



Predictors of Job Satisfaction Among Active Duty and Reserve/Guard Personnel in the U.S. Military

Sanchez, R. P., Bray, R. M., Vincus, A. A., & Bann, C. M. (2004). Predictors of job satisfaction among Active Duty and Reserve/Guard personnel in the U.S. Military. *Military Psychology, 16*(1), 19–35. doi:10.1207/s15327876mp1601_2

SUMMARY: Job satisfaction among Service members is determined by various factors. This study explored the associations among job pressure, demographic factors (e.g., age), and health status with job satisfaction of Active Duty and Reservists Service members.

KEY FINDINGS

- Current health status was a significant predictor of job satisfaction for Active Duty Service members, while lifetime medical conditions was a significant predictor of job satisfaction for Reservists.
- For all Service members, the strongest predictors of job satisfaction were job pressure and the belief that their biggest problems in their lives were the result of job-related issues.
- Service members who were younger, enlisted, and unmarried had lower job satisfaction than Service members who were not in those groups.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS

Programs could:

- Develop workshops for military families that educate them about factors related to job satisfaction for Service members
- Offer peer support groups to help military couples learn stress-reduction techniques to help manage job-related stressors
- Host events that encourage family bonding (e.g., outdoor activities) to strengthen family cohesion and resilience among military families

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES

Policies could:

- Support outreach efforts to engage military families who have Service members that may be at greater risk (e.g., younger, enlisted, unmarried) of low job satisfaction
- Encourage training for professionals who work with military families about warning signs for low job satisfaction
- Develop procedures on best practices related to how to address the needs of Service members who report low job satisfaction

Putting Research to Work for Military Families



METHODS

- Participant data (n = 24,881) were gathered from two military databases from two related studies: the Total Force Health Assessment and the Perceptions of Wellness and Readiness.
- The Perceptions of Wellness and Readiness questionnaire was administered in group sessions and via mail. The Total Force Health Assessment was administered via mail.
- Participants completed measures that assessed job satisfaction, life satisfaction, physical and mental health, and occurrences of positive and negative life events in the past year.

PARTICIPANTS

- Participants were Active Duty and Reservists Service members who represented all branches.
- Most participants were male (85%), White (69%), married (59%), and enlisted pay grade (85%).
- The largest age subgroup of Active Duty participants was between 26-34 years old (35%), while among Reservists, most participants were over 35 years old (50%).

LIMITATIONS

- The measures assessed limited dimensions of job satisfaction, so it is unclear which aspects of military service or job tasks lead to higher (or lower) levels of job satisfaction.
- There were no data on how participants were recruited, so it is unknown how participants were informed about and became involved in the study.
- The data that were collected are cross-sectional, which means no definitive conclusions can be made about job satisfaction and the various factors (e.g., job pressure, Active Duty status) examined in this study.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Explore additional factors that relate to Service members who experience high job satisfaction
- Gather data from military families of Service members who have high and low job satisfaction to study the potential influential role of their families on job satisfaction
- Conduct longitudinal to determine trends and patterns of job satisfaction among Service members over extended periods of time

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