Abstract

Post-traumatic stress manifests itself in several different ways among the various career fields in the U.S. Military. This study investigated the mental health symptoms reported by the U.S. Military personnel based on their demographic and occupational risk factors. The study reviewed 20,000 Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA) surveys completed between 2007 and 2008 by the returnees of Iraq and Afghanistan. The rate of PTSD was highest among the enlisted Army males, aged 23-30 years, serving in the Iraq war. However, secondary non-combat exposures such as witnessing death or injury of other human beings, and experiencing circumstances where there is an imminent danger of being killed had a significant impact on the rate of PTSD and depression experienced by the subjects of this study. These findings suggest that individuals with specific deployment exposures have higher likelihood of developing PTSD independent of their combatant status, and therefore should be considered for enhanced PTSD screening in their respective career fields.