

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
OF VETERANS AS A FUNCTION OF RACE/ETHNICITY AND GENDER: A
NATIONAL ANALYSIS

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Cassandra D. Boyd

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by

Cassandra D. Boyd

APPROVED:

Dr. John R. Slate
Dissertation Chair

Dr. George W. Moore
Committee Member

Dr. Frederick C. Lunenburg
Committee Member

Dr. Wally Barnes
Committee Member

Approved:

Dr. Stacey L. Edmonson
Dean, College of Education

DEDICATION

First and foremost, I want to give honor and glory to God. I believe my faith allowed me to see that completing my dissertation was possible. I hope to inspire others to accomplish their own goals.

Moreover, I dedicate this dissertation to my parents who encouraged me to reach for things unimaginable. My father, James Boyd, is a retired U.S. Army veteran and my mom, Daisy Boyd, is a retired U.S. military licensed clinical social worker who worked tirelessly to help support military families. Their marriage of 50 years taught me that it is always better to give than to receive. This dissertation is also dedicated to my extended family and friends near and far. They provided unwavering support, prayers, and motivation. To everyone in my support network who have served in the military, thank you for being the source of my inspiration for my topic as well as my personal growth. Most importantly, thank you to U.S. soldiers past and present who honor this great country.

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ABSTRACT

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Purpose

The primary purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits between male and female student veterans. Specifically addressed was the extent to which male and female veterans perceived their educational benefits as an important factor in meeting their life goals. Another purpose was to examine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions of the importance of educational benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans and between Black and Hispanic male veterans and between Black and Hispanic female veterans.

Method

A non-experimental, causal-comparative research design (Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2014) was used in this study. An archival dataset, specifically data from veterans who completed the 2010 National Survey of Veterans (NSV), including: Active Duty Service Members, the Demobilized National Guard, Reserve Members, Family Members, and Surviving Spouses, were analyzed herein.

Findings

Most female veterans reported that educational benefits were extremely important. Yet, nearly 20% of female veterans received other education or training assistance outside of VA education assistance, in comparison to male veterans. However, more than half of male veterans reported that they had participated in an apprenticeship

or job training and flight training program compared to female veterans. Additionally, more than three-fourths (i.e., 88.2%) of Hispanic female veterans revealed that educational benefits were extremely important compared to less than half (i.e., 49.6%) of Hispanic male veterans. More Hispanic female veterans also reported that they had attended a teacher certification program compared to no Hispanic male veterans. In regard the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, similar percentages were shared on all survey items for both groups. In all three articles in this journal-ready dissertation, implications for policy and for practice were made. Moreover, recommendations for future research were also made in all three articles.

KEY WORDS: Veteran Affairs, GI Bill, educational benefits, Hispanic, Black, gender, flight training, teacher certification program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The expansion of educational benefits from the Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008, also known as the Post 9/11 GI Bill, has increased and will continue to increase the number of veterans enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the United States over the next two decades (Santos, Esqueda, & Molina, 2015). For example, in 2011, student veterans and their dependents used over 10 billion dollars in educational benefits toward college costs (McCaslin, Leach, Herbst, & Armstrong, 2013). Thus, the 2.4 million veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) between 2001 and 2015 will likely be attracted to the educational benefits provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs to fund their education (Phelps, 2015).

Many college administrators and advisors, however, are not familiar or prepared to address the unique challenges that can cause the increasing number of Post 9/11 veterans to dropout or to experience other poor student success outcomes (McCaslin et al., 2013). Santos et al. (2015) recommended that future scholars could investigate and report the differences in Veterans Administration (VA) benefit usage among racial/ethnic minorities who served after 9/11 because more information on the ethnicity/race of veterans could further support policies and practices in helping more veterans earn a college degree. Moreover, research on gender and race/ethnicity differences of educational benefit usage as factors that influence college enrollment and completion after military service was lacking in the literature. With this journal-ready dissertation,

the degree to which gender and racial/ethnic differences might be present in the use of VA educational benefits were examined.

Review of the Literature on Male and Female Veterans

In 2008, the United States Congress and then-President George W. Bush added additional educational benefits for men and women who previously served in the military after September 11, 2001 (Sandler, 2013). This expansion of benefits was referred to as the Post-9/11 GI Bill but was formally entitled the Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 (Phelps, 2015; Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). During the first year of implementing the Post 9/11 GI Bill, 30,000 veterans received educational benefits for college (Santos et al., 2015). The Post 9/11 GI Bill was beneficial for individuals who served 90 days after September 11, 2001 to begin or continue their education. Additionally, the Post 9/11 GI Bill was an incentive for men and women to join the military after 9/11 to cover the growing costs of college and other expenses. In comparison to the Post 9/11 GI Bill, the earlier Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve and the Reserve Educational Assistance Program provided noticeably lower payments to veterans (Ford & Vignare, 2015).

