. et al.

Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma

First Online: 21 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-019-00259-z>

Families experience multiple stressors as a result of military service. The purpose of this study was to examine facets of military life and family factors that may impact child psychosocial and mental health functioning. Using baseline data from the Millennium Cohort Family Study, this study examined family demographics and composition (age, number of children), military life stressors (injury, family, and deployment stressors), family communication and satisfaction as assessed by the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale-IV, parental social functioning assessed via the Short Form Health Survey-36, and child mental health and behavioral functioning (parental reports of clinician-diagnosed mental health conditions such as depression) and an adapted

version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Injury- and family-related military stressors were significant indicators of heightened risk for child mental health conditions, whereas greater levels of parental social functioning and family satisfaction were associated with lower risk of child mental health conditions. Differential associations were found in child functioning when military-related variables (e.g., service component), sociodemographic, and family composition factors (number and age of the children in the home) were examined. These findings underscore the importance of examining the “whole child” within the broader ecological and military family context to understand factors associated with children’s mental and behavioral health. The results from the present study highlight the complex relationships that may be at play, which, in turn, have considerable implications for the development of policies to support children and families encountering multiple stressors related to a parent’s military service.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0887618518303633>

Childhood adversities and psychopathology among military veterans in the US: the mediating role of social networks.

M. McLafferty, J. Ross, B. Waterhouse-Bradley, C. Armour

Journal of Anxiety Disorders

Available online 18 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2019.05.001>

Highlights

- Childhood adversities are associated with elevated levels of mental health problems in veterans.
- Quality of social networks is a protective factor, but quantity is not.
- Individuals who experience childhood adversities are less likely to have good social networks.

Abstract

Childhood adversities can impact negatively on psychological health across the lifespan. Many military veterans have a history of adverse childhood experiences, which when combined with deployment related traumas, can lead to high levels of psychopathology. Social networks can however be protective. The current study aimed to identify typologies of childhood adversity in U.S. military veterans (n = 3,092) and

explore relationships between the adversity typologies and PTSD, mood and anxiety disorders, utilising data from the National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions-III (NESARC-III). The mediating role of quality and quantity of social networks were examined. Latent class analysis identified four adversity classes; 1) baseline, 2) household dysfunction, 3) maltreatment, and 4) multi-adversity. Individuals in the adversity classes (2-4), especially those who experienced multi-adversity had higher rates of psychopathology. The quality of social networks played an important mediating role, while quantity of networks did not. Those who experienced adversity were less likely to have supportive social networks, therefore adversity had both a direct and indirect impact on psychopathology. The findings highlight the importance of developing and maintaining social networks following military life. Recommendations include interpersonal skills training and programmes which may help them engage back into the community and enhance relationships.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0005789419300632>

The structure of competence: Evaluating the factor structure of the Cognitive Therapy Rating Scale.

Simon B. Goldberg, Scott A. Baldwin, Kritzia Merced, Derek Caperton, ... Torrey Creed

Behavior Therapy

Available online 24 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2019.05.008>

Highlights

- The multilevel factor structure of the Cognitive Therapy Rating Scale was evaluated
- Three distinct and interpretable within-therapist factors were found
- A single between-therapist factor was found

Abstract

The Cognitive Therapy Rating Scale (CTRS) is an observer-rated measure of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) treatment fidelity. Although widely used, the factor structure and psychometric properties of the CTRS are not well established. Evaluating the factorial validity of the CTRS may increase its utility for training and fidelity monitoring in clinical practice and research. The current study used multilevel exploratory factor analysis to examine the factor structure of the CTRS in a large sample of therapists

(n = 413) and observations (n = 1264) from community-based CBT training. Examination of model fit and factor loadings suggested that three within-therapist factors and one between-therapist factor provided adequate fit and the most parsimonious and interpretable factor structure. The three within-therapist factors included items related to (a) session structure, (b) CBT-specific skills and techniques, and (c) therapeutic relationship skills, although three items showed some evidence of cross-loading. All items showed moderate to high loadings on the single between-therapist factor. Results support continued use of the CTRS and suggest factors that may be a relevant focus for therapists, trainers, and researchers.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11089-019-00881-6>

Revisiting Living in Limbo to Illustrate a Pastoral Psychological Understanding of Transition from Military to Civilian Life.

