

Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:
Navy

Number of Deployments, Relationship Satisfaction and Perpetration of Partner Violence Among U.S. Navy Members

Kelley, M. L., Stambaugh, L., Milletich, R. J., Veprinsky, A., & Snell, A. K. (2015). Number of deployments, relationship satisfaction and perpetration of partner violence among U.S. Navy members. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 29(4), 635-641. doi:10.1037/fam0000101

SUMMARY: It is important to understand factors that may contribute to the perpetration of intimate partner violence. In order to analyze the connection between relationship satisfaction, number of deployments, and intimate partner violence, researchers surveyed 80 U.S. Sailors. Results revealed that multiple deployments combined with low relationship satisfaction was related to higher rates of intimate partner violence.

KEY FINDINGS:

- A greater number of deployments was associated with a higher likelihood of perpetrating intimate partner violence.
- For Sailors who were more highly satisfied with their relationship, the effect of multiple deployments on perpetrating intimate partner violence decreased.
- Among Sailors, 24 % had perpetrated at least one act of violence towards current partner in last 12 months.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Provide education to Sailors and partners on positive communication and coping behaviors to reduce the risk of intimate partner violence
- Offer pre- and post-deployment workshops that focus on emotion regulation and conflict-resolution
- Disseminate written materials to Sailors and partners that focus on communication methods that help prevent intimate partner violence

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Recommend supportive services for Sailors who are at risk for perpetrating intimate partner violence
- Continue to support programs that engage Sailors and their partners in activities related to wellness and partner support
- Recommend education for service providers around the possible effects of deployment on Sailors and their relationships

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METHODS

- Participants were recruited from a U.S. Navy installation in Virginia via email, briefing by the ship's captain, and posters.
- Data was collected via an online survey, including questions related to intimate partner violence, relationship satisfaction, and number of deployments.
- The relationships among perpetration of intimate partner violence, relationship satisfaction, and number of deployments were analyzed.

PARTICIPANTS

- Active Duty participants included 58 men and 22 women in the Navy.
- Of the Service members, 64% were White, 18% were Black, 10% Latino and 8% were other races.
- The sample had an average age of 28.96 years (SD = 5.92).

LIMITATIONS

- All measures of intimate partner violence were self-reported from the Sailors, who may underreport perpetrating violence.
- The sample only included Sailors in long term relationships, not including causal dating or prior relationships, which could affect the generalizability of results.
- All participants were from the Navy which limits the ability to extend results to other branches of the U.S Military.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Replicate this study with larger sample size throughout all U.S. Military branches
- Study current pre- and post-deployment programs to determine their efficacy with intimate partner violence prevention
- Investigate these relationships using spouse's reports of intimate partner violence

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