Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Native American Veterans’ Attitudes, Perceptions, and Beliefs

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Literature Review

- 5 to 17% of returning Veterans suffer from combat related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Research regarding Native American Veterans is lacking

- Native Veterans greatly underutilize services to treat PTSD

- Equine Therapy is becoming more popular for treatment of PTSD.
Purpose and Participants

This study seeks to gain an understanding of:

- Attitudes toward PTSD
- Perceptions about PTSD
- Willingness to engage in therapy
- Barriers to seeking treatment
- Facilitators of treatment

Sample - 588 individuals who identify themselves as Native American Veterans.

- 478 male
- 110 female

represent all branches of the U.S. military.
Instruments

- cross-sectional survey design
- Containing 40 items
- 39 quantitative
- 1 qualitative
- Administered via Survey Monkey.
Procedure

- Contacted social media sites for:
  - All federally recognized Veteran Service Organizations
  - All state and federally recognized Native American Nations
  - Organizations and nations were asked to help circulate word of the study

- Participants have the option of requesting a hard copy

- Results imported into SPSS

- Descriptive statistics of data ran.
Results

Gender

- Men: 82%
- Women: 18%

Branch of Service

- Navy: 48%
- Army: 24%
- Air Force: 19%
- Marine Corps: 16%
- Coast Guard: 2%

19%
Results: Barriers to treatment

- Appearing weak
- Denial that problem exists
- Drug/Alcohol Use
- Fear of what others think
- Lack of Tx. Options
- Lack of resources
- Discomfort w/ Diagnosis
Results: facilitators of Tx.
Results: likeliness to engage in TX./healing
Results

Aware of others diagnosed with PTSD

- Yes: 89%
- No: 7%
- Unsure: 4%

Did your perception of this person change?

- Positively: 11.5%
- Negatively: 13.5%
- Unsure: 3%
- Did not change: 72%
Do most veterans who suffer from PTSD receive adequate treatment?

- Yes: 77%
- No: 19%
- Unsure: 4%
Discussion

- Native Veterans are generally unsatisfied with services provided to them and view them as being inadequate.

- They desire programs that have staff that are veterans and who can understand their experiences in the military.

- More facilities and programs designed to treat PTSD should be formed near major populations of Native Veterans.

- Cost for participation in programs should be significantly reduced or free to participants.

- Programs should be designed to address both primary and secondary symptoms of PTSD, such as drug or alcohol abuse.

- They are not likely to have other Native Veterans view them negatively due to having PTSD.
Limitations and Future Directions of Study

• The survey relied on self-report.

• Native American are not a homogenous group, cultural aspects can differ slightly from tribe to tribe.

• More studies needed to replicate and strengthen research.

• A more detailed look at differences between cohorts should be conducted to see if preferred aspects of treatment differ.

• Qualitative study should also be done to provide depth of information on key findings.

• Pilot studies should be conducted.
This study is open till August 20th.

- To access the study please click on the following link:
  - https://www.surveymonkey.com/summary/npQih4TedXyCOxZvdGXNWpjTMW1kOt7zFFmS6Aqax9I_3D

- For more information regarding results from the survey please contact Greg Urquhart at Greg.Urquhart@wsu.edu