Compared to former GI Bill recipients, Post 9/11 veterans were more likely to join the military because of financial concerns, such as housing, health care, and childcare (Brown & Routon, 2016). Many Post 9/11 military personnel and veterans often entered the military because of their low socioeconomic status. Also, Post 9/11 male and female veterans can face disappointing setbacks, such as unemployment, economic downturns, low compensation for military skills, and discrimination (Miles, 2016; Vick & Fontanella, 2017). As a result, an expectation can be that the military

might bridge a correlating income divide when soldiers return to their civilian lives (Brown & Routon, 2016; Evans, Pellegrino, & Hoggan, 2015). In turn, Brown and Routon (2016) determined that educational benefits gained from years of military service could assist soldiers separating or retiring from the military as one method of transitioning to college and improve projected minimum or below average wages within the civilian labor force due to their veteran status.

Thus, the Post-9/11 GI Bill offered many veterans, especially OIF, OND, and OIF veterans, an alternative method to transition into civilian life by enrolling in college. Norman et al. (2015) reported that more than a million veterans who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts have redeemed VA educational benefits. Notwithstanding the growing number of veterans who can and or have claimed Post 9/11 educational benefits, a gap existed in the literature regarding relationships between ethnicity/race and gender and veterans' perceptions of using their educational benefits.

Borsari et al. (2017) determined that, in general, military research is largely centered on male veterans. In the mid-1980s, sociologist Glen Elder Jr., explored the influence of wellness over the lifespan of only World War II (WWII) male veterans in relation to their military occupation (Segal & Lane, 2016). In 1986, Elder articulated that the GI Bill influenced positive wellness outcomes (e.g., financial services, personal grit, and group support) for the males in his lifespan study (Elder as cited in Segal & Lane, 2016). Readers should note; however, that, women were excluded in Elder's study (Segal & Lane, 2016). The lack of inclusion of women in military studies, such as Elder's WWII male veteran lifespan study, merely exacerbates the literature gap regarding gender and GI Bill perceptions today. More research efforts were needed

regarding the perceptions of both male and female veterans and the degree to which gender differences might be present in how the GI Bill is interpreted.

In an attempt to add to the lack of 21st century literature on female veteran perceptions; DiRamio et al. (2015) explained that the transition from the military to civilian life for female veterans should be analyzed as carefully as research for males, especially as women have unique transitional barriers that might differ from their male peers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, Heitzman and Somers (2015) examined the experiences of 51 females at a 4-year university who formerly served in the military; 15% of the women were Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans. Heitzman and Somers (2015) recognized that 85% of the female participants stated that they planned to use GI Bill benefits to attend their preferred college. In addition, Segal and Lane (2016) reported that female veterans might use their educational benefits more than male veterans in pursuit of a college degree. Also, Heitzman and Somers (2015) concluded that 65% of the women in the study had children but were confident in their academic ability to persist to graduation.

In a related qualitative case study, Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015) interviewed two confident female veterans who were mothers to explore their unique needs transitioning at a two-year college. One participant, Jessica, left the military after she had her first son but reenlisted due to increased family expenses. After eight years in the military, three deployments, and four children, she depended on the housing stipend associated with her GI Bill to offset childcare and transportation costs (Pellegrino & Hoggan, 2015).

Amy, a Navy veteran and mother of two, was the second participant who took classes full-time with a goal to finish her degree in four semesters. She wanted to gain

more time with her children (Pellegrino & Hoggan, 2015). Both women veterans relied heavily on their GI bill benefits. In sum, Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015) cautioned college leaders at 2-year institutions to understand the different barriers of women veterans with children, particularly single veteran mothers who might depend on educational benefits to relieve financial stress and balance family and school demands.