Jan Grimell

Pastoral Psychology

First Online: 25 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-019-00881-6>

The transition from military to civilian life includes a multitude of challenges for service members and their significant others. This transfer from one context to another can include, but is not limited to, a need for an identity shift, cultivation of an alternate mind-set, social reorientation, a search for employment, grief and sadness due to the loss of camaraderie, and/or experiences of alienation and estrangement from civilian society. Although the social sciences dominate this research field and dub it ‘transition,’ the ambiguity of the process can be further advanced through pastoral psychology. This article rethinks and reinterprets qualitative data to develop a pastoral psychological understanding of veterans through Capps and Carlin’s lens of living in limbo. This pastoral psychological construct embraces the ambiguity of the transition to civilian life and addresses it as a potentially complex and acute limbo situation. This construct can resonate with both veterans and significant others while also assisting pastors in providing care and counseling.

Meaning in Life following Deployment Sexual Trauma: Prediction of Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms, Depressive Symptoms, and Suicidal Ideation.

Georgina M. Gross, Holly Laws, Crystal L. Park, Rani Hoff, Claire A. Hoffmire

Psychiatry Research

Available online 24 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.05.037>

Highlights

- Deployment sexual trauma (DST) is associated with decreased sense of meaning in life
- DST is associated with posttraumatic stress symptoms, depression, and suicidal ideation
- Meaning in life mediates the relationship between DST and mental health outcomes
- Meaning in life may represent a protective factor following DST

Abstract

Deployment sexual trauma (DST; i.e., sexual harassment or assault during deployment in the military) is associated with physical and mental health consequences, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and suicidal ideation (SI). Less attention has been placed on factors that may offer protection from deleterious mental health outcomes following DST. Global meaning in life (i.e., purpose, beliefs, goals, and subjective feelings) has been shown to be a protective factor against PTSD, depression, and SI following combat trauma; however, the extent to which meaning in life may affect outcomes following DST has not been investigated. Cross-sectional associations and Hayes mediation models were examined using baseline interview data from the Survey of Experiences of Returning Veterans sample (SERV; 850 recently returned veterans, 352 women). DST was associated with post-deployment posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), depressive symptoms, and SI severity, and with decreased sense of meaning in life. Further, meaning in life was a significant mediator between DST and each of the three outcomes, even after controlling for demographic variables and combat experiences. The mediation models did not differ by gender. Findings suggest meaning in life may be an important clinical factor, both for the identification of risk and as a point of intervention.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/bsl.2411>

Cognitive behavioral therapy for suicide prevention (CBT-SP): Implications for meeting standard of care expectations with suicidal patients.

Craig J. Bryan

Behavioral Sciences & the Law

First published: 23 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2411>

Accumulating evidence supports the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for suicide prevention (CBT-SP) as an empirically supported treatment approach for suicidal patients. In light of these findings, several procedures pulled from CBT-SP have been recommended for standard care with suicidal patients. The present article provides an overview of the procedures used in CBT-SP and discusses how these procedures meet, or even exceed, standard of care expectations for outpatient mental healthcare clinicians. Finally, the relevance of clinician fidelity to the CBT-SP model when evaluating standard of care expectations is discussed.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/jclp.22797>

Telemental health training in the Veterans Administration Puget Sound Health Care System.

Kelly A. Caver, Erika M. Shearer, Derek J. Burks, Kristen Perry, Nicola F. De Paul, Meghan M. McGinn, Bradford L. Felker

Journal of Clinical Psychology

First published: 21 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22797>

As a pioneer of training in the field of psychology, the Veterans Affairs (VA) HealthCare System serves as a leader in the training in and provision of Telemental Health (TMH) services in the United States. To meet goals toward continued expansion of these services, the VA TMH training program includes both web-based didactic courses and a skills competency test at a basic level with supervision and consultation in TMH for

more advanced training and is available to staff psychologists and psychologist trainees. Despite these efforts, barriers for training in and implementation of TMH occur at the provider, system, and patient level. At the national level, the VA is actively working to resolve these barriers and we share site-specific examples implemented by the VA Puget Sound Health Care System promoting access through TMH team to further address barriers to training and implementation.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0005796719300956>

Mediation of suicide ideation in prolonged exposure therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder.

