PERCEPTIONS OF COPING AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING DURING FAMILY SEPARATIONS IN MODERN ARMY FAMILIES

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

Since the number of soldiers within the army has been reduced over the past decade, active-duty soldiers are spending more time away from their families in order to compensate for the lack of manpower. This leaves the soldiers' families (e.g., spouses, children) to manage daily responsibilities on their own. There is a need to focus on how families manage to function as a system with such frequent separations from servicemembers. In order to build a strong army, the military needs strong families that are able to withstand the ongoing separations that are incurred. The present study attempts to illustrate that life-event stressors and coping techniques are associated with family functioning.

Coping defined by Boss (1988) is the management of a stressful event or situation by the family as a unit with no detrimental effects on any individual in that family. Family coping is the cognitive, affective, and behavioral process by which individuals and their family system as a whole manage rather than eradicate stressful events or situations. Previous research with military families has primarily focused on prisoner of war (POW) families and families of the 1960s and 1970s, during and after the Vietnam War. The stresses of war and the coping and adaptation behaviors of families of servicemembers in captivity are similar; however, these issues do not always correlate with the same coping and adaptations of today's modern military Army families during frequent, routine deployments.

There are 298,119 family units in the Army today, with 15% living somewhere other than the continental United States (OCONUS) and 85% living in the continental United States (CONUS) (Army Family Action Plan Conference, 1998). From 1949-1989 the Army faced 10 major operations around the world compared to 26 major operations from 1989 to 1998 (Army Family Action Plan Conference, 1998).

A separation due to training, schools, or deployments could range from a couple of days away from home to months. When there are fewer soldiers, those few are gone more frequently. The ongoing routine of "home today, gone tomorrow, yet back again next week," presents a unique research study for today's modern Army. Thus, the downsizing of the military over the last decade is presenting families with unique challenges unknown in past eras due to increasingly frequent ongoing separations.

Desivilya and Gal (1996) revealed two major ways in which military families respond to the continual demands of military life: 1) families that were successful in their efforts to resolve the military versus family conflict, and 2) families that did not manage to reconcile the competing demands of these domains. This study will identify the perceived coping strategies employed by modern Army families in regard to deployments and their perceived family functioning (i.e., the daily management of the family system). Family stress theory will serve as the conceptual framework for this study.

Conceptual Definition of Terms

Family Coping

Coping is defined as individual or family behavior used to manage difficulties associated with life-event changes or stressors (McCubbin, Boss, Wilson, & Dahl, 1981). Five major characteristics of coping are included in this study. *Maintaining family integrity* encourages

doing things as a family, becoming a mother and father to children, investing oneself in their family members, and spending time with the children. *Developing interpersonal relationships and social support* focuses upon the wife's efforts to develop meaningful and supportive relationships outside the family unit. *Managing psychological tension and strain* describes behaviors for reducing perceived stress and tension resulting from the separation. *Believing in the value of the spouse's profession and maintaining an optimistic definition of the situation* emphasizes a psychological resignation to and acceptance of the stressful situation. *Developing self-reliance and self-esteem* centers around active self-development and growth behaviors (McCubbin, et al., 1981).

Life-Event Stressors

Life-event stressors refer to any family change that affects one or all members of the family system (McCubbin, Patterson, & Wilson, 1981). There are seven major life-event stressor characteristics in this study. *Intra-family strain* includes issues such as husband/father or wife/mother time away from family, emotional problems in family, family members' abuse of alcohol or drugs, and/or problems managing children. *Marital strains* include issues such as spouse/parent separating or divorcing, spouse/parent having an affair, increased difficulty in resolving issues with a former spouse, and/or increased difficulty with sexual relationship. *Pregnancy and childbearing strains* include unwanted or difficult pregnancy, unmarried family member becoming pregnant, abortion of family member, and/or giving birth or adopting a child. *Finance and business strains* include taking out loans to cover expenses, going on welfare, change in income level, major purchases, and/or delay in alimony or child support payments. *Work-family transitions and strains* include changing to a new job or career, lack of job satisfaction, losing or quitting a job, retirement, returning to

work, moving to new home, and/or change in schools. *Illness and family care strains* include caring for a person (e.g., parent, spouse, child, close friend) with a serious illness or injury or physical disability and/or arranging for satisfactory childcare. *Losses* include parent, spouse, child, in-law, or close friend of family dies, son/daughter separates or divorces, and/or relationship "break ups." *Transitions "in" and "out"* include family member marrying, family member leaving home, child leaving for college or post high-school training, family member moving back home, and/or parent/spouse starting school. *Family legal violations* include a family member going to jail or getting arrested, physical or sexual abuse, violence, child running away from home, and/or family member dropping out of school.

Family Functioning

Family functioning refers to the daily management of the family system. Two major characteristics of family functioning are included in this study. *Adaptability* refers to the ability of a family system to modify structure, roles, and relationship rules in response to situational life-event stressors. *Cohesion* refers to the degree of emotional bonding that occurs between the members of a family system (Figley & McCubbin, 1983).

Demographics

Demographics consist of ten characteristics. *Rank* refers to the servicemember's achieved position within the Army. *Years married* refers to the number of years the spouse has been married to the servicemember. *Number of children* refers to the number of children of the spouse and servicemember. *Years at current location* refers to the number of years the spouse and servicemember have resided at their current location. *Post* refers to whether the servicemember family lives on or off a military installation. *Hours employed* refers to the

number of hours the spouse is employed per week. *Military involvement* refers to whether or not the servicemember's spouse is involved in the military community/life. *Hours of military involvement* refers to the number of hours the servicemember's spouse is involved in the military community/life per week. *Number of deployments* refers to the number of deployments the servicemember's family has experienced in the past 12 months. *Duration of deployments* refers to the number of weeks the servicemember has spent away from his/her family.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between perceived life-event stressors (intra-family strains, marital strains, pregnancy/childbearing strains, financial/business strains, work/family strains, illcare strains, losses, transition strains, family legal violations), coping (family integrity, support, managing strain, optimism, self-reliance), and family functioning (adaptability, cohesion).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The goal of this research was to examine the spouse's perceived adaptation and coping patterns of modern military Army families during the frequent deployments of their military servicemember, and the relationship between perceptions of family functioning and frequency and duration of deployments. The following literature review includes the research that has looked directly at trends (e.g., marriage, coping with deployments) within military families.

Trends in Today's Military Families

Marriage Trends

Schumm, Bell, Rice, and Schuman (1996) found that since the early 1950s the percentage of enlisted personnel in the U.S. Army that was married at any one time has risen from approximately 30% of the force to nearly 60%; meanwhile the percentage of married officers has fluctuated between 70% and 90%. Army spouses currently make up 261,776 of active dependents in the Army today (Army Family Action Plan Conference, 1998). Retention of married enlisted personnel is associated with increased retention in the Army. Today the Army is an all-volunteer force whose needs vary. The typical soldier today is well educated, married, makes less money than civilian peers, and is frequently separated from family.

Seventeen percent of soldiers recruited today are married; and after one year of service, 36% are married and starting a family. Marital status has a complex association with combat readiness and can be observed as advantageous or disadvantageous when comparing readiness factors for unmarried and married soldiers. The vintage line, "If Uncle Sam wanted you to have a wife, he would have issued you one," does not hold up with the demographics of today's married soldier.

Employed Spouses

Childcare needs have increased dramatically for military families because 54% of Army spouses are employed outside the home and 10 percent are currently seeking employment (Army Family Action Plan Conference, 1998). Over the past two decades, volunteerism of military spouses is down in military communities due to the employment of spouses in the workforce. Murray's (1988) study of military wives' labor force participation and the implications for military human resources and military family policy indicated that military wives' individual and family characteristics, as well as their mobility and volunteer work contributions, were important contributors to their employment characteristics. Officers' wives' employment in professional or managerial occupations was related to dissatisfaction with the military life as well as an increased probability of the member remaining in the military. Enlisted men's wives' labor force participation was related to increased satisfaction with military life but had no effect on enlisted men's retention. Data on workforce participation and rank differences for male Army spouses was unavailable.

Dual Military Couples

Today, there is a new phenomenon in the military: dual military couples. With 5,455 dual military officer families and 23,245 enlisted dual military families on active duty (Army

Family Action Plan Conference, 1998), the U.S. Army has more dual military couples today than ever before (Schumm et al., 1996). Schumm, Rice, Bell, and Sander (1996) studied dual military Army families and their family adaptations. This study found few differences between dual military families and other types of families related to work demands, work stress, work predictability, locus of control, self-esteem, parental satisfaction, family strength and coherence, or coping with family responsibilities. Further research is needed in order to develop programs and policies to help these families to perform adequately as both parents and soldiers. However, dual military families have more difficulty reacting to short notice deployments, although they perform better than average on other readiness measures. Female soldiers in dual military families reported feeling less satisfied with parent-child relationships and experienced higher work stress than their husbands.

Number of Deployments

The downsizing of the Army over the last decade is presenting families with challenges unknown in past eras. From 1949-1989 the Army faced 10 major operations around the world compared to 26 major operations from 1989-1998. These numbers do not include routine separations incurred by soldiers due to schooling, training, TDY (temporary duty), PCS (permanent change of station), and other routine absences from the family. There are fewer Army families today and those few face more separations due to the lessened supply and increased demand of manpower.

Children Issues in the Modern Military

The average Army soldier has 1.1 children, accounting for 471,831 of the children and youth in the Army population (Army Family Action Plan Conference, 1998). Hiew (1992)

studied the impact of father absence on the family, created by work requirements, and found that it produced a loss of perceived social support for wives, which was negatively correlated to the behavioral adjustment and academic performance of their children. However, Marchant and Medway (1987) investigated 40 Army families regarding history of geographic mobility, identification with Army life, personal well being, and children's school achievement and social competence. They concluded that frequent relocation (which is not the same as deployment) was not detrimental to service member or spouse and was positively associated with higher child and social competence.

Applewhite and Mays (1996) compared the psychosocial functioning of children in military families who have experienced extended maternal separation with that exhibited by children who have been separated from their fathers. The sample included 288 children (aged 4-8 years) who lived at home with either a father or mother on a military base. The four-part questionnaire used in the study combined the Psychosocial Functioning Inventory and the Family Stressors Index. The lack of a statistically significant difference in the findings of the ANOVA may indicate no significant difference in the quality of the children's psychosocial functioning, whether they were experiencing either an extended maternal or paternal separation.

Mott, Kowaleski-Jones, and Menaghan (1997) researched gender differences and long-term and short-term implications of a father's absence. Boys and girls responded differently to a father's departure from the home. Boys did not adjust as quickly as girls, and they suffered a greater perceived decline in the quality of home environment than girls did. Boys often behaved aggressively and followed noncompliant paths.

A recent study by Jensen, Martin, and Watanabe (1996) found that children's responses to parental separation during Operation Desert Storm indicated elevated self-reported levels of depression, similar to their parents. Also, families of deployed personnel reported significantly more intervening stressors, compared with children and families of non-deployed personnel. A significant finding of this study indicated that boys and younger children appeared to be especially vulnerable to deployment effects.

Kelly (1994) studied 61 school-age children before, during, and after military deployment of their fathers. Separations resulted in temporary disruptions in families and the reported ability to maintain supportive relationships. Wives of servicemen sent to Operation Desert Shield/Storm reported less nurturing, less family cohesiveness, and more internalizing and externalizing in children than did those whose husband's deployments were routine. Raiha and Soma's (1997) research of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. Army reflects the possibilities that the strain of single parenting and the stress of the occupation, coupled with lower rank (SES), can contribute to child maltreatment. Young children were at the greatest risk for major physical abuse and neglect. Boys were neglect victims more frequently than girls were. Teenage girls were at the highest risk for minor physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse.