Both male and female veterans can exhibit stress-induced characteristics caused by several factors: (a) years of deployment, (b) military relocations, (c) part-time enrollment status to care for dependents, (d) life with physical disabilities, and (e) the continuous management of mental health issues due to combat trauma (Evans et al., 2015; Ford & Vignare, 2015). Such experiences in the military might influence how well student veterans use their educational benefits to transition into college. In particular, women veterans (e.g., women veterans with lower SES, women veterans with children, single-parent female veterans) might need to rely on their educational benefits as a method of transitional support more so than male veterans who were documented to have less trouble with their post-military transitions (e.g., finding jobs, returning to school, and locating reasonable housing) than female veterans (Baechtold & De Sawal, 2015; Reppert et al., 2014).

Moreover, Segal and Lane (2016) argued that women veterans suffered over time compared to their male peers. After years of service in a male dominated environment, seemingly, women veterans might ascribe to societal gender roles or pressures that affect the increased use of their VA educational benefits. DiRamio et al. (2015) evaluated the help-seeking attitudes of female college veterans of which three themes emerged in the help-seeking attitudes of female college-going veterans. These themes involved: (a)

gender expectations, (b) accountability attitudes, and (c) male dominance (DiRamio et al., 2015).

One meaningful finding expressed by DiRamio et al. (2015) was that many female veterans resolved that they might not be worthy enough to use resources that would be more suitable for males, especially male veterans who served in combat. In essence, female college veterans communicated that their military service only deserved VA educational benefits, not the additional help-seeking benefits (e.g., outside financial assistance and campus counseling) afforded to them. DiRamio et al. (2015) summarized those non-help-seeking attitudes for women veterans might be cultivated by working in a male-dominated environment.

DiRamio et al. (2015) recorded how one female participant was conflicted regarding the use of benefits other than the GI Bill. The participant stated:

Education benefits are easy to take advantage of but as far as counseling or financial or asking for help, you feel like, have you really done anything to even deserve this because there are so many people who have done so much more than I have you know that's for them? All that stuff is for them. It's not for me because I didn't really do anything. (p. 9)

Alfred, Hammer, and Good (2014) determined that males can experience the effects of male-dominated, non-help seeking norms. Alfred et al. (2014) examined the level of conformity of masculine norms among male student veterans in association with their psychological health. The 117 male student veterans were enrolled at military colleges and or technical colleges, and they participated in the Student Veterans of America organization. Accordingly, male student veterans attending such specific

colleges who conformed to masculine norms experienced lower emotional well-being based on hardiness self-reports (Alfred et al., 2014).

Moreover, male student veterans exhibited a low sense of motivation or an expectation for positive change and growth because of their ascribed male conformity. Half of the males in the study were deployed at least once during their military experience, having served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom or both. In light of these findings, more research could be needed on the perceptions of male and female veterans when exiting the military and entering college life by means of receiving or not receiving help-seeking benefits beyond the GI Bill compared to female veterans.

In contrast, Heitzman and Somers (2015) and Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015) confirmed that the allotment of GI Bill benefits was a helpful factor for female veterans who wished to attend their top university and ultimately signified that their years of service in the military taught them resilience and the “intent to persist” in college (Heitzman & Somers; 2015, p. 23). Therefore, Segal and Lane (2016) validated the research of Heitzman and Somers (2015) because they suggested that educational benefits from the GI Bill could produce similar positive mental and economic outcomes for female veterans similar to Elder’s life course study on World War II (WWII) male veterans (Elder as cited in Segal & Lane, 2016). In sum, more research investigations might assist college financial aid advisors in advising male and female veterans based on their perceptions and the potential difference regarding how they use their educational benefits.

Review of the Literature on Hispanic Veterans

The diversity of the armed services in the United States is unique in many ways, largely because ethnic/racial minorities have served in the military since the American Revolutionary War (Harris, 2014). In 2014, minorities constituted 31.2% of all enlisted soldiers in the United States military, with 12% being of Hispanic origin (Minority Veterans Report, 2017). As a result, the minority veteran's population continues to increase as well. In 2014, the Veterans Population Model projected that five million or approximately 22.6% of military veterans were minorities. Researchers (e.g., Harris, 2014; Minority Veterans Report, 2017) commented that the percentage of minority veterans would continue to increase substantially for years to come.

In fact, minority veterans are expected to increase from 21% to 34% within the next two decades. Even though the military will decline from 22.7 million veterans to 14.5 million veterans by 2040, both Black and Hispanic veterans will increase in comparison to other ethnic/racial groups (Harris, 2014). Harris (2014) noted that by 2040, that percentage of Hispanic veterans should double in size.