Lily A. Brown, Yinyin Zang, Kathy Benhamou, Daniel J. Taylor, ... Edna B. Foa

Behaviour Research and Therapy

Available online 23 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2019.103409>

Highlights

- Mediators of change over time in suicidal ideation (SI) were examined in prolonged exposure (PE) and present centered therapy (PCT) for PTSD.
- Depression was the strongest mediator of change in SI over time.
- Changes in PTSD were associated with changes in depression, which were associated with changes in SI.
- Mediation models were not moderated by treatment condition (PE vs. PCT).

Abstract

Background

Evidence-based treatments for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are associated with reduction in suicidal ideation (SI), yet the mechanisms underlying this reduction are unclear. The current study investigated improvements in PTSD, depression, and social support as potential mediators of the change in SI over time.

Method

Participants (N = 200) were active duty military personnel with PTSD randomized to prolonged exposure therapy (PE) or present-centered therapy (PCT). Using parallel mediation and serial mediation models, we examined the relative influence of the mediators on suicidal ideation over time.

Results

Consistent with our hypotheses, lagged mediation analyses revealed that depression was the strongest mediator of improvements in SI over time in PE and PCT. Reductions in PTSD were associated with subsequent reductions in depression, which was associated with reductions in SI. Treatment condition did not moderate this relationship, and social support was not a significant mediator.

Conclusions

In active duty military personnel, reduction in depression was the strongest mediator of reduction in suicidal ideation in PE and PCT for PTSD. These results were not altered by treatment condition.

Trial registration

Clinicaltrials.gov identifier: NCT01049516.

<http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/show/NCT01049516>.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0022395619302468>

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Characteristics Do Not Negatively Influence Cognitive Processing Therapy Attendance or Outcomes.

Laura D. Crocker, Sarah M. Jurick, Kelsey R. Thomas, Amber V. Keller, ... Amy J. Jak

Journal of Psychiatric Research

Available online 24 May 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2019.05.022>

Some providers have expressed hesitation about the appropriateness of PTSD treatment for veterans with a history of mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), given concerns that TBI-related sequelae may negatively affect PTSD treatment and/or should be the focus of treatment instead. However, research suggests that those with a history of mTBI can benefit from evidence-based PTSD treatment. To extend these findings, we examined whether specific mTBI injury markers were associated with PTSD treatment attendance and response. Iraq/Afghanistan-era veterans with PTSD and history of mTBI (N=88) all received Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT; either standard CPT without the trauma account or SMART-CPT, a modified version of CPT that included cognitive rehabilitation strategies). Analyses examined whether time since

injury, presence of loss of consciousness (LOC) or posttraumatic amnesia (PTA), and number and mechanism of mTBIs were associated with treatment attendance or response. None of the five injury variables examined were associated with number of treatment sessions attended. Multilevel modeling indicated that injury variables did not moderate treatment response (across treatment conditions) in terms of change in PTSD and depression symptoms. There was a three-way interaction showing that individuals who denied ever experiencing LOC exhibited a greater decrease in PTSD and depression symptoms in standard CPT relative to those in the SMART-CPT. Thus, a history of mTBI should not preclude individuals from receiving standard CPT, regardless of injury characteristics. In fact, PTSD treatment should often be a first line of treatment for these veterans, given evidence of a mental health etiology to persistent post-concussive symptoms.

<https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fpha0000285>

The use of cannabinoids for sleep: A critical review on clinical trials.

Kuhathasan, Nirushi, Dufort, Alexander, MacKillop, James, Gottschalk, Raymond, Minuzzi, Luciano, Frey, Benicio N.

Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology
May 23, 2019

Cannabis and its pharmacologically active constituents, phytocannabinoids, have long been reported to have multiple medicinal benefits. One association often reported by users is sedation and subjective improvements in sleep. To further examine this association, we conducted a critical review of clinical studies examining the effects of cannabinoids on subjective and objective measures of sleep. PubMed, Web of Science, and Google Scholar were searched using terms and synonyms related to cannabinoids and sleep. Articles chosen included randomized controlled trials and open label studies. The Cochrane risk of bias tool was used to assess the quality of trials that compared cannabinoids with control interventions. The current literature focuses mostly on the use of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and/or cannabidiol (CBD) in the treatment of chronic health conditions such as multiple sclerosis, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and chronic pain. Sleep is often a secondary, rather than primary outcome in these studies. Many of the reviewed studies suggested that cannabinoids could improve sleep quality, decrease sleep disturbances, and decrease sleep onset latency. While many of the studies did show a positive effect on sleep, there are many limiting factors

such as small sample sizes, examining sleep as a secondary outcome in the context of another illness, and relatively few studies using validated subjective or objective measurements. This review also identified several questions that should be addressed in future research. These questions include further elucidation of the dichotomy between the effects of THC and CBD, as well as identifying any long-term adverse effects of medicinal cannabinoid use. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2019 APA, all rights reserved)