Current Military Family Research

A study examining the stress-buffering effects of four types of social support on the general well being of military wives found that the perceived support from other unit wives was the only type of support that emerged as significant in buffering against the stressor of a husband's absence. Schumm et al. (1996) summarized findings from an Army-family research program and other research efforts that investigated family adaptation to Army life

to identify the major stressors that Army families encounter, including changing duty stations and living overseas, experiencing family separations, adapting to danger, and dealing with the institution of the Army. Relocation hardships encompassed finances and housing, adaptation to a new environment, and the impact of moving on a spouse's career. Separation hardships that affect wives include (a) experiencing physical illness, affective conditions, and fears of infidelity, (b) being pregnant, (c) handling the practical aspects of car and home maintenance, (d) having to assume sole responsibility for family life, and (e) making adjustments upon the husband's return. Hardships associated with the adaptation to danger include being unable to communicate with the deployed soldier, having to assume sole responsibility for family life, and losing income from the deployed spouse's job. Institutional hardships include long duty hours, unit demands, mandatory spouse participation in a variety of social and volunteer functions, and loss of personal freedom.

Research from Desert Storm

Rosen and Durand (1995) examined organizational and marital factors that contribute to retention and reenlistment for married junior enlisted and midlevel non-commissioned officer (NCO) families in the U.S. Army. The study was based on questionnaire data provided by 1,274 Army spouses who participated in the Operation Desert Storm Well-being Survey. One year after Desert Storm, 776 of the families were sampled again. The main predictor of negative retention for junior enlisted families was the spouse's unrealistic expectations of what the Army could provide as resources for families of deployed soldiers. The main predictor of retention for NCO couples was the spouse's desire for the soldier to either stay in or get out of the Army. The rank of the NCO was the main predictor of intentions to reenlist. Marital problems also emerged as a significant predictor of retention for both samples. This

same sample cluster analysis of the data was used to create groupings by age and emotional well being. The findings show that spouses who had the most difficulty with coping tended to be younger. In addition, findings suggest that the Army needs to distinguish between providing assistance to spouses with specific problems and providing total support systems to those spouses who have none.

Schumm, Hemesath, Bell, and Palmer-Johnson (1996) asked the question, "Did Desert Storm reduce marital satisfaction among Army enlisted personnel?" The 806 enlisted married soldiers (between August 1990 and mid 1993) who responded indicated no significant overall change in marital satisfaction. It would be useful to sample the soldiers' spouses. Incidentally, Rosen, Durand, Westhuis, and Teitelbaum (1995) interviewed spouses married to soldiers who had been deployed in Operation Desert Storm to study marital adjustment nine to ten months after the soldiers returned. The interviews of 1,274 spouses and soldiers, conducted during site visits to a sample of installations, led to the identification of 19 marital adjustment events. Questions regarding these events were included in a mailed questionnaire that was sent to 773 of the female spouses from the original sample. A factor analysis of the events produced five factors: Distance, Closeness, Role Sharing, Independent Spouse, and Dependent Spouse/Withdrawn Soldier. Predictors of factor scores included stress, prior marital problems, social support, and emotional well being. Evidence indicates most spouses adjusted well to the deployment. Knapp (1993) hypothesized that U.S. Army wives' level of accumulated stressors, self-esteem, mastery, and perceived military stress were significantly related to their psychological well being during the stress of an extended military separation. A sample of 74 wives of U.S. Army soldiers who were stationed in the Persian Gulf participated in the study. Results show that accumulated stressors and

perceived military stress accounted for a significant portion of the variance in psychological well being.

Leader Support Influences of Family Adaptations

Bowen (1998) researched the direct versus the buffering effect of leader support in the work unit on the relationship between work spillover and family adaptation. The analyses used data from a probability sample of 3,190 married soldiers in the U.S. Army who participated in the 1989 Army and Family Survey, and the data are analyzed by the gender of the respondent. Two types of work spillover are examined in the analysis (energy and time interference), and both internal and external types of family adaptation were hypothesized and supported by the empirical analysis. Only modest support is found for the buffering effect hypothesis. In support of the direct effect hypotheses, the findings indicate that leader support in the work unit decreased perceptions of work spillover, which is a preventive effect, and enhanced perceptions of external adaptation, which is a therapeutic effect.

Corporate Executives' Wives

Boss (1979) studied a similar population in the routine absence of corporate executive husbands and fathers in intact families as a variation of father absence. Though not prolonged, frequent exits and re-entries may stress the family system. To determine how non-clinical family members deal with routine father absence, an unknown coping inventory was administered to 66 corporate wives. Factor analysis revealed wives coped with the stress of routine father absence by (a) fitting into the corporate lifestyle, (b) developing self, and (c) establishing independence. Though a pilot study, findings offer empirical support for a premise more traditionally accepted by family therapists than by sociologists: individual

psychological variables need to be considered along with systems variables in the development of family stress theory.

Coping With Deployments

McCubbin, Dahl, Lester, Benson, and Robertson's (1976) research on the coping repertoires of families adapting to prolonged war-induced separations lends insight into the discovered six coping behavior patterns of (1) seeking resolution and expressing feeling, (2) maintaining family integrity, (3) establishing autonomy and maintaining family ties, (4) reducing anxiety, (5) establishing independence through self-development, and (6) maintaining the past and dependence on religion.

Hill's (1958) study on the value of the husband's and wife's background, the history of the marriage, the development of the family, and the stresses of separation in determining the family's responses to separation is instrumental in understanding coping. McCubbin, Dahl and Hunter (1976) studied military prisoner of war (POW) families and the effects of separation in relation to family adjustments. McCubbin has contributed the most exhaustive research to military families concerning separation, but these studies are over twenty years old.

Figley and McCubbin (1983) define dysfunctional coping in families undergoing separation as stagnation, self-enforced isolation, blaming, and parental pressure/neglect. They defined functional coping as preparation, positive action, short-term coping, communication, and support from other families.

The active duty Army has approximately 400,000 families who on a daily basis interact with the largest military system in the world according to Smith (1988). An all-pervasive culture unto itself, the Army affects the lives of each one of these people. Coping styles of

18 healthy Army families were examined qualitatively. Healthy families were defined as those who were without overt clinical symptoms of pathology, who enjoyed military life, and who had chosen the military as a career. Data were gathered by means of intensive, unstructured interviews, and by administration of the Moos's Family Environment Scale. Smith's (1988) study looked at the effects the military lifestyle has and how individuals and families structure their environment to cope with it. Five distinctive healthy coping styles were identified and were perceived to be consonant with the lifestyle of military families. These family styles include apathetic-independence, individual personal growth, expression-oriented, expressive-conflict, and structure-oriented (Smith, 1988).

Theoretical Framework

According to family stress theory, the adaptation of families and individual family members is predicted, in part, from the combination of stressors which occur, resources available, and the perception of the situation (Hill, 1971). A few fundamental assumptions of family stress theory are: 1) families face hardships and changes as a natural predictable aspect of family life over the life cycle; 2) families develop basic strengths and capabilities designed to foster the growth and development of family members and the family unit and to protect the family from major disruptions in the face of family transition and changes; and 3) families also face crises that force the family unit to change its traditional mode of functioning. The application of the Family Stress Double ABCX theory (McCubbin & Figley, 1983; see Appendix A) will be used to explore the relationship between military spouses' perceptions of stressors, coping and adaptation. The ABCX model of family stress and adaptation, using data on Army families' adaptation to the crisis of relocation overseas,

resulted in support for the notion of pile-up demand. Family system resources and social support were both found to facilitate adaptation (Lavee, 1985).

The Double ABCX model, emerging from studies of war-induced family crisis, expands upon Hill's (1958) original ABCX model. The original ABCX model focused primarily upon pre-crisis variables that account for differences in family capability to cope with the impact of a stressor event and transition and that determine whether and to what degree the outcome is a crisis for the family. Much of the research on this model was done with WWII and military families. Within the model, A is the stressor event; B is the available family resources; C is the family definition of the situation (perception); and X is the degree of family crisis or disruption. The expanded model adds post-crisis variables in an effort to describe: (a) the additional life stressors and changes which may influence the family's ability to achieve adaptation; (b) the critical psychological and social factors families call upon and use in managing crisis situations; (c) the processes families engage in to achieve satisfactory resolution; and (d) the positive (bonadaptation) or negative (maladaptation) outcome of these family efforts (McCubbin & Figley, 1983).

Coping can involve direct action to either reduce the number and or intensity of demands or to acquire additional resources not already available to the family. Also, coping can involve appraisal to change the meaning of a situation to make it more manageable. Life events occurring at the time of deployments (positive or negative) can contribute to the perceptions of family members; however, they also may result in additional stressors. The Double ABCX model has descriptive value but needs further development on predicting adjustments of military wives during service-related absence of spouses (Frankel, Snowden, & Nelson, 1992).

In order to explore the state of modern Army families, the following aspects of the double ABCX model will be discussed. Identified perceived stressors (intra-family strains, marital strains, pregnancy and childbearing strains, financial strains, work-family strains, illcare strains, losses, transition strains, family legal violations) and perceptions of coping characteristics (family integrity, support, managing strain, optimism, self-reliance were studied) as predictors of perceived adaptation (adaptability and cohesion) as a family functioning characteristic.

Family stress theory is useful in studying the variables posed in this study related to the stress of separation for military families. The research variables identified with this study add to the broader literature of military families' coping and adaptation strategies. Since the draw-down of the Army, little research has focused on the family's adaptation, coping and family functioning in relation to consistent, frequent separations.

Family stress theory was utilized to examine the following hypotheses:

H1: Frequency of deployments is related to perceptions of family functioning.

H2: Duration of deployments is related to perceptions of family functioning.

H3: Frequency of deployments is related to perceptions of coping.

H4: Duration of deployments is related to perceptions of coping.

H5: The interaction of frequency and duration of deployments is related to perceptions of family functioning.

H6: The interaction of frequency and duration of deployments is related to perceptions of coping.

H7: Perceived life-event stressors are related to perceptions of family functioning during deployments.

H8: Perceived life-event stressors are related to perceptions of coping during deployments.

H9: Demographics (rank, years married, number of children, years at current location, living on post, spouse's hours employed per week, spouse's military involvement, hours of spouse's military involvement per week, number of deployments in past year, duration of deployments in past year) are related to perceptions of family functioning during deployments.

H10: Demographics (rank, years married, number of children, years at current location, living on post, spouse's hours employed per week, spouse's military involvement, hours of spouse's military involvement per week, number of deployments in past year, duration of deployments in past year) are related to perceptions of coping during deployments.

H11: Perceptions of coping are related to perceptions of family functioning (i.e., adaptability and cohesion).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A cross-sectional research design was utilized in this study. Respondents represented a random mix of many ranks, ages, and degrees of military experience, and the strength and direction of the relationships between the identified variables were examined based on correlation coefficients and regression analyses. The cross-sectional design, exploratory in nature, was utilized because (1) self-report questionnaires were administered and (2) there were not any experimental versus control groups. The dependent variable was identified as perceived family functioning (adaptability and cohesion). The two independent variables were (a) perceived life-event stressors and (b) perceived coping.

