

Military Sexual Violence and Cannabis Use Disorder Among OEF/OIF Veterans



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Introduction

- An estimated 15% of veterans face military sexual trauma (MST)
- Higher rates among women (30-50%) and LGBTQ+ (70-80%)
- Exact prevalence difficult to gauge
- Veterans who experience MST have higher risk for cumulative trauma and behavioral health disorders
- Increasing rate of cannabis use disorder (CUD) in recent years among veterans
- Veterans can also have high resilience (the ability to “bounce back” after distressing events), which can be protective against poor behavioral health outcomes
- Little is known of the link between MST, CUD, and resilience

Methods

Participants

- N = 1005
- 13.6% past 30-day use of cannabis

Analysis

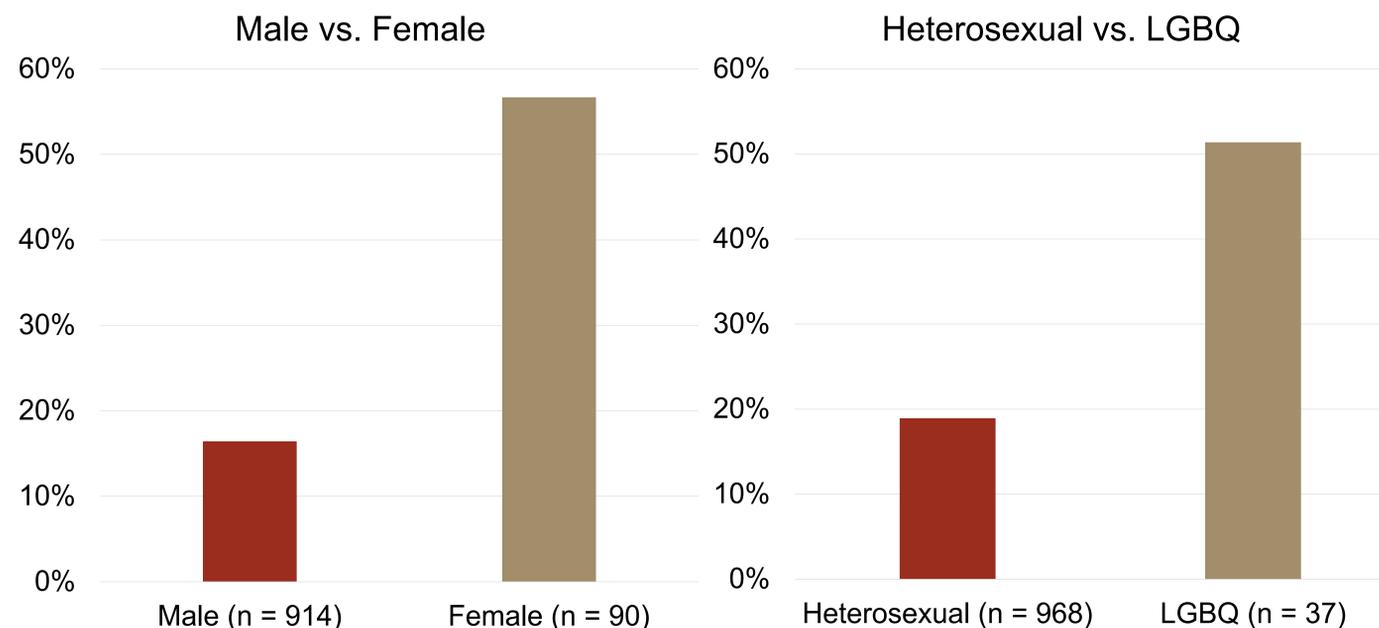
- Sexual violence (not including harassment) measured at Time 1 (Feb. 2020) and CUD, resilience measured at Time 2 (Feb. 2021)
- Chi-square tests for differences in military sexual violence among groups
- Women v. Men (sex)
- LGBTQ v. Heterosexual
- Logistic regression - Military sexual violence predicting CUD
- CUDIT screen @ 12 for probable CUD
- Control for sex, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity
- Moderated by resilience

Results

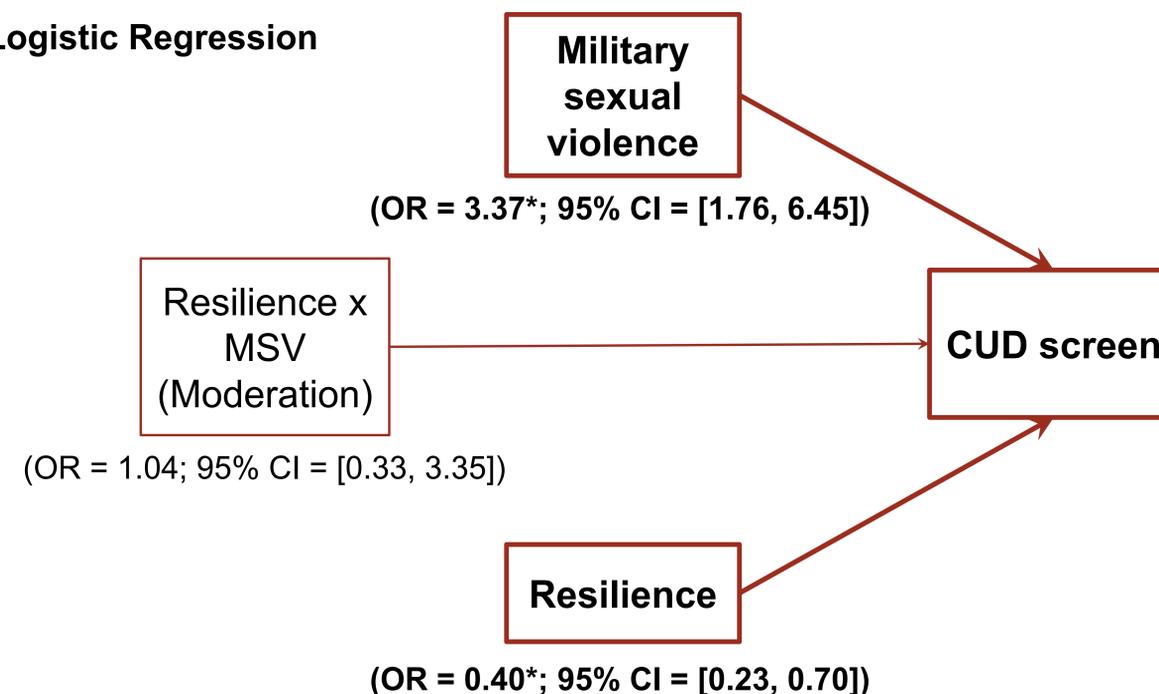
χ² Tests

Female ($\chi^2 = 82.9, p < 0.001$) and **LGBQ** veterans ($\chi^2 = 23.4, p < 0.001$) were significantly **more likely** to have experienced military sexual violence.

% Experienced Military Sexual Violence



Logistic Regression



- Veterans who experienced military sexual violence had **higher odds** of screening for CUD
- Greater resilience was associated with **lower odds** of CUD
- Resilience X sexual violence interaction non-significant

Discussion

- Results point to the importance of screening for MST among veterans seeking care for CUD and vice versa
- Female and SGM veterans could be in need for targeted screening efforts for MST
- Resilience-based treatments may have independent protective effects on CUD
- Need for more robust analysis among female and LGBTQ+ veterans who use cannabis
- Future work to examine role of PTSD, other substances

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