Links of Interest

U.S. Army's Tweet Prompts Stories of Harmful Effects of Military Service

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/26/us/us-army-twitter.html>

States' increasing restrictions and bans could put abortions 'out of reach' for some military women

<https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/2019/05/24/states-increasing-restrictions-and-bans-could-put-abortions-out-of-reach-for-some-military-women/>

Senate defense bill would make military sexual harassment standalone crime

<https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/445276-senate-defense-bill-would-make-military-sexual-harassment-stand-alone-crime>

People with depression use language differently – here's how to spot it

<https://bigthink.com/the-conversation/people-with-depression-use-language-differently-nil-heres-how-to-spot-it>

Why many combat veterans are still suffering, years after the fight ended

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-many-combat-veterans-are-still-suffering-years-after-the-fight-ended>

Behavioral Health Technicians: The Unsung Heroes of Training Programs

<https://www.pdhealth.mil/news/blog/behavioral-health-technicians-unsung-heroes-training-programs>

Stress relief a touch screen away

<https://health.mil/News/Articles/2019/05/29/Stress-relief-a-touch-screen-away>

One candidate's suicide prevention plan: Annual mental health check-ups for all troops, high schoolers

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/05/28/one-candidates-suicide-prevention-plan-annual-mental-health-check-ups-for-all-troops-high-schoolers/>

Video games and pizza: Nearly half of Canadian soldiers are overweight because they sit too much

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/battle-of-the-bulge-nearly-50-per-cent-of-canadian-soldiers-are-overweight-because-they-sit-too-much>

Falling enrollment in VA's caregiver program raises concerns

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/05/29/falling-enrollment-in-vas-caregiver-program-raises-concerns/>

These unique scholarships gives student vets cash to make ends meet

<https://rebootcamp.militarytimes.com/news/education/2019/05/29/these-unique-scholarships-gives-student-vets-cash-to-make-ends-meet/>

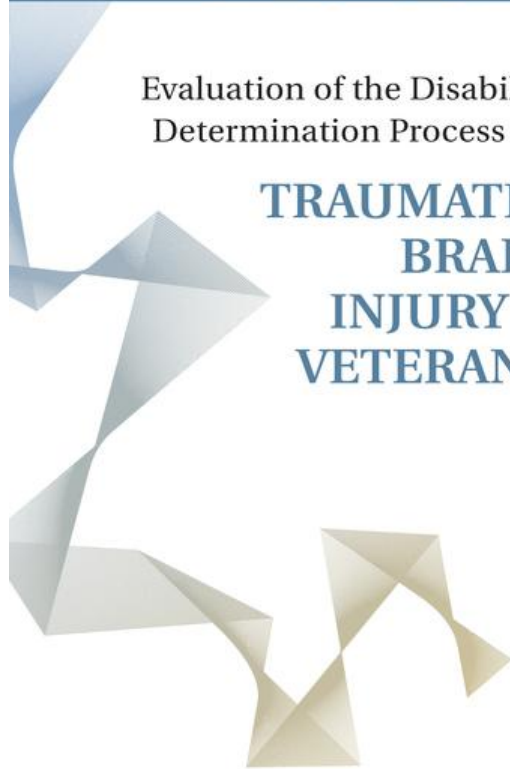
Resource of the Week: [Evaluation of the Disability Determination Process for Traumatic Brain Injury in Veterans](#)

New, from the National Academies:

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides disability compensation to veterans with a service-connected injury, and to receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a veteran must submit a claim or have a claim submitted on his or her behalf. Evaluation of the Disability Determination Process for Traumatic Brain Injury in Veterans reviews the process by which the VA assesses impairments resulting from traumatic brain injury for purposes of awarding disability compensation. This report also provides recommendations for legislative or administrative action for improving the adjudication of veterans' claims seeking entitlement to compensation for all impairments arising from a traumatic brain injury.

Evaluation of the Disability
Determination Process for

**TRAUMATIC
BRAIN
INJURY in
VETERANS**



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