Sample and Procedure

Participants in this study included Army families who attended the 5th Army Family Action Plan Conference in August of 1998. The unit of analysis for this study was the modern military Army family evaluated by the servicemembers' spouses, who have experienced a previous deployment in the past year. The sample was drawn by a mailed questionnaire to married soldier families within the 5th Army population, which has a good representation of the Army population today, due to the diverse assignments within and the large area represented by 5th Army servicemembers. Participation in the sample was strictly

voluntary and confidentiality was insured. Self-administered questionnaires were to collect data that could be generalized to the Army population. The sample was a mixture of ranks ranging from junior enlisted to general officers. The participants who attended the conference were randomly selected by their commands to represent the 5th Army population. The questionnaire was mailed to the home address for each spouse participant, totaling 62 active-duty Army family participants who are located within 22 states of the United States. Each questionnaire was addressed and mailed to the servicemember's spouse. Each participant was asked to locate three other military spouses (co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances) of similar rank of their spouses rank and from the same Army post or location.

All of participants of the study live in the 5th Army Population, which is generally west of the Mississippi in the United States. Of the possible 248 (derived from the 62 questionnaires mailed), 50 spouses responded (36 of whom attended the conference, 14 by handout). All of the 50 respondents were female. The rank of servicemember spouse respondents ranged from E-5 (enlisted) to 09 (General Officer). The rank that responded the most frequently to the survey was O4 (Major).

This sample averaged being married to the servicemember for 12 years. Respondents had an average of two children. Families of this sample had been living at their current location for less than a year and a half. Approximately one-half of these families live on a military installation, and half in the local community. Of the spouses surveyed, the mean of hours employed outside the home was 11 hours. Over 60% of the spouses surveyed are involved with the military/community lifestyle, with the mean hours involved per week being five. Families averaged 4.54 number of deployments in the past year, with an average duration of

11 weeks in the past year. Most respondents had experienced a military separation from their spouse in the last year, unless their spouse was in a school environment or other unusual duties for the year involved for this survey (See Table 1).

A modification of the Dillman (1978) Total Design Method was used for implementing the mail surveys. Similar to Dillman's (1978) method, each questionnaire briefly described that the intent of the research was strictly for understanding how Army families function with frequent deployments. A cover sheet included a brief description about the researcher, the study and the need for input from this group (see Appendix B). An identification number was on the cover of the questionnaire, where it was visible to the respondent. The cover letter and a business reply envelope were carefully folded in a predetermined fashion and placed for mailing into a regular business stationery envelope with the questionnaire, on which the respondent's name and address were individually typed. First-class postage was affixed (by stamp) to the envelope, and the mailing was dispatched. Simple details of completing the questionnaire were included.

Participants were informed of the confidentiality of the sample results and a consent form was included in the mailing (see Appendix B). Exactly one week later a postcard follow-up was sent to all recipients of the first mailing (see Appendix B). Preprinted, but with an individually typed name and address on one side and an individually applied signature on the other, the note on this postcard was written as a thank you for those who had already returned their questionnaires, and a reminder to those who had not. The key to this design method was the personalization that the respondents' input was critical to the study (Dillman, 1978).

There was a possibility of bias in that some families who had negative perceptions of the military may not have taken the time to fill out the questionnaire. Perhaps some

servicemembers' spouses felt their input would not change the reality of their existence. Some of the families might have moved since the conference and the packets may not have reached them. Another consideration is that the 5th Army sample resides in the continental United States. This study did not have the input of Army spouses currently living abroad, although some data may reflect spouses' experiences from the previous year OCONUS. It was critical in this study to let the participants know that their chain of command or the Army would not have access to the data or to the identity of the respondents. The perceptions of influence of the command knowing any family issues or problems could have biased the results of this study. Within this study there were two dual military couples. This study is not representative of gender, in that all respondents were female, although there are many male spouses of servicemembers in the Army.

Measurements

Family Coping

The Family Coping Inventory (FCI; Separation and Single Parent Status), designed by McCubbin, Boss, Wilson and Dahl (1981), is a self-report questionnaire that measures the spouse's strategies for coping with permanent, extended, or repeated family separations (the "coping" component of the Double ABCX Model). There are 70 Likert-type items with a range of four points (i.e., 0 = not helpful, 1 = minimally helpful, 2 = moderately helpful, 3 = very helpful). Thus, a high score reflects a high level of coping.

There are five subscales that measure coping patterns: 1) maintaining family integrity; 2) developing self, self-esteem, and establishing independence; 3) maintaining psychological tension and strain; 4) believing in the value of the spouse's profession and maintaining an optimistic definition of the situation; and 5) developing self-reliance and self-esteem.

Maintaining Family Integrity identifies seven behaviors which center around doing things together as a family, especially with the children (e.g., "Doing things with the family," "Doing more things with the children"). *Developing Self, Self-Esteem and Establishing Independence* identifies 18 coping behaviors that emphasize personal growth and development regarding skills, appearance and relationships, as well as a future orientation around an independent lifestyle (e.g., "Building close relationships with people"). *Managing Psychological Tension and Strain* identifies six items which describe behaviors for reducing perceived stress and tension resulting from the separation (e.g., "Wishing my spouse was not gone and that things were different"). The fourth subscale is *Believing in the Value of the Spouse's Profession and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation* (e.g., "Believing that things will always work out"). The fifth subscale is *Developing Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem* (e.g., "Becoming more independent").

There is a previously reported internal consistency reliability of a Cronbach Alpha on the subscales ranging from .7 to .86 (McCubbin, Boss, Wilson & Dahl, 1981). This instrument was used to identify specific coping strategies due to separations. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliability for the subscales in this study using the FCI inventory were .79 for maintaining family integrity, .61 for developing interpersonal relationships and social support, .56 for managing psychological tension and strain, .66 for believing in the value of spouse's profession and maintaining an optimistic definition of the situation, and .63 for development of self-reliance and self-esteem. The total scale Cronbach's coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliability was .94 for coping.

Life-Event Stressors

The Family Inventory of Life Events and Changes (FILE; McCubbin, Patterson & Wilson, 1981) was used to assess the pile-up of perceived life-event stressors experienced by a family (the aA factor of the Double ABCX Model). Each item is worded to reflect that a life-event stressor produced a change in the adjusting of regular interaction patterns of family members. This inventory reflects change, which may be positive or negative.

FILE (form C) is a 71-item self report instrument that is grouped into nine subscales, designed to record the normative and non-normative life events and changes experienced by a family unit (single parent, two parent, reconstituted, etc.) in the past year. The respondents answered yes or no to events happening to their family in the past 12 months. Responses were summed for a total score of life-events or stressors. Thus, a high score reflects a high number of stressors.

The nine subscales found within the FILE inventory include: *Intra-Family Strains* (17 items; e.g., "Increase of husband-father's time away from family"); *Marital Strains* (4 items; e.g., "Spouse/parent was separated or divorced"); *Pregnancy and Childbearing Strains* (4 items; e.g., "Spouse had unwanted or difficult pregnancy"); *Finance and Business Strains* (12 items; e.g., "Took out a loan or refinanced a loan to cover increased expenses"); *Work-Family Transitions and Strains* (10 items; e.g., "A member changed to a new job/career"); *Illness and Family "Care" Strains (i.e., "illcare")* (8 items; e.g., "Experienced difficulty in arranging for satisfactory child care"); *Losses* (6 items; e.g., "A parent/spouse died"); *Transitions "In" and "Out"* (5 items; e.g., "Young adult member left home"); *Legal Violations* (5 items; e.g., "A member went to jail or juvenile detention").

The overall internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the FILE in previous research is .72 (McCubbin, Patterson & Wilson, 1981). The Cronbach's coefficient alphas of internal consistency reliability for each subscale within the current study were .61 for intra-family strains, -.09 for marital strains, .62 for pregnancy/child-rearing strains, .52 for financial strains, .46 for work/family strains, .37 for illcare strains, and .06 for losses. The subscale transitions in and out of the family's Cronbach coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliability changed to .44 from .15 when item number 66 was deleted from the analyses; further analyses will be used with the deleted item number 66. The subscale for legal violations was not used for analyses due to the lack of variance in responses. The subscales marital strains and losses, respectively, had two items with zero variance, which affected reliability. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliability for the total FILE scale did not report stressor reliability analyses due to the number of items with zero variance; hence subscales instead of the total scale were used in further analyses. The following subscales were eliminated from further analyses: legal violations, marital strains, and losses.

Family Functioning

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale III (FACES; Olsen, Portner, & Bell, 1985) was used in this study as a measure of family cohesion and adaptability, operationalizing adaptation from the Double ABCX Model. FACES III is a linear measure, with high scores on cohesion and adaptability being related to more functional family relationships. This Likert-type 20-item scale (i.e., 1 = almost never, 2 = once in awhile, 3 = sometimes, 4 = frequently, 5 = almost always) contains 10 cohesion items and 10 adaptability items. A high score reflects a high level of cohesion or adaptability. There are

two items for each of the following five concepts related to the *cohesion* dimension: emotional bonding, supportiveness, family boundaries, time and friends, and interest in recreation. There are two items for each of the concepts related to the *adaptability* dimension (leadership, control, and discipline), and four items for the combined concept of roles and rules.

The construct validity of FACES III, reported by Olson, Portner, and Bell (1985), indicates that the correlation between cohesion and adaptability is almost zero ($r = .03$). The Cronbach's coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliability in this study for adaptability and cohesion were .79 and .89, respectively. There was a positive significant correlation between adaptability and cohesion of .70 in this study.

Demographics

The last self-administered instrument to be used was a combined demographic and military specific questionnaire designed by the researcher. The nine closed-ended military questions used in quantitative analysis of the data included rank of servicemember (1 = E-1, 2 = E-2, etc.), years married to current spouse in the military (1 = one year, 2 = two years, etc.), number of children (0 = none, 1 = one child, etc.), years at current location (1 = one year, 2 = two years, etc.), living on (1) or off (0) post, hours spouse is employed per week (0 = none, 1 = one hour, etc.), involvement in military life (0 = no, 1 = yes), hours involved in military life (0 = none, 1 = one hour, etc.), number of deployments of servicemember within the last year (0 = none, 1 = one deployment, etc.), and duration (total length) of deployments in the last year (0 = none, 1 = one week, etc.) (See Table 1).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study examined the relationships between the selected demographic variables (rank of the servicemember, years the servicemember has been married, the number of children of the servicemember, the years living at current location, living on or off post, number of hours per week the spouse is employed, involvement of the spouse in military life/community, hours of involvement per week by the spouse in military life/community, number of deployments in the past year, duration of deployments in the past year), perceived family functioning variables (adaptability, cohesion), perceived life-event stressor variables (intra-family strains, marital strains, pregnancy and childbearing strains, finance and business strains, work-family transitions and strains, illness and family "care" strains, losses, transitions "in and out," family legal violations), and perceived coping variables (maintaining family integrity, developing interpersonal relationships and social support, managing psychosocial tension and strain, believing in the value of spouse's profession and maintaining an optimistic definition of the situation, development of self-reliance and self-esteem). Those variables which were significantly related in the bivariate correlations were entered into separate hierarchical multiple regression equations.

Bivariate Correlations

Bivariate correlations were used to examine pairs of relationships between the demographic variables (rank, years married, number of children, living on post, hours spouse

is employed a week, involvement in military community/life, hours involved in military community/life, number of deployments in the past year, duration in weeks of deployments in the past years), family functioning (adaptability, cohesion), life-event stressors (intra-family strains, marital strains, pregnancy/childbearing strains, financial strains, work-family strains, illness and family care strains, losses, transitions, and legal violations), and coping (family integrity, support, managing strain, optimism, self-reliance). The SPSS for Windows Release 10.0 (1999) computer analysis program was used to analyze the collected data. A one-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test for significant relationships between the variables (see Table 6). The significant relationships found were used in the multiple regression equations.