Although population trends are that the veteran population is on par with the growth of the more racially and ethnically diverse population in the United States, researchers (e.g., Minority Veterans Report, 2017) revealed that large diverse demographic profiles have long been documented throughout military history in the United States. For example, during the War of 1812, Hispanics participated in military service by fighting against the British in what is referred to as the second battle for independence (Harris, 2014). Historians also detailed that approximately 500,000 Hispanic men fought during WWII, out of a total of two million soldiers who served from

1944 until 1956 (Harris, 2014; Leal, 2003; Santos et al., 2015). Moreover, Hispanic veterans who served in WWII received educational benefits under the GI Bill, also called the GI Bill of Rights, which was signed into law by then President Franklin Roosevelt in 1944 (Thelin, 2004). The GI Bill was a catalyst that offered Hispanic veterans a pathway to attend college and transition into the civilian world and provided a platform for positive change for a large population of Hispanics.

Rosales (2011) conducted a historical literature review on the effects of the GI Bill and the identity development of WWII Hispanic veterans, particularly of Mexican descent through a comprehensive literature review with archival and/or census data and a sample of oral historical interviews from 14 Hispanic veterans who served during WWII and utilized the GI Bill. One important finding was that many World War II (WWII) Hispanic veterans faced barriers when attempting to use their educational benefits for college or training. Interestingly, the challenges faced by many Hispanics, fueled Hispanic veterans to seek opportunities beyond addressing VA discrimination to develop a capacity for greater activism (Rosales, 2011).

One example was that Hispanic veterans from Texas created an organization called The American GI Forum. The term GI was a common WWI name that later became a generic term for an American soldier. Thus, The American GI Forum was a sounding board for benefit allocation issues associated with former WWII soldiers; however, the group expanded their interests to include other political and social concerns for the entire Hispanic population (Leal, 2003).

Thelin (2004) stated:

While the GI Bill enhanced postsecondary education opportunities for modest-income veterans, it had limited the impact on race relations at colleges and universities...the terms of the GI Bill carried no requirement that participating institutions demonstrate nondiscrimination. Colleges that had traditionally excluded racial minorities continued to do so, with no penalty from the federal government...the U.S. armed services still had no policies of racial and ethnic discrimination, especially in the United States Navy. The economic benefits of educational opportunity had yet to be extended to concern for civil rights. At best, the doctrine of “separate but equal” would be the operating principle for race relations in American organizations...It [GI Bill] was large but finite, a temporary accommodation to alleviate a specific problem. (p. 267)

Leal (2003) reported the effects of military service and acculturation of Hispanic veterans during their years of service during both the draft era and the modern volunteer-era. Using archival data from the Latino National Political Survey which comprised 2,817 veteran participants of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban descent and a small veteran sample of White participants, Leal (2003) analyzed responses on intercultural development and racial tolerance. Specifically, 197 participants were draft-era veterans, and 50 were veterans who served during the All-Volunteer Force era. Leal (2003) determined that Hispanic veterans experienced several positive acculturation outcomes related to their military experience. As a result, Hispanic veterans developed more friends with Whites, communicated in English more at home, and notably were more likely to recognize Cesar Chavez. Leal (2003) added that “military service therefore

removes people from civilian society and put them through an unusual experience at an especially formative, young stage in their lives” (p. 208). Despite the positive outcomes of cultural exchanges between Hispanic and White service members, Hispanic veterans were more likely to report incidents of discrimination due to increased exposure to Whites during their military service (Leal, 2003).

Of note, acts of discrimination similar to findings by Leal (2003) toward WWII Hispanic veterans were also revealed by Segal, Thanner, and Segal (2007), who investigated the representation of Hispanic and Black soldiers in the US military. Segal et al. (2007) used unpublished data from the Department of Defense database and annual population representation reports. A key finding was that 20% of Hispanics in the military reported incidents of discrimination in the 1970s because of their race/ethnicity. This percentage merely intensifies the need for more research on the experiences of Hispanic male and female veterans who were once an underrepresented population in the military, but now are a fast-growing group transitioning into college with GI Bill benefits (Segal et al., 2007).

In a more recent analysis of archival data, Santos et al. (2015) examined the experiences of military-connected Hispanic students. The researchers analyzed a subsample of 142, first-year Hispanic enrolled military-connected students from the 2011 UCLA Higher Education Research Institute Freshman Survey. Of note, many Hispanic veteran college students indicated that they had some college experience prior to their first-year as military-connected students. According to Santos et al. (2015), a majority of the Hispanic student veterans were also first-generation college students.

