

Exploration of a professional journal article in psychology

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Journal Article Reviewed: New Onset and Persistent Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Self Reported after Deployment and Combat Exposures: Prospective population based U. S. military cohort study Author Institution Name Course Number/Name Instructors Name Date of Submission Smith, T. C., Ryan, M. A., Wingard, D. L., Slymen, D. J., Sallis, J. F., & Kritzer-Silverstein, D. (2008). New Onset and Persistent Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Self Reported after Deployment and Combat Exposures: Prospective population based U. S. military cohort study. *British Medical Journal*, 336-366. The journal article chosen for this assignment describes the persistence as well as the new onset of PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) symptoms that were self reported by a large population of combatants who were deployed in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The article addresses the growing concern among veterans, as well as the general public, that the mental health consequences of post deployed military personnel may be considerable and lasting. The article is geared towards recording as well as understanding the symptoms of PTSD and the expected proportion of mental health disorders among military personnel post deployment. The article is a report of new research conducted by the authors and is based on a cohort study on post traumatic stress disorder among the military. It clearly outlines data collected from 50, 184 active military participants who had enrolled in a 22 year longitudinal study of health. Through both quantitative and qualitative research, the data expresses the health outcomes of those deployed in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, and their mental state upon their return home. The study is conducted between the months of June 2004 and February 2006. The articles

main purpose is to prospectively investigate the effect of military post deployment and self reported exposure to combat on new onset and persistent symptoms of PTSD. It tries to add onto the body of research on PTSD among post deployment military personnel. This is largely due to the fact that most of the epidemiological research on the subject has greatly focused on retrospective data as well as a small and selected population. The authors used the civilian version of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of mental disorders, fourth edition, in order to diagnose the complex PTSD symptoms among members of the military to collect their data and make a report of the prevalence of these symptoms. The main method of data collection was the distribution of questionnaires among participants that had been deployed in support of the wars. The main findings of the article are that combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan has been linked with an elevated use of mental health facilities and services. It documents the increased risk of self reported symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder among military personnel who were female, enlisted or divorced. In addition, members who had previously been identified as problem drinkers or smokers at the baseline of the study (before deployment) were also noticed to be at an increased risk of suffering from the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder upon their return home. The study also finds that there was a threefold increase in self reported symptoms of PTSD among military personnel who had been deployed and had exposed to combat as compared to member who had not been exposed to combat. The collected data indicates that the high stress levels found in combatants that could cause the prevalence of the symptoms of PTSD can be attributed to the intensity

and unpredictability of urban combat, multiple and prolonged combat tours, constant risk of roadside bombs as well as the complex issues involving the differentiation of allies from enemies. The study reports that 16.7% of U. S. military personnel that reported suffering from symptoms of PTSD within six months, post deployment. Overall, the report states that 4.3% of deployed personnel reported symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder and only 2.3% of non deployed personnel reported symptoms. Furthermore, the authors' findings suggest that up to seventy six percent of these self reported symptoms could be attributed to combat exposures in the war zones. The report also documents that there is a significant increase in the report of PTSD symptoms among personnel who were higher educated and older. In addition, the authors' findings indicate that there are members of the military who are more resilient or vulnerable to combat exposure and the subsequent consequence of developing PTSD symptoms. All of the major findings within the articles are supported by the quantitative and qualitative data collected by the authors during their cohort study. This particular article is relevant and fits into the overall field of psychology by providing new evidence of the increase of PTSD symptoms among members of the military deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. It suggests and encourages future research to include better efforts to better understand the vulnerability or resiliency to symptoms of PTSD among subpopulations of those deployed into combat zones. The article also shows that there is a need for further research to investigate the development of better validated and standardized screening and diagnostic approaches for PTSD. The journal article is different from other non-scholarly articles because contrary to other

sources of non-scholarly information, the article is: Peer reviewed Written by an authority on the subject- The authors affiliations have been listed and all are authorities on the subject Produced by a reputable association Contains reliable research methods that support the authors' findings Has an abstract and descriptive summary of the reports content Contains a bibliography

References Smith, T. C., Ryan, M. A., Wingard, D. L., Slymen, D. J., Sallis, J. F., & Kritz-Silverstein, D. (2008). New Onset and Persistent Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Self Reported after Deployment and Combat Exposures: Prospective population based U. S. military cohort study. *British Medical Journal*, 336-366.