Insert Table 6 about here

Correlations for Demographic Variables

Support was not provided for the eight hypotheses involving demographic variables. Specifically, frequency and/or duration of deployments were not related to family functioning (adaptability and cohesion) and/or coping (maintaining family integrity, support, managing strain, optimism, and self-reliance). In addition, the remaining demographic variables (rank, years married, children, years at location, living on post, spouse's hours employed, military involvement, hours of military involvement, number of deployments, and duration of deployments) were not related to family functioning and/or coping during deployments.

Correlations for Life-Event Stressors

They hypothesized relationships between perceived life-event stressors and perceived coping received partial support. Specifically, family integrity was negatively related to illcare. No support was provided for the hypothesis regarding perceived life-event stressors and perceived family functioning.

Correlations for Coping

The hypothesized relationship between perceived coping and perceived family functioning (adaptability and cohesion) received partial support. Specifically, perceptions of self-reliance were related to one characteristic of family functioning, perceptions of cohesion. In addition, perceived coping (i.e., the total coping score) was related to perceived adaptability.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the incremental contribution of the predictor variables (identified in bivariate correlations) to the variance in perceived coping and family functioning. Variables that were significantly related from the bivariate correlation analyses were entered as predictor variables in separate hierarchical multiple regression models. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to determine (1) the contribution of the sets of predictor variables in explaining the variance in the criterion variable, and (2) the significance level of specific beta coefficients within the models. Simple linear regression was used in models with only one predictor variable.

Model 1: Adaptability. In step one of the first regression equation, family integrity, support, and managing strains were positively related to adaptability, however none of the

relationships were significant at $p \leq .05$. The model was significant ($F = 4.52$, $p \leq .01$) and accounted for 23% of the variance in adaptability.

Model 2: Cohesion. Self-reliance was a significant predictor of cohesion, a characteristic of family functioning. Self-reliance was positively and significantly related to cohesion ($\beta = .36$, $p \leq .01$). However, family integrity failed to achieve significance in predicting cohesion. The model was significant ($F = 6.82$, $p \leq .01$) and accounted for 23% of the variance in cohesion. Therefore, when perceptions of self-reliance are high, cohesion is perceived to be high. Conversely, when perceptions of self-reliance are low, cohesion is perceived to be low.

Model 3: Adaptability. Total coping was positively and significantly related to adaptability ($\beta = .35$, $p \leq .05$). The model was significant ($F = 6.86$, $p \leq .05$) and accounted for 13% of the variance in adaptability. Therefore, when perceptions of coping are high, perceptions of adaptability are high. Conversely, when perceptions of coping are low, perceptions of adaptability are low.

Insert Table 8 about here

Insert Table 9 about here

Insert Table 10 about here

To gain further depth of understanding of military families and how they function, further analyses were conducted. These analyses explored the combinations of the different components of the theoretical model, explaining demographics, perceived family functioning, and perceived stressors as predictors of perceived coping (See Appendix D).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the relationship between demographics, perceived family functioning, perceived life-event stressors, and perceived coping. Consistent with the application of Double ABCX theory, the results of this study provided partial support for dimensions of perceived coping and perceived family functioning in military families. Specifically, the perceived life-event stressor, illcare, was related to intra-family strain. In addition, perceived coping was related to one characteristic of perceived family functioning (adaptability).

The findings of this study did not support the following hypotheses: 1) perceptions of the frequency of deployments is related to perceived family functioning; 2) the duration of deployments is related to perceived family functioning; 3) the frequency of deployments is related to perceived coping; 4) the duration of deployments is related to perceived coping; 5) the interaction of frequency and duration of deployments is related to perceived family functioning; 6) the interaction of frequency and duration of deployments is related to perceived coping; 7) perceived life-event stressors are related to perceived family functioning during deployments; 9) demographics are related to perceived family functioning during deployments; and 10) demographics are related to perceived coping during deployments.

The mean number of deployments in the past year was 4.54 for participating servicemembers. The mean total duration of weeks deployed in past year was 10.85.

However, neither number of deployments nor duration of deployments was related to perceived family functioning or to perceived coping. This may suggest that military families have already established high levels of cohesion and/or adaptability that, therefore, may promote successful management. Considering the means, this sample reported mean levels of adaptation above the midpoint of possible adaptation scores. However, their reports of cohesion, were even higher. Therefore, it appears that military families have high levels of cohesion, but might benefit form interventions enhancing adaptability. Although the individual scales were not significant in predicting family functioning, total coping did show to be related to adaptability. Therefore, the Army may consider adopting programs to encourage coping strategies for spouses of military members.

Hypothesis 11, perceptions of coping are related to family adaptability during deployments, was supported in that perceptions of coping are related to one dimension of family functioning (adaptability). In addition, self-reliance was positively related to cohesion (a second dimension of family functioning). Therefore, the Army may develop programs to promote self-development and personal growth (e.g., physical, spiritual, emotional).

Recommendations

The Army is currently implementing new programs to enhance the lives of servicemembers and their families. For example, The Army Family Action Conferences allow families to identify the needs of the military population and encourage policy and program improvements. The Army is also improving the living conditions (e.g., housing), and affordable alternatives are being implemented. Effective October 1, 2000, the Army began tracking the time away from home on deployments, exercises, training, temporary duty/temporary assignments, etc. All days spent away from home will be shown on

servicemember's monthly leave and earning statements and they will be compensated for excessive days spent away from home. The importance of the present study is supported by the Army's recent policy modification of tracking the excessive time that servicemembers are separated from their families.

Programs that enhance family coping during deployments would increase the adaptability in family functioning. This study finds that spouses who perceive their coping to be increased, also find their adaptability to be increased. This finding may encourage the development of programs with focus on strengthening the family's aspects of coping (e.g., maintaining family integrity, support programs, etc.) in order to strengthen the way the family functions.

Future Research

Due to the number of deployments experienced by this population studied and the duration in which they were separated from their family, it would be useful and more insightful to incorporate a qualitative method for data collection (e.g., focus groups) in order to determine what coping mechanisms are employed by families during these absences.

Families utilize similar coping strategies when servicemembers are deployed either for war or for temporary duty. "Psychological numbing" is a coping strategy that has been identified in wartime families (Figley & McCubbin, 1983). This phenomenon occurs as the ups and downs of continued deployments and separations have a leveling effect on emotions. It has been suggested that separations for military wives may be a developmental task that is difficult in the beginning but becomes easier with time. This is a concept that needs to be researched with modern military families and a determination made if the "numbing" is a healthy functioning for families or not.

Concerns for waiting spouses can intensify with the servicemember leaving the family structure as well as when they return. Problems of role definition, problems of sexual adjustment and problems caused by isolation can occur before, during, and after deployments. The ambivalence that can develop (perhaps the numbing effect to some degree) can cause guilt. Symptoms of depression, such as sleep disturbances and irritability, may occur before or after the return of the servicemember. These symptoms may stem from a loss of control, loss of mastery, loss of independence, and feelings of giving up the adapted existence.

The military family is influenced by a host of acute and chronic stresses related to, if not unique to, life in the military. No other large group is exposed so uniformly to the pressures of father/mother absence, spouse absence, and geographic mobility. Family separations due to unaccompanied tours, repeated temporary duty assignments, training missions, and wartime duty have impacts on servicemembers, spouses, and their children. Empirical longitudinal and cross-sectional studies into the family functioning of military families is essential to maintain healthy families as well as prepare soldiers. Trends in single-parenting, dual-military families and the fact that the Army today is a "married Army" lends practitioners and researchers some insights on what needs exist in this difficult subculture reality.

The daily functioning of families in relation to the modern Army servicemember's absence during deployments should be examined. When the servicemember is deployed does the family keep his or her presence (psychological presence) in their schedule maintenance, sleep maintenance, eating habits, social life maintenance, and parenting practices the same or do they adapt by extending the boundaries in order to cope and keep the

family functioning? Many unanswered questions remain pertaining to military families that need further examination.

Similarly, Edna Hunter (1983) eloquently described the separation and loss in an missing in action (MIA) or POW family's experience, possibly to a lesser degree during frequent, routine, separations military families feel many of the same emotions and adapt and cope in family functioning somewhat the same. Hunter (1983) describes separation as follows:

> When a family member is lost, either temporarily or permanently, the family is profoundly affected. The elements of the captivity experiences which are particularly upsetting for family members include the ambiguity of the situation and the indeterminate duration of the stressor, which result in feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, disrupting normal functioning. A primary emotion experienced by family members, is fear- fear not only for the captive but also for themselves and their eventual fate as well. As time passes, feelings of isolation, alienation, anger, guilt, hostility, and depression develop, as do psychophysiological stressors arising from forced role changes within the family structure and the requirement for one parent to fill the dual mother/father role. These feelings will be experienced in a type of emotional rollercoaster pattern. After these emotional ups and downs continue month after month and year after year, both the captive and the family tended to level out their emotions and develop what has been termed "psychological numbing" or blunted affect (p. 171).

This is a topic to be probed further with career military families. How do the family members adapt and cope in daily family functioning? Is this healthy for families?

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between perceived coping, life-event stressors, and family functioning. Results of this study supported the theoretical assertion of a relationship between perceived life-event stressors and perceived coping during deployment. The results of this study found that perceptions of coping are related to perceptions of adaptability. In addition, perceived self-reliance is related to perceptions of family cohesion. The results of this study should compel future scholars to expand the methods in which they investigate the issues of family functioning and coping within Army families during the servicemember's deployment.

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Table 1

Averages of Demographic Variables

Variable	Average
1. Rank (E-5 – O-9 respondents)	0-4 (major)
2. Years married	12
3. Number of children	2
4. Years at current location	1.4
5. Living on post	52%
6. Hours spouse is employed a week	10.86
7. Spouses involved in military communtiy/life	62%
8. Hours involved in military communtiy/life per week	5
9. Number of deployments in past year	4.5
10. Duration of deployments in past year (weeks)	11

Table 2

Variables, Measures, Reliabilities

Variable	Measure	Reliabilities (Cronbach's Alpha)
Coping	Family Coping Inventory (McCubbin, et al.,1981)	.94
Family integrity		.79
Support		.61
Managing strain		.56
Optimism		.66
Self-reliance		.63
Life-event stressors	The Family Inventory of Life Events and Changes (McCubbin, Patterson & Wilson, 1981)	...
Intra-family strain		.61
Marital strain		-.09*
Pregnancy and childbearing strain		.62
Financial strain		.52
Work-family strain		.46
Illcare		.37
Losses		.06*
Transitions in and out		.15
Family legal violations		... *
Family Functioning	Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale III (Olsen, Portner & Bell ,1985)	...
Adaptability		.79
Cohesion		.89
Demographics	Demographic questionnaire (created scale)	...