Approximately 48.6% of the reported Hispanic college veterans exhibited no financial anxiety about tuition costs and nearly 43% stated that they had access to \$10,000 or more in education assistance that would not need any return remittance. Santos et al. (2015) concluded that researchers might aspire to learn more about the advantages and disadvantages of racial/ethnic military-connected veterans. In particular, Santos et al. (2015) implied that research should be conducted on why young adult Hispanics consider the military as an indirect path to college instead of other methods for college preparation and financing (Santos et al., 2015). Lastly, Santos et al. (2015) declared that the increase of the Post 9/11 GI Bill has attracted a majority of veterans to use their educational benefits, but future researchers could investigate if educational benefits influence upward mobility for different underrepresented groups, such as Hispanic or Black veterans who served in the military.

Review of the Literature on Black and Hispanic Veterans

The number of minority veterans in the United States was estimated at five million in 2014. The percentages of these minority veterans who took advantage of a minimum of one VA benefit or service increased from 35.2% in 2005 to 44.1% in 2014. In 2014, 1.4 million minority veterans received services or benefits from the Veterans Benefits Association (Minority Report, 2017). With these documented increases in benefit use by underrepresented veterans, readers should note that only 12.9% of the total 22.6% of underrepresented veterans used their educational benefits in 2014 (Minority Report, 2017).

McCaslin et al. (2013) contended that an increasing number of veterans were using their VA educational benefits due to the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Ford and Vignare

(2015) added that the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, also called the New GI Bill, did increase the number of veteran beneficiaries, because of expanded benefits for veterans who served 90 days after 9/11 terrorist act. Additionally, the updated and expanded benefits were an attractive incentive for most veterans because of the higher tuition cap for public or private colleges, including \$1,000 book stipends, prorated housing allowances for online students, rollover of unused benefits for dependents, and the inclusion of educational benefits for National Guard service members and reservists (Ford & Vignare, 2015).

Despite the general increase of using benefits by underrepresented veterans and the generous expansion of 9/11 GI Bill benefits, Black and Hispanic veterans might perceive and experience using their educational benefits differently. For example, Onkst (1998) reported that historically the GI Bill was not a turning point for most Black male WWII veterans, especially Black veterans from the Deep South. Many Black male WWII veterans might have been hopeful for social and economic mobility from the GI Bill after the war ended, but instead faced waves of discrimination from local VA offices managed by White clerks who made the process of gaining job security, unemployment aid, and home loans difficult. Onkst (1998) determined that only 12 Black GI Bill officials were hired at VA centers in 1947. Thus, the military offered no accountability, no diverse staffing, and no protection for Black veterans who encountered racism by the VA, despite the fact that GI Bill policies forbade the mistreatment of all former soldiers (Onkst, 1998). On the positive side, some southern communities organized veteran leagues, such as the all-Black Georgia Veteran's League in Atlanta that assisted Black veterans with workforce education in a segregated South (Onkst, 1998).

Similarly, Leal (2003) determined that Hispanic male veterans who served in WWII pushed back against discriminatory practices after returning home from war. Markedly, the American GI (e.g., a generic term for a US soldier) Forum was implemented by Hispanic veterans in Texas who experienced problematic or poor administration of their veteran benefits by the government. The American GI Forum ultimately rejected the norm that WWII Hispanic veterans would be oppressed politically and economically. Therefore, the American GI Forum decided to expand their agenda to include political issues harming Hispanic veterans transitioning post war and became Congressional activists demanding a brighter future for the community of Hispanic veterans (Leal, 2003).

As stated by McCardle (2017), WWII underrepresented veterans who desired to use their GI benefits and were admitted into college often had a “strong will” to pursue a higher education (p. 122). To elaborate, 14 years after the GI Bill was signed; if Black male veterans did receive access to use their GI benefits to go to college, they might have dealt with Jim Crow laws, such as campus discriminatory housing practices and death threats from community members. In short, McCardle (2017) suggested that “the search to cash in on the federal government’s promise of a college education was anything but democratic and practical” for Black males who fought in WWII and later attended a desegregated college (p. 133).

