

Discussion

Name of Student

Institutional Affiliation

4-1 Discussion

Military veterans are a particular group highly susceptible to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The heightened susceptibility is mainly due to the extreme stressors and traumatic events experienced during combat and military service, such as exposure to life-threatening situations, witnessing death and injury, and the high-pressure environment of warfare. The prevalence of PTSD among veterans is significantly higher compared to the general population, with estimates suggesting that about 11-20% of veterans who served in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have PTSD in a given year (Benhamou, 2020).

Several factors contribute to the increased susceptibility of PTSD among veterans. The nature of military service inherently involves exposure to traumatic events that can overwhelm an individual's ability to cope. The transition from military to civilian life can also be challenging, with veterans often facing difficulties in adjusting to a non-combat environment, potentially exacerbating PTSD symptoms. Additionally, the stigma associated with mental health issues within the military culture can deter individuals from seeking help, leading to untreated or inadequately treated PTSD.

Veterans seek treatment for PTSD through various avenues, often starting with the Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare system, which offers a range of specialized services. Effective treatments for PTSD in veterans typically include evidence-based psychotherapies such as Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and Prolonged Exposure (PE) therapy (Benhamou, 2020). These therapies focus on helping individuals process and reduce the impact of traumatic memories. Medications, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), are also commonly used to alleviate symptoms.

Innovative treatments, such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and the use of service dogs, have shown promise. EMDR helps patients reprocess

traumatic memories, while service dogs provide emotional support and reduce anxiety levels. Additionally, peer support groups and community-based interventions are crucial, providing a platform for veterans to share experiences and coping strategies, thus fostering a supportive environment for recovery.

References

Benhamou, P. (2020). *Risk Factors for PTSD Symptoms among Persian Gulf War Veterans and Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans* [PhD Thesis, Grand Canyon University].

<https://search.proquest.com/openview/042c028cd169603ecd84e3cbb3af966c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

Responses

Hello Terry,

Your analysis of the susceptibility of first responders to PTSD is insightful. The constant exposure to traumatic events certainly puts them at a higher risk for developing PTSD. However, I wonder if there are specific factors within this group that might further influence their susceptibility, such as differences in training, experience, or personal coping mechanisms. For instance, how might the level of preparedness or previous exposure to trauma impact their likelihood of developing PTSD? Additionally, while you mentioned cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) as an effective treatment, what role do peer support and debriefing sessions play in mitigating PTSD symptoms among first responders? Studies have shown that immediate peer support and structured debriefings can significantly reduce the onset of PTSD symptoms. Could these interventions be as critical as formal therapy in the long-term mental health of first responders?

Hi Roshelle,

Your discussion on the susceptibility of sexual assault survivors to PTSD highlights an essential and often underrepresented group. The long-lasting psychological impacts of such trauma are profound. However, considering the varying personal and social contexts, how do factors such as social support, the victim's relationship with the perpetrator, and the response of the legal system affect their PTSD symptoms? Research indicates that strong social support can act as a protective factor, reducing the severity of PTSD symptoms. Furthermore, the response of the legal and medical systems can significantly influence survivors' recovery. Have you considered how systemic responses to sexual assault might either exacerbate or alleviate PTSD symptoms? Exploring these aspects could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges faced by sexual assault survivors.