* Due to the lack of reliability or lack of variance the subscale was not used in the data analyses

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of (FCI) – Family Coping Inventory- Separation/Single

Variable	Theoretical Range	Actual Range	M	SD
Family Integrity	0-15	0-15	11.18	3.44
Social Support	0-15	0-15	9.46	2.92
Manage Strain	0-18	0-13	5.68	3.01
Optimism	0-18	4-18	12.76	3.35
Self-reliance/esteem	0-12	3-12	9.50	2.27
Total Coping	0-78	15-67	48.36	10.86

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of (FILE) – Family Inventory of Life Events/Changes

Variable	Theoretical Range	Actual Range	M	SD
Intra-family strain	0-17	0-10	2.94	2.32
Preg./Child Strain	0-4	0-2	.16	.51
Finance Strain	0-12	0-5	1.54	1.49
Work/Family Strain	0-10	0-7	2.78	1.68
Ill-Care Strain	0-8	0-4	.82	1.02
Transitions	0-5	0-2	.26	.53
Stressors Total	0-71	2-19	8.96	4.62

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations of Adaptation and Cohesion (FACES III)

Variable	Theoretical Range	Actual Range	M	SD
Adaptation	10-50	14-46	32.22	6.72
Cohesion	10-50	13-50	40.76	8.46

Table 6: Bivariate Correlations of Demographics, Perceived Family Functioning, Perceived Family Stressors, and Perceived Family Coping

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1 RANK	1.00																							
2 YRSMARRY	.42**	1.00																						
3 CHILDREN	-.15	.10	1.00																					
4 YRSLOCAT	-.03	-.02	-.27	1.00																				
5 POST	-.03	.01	.13	-.08	1.00																			
6 HRSEMP	-.27	-.05	-.12	17	-.36	1.00																		
7 MILINVOL	-.05	.17	-.01	.04	.24	-.35*	1.00																	
8 HRSINVOL	-.03	.15	.03	-.09	.29*	-.24	.48**	1.00																
9 NDEPLOY	.06	.21	-.20	.24	-.31*	.14	-.05	-.02	1.00															
10 DEPDURAT	-.34**	-.03	-.06	.05	-.20	-.15	.02	.13	.31*	1.00														
11 ADAPT	.03	-.03	.02	-.05	.20	.16	-.15	-.17	-.18	-.06	1.00													
12 COHESION	11	.08	.09	-.05	.07	-.03	-.05	-.12	-.17	.05	.70**	1.00												
13 INTRAFAM	-.28	-.23	.08	.21	-.04	.19	-.36**	.00	-.15	.00	-.01	-.23	1.00											
14 PRGCHILD	-.02	-.10	.19	-.19	.31*	-.20	.25	.42**	-.21	-.18	-.03	.00	-.08	1.00										
15 FINANCE	-.29*	-.19	.08	.13	-.06	.19	-.29*	-.16	-.05	.20	.04	.05	.31*	-.15	1.00									
16 WORKFAM	-.05	-.10	.14	-.37**	-.01	-.06	-.15	.00	-.27	.04	.18	.16	.13	.18	.18	1.00								
17 ILLCARE	.05	-.10	-.04	.08	.34*	-.22	-.18	-.07	-.35*	-.20	.18	.08	.12	.13	.19	19	1.00							
18 TRANSITS	.01	-.02	.29*	-.07	.25	-.15	.15	.44**	-.08	.05	-.02	.05	.13	.15	.07	.20	.09	1.00						
19 FAMINTEG	-.17	-.09	.31*	-.24	-.05	.17	-.01	.15	-.22	.01	.33*	.32*	.07	.01	.11	.17	-.38**	.24	1.00					
20 SUPPORT	-.07	-.14	-.26	.05	.23	-.06	.09	.18	-.18	-.06	.29*	.19	.26	.03	.10	.04	.05	.12	.36*	1.00				
21 MANGSTRN	-.24	-.06	-.08	-.04	.18	-.01	.16	.11	-.20	.08	.42**	.20	.15	.14	.04	-.08	.02	-.03	.23	.43**	1.00			
22 OPTIMIST	-.06	.06	.24	-.17	-.03	-.14	.03	.20	-.13	.22	.19	.19	.04	.11	.16	.14	.04	.23	.21	.35*	.47**	1.00		
23 SELFRELY	.05	.14	-.14	-.04	.12	-.23	.12	.18	-.21	.11	.23	.40**	-.02	.14	.17	.18	.19	.11	.20	.46**	.49**	.55**	1.00	
24 COPING	-.13	-.06	-.06	-.11	.06	-.04	.16	.26	-.28	.07	.35*	.34*	.12	.10	.21	13	-.02	.14	.50**	.73**	.73**	.73**	.74**	1.00

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 7

Definitions of Statistically Analyzed Variable Codes

Variable	Definition
1. RANK	Rank of servicemember
2. YRSMARRY	Years married to servicemember
3. CHILDREN	Number of children
4. YRSLOCAT	Years resided at current location
5. POST	Living on or off post
6. HRSEMP	Hours employed by spouse per week
7. MILINVOL	Spouse's involvement in military community/life
8. HRSINVOL	Hours of spousal military involvement per week
9. NDEPLOY	Number of deployments in previous 12 months
10. DEPDURAT	Duration of deployments in previous 12 months
11. ADAPT	Adaptability
12. COHESION	Cohesion
13. INTRAFAM	Intra-family strains
14. PRGCHILD	Pregnancy/child-bearing strains
15. FINANCE	Financial business strains
16. WORKFAM	Work-family transitions and strains
17. ILLCARE	Illness and family care strains
18. TRANSITS	Transitions in and out
19. FAMINTEG	Maintaining family integrity
20. SUPPORT	Developing interpersonal relationships and social support
21. MANGSTRN	Managing psychological tension and strain
22. OPTIMIST	Believing in the value of spouse's profession and maintaining an optimistic definition of the situation
23. SELFRELY	Development of self-reliance and self-esteem
24. COPING	Combination of all coping characteristics

Table 8

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Adaptability

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Faminteg	.40	.27	.21	.23
Support	.27	.36	.12	
Mangstrn	.64	.34	.29	
Multiple R				.48
R^2				.23
Adjusted R^2				.18
F Value				4.52**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 9

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Cohesion

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Faminteg	.65	.32	.26	.23**
Selfrely	1.32	.48	.36**	
Multiple R				.48
R^2				.23
Adjusted R^2				.20
F Value				6.82*

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 10

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Adaptability

Predictor Variable	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Coping	.22	.08	.35*	.13*
Multiple R				.35
R^2				.13
Adjusted R^2				.11
F Value				6.86*

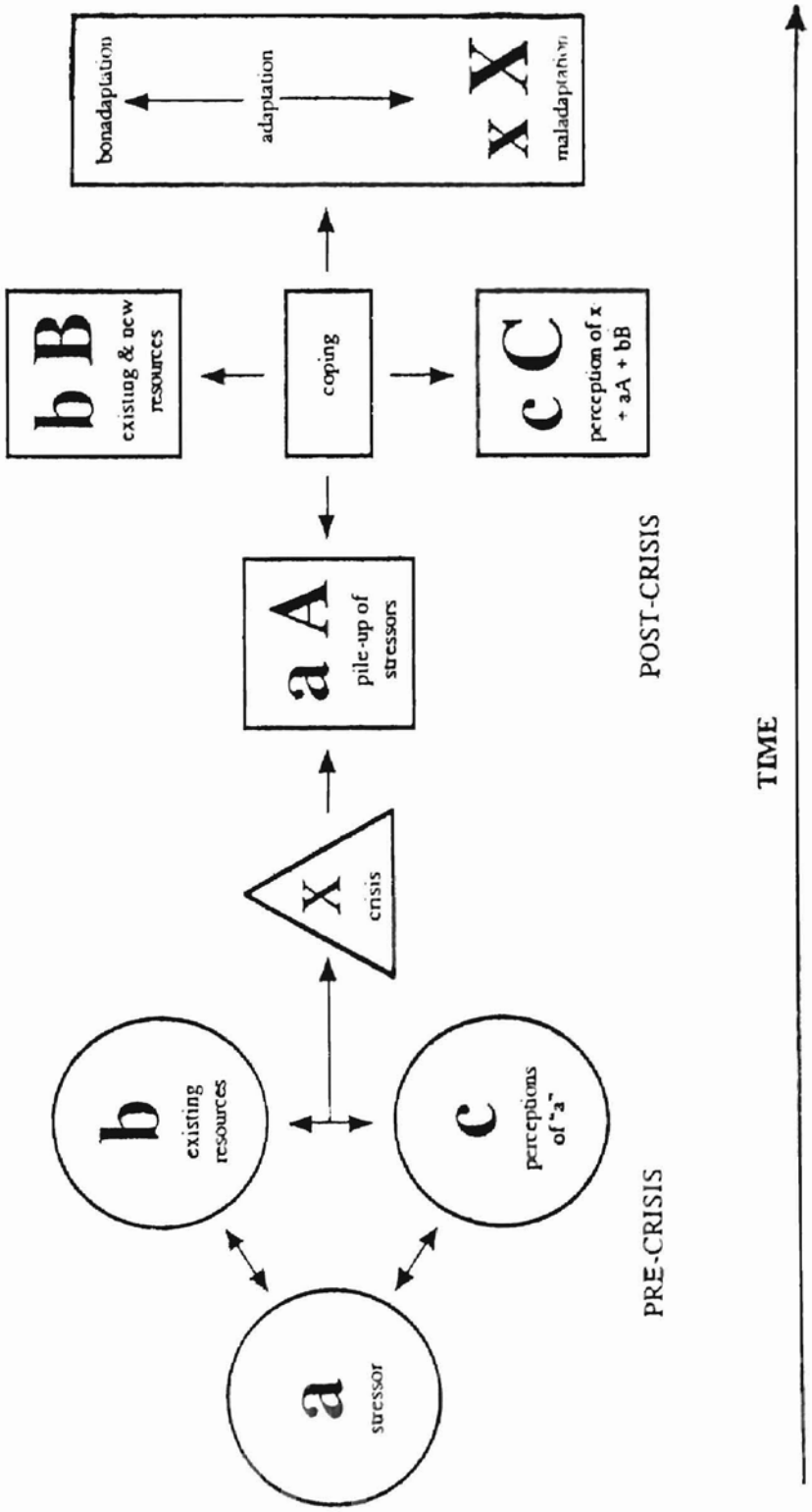
*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DOUBLE ABCX MODEL

Figure 1. Double ABCX Model of Family Stress.



APPENDIX B

FORMS

March 30, 2000

Dear fellow Army Servicemember Spouse,

As a 11-year veteran army wife and current graduate student majoring in family relations and child development, I am interested in seeking the participation of spouses of servicemembers from 5th Army to participate in a research study on coping and family functioning during military separations (e.g., deployments, training's, schools, TDY, or any ongoing family separation due to military duties). When I attended the 5th Army Family Action Plan Conference in 1998 in San Antonio a list was generated and distributed to all in attendance of the names and addresses of Army families participating there. All participants from the conference will be receiving this voluntary survey and are being asked to give additional surveys to other Army families. I am studying how separation from servicemembers, due to military duties relate to coping and family functioning with the family (spouse /children) during their absence. Your expertise on the subject is greatly needed to gain a true perspective on life for today's Army families. If for any reason any of the questions evoke emotions and issues that need to be addressed please seek assistance at the Army's closest family service center, Chaplains office, or medical facility at your current location. This study will form the basis of my thesis project, and I appreciate your support greatly.

I would appreciate your taking the time to complete one questionnaire and a consent form. Your participation is very important for this study. The information produced from this research may influence policy and programs for military families in the future.

Please enclose the completed questionnaire and consent form in the provided (postage paid) envelope and return as soon as possible. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Amy Freeman
Graduate Student

Linda C. Robinson
Associate Professor

CONSENT FORM

I, _____hereby authorize or direct

Amy L. Freeman and Linda C. Robinson, Ph.D. to perform the following procedure for the research study entitled *Coping and Family Functioning during Family Separations in Modern Army Families*.

The research procedure involves completing a questionnaire addressing coping of military families during separations due to military duties. I authorize the use of data collected in this project as a means of understanding the unique situations encountered by military families. I understand the procedure will take about 30 minutes maximum and the questionnaire is to be returned by mail to the investigators.