DiRamio and Jarvis (2014) acknowledged the general challenges when today’s Post 9/11 veterans try to adjust socially to civilian life, but with “GI bill limitations ...and health impairments (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder, physical disabilities) as a result of their service,” these Post 9/11 veterans, Black male veterans face additional systematic

discriminatory practices that mitigated their likelihood for college success (p. 19). Ottley (2014) determined that such factors might explain why Black veterans tend not to use their educational benefits, especially Black male veterans. Ottley (2014) provided a possible rationale for the lack using educational benefits, stating:

If someone falls in a pit and a ladder is let down to rescue him, but the distance between the rung is too great to climb from one to the next, then the ladder is of little use to the victim of the pit. If funds for education are available to the returning vet but there are barriers (access) and obstacles (readiness) to utilizing those funds, then they are of little use to those who may be eligible for such funds. (p. 79)

In sum, additional college preparation for Black veterans before leaving the military could be a warranted investigation to improve college entrance outcomes for Black veterans planning to use their GI Bill benefits. These interventions could circumvent a perilous, pre-destined and metaphorical pit for Black male veterans (Harris, 2014; Ottley, 2014). Researchers (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011; Ottley, 2014) concluded that more literature is needed to understand the experiences of Black male veterans who use their GI Bill benefits over time. Thus, the call for an investigation on “structural and institutional contexts” from researchers conducting longitudinal studies could determine why educational benefits are underused by Black veterans (Ottley, 2014, p. 84).

In contrast to male veterans, according to Prokos and Cabage (2017), the long-term effects of women who have served in the military is still limited, because most military scholars have focused on male veterans and their experiences with educational outcomes and/or gainful employment from the GI Bill. Of note, women with military

service did not receive the same benefits or career advances offered to male veterans until years after WWII (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011). Cooney et al. (2003) agreed that historically, men have served in the military longer than women. However, women who do possess military experience can take advantage of the military's selection process that screen women applicants thoroughly for armed duty. Thus, women veterans often gain combat and other technical skills through their military service, which might make them preferable candidates in the labor force compared to women without military experience. In fact, Black women in the military preferred the instant access of their military and VA benefits compared to the 30, 60, 90 trial periods embedded in the civilian labor force (Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010).

Black women in the military have served since the start of the All-Volunteer Force and 30% of Black women currently serve in the military, but numbers of Black enlisted service members have decreased due to the culmination of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts (Kelty et al., 2010). As such, Black female veterans are overrepresented as a veteran group. Veteran status for Black female veterans can be associated with certain benefits (e.g., stable incomes and access to technical education) that has helped them to compete with those individuals who have not served in the military (Cooney et al., 2003). Notably, Black female veterans who use their GI Bill benefits have more education compared to their non-veteran peers (Cooney et al., 2003).

In comparison, Hispanic female veterans have served in the military since the 1994 establishment of the All-Volunteer Force. These Hispanic females, comparable to Black female soldiers and Black male soldiers, outnumber Hispanic males in the military. In addition, both Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans earn more than

their peers without military service, because the pay gap for women in the military is slightly smaller than in the labor market. Service members of color typically have higher levels of education because of military entrance requirements and their access to the GI Bill (Kelty et al., 2010). Accordingly, researchers (Kelty et al., 2010; Segal et al., 2007) stated that Hispanic and Black female veterans might perceive that their benefits aid them in combating bias social norms that can make them twice as vulnerable as non-veteran minority women and (Kelty et al., 2010). Overall, minority perceptions of the GI Bill are complex. More research regarding why some veterans opt in or opt out of their educational benefits deserved further analysis. Future scholars could use information from this study to promote greater homecoming support for veterans transitioning out of the military and enrolling in college. (Kelty et al., 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Historically, the military has encouraged soldiers to use educational benefits to transition from active duty to civilian life. The Serviceman Readjustment Act of 1944 permitted approximately two million veterans of diverse backgrounds to both attend and afford college after WWII (Nugent, 2018). In fact, WWI and WWII served as major catalysts toward advancing innovative forms of veteran benefits that differed from past war pensions (e.g., Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, and the Civil War). Former soldiers no longer had to return to fields or industrial buildings; they could receive a vocational education (Kiestler, 1994). As such, the government began an unexpected, circumstantial relationship with university organizations after WWII (Thelin, 2004).