I understand that the questionnaire will be considered for confidential research use only. The researcher has assigned each questionnaire a code number and the researchers will destroy the list of participants before they begin to review the questionnaires. This questionnaire does address sensitive issues, so participants should be prepared to answer some difficult answers to family issues. I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the project director. The researchers will use the results of the study to identify effective ways in which military families cope with the demands of separations due to military duties and to make recommendations for policies which could enhance the well being of military families.

I may contact Amy Freeman at telephone number (301)-985-2074or Linda Robinson at (405) 744-8356. I may also contact, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number: (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily.

Date: _____ Time: _____(a.m./p.m.)

Signed: _____
Signature of Subject

4/22/00

Dear Army Servicemember Spouse,

Thank you for allowing me to use your experience and knowledge pertaining to family life in the military for my research study. Being a Army spouse for the past 11 years, I have developed a true respect and interest in how military families adapt, cope, and function under unique situations. If you have already mailed your survey and given other military families the additional surveys, Thank You! If not, please do so as soon as you can. Your input is critical to this study. All information is strictly confidential and to be used only in this individual survey.

Sincerely, Amy L. Freeman
301-985-2074

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

To be filled out by servicemember's spouse

Please answer the following questions about your family.

1. What is the rank of the servicemember in your family?
2. How many years or months have you and your spouse been a married military family?
3. How many children do you have?
4. How long have you been living at your current location? (years, months, days)
5. Do you live on or off post?
6. How many hours are you employed per week?
7. Are you involved in the military community/life? How many hours a week?
8. How many deployments (including separations due to military duties, i.e. TDY, training, schools, etc) have you experienced in the past year?
9. What is the duration (total length) of the servicemember's deployments and military absences in the past year?

FCI

FAMILY COPING INVENTORY

Separation and Single Parent Status

Hamilton I. McCubbin Pauline G. Boss Lance R. Wilson and Barbara B. Dahl

PURPOSE

FCI is designed to record the behaviors wives or husbands find helpful to them in managing family life when spouses are separated for short, long, or permanent periods of time. Coping is defined as individual or group behavior used to manage the hardships and relieve the discomfort associated with life changes or difficult life events.

DIRECTIONS

- On the next two pages is a list of "behaviors" or statements that spouses may or may not use to cope with a separation experience. Please carefully consider "how helpful" each of these behaviors has been to you in your adjustment to separation.
- Circle one of the following responses for each statement:

  3 Very Helpful
  2 Moderately Helpful
  1 Minimally Helpful
  0 Not Helpful

- Please be sure and record a response for every item.

COMPUTER CODES: IID☐☐☐☐ GID☐☐☐ FAMID☐☐☐☐

Not Helpful	Minimally Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Very Helpful	COPING BEHAVIORS
0	1	2	3	1 Talking with other individuals in my same situation
0	1	2	3	2 Going to school
0	1	2	3	3 Learning new skills
0	1	2	3	4 Developing myself as a person
0	1	2	3	5 Making financial investments/savings
0	1	2	3	6 Doing things with the family
0	1	2	3	7 Involvement in religious activities
0	1	2	3	8 Trying to be a father and a mother to the children
0	1	2	3	9 Allowing myself to become angry
0	1	2	3	10 Believing that my husband's career is most important
0	1	2	3	11 Always depending upon friends to give me support
0	1	2	3	12 Trying to maintain family stability
0	1	2	3	13 Investing myself in my children
0	1	2	3	14 Becoming more independent
0	1	2	3	15 Reading
0	1	2	3	16 Believing that the institutions that my spouse and I work for have my family's best interest in mind
0	1	2	3	17 Taking advantage of local programs and services aimed at helping those in my situation
0	1	2	3	18 Wishing my spouse (or former spouse) was not gone and that things were different
0	1	2	3	19 Believing that my life would not be any better if my spouse were here (or my former spouse and I were still together)
0	1	2	3	20 Building close relationships wi people
0	1	2	3	21 Taking advantage of professiona counseling
0	1	2	3	22 Involvement in activities speci cally for someone in my situati
0	1	2	3	23 Establishing a new life for mys
0	1	2	3	24 Drinking alcohol
0	1	2	3	25 Always counting on relatives to help me out
0	1	2	3	26 Being active in the local commu
0	1	2	3	27 Doing things with relatives
0	1	2	3	28 Reliving the past; reflecting o the memorable moments
0	1	2	3	29 Crying
0	1	2	3	30 Believing that things will alwa work out
0	1	2	3	31 Dating
0	1	2	3	32 Talking to someone about how I feel
0	1	2	3	33 Showing that I'm strong
0	1	2	3	34 Using drugs
0	1	2	3	35 Making sure I take advantage of all the state and local economi benefits I have coming to me
0	1	2	3	36 Participating on a regular basi in planned activities conducted by others in my situation
0	1	2	3	37 Establishing a routine which is not dependent upon my spouse (o former spouse) being around
0	1	2	3	38 Believing that I am better at running the family and/or finan without my spouse or former spouse

Not Helpful	Minimally Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Very Helpful	COPING BEHAVIORS	Not Helpful	Minimally Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Very Helpful	COPING BEHAVIORS
0	1	2	3	39 Believing that this is our style of life and I should enjoy it	0	1	2	3	55 Sleeping
0	1	2	3	40 Always trusting my faith to pull me through	0	1	2	3	56 Keeping myself in shape and well-groomed
0	1	2	3	41 Doing more things with the children	0	1	2	3	57 Watching television
0	1	2	3	42 Being a "good" wife and doing what my husband wants me to do	0	1	2	3	58 Going to movies
0	1	2	3	43 Believing in God	0	1	2	3	59 Remodeling or redecorating the house
0	1	2	3	44 Doing volunteer work	0	1	2	3	60 Engaging in club work (church, PTA, etc.)
0	1	2	3	45 Involvement in social activities (parties, etc.) with friends	0	1	2	3	61 Telling myself that I have many things I should be thankful for
0	1	2	3	46 Planning my future	0	1	2	3	62 Keeping problems to myself
0	1	2	3	47 Concentrating on hobbies (art, music, sewing, etc.)	0	1	2	3	63 Going shopping with friends
0	1	2	3	48 Eating	0	1	2	3	64 Advancing my professional career
0	1	2	3	49 Traveling	0	1	2	3	65 Living up to what society wants me to do as a parent
0	1	2	3	50 Always relying on myself to solve problems	0	1	2	3	66 Participating in gatherings and events with relatives
0	1	2	3	51 Going shopping with the children or by myself	0	1	2	3	67 Socializing with friends of the opposite sex
0	1	2	3	52 Reading about how other persons in my situation handle things	0	1	2	3	68 Establish a new style of life--new friends, new activities, etc.
0	1	2	3	53 Seeking encouragement, guidance and support from my parent(s)	0	1	2	3	69 Always believing that nothing bad could ever happen to my children
0	1	2	3	54 Engaging in relationships and friendships which are satisfying to me	0	1	2	3	70 Seeking out friends who understand how difficult it is for me at times

PLEASE Check all 70 items to be sure you have circled a number for each one.

FAMILY STRESS COPING AND HEALTH PROJECT
1300 Linden Drive
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, WI 53706

Family Health Program
FORM C
1983

ID ☐☐☐
GID ☐☐☐
FID ☐☐☐

FILE

Family Inventory of Life Events and Changes

Hamilton I. McCubbin Joan M. Patterson Lance R. Wilson

PURPOSE

Over their life cycle, all families experience many changes as a result of normal growth and development of members due to external circumstances. The following list of family life changes can happen in a family at any time. Because far members are connected to each other in some way, a life change for any one member affects all the other persons in family to some degree.

> "FAMILY" means a group of two or more persons living together who are related by blood, marriage or adoption. This includes persons who live with you *and* to whom you have a long term commitment.

DIRECTIONS

"DID THE CHANGE HAPPEN IN YOUR FAMILY?"
Please read each family life change and decide whether it happened to any member of your family—including you.

- DURING THE LAST YEAR
  First, decide if it happened any time during the last 12 months and check YES or NO.

During Last 12 Months Yes	No
☐	☐

FAMILY LIFE CHANGES	DID THE CHANGE HAPPEN IN YOUR FAMILY? During Last 12 Months Yes	No	Score
I. INTRA-FAMILY STRAINS			
1. Increase of husband-father's time away from family 46	☐	☐	
2. Increase of wife/mother's time away from family 51	☐	☐	
3. A member appears to have emotional problems 58	☐	☐	
4. A member appears to depend on alcohol or drugs 66	☐	☐	
5. Increase in conflict between husband and wife 53	☐	☐	
6. Increase in arguments between parent(s) and child(ren) 45	☐	☐	
7. Increase in conflict among children in the family 48	☐	☐	
8. Increased difficulty in managing teenage child(ren) 55	☐	☐	
9. Increased difficulty in managing school age child(ren) (6-12 yrs.) 39	☐	☐	
10. Increased difficulty in managing preschool age child(ren) (2½-6 yrs.) 36	☐	☐	
11. Increased difficulty in managing toddler(s) (1-2½ yrs.) 36	☐	☐	
12. Increased difficulty in managing infant(s) (0-1 yr.) 35	☐	☐	
13. Increase in the amount of "outside activities" which the child(ren) are involved in 25	☐	☐	
14. Increased disagreement about a member's friends or activities 35	☐	☐	
15. Increase in the number of problems or issues which don't get resolved 45	☐	☐	
16. Increase in the number of tasks or chores which don't get done 35	☐	☐	
17. Increased conflict with in-laws or relatives 40	☐	☐	
II. MARITAL STRAINS			
18. Spouse/parent was separated or divorced 79	☐	☐	
19. Spouse/parent has an "affair" 68	☐	☐	
20. Increased difficulty in resolving issues with a "former" or separated spouse 47	☐	☐	
21. Increased difficulty with sexual relationship between husband and wife 58	☐	☐	

Subtotal 1 ____

Please turn over and complet

Subtotal 2 ____

FAMILY LIFE CHANGES	DID THE CHANGE HAPPEN IN YOUR FAMILY? During Last 12 Months Yes	No	Score
III. PREGNANCY AND CHILDBEARING STRAINS			
22. Spouse had unwanted or difficult pregnancy 45	☐	☐	
23. An unmarried member became pregnant 65	☐	☐	
24. A member had an abortion 50	☐	☐	
25. A member gave birth to or adopted a child 50	☐	☐ *	
IV. FINANCE AND BUSINESS STRAINS			
26. Took out a loan or refinanced a loan to cover increased expenses 29	☐	☐	
27. Went on welfare 55	☐	☐	
28. Change in conditions (economic, political, weather) which hurts the family business 41	☐	☐	
29. Change in Agriculture Market, Stock Market, or Land Values which hurts family investments and or income 43	☐	☐	
30. A member started a new business 50	☐	☐	
31. Purchased or built a home 41	☐	☐	
32. A member purchased a car or other major item 19	☐	☐	
33. Increasing financial debts due to over-use of credit cards 31	☐	☐	
34. Increased strain on family "money" for medical/dental expenses 23	☐	☐	
35. Increased strain on family "money" for food, clothing, energy, home care 21	☐	☐	
36. Increased strain on family "money" for children's education 22	☐	☐	
37. Delay in receiving child support or alimony payments 41	☐	☐ *	
V. WORK-FAMILY TRANSITIONS AND STRAINS			
38. A member changed to a new job/career 40	☐	☐	
39. A member lost or quit a job 55	☐	☐	
40. A member retired from work 48	☐	☐	
41. A member started or returned to work 41	☐	☐	
42. A member stopped working for extended period (e.g., laid off, leave of absence, strike) 51	☐	☐	
43. Decrease in satisfaction with job/career 45	☐	☐	
44. A member had increased difficulty with people at work 32	☐	☐	
45. A member was promoted at work or given more responsibilities 40	☐	☐	
46. Family moved to a new home/apartment 43	☐	☐	
47. A child/adolescent member changed to a new school 24	☐	☐ **	
Subtotal 3			

FAMILY LIFE CHANGES	DID THE CHANGE HAPPEN IN YOUR FAMILY? During Last 12 Months Yes	No	Score
VI. ILLNESS AND FAMILY "CARE" STRAINS			
48. Parent/spouse became seriously ill or injured 44	☐	☐	
49. Child became seriously ill or injured 35	☐	☐	
50. Close relative or friend of the family became seriously ill 44	☐	☐	
51. A member became physically disabled or chronically ill 73	☐	☐	
52. Increased difficulty in managing a chronically ill or disabled member 58	☐	☐	
53. Member or close relative was committed to an institution or nursing home 44 47	☐	☐	
54. Increased responsibility to provide direct care or financial help to husband's and/or wife's parent(s)	☐	☐	
55. Experienced difficulty in arranging for satisfactory child care 40	☐	☐ *	
VII. LOSSES			
56. A parent/spouse died 98	☐	☐	
57. A child member died 99	☐	☐	
58. Death of husband's or wife's parent or close relative 48	☐	☐	
59. Close friend of the family died 47	☐	☐	
60. Married son or daughter was separated or divorced 58	☐	☐	
61. A member "broke up" a relationship with a close friend 55	☐	☐ *	
VIII. TRANSITIONS "IN AND OUT"			
62. A member was married 42	☐	☐	
63. Young adult member left home 43	☐	☐	
64. A young adult member began college (or post high school training) 28	☐	☐	
65. A member moved back home or a new person moved into the household 42	☐	☐	
66. A parent/spouse started school (or training program) after being away from school for a long time 38	☐	☐ **	
IX. FAMILY LEGAL VIOLATIONS			
67. A member went to jail or juvenile detention 68	☐	☐	
68. A member was picked up by police or arrested 57	☐	☐	
69. Physical or sexual abuse or violence in the home 75	☐	☐	
70. A member ran away from home 61	☐	☐	
71. A member dropped out of school or was suspended from school 38	☐	☐ **	
Subtotal 4			
Grand Total (1+2+3+4)			

FACES III: Couple Version

David H. Olson, Joyce Portner, and Yoav Lavee

1	2	3	4	5
ALMOST NEVER	ONCE IN AWHILE	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALW

_____ 1. We ask each other for help.

_____ 2. When problems arise, we compromise.

_____ 3. We approve of each other's friends.

_____ 4. We are flexible in how we handle our differences.

_____ 5. We like to do things with each other.

_____ 6. Different persons act as leaders in our marriage.

_____ 7. We feel closer to each other than to people outside our family.

_____ 8. We change our way of handling tasks.

_____ 9. We like to spend free time with each other.

_____ 10. We try new ways of dealing with problems.

_____ 11. We feel very close to each other.

_____ 12. We jointly make the decisions in our marriage.

_____ 13. We share hobbies and interests together.

_____ 14. Rules change in our marriage.

_____ 15. We can easily think of things to do together as a couple.

_____ 16. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.

_____ 17. We consult each other on our decisions.

_____ 18. It is hard to identify who the leader is in our marriage.

_____ 19. Togetherness is a top priority.

_____ 20. It is hard to tell who does which household chores.

FAMILY SOCIAL SCIENCE, 290 McNeal Hall, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, M

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

Although several of the hypotheses were not supported, much richness existed in the data. Therefore, further analyses were used to gain further depth of information regarding military families and how they function. The purpose of these analyses was to explore the combinations of the different components of the theoretical model, to explain demographics, perceived family functioning, and perceived stressors as predictors of perceived coping.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses

Model 1: Family Integrity (Coping). In step one of the first regression equation, children demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .31$, $p \leq .05$) with perceived family integrity and accounted for 9% of the variance in perceived family integrity. In step two, of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, children ($\beta = .27$), adaptation ($\beta = .21$), and cohesion ($\beta = .15$) were not significant and accounted for an additional 10% variance in perceived family integrity. In step three, the only significant predictor was illcare ($\beta = -.44$, $p \leq .01$), which explained an additional 19% of variance in perceived family integrity ($F = 6.81$, $p \leq .01$; $R^2 = .38$). In other words, when the number of children increase, the perception of family integrity increase. Conversely, when the number of children decrease, the perception of family integrity decrease. When the perception of illcare strains increase, the perception of family integrity also increases. However, when the perception of illcare strains decrease, the perception of family integrity decreases. Hypothesis eight is supported in the analysis due to illcare being a stressor related to perceived coping. The additional analyses are of demographic variables, family functioning variables, and coping variables run as predictors of stressors (See Table 11).

Model 2: Intra-family Strains. In step one of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, perceived military involvement of the spouse demonstrated a significant negative

beta coefficient (β = -.36, $p \leq .01$) with perceived intra-family strains and accounted for 13% of the variance in the outcome variable. In step two, perceived military involvement yielded a significant negative beta coefficient (β = -.29, $p \leq .05$) when combined with perception of finance strains accounting for 5% of additional variance.. The perception of finance strains yielded a beta coefficient that was not significant. The overall research model (perception of military involvement of spouse, perception of financial strain) accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perception of intra-family strains ($F = 5.27$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .18$). Therefore, when the perception of military involvement increases, the perception of intra-family strains decrease. Conversely, when the perception of military involvement decrease, the perception of intra-family strains increase (See Table 12).

Model 3: Pregnancy/Childbearing Strains. The third regression equation explained 23% variance in perception of pregnancy/childbearing strains ($F = 6.89$, $p \leq .01$). The hours of involvement yielded a significant positive beta coefficient with perceptions of pregnancy/childbearing strains (β = .38, $p \leq .01$) but living on/off post was non-significant. Therefore, when perception of spouse involvement in the military community increase, the perception of pregnancy and childbearing strains increase. However, when perception of spouse involvement in the military community decrease, the perception of pregnancy and childbearing strains decrease (See Table 13).

Model 4: Financial/Business Strains. In step one of the fourth regression equation, rank of the servicemember demonstrated a significant negative beta coefficient (β = -.31, $p \leq .05$) in relation to perception of financial/business strains and accounted for a significant 10% of the variance. In step two, the rank yielded a significant negative beta coefficient in relation to perceptions of financial/business strains (β = -.33, $p \leq .05$) and military involvement

yielded a significant negative beta coefficient as well (β = -.32, $p \leq .05$) and accounted for an additional 10% of the variance. Step three of the hierarchical multiple regression equation explained an additional 2% of the variance but was not significant. Rank demonstrated significant negative beta coefficients with perception of financial/business strains (β = -.28, $p \leq .05$). Perceptions of military involvement and perceptions of intra-family strains did not prove significant in the step three analyses. The overall research model (rank, perception of military involvement, perception of intra-family strains) accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perception of financial/business strains ($F = 4.22$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .22$). Hence, when the rank of the servicemember increases, the perception of financial/business strains decreases. Conversely, when the rank of the servicemember decreases, the perception of financial/business strains increase. When the perception of spouse involvement in the military community in combination with rank, increases, there is a decrease in the perception of financial/business strains. When the perception of spouse involvement in the military community decreases, there is a increase in the perception of financial/business strains (See Table 14).

Model 5: Work and Family Strains. In the fifth regression equation, years at the current location demonstrated a significant negative beta coefficient (β = -.37, $p \leq .01$) with perceptions of work and family strains. Years at current location accounted for a significant amount of variance ($F = 7.76$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .14$) in perceptions of work and family strains. Hence, when the number of years at location increase, the perception of work and family strains decrease. Conversely, when the years at location decrease, the perception of work and family strains increase (See Table 15).

Model 6: Illcare Strains. In step one of the sixth regression equation, living on post demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .33$, $p \leq .05$) with perceptions of illcare strains and accounted for a significant 11% of the variance in perceptions illcare strains. In step two, neither living on post nor number of deployments were significantly related to perceptions of illcare strains. However, this step accounted for an additional 6% of the variance in perceptions of illcare strains. In step three of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, living on post was not significant, but number of deployments demonstrated a significant negative beta coefficient ($\beta = -.38$, $p \leq .01$) and perceptions of family integrity yielded a significant negative beta coefficient ($\beta = -.46$, $p \leq .01$) with perceptions of illcare strains. The variables of step three (living on post, number of deployments, perceptions of maintaining family integrity) accounted for a significant additional variance of 20% in the perceptions of illcare strains. The overall research model (living on post, number of deployments, perceptions of maintaining family integrity) accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perceptions of illcare strains ($F = 8.73$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .37$). The amount of unique variance accounted for by each step of the equation beyond that accounted for by previous steps for perceptions of illcare in the models follow: step one, 11%; step two, 6%; step three, 20%. Therefore, when there is an increase of living on post, the perception of illcare strains (e.g., injured or sick family member, disabilities, childcare arrangement) increase as well. Conversely, when there is a decrease of living on post, there is a decrease in the perception of illcare strains. When the number of deployments increase, combined with living on post and perceptions of family integrity, the perception of illcare strains decrease. However, when the number of deployments decrease, combined

with living on post and perceptions of family integrity, the perceptions of illcare strains increase (See Table 16).

Model 7: Transitions "In" and "Out". In the seventh regression equation, hours of spouse involvement in the military community demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .51$, $p \leq .01$) with perceptions of transitions "in" and "out" of the family strains. The model accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perceptions of transitions "in" and "out" of the family strains ($F = 17.00$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .26$). Therefore, as hours of spouse involvement in the military community increase, perceptions of transition "in" and "out" (servicemember's presence and separation from the family) strains increase. Conversely, as hours of spouse involvement in the military community decreases, perceptions of transitions "in" and "out" decrease (See Table 17).

Model 8: Coping. In step one of the eighth regression equation, perceived adaptability demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .36$, $p \leq .05$) with perceived coping and accounted for 13% of the variance. In step two, of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, adaptability ($\beta = .26$) and cohesion ($\beta = .14$) were not significant and accounted for an additional variance of 1% in perceptions of coping. The overall research model (adaptability, cohesion) accounted for a significant amount of the variance in coping ($F = 3.68$, $p \leq .05$, $R^2 = .14$). Hence, as perception of adaptability increases, perception of coping increases. Conversely, as perception of adaptability decreases, perception of coping decreases (See Table 18).

Model 9: Support. In step one of the ninth regression equation, perceived adaptability demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .34$, $p \leq .05$) with perceived support and accounted for 12% of the variance. In step two of the hierarchical multiple regression

equation, perceived adaptability (β = .26) and family integrity (β = .24) were not significant and accounted for an additional 5% variance in perceived support. The overall model accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perceived support ($F = 4.55$, $p \leq .05$, $R^2 = .17$). Therefore, as the perception of adaptability increases, perception of support increases. Conversely, as the perception of adaptability decreases, perception of support decreases (See Table 19).