Postsecondary settings have now experienced a second wave of college enrollments from this familiar and reemerging student population. As of 2013, over one million student veterans and their spouses and children have used educational benefits from the 2008 Post 9/11 G.I. Bill at the cost of \$12 billion dollars (Irwin, 2016). Post 9/11 veterans are a new generation who choose to capitalize on their expanded government educational benefits. Today's student veterans can use the GI Bill in addition to other Pell Grants and college aid compared to their WWII forefathers (Field et al., 2008). Despite such generous educational awards that reduce the financial strain often experienced by all college students, student veterans still remain an at-risk population for not persisting to degree completion (McCaslin, 2013). Thus, college administrators should become aware of the perceptions and uses of educational benefits of such a vulnerable population. If college administrators do not understand the perceptions and methods of educational benefit utilization, student veterans might continue to be classified as at-risk and will lose available opportunities to transition successfully well beyond their military careers (Parks et al., 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits between male and female student veterans. Specifically addressed was the extent to which male and female veterans perceived their educational benefits as an important factor in meeting their life goals. Another purpose was to examine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions of the importance of educational

benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans and between Black and Hispanic male veterans and between Black and Hispanic female veterans.

Significance of the Study

Currently, literature is limited in terms of the comparisons of military service or similar armed service time periods (i.e., after 9/11) based on racial/ethnicity, gender, and educational benefit use. Researchers (e.g., Borsari et al., 2017; Mankowski, Tower, Brandt, & Mattocks, 2015) stated that more comprehensive research and evaluation might be needed to provide legislative leaders and higher education administrators and scholars with an analysis of different racial/ethnicity and gender perceptions about the use of educational benefits of service members who transition post military. Thus, research is warranted regarding gender and racial/ethnicity perceptions about the use of educational benefits for male and female veterans. The information obtained from such studies could be beneficial to college administrators and legislators (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011).

Definition of Terms

Key terms are defined below to provide the readers with a clear understanding of the concepts presented in this this journal-ready dissertation.

Black or African American

According to the United States Census Bureau (2010a), the Black population is defined as follows: Individuals of a Black racial body of people who have ancestry connected to the continent of Africa. Participants with African ancestors in the 2010 census could self-identify by marking a checkbox to declare their race as (a) race alone, (b) race in-combination or (c) race alone or race or in-combination. Furthermore, Black,

African-American, or Negro were terms related to those individuals who identified with African-American, Sub-Saharan African, and Afro-Caribbean concepts and groups (e.g. “African American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian”) {p. 2}. For this journal-ready dissertation, the term Black will be used.

Educational Benefits

Naphan and Elliot (2015) defined educational benefits as funding from government sources, such as the G.I. Bill that historically provided an incentive for men and women to enlist in the military. In fact, the Post/9/11 G.I. Bill increased educational benefits for those persons who served 90 days or more after September 11, 2011, compared to the lower payments from the earlier Montgomery G.I. Bill-Selected Reserve and the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (Ford & Vignare, 2015). These Post 9/11 educational benefits for veterans include the full cost of in-state tuition at 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges, and trade schools regardless of their current state of residency (Miles, 2014). Specifically, Post 9/11 G.I Bill payment options are: (a) \$1,789 dollars a month for 8 semesters, (b) full tuition payments and fees at any public institution for 36 months, and (c) \$21,085 annually for public institutions (Weisser, 2015). In addition, Post 9/11 educational benefits include: (a) \$1,000 book stipends, (b) any remaining benefits to dependents (i.e., spouses and children), and (c) monthly housing payments for fully online student veterans (Ford & Vignare, 2015).

Hispanic

The U.S. Census Bureau (2010b) defined members of the Hispanic population as follows: Individuals of Hispanic descent with a connection to persons with similar

heritage or family of origin that arrived before being born in the United States, such persons might be referred to as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (p. 2).

Veteran Affairs

The USA.gov (2018), an official website of the United States government, described Veteran Affairs as the following:

Veteran Affairs also referred to as the VA, runs programs benefiting veterans and members of their families. It offers education opportunities and rehabilitation services and provides compensation payments for disabilities or death related to military service, home loan guaranties, pensions, burials, and health care that includes the services of nursing homes, clinics, and medical centers. (para. 1)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (V.A.), National Survey of Veterans, Active Duty Service Members, Demobilized National Guard, and Reserve Members, Family Members and Surviving Spouses

The National Survey of Veterans (NSV) was published by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and is accessible to the public. The 2010 version of this national survey is the sixth in a line of surveys developed to create custom programs and services for veterans. The NSV includes profile summaries of the Veteran population, comparisons between non-veteran benefit users and veteran benefits users, data on emerging veteran trends, and ways that the VA transfers benefits and resources to veterans. Overall, the NSV (2010) contains current information on the duties of the VA and how future policies can best advocate for veterans.