Model 10: Managing Strains. In step one of the tenth regression equation, perceived adaptability demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .40$, $p \leq .01$) with perceptions of managing strains and accounted for 16% of the variance. In step two of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, perceived adaptability yielded significant positive beta coefficients ($\beta = .27$, $p \leq .05$) with perceptions of managing strains. Perceived support yielded a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .45$, $p \leq .01$) with perceptions of managing strains. Perceived adaptability and support accounted for a significant additional 18% of variance in perceptions of managing strains. The overall model accounted for a significant amount of the variance in perceptions of managing strains ($F = 12.13$, $p \leq .01$, $R^2 = .34$). In other words, as the perception of adaptability increases, the perception of managing strains increases. Conversely, as the perception of adaptability decreases, perception of managing strains decreases. As perceptions of adaptability and support increase, perceptions of managing strains increase. Conversely, as perceptions of adaptability and support decrease, perceptions of managing strain decrease (See Table 20).

Model 11: Optimism. In the eleventh regression equation, perceptions of managing strain yielded a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .39$, $p \leq .05$) with perceived optimism, although support was non-significant. Twenty-four percent of the variance in

perceived optimism was explained by these combined variables ($F = 7.21$, $p \leq .01$). Therefore, as perceptions managing strain increase, perceptions of optimism increase. Conversely, as perceptions of managing strain decrease, perceptions of optimism decrease (See Table 21).

Model 12: Self-Reliance. In step one of the twelfth regression equation, perceived cohesion demonstrated a significant positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .39$, $p \leq .01$) with perceived self-reliance and accounted for 15% of the variance. In step two of the hierarchical multiple regression equation, perceived cohesion ($\beta = .25$, $p \leq .05$) and perceived optimism ($\beta = .36$, $p \leq .01$) were significantly related to perceptions of self-reliance. Perceptions of support ($\beta = .24$) and managing strain ($\beta = 14$) were not significant in step two. Step two variables accounted for an additional significant 33% variance in perceived self-reliance. The model accounted for 49% of the variance in perceived self-reliance ($F = 10.58$, $p \leq .01$). In other words, as perceptions of cohesion increase, perceptions of self-reliance increase. Conversely, as perceptions of cohesion decrease, perceptions of self-reliance decrease. As perceptions of optimism combined with perceptions of cohesion increase, perceptions of self-reliance increase. On the other hand, as perceptions of optimism combined with perceptions of cohesion decrease, perceptions of self-reliance decrease (See Table 22).

Additional Stressors

This research found the perceived life-event stressor, illcare (childcare for children, caring for sick family members, etc.), was related to perceived coping which support Hypothesis 8, perceived life-event stressors are related to perceived coping during deployments. Specifically, the results found that perceptions of family integrity relate to perceived illness and family care strains (illcare).

The involvement of the servicemembers' spouse in military life was negatively related to perceptions of intra-family strains. This indicates that as problems within the military family (e.g., absence of the mother or the father from the home) increase, the military/community involvement of the spouse decreases. Many of the items within the intra-family strain subscale (e.g., managing children, household chores, etc.) may influence the life of the spouse during the absence of the servicemember.

The childcare/child-rearing issues within intra-family strains may be related to the significant relationship between perceptions of illcare and coping. The involvement of the servicemember's spouse in military life was positively related to perceptions of pregnancy and childbearing strains. This effect may be due to the spouse being geographically separated from family support networks.

Rank was negatively related to perceived financial and business strains. The higher the rank of the servicemember the least amount of perceived financial and business strain the family experienced, which may be related to the increased earnings of higher-ranking servicemembers.

The number of years residing at current location was negatively related to work and family transitions and strains for the military families studied. The longer a servicemember's family resides at one location, the fewer work-family transitions the family will experience. Typically, the Army attempts to stabilize at any one location for approximately three years.

This study found the average family had only lived at their current location for 1.5 years. The number of deployments and family integrity were negatively related to illness and family care strains. In other words, as deployments and family integrity increase, illness and family care strains decrease. Perhaps this is due to the resources and coping techniques the spouse

incorporates during time of separations, and the perception that he or she is solely responsible for the family care during the absence.

Spouse's number of hours involved in military life/community were positively related to transition strains. The more a spouse is involved in the military life/community, the more difficult it is to manage the transitions of the family members exiting and entering the system.

Although adaptability and cohesion were correlated in bivariate correlations with coping and family integrity, neither showed significance in the regression models. Adaptability and support explained 34% of the variance in managing strains. Managing strains was positively related to optimism. The more adept a servicemember's spouse is at managing strains, the higher his or her optimism level. Cohesion and optimism positively predicted self-reliance. The more cohesion between family members and the higher the level of optimism experienced by the servicemember's spouse relates to a higher self-reliance for the spouse.

In spite of a significant number of absences and duration of absences of servicemembers from their families, modern Army families appear to perceive relatively few strains due to perceived life-event stressors. However, more financial strains are perceived when the rank of the servicemember is lower.

Modern Army families report high perceived coping skills and family functioning. Modern Army families appear to report similar coping strategies as families who experienced war-induced separations, including adaptability, closeness, and family integrity. Spouses who value the servicemember's occupation and who are more involved in military life tend to perceive lower levels of intra-family strain and manage strains more effectively. The better a servicemember spouse manages strain the higher the perceived optimism level.

Adaptations of modern Army families may be enhanced through the resources of adaptability, cohesion, family integrity, and valuing and/or being involved in the military life/community.

Recommendations

Any programs implemented by the Army to support families in providing resources in caring for children, help during illness, and dealing with the pressures of these issues during times of deployments could help in the coping of spouses. Programs that would help ease the demands of intra-family strains would increase spouse involvement in the military community. Programs to lend support to spouses who are pregnant or experiencing childbearing strains would strengthen spouses' involvement in the community. Programs to help junior enlisted families successfully handle the financial strains experienced have been identified as warranted.

Due to the length of time families are actually living at their current location, programs to ease the related work and family transitions and strains is needed. These could include sponsors, orientations, spouse support groups, childcare arrangements, youth activities, and other activities to help families get settled into their new life.

Programs that enhance spouse self-esteem and self-reliance would boost confidence level in turn helping families manage strains and create a more optimistic outlook and perception about themselves and the military. This study finds that spouses who value the servicemember's occupation and who are more involved in military life tend to have lower levels of intra-family strain and manage strains more effectively. This finding should encourage the Army to find ways to involve spouses in the military community and

recognize the value of integrating positive programs about the military which would boost spouse outlook on the profession of soldiering.

Army families can adapt to stressors of military life by incorporating the resources of adaptability, cohesion, family integrity, and valuing/ being involved in the military life. Programs that promote communication in families, spending time together as a family, learning to count on each other, and providing information on why their role is so important to the Army and our country could strengthen the families of the Army.

Table 11

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Family Integrity

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Children	.98	.45	.31*	.09*
Step 2:				
Children	.86	.43	.27	.10
Adapt	.11	.10	.21	
Cohes	.00	.08	.15	
Step 3:				
Children	.73	.39	.23	.19**
Adapt	.17	.09	.32	
Cohes	.00	.07	.12	
Illcare	-1.48	.41	-.44**	
Multiple R				.62
R^2				.38
Adjusted R^2				.33
F Value				6.81*

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 12

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Intrafamily Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Milinvolv	-1.71	.64	-.36**	.13**
Step 2:				
Milinvolv	-1.37	.66	-.29*	.05
Finance	.38	.22	.24	
Multiple R				.43
R^2				.18
Adjusted R^2				.15
F Value				5.27**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 13

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Pregnancy/Childbearing Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Post	.22	.14	.21	.23**
Hrsinvol	.00	.01	.38**	
Multiple R				.48
R^2				.23
Adjusted R^2				.20
F Value				6.89**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 14

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Financial/Business Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Rank	.00	.04	-.31*	.10*
Step 2:				
Rank	-.10	.04	-.33*	.10*
Milinvol	-.96	.40	-.32*	
Step3:				
Rank	.00	.04	-.28*	.02
Milinvol	-.80	.43	-.26	
Intrafam	.10	.09	.16	
Multiple R				.46
R^2				.22
Adjusted R^2				.17
F Value				4.22**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 15

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Work and Family Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Yrslocat	-.94	.34	-.37**	.14**
Multiple R				.37
R^2				.14
Adjusted R^2				.12
F Value				7.76**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 16

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Illcare Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Post	.68	.28	.33*	.11*
Step 2:				
Post	.52	.29	.26	.06
Ndeploy	.00	.03	-.26	
Step 3:				
Post	.41	.25	.20	.20**
Ndeploy	.00	.03	-.38**	
Faminteg	-.14	.04	-.46**	
Multiple R				.61
R^2				.37
Adjusted R^2				.33
F Value				8.73**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 17

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Transitions "In" and "Out" Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Hrsinvolv	.00	.01	.51**	.26**
Multiple R				.51
R^2				.26
Adjusted R^2				.25
F Value				17.00**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 18

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Coping

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Adaptability	.57	.22	.36*	.13*
Step 2:				
Adaptability	.41	.31	.26	.01
Cohesion	.18	.24	.14	
Multiple R				.37
R^2				.14
Adjusted R^2				.10
F Value				3.68

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 19

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Support

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Adaptability	.15	.06	.34*	.12*
Step 2:				
Adaptability	.12	.06	.26	.05
Family Integ	.20	.12	.24	
Multiple R				.41
R^2				.17
Adjusted R^2				.13
F Value				4.55*

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 20

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Managing Strains

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Adaptability	.18	.06	.40**	.16**
Step 2:				
Adaptability	.12	.06	.27*	.18**
Support	.46	.13	.45**	
Multiple R				.58
R^2				.34
Adjusted R^2				.31
F Value				12.13**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 21

Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Optimism

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Support	.17	.17	.15	.24**
Managing Strain	.43	.17	.39*	
Multiple R				.48
R^2				.24
Adjusted R^2				.20
F Value				7.21**

*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

Table 22

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Self-Reliance

Predictor Variables	b	SE	B	ΔR^2
Step 1:				
Cohesion	.11	.04	.39**	.15**
Step 2:				
Cohesion	.00	.03	.25*	.33**
Support	.19	.10	.24	
Mangstrn	.11	.10	.14	
Optimist	.24	.08	.36**	
Multiple R				.70
R^2				.49[a]
Adjusted R^2				.44
F Value				10.58**

[a] Change for ΔR^2 in Step 1 and Step 2 does not equal the R^2 due to rounding error
*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$

APPENDIX E

MISCELLANEOUS

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date:	February 7, 2000	IRB #:	HE-99107
Proposal Title:	"COPING AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING DURING FAMILY SEPARATION IN MODERN ARMY FAMILIES"		
Principal Investigator(s):	Linda Robinson Amy Freeman		
Reviewed and Processed as:	Expedited		

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature:

Carol Olson

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance — February 7, 2000 (Date)

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

VITA

Amy L. Freeman

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PERCEPTIONS OF COPING AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING DURING FAMILY SEPARATIONS IN MODERN ARMY FAMILIES

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Education: Graduated from Eastland High School, Eastland, Texas in 1984; Received an Associate of Science Degree from Cisco Junior College in 1986. Received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Vocational Home Economics Education from Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, in 1988. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Family Science at Oklahoma State University in May 2001.

Experience: Supervisor for Healthy Families in Lincoln County, Oklahoma with the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service, 1998-1999; Graduate assistant for Cooperative Extension Specialists, Oklahoma State University, 1997-1998; Extension Educator in Crossville, Tennessee with Tennessee Cooperative Extension Service, 1996; Membership Services Specialist in Nashville, Tennessee with the YMCA, 1994-1996; Family Education Specialist with the Armed Services YMCA, Oahu, Hawaii, 1992-1994; Preschool Teacher, Department of Defense Child Development Center, Bindlach, Germany, 1991-1992; Extension Educator with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Leesville, Louisiana, 1988-1990.