Veteran Status

According to the United States Census Bureau (2018) Glossary, veteran status is defined as a civilian veteran who is over 18 years of age that served actively for a short or long period of time in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II” (para. 1), including those veterans who served during the most recent Middle East conflicts that began in 2001 and 2003. In addition, individuals who served in the National Guard and Reserves gain veteran status only if they were drafted for active duty or requested to serve beyond basic training. In addition, a veteran is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable (Veterans’ Benefits, 38 U.S.C. x 101, 2002).

Literature Review Search Procedures

For the purpose of this journal-ready dissertation, the literature regarding veterans and educational benefits, student veterans, race/ethnicity and gender was examined. Phrases that were used in the search for relevant literature included *veterans*, *educational benefits*, and *GI Bill*. All searches were performed with software algorithms on the EBSCO database that resulted in full-text, peer reviewed, and current scholarly journals with a publication date of 10 years or less (e.g., 2010-2018). Similar limiters were applied to subsequent searches that included the following terms: *Black*, *Hispanic*, *male* and *female*. In short, secondary sources and or research articles that were not directly related to current veteran issues were not selected for this study.

Key word searches for “veterans” yielded 502,009 results. Then, the term “educational benefits” was added and the number of results became 1,236. Next, the

search was narrowed to 547 after entering the terms “male” veterans. Compared to the “male” veteran term, adding only the “female” veterans search term yielded fewer peer-reviewed articles, 513. Particularly, adding both “male” and “female” veterans search terms yielded 88 peer-reviewed results.

Another key word search for the term “GI Bill” yielded 6,303 results, which were narrowed to 1,271 after adding the word Hispanic. Specifically, adding the key word male veterans to the search yielded 158 results. By including the term female with male veterans, the results were reduced to 130. Interestingly, the GI Bill term, including the terms Blacks or African-American yielded 2,674 results. However, when adding the search terms “male” veterans the results were reduced to 188 and then to 99 results when the term “female” veterans was included in the search. The relevant articles were reviewed pertaining to perceptions of education use based on gender and Black and Hispanic United State military veterans.

Delimitations

In this journal-ready dissertation, the three studies were delimited to data on Active Duty Service Members, the Demobilized National Guard, Reserve Members, family members, and surviving spouses from the United States Military who completed the NSV. Data on veterans from International military organizations were not used for this journal-ready dissertation. The data analyzed in this journal-ready dissertation were data obtained from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, NSV (USA.gov, 2018).

Limitations

In this journal-ready dissertation, the sampled NSV data were only reported from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, specifically to the National Center for Veteran Analysis and Statistics. Quantitative data were analyzed for the perceptions and uses of educational benefits of male and female veterans. In addition, quantitative data on Hispanic and Black male and female perceptions and uses of educational benefits were used.

Assumptions

In this study, the 2010 NSV data on gender from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and educational benefits were assumed to be accurately and honestly reported. Another assumption was that the racial/ethnic information reported by respondents was accurate. Moreover, the data gathered and analyzed were assumed to be error free based on the intensive audit review process conducted by the National Center for Veteran Analysis and Statistics and the Westat research corporation.

Organization of the Study

Three research investigations were presented within this journal-ready dissertation. In the first journal-ready dissertation article, the research questions that were addressed were on the extent to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits by male and female veterans. In the second journal-ready dissertation article, the research questions were on the degree to which differences existed in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veterans. Finally, in the third journal-ready dissertation article, the extent to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational

benefits for Black and Hispanic males compared to Black and Hispanic females, respectively, was addressed.

This journal-ready dissertation consists of three different manuscripts and of five chapters. The first chapter included the foundational frame of the study including, a literature review, statement of the program, purpose of the study, significance of the study, definition of the terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and an overview of the journal-ready dissertation. In Chapter II, the first-journal-ready dissertation article on the degree to which differences existed in perceptions and educational benefit use between male and female veterans was presented. In Chapter III, the extent to which differences were present in the perception and use of educational benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans was discussed. Chapter IV was on the degree to which differences existed in the perception and educational benefit use of Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans compared to Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans. Lastly, in Chapter V, a review of the findings was provided. Interpreted in the three research articles previously mentioned, as well as implications for policy reforms and for best practices, as well as recommendations for future inquiry.

CHAPTER II

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE VETERANS IN THEIR PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

In this investigation, the perceptions of male and female veterans toward their educational benefits was examined based on data from the 2010 NSV. Through inferential statistical analyses, it was revealed that female veterans reported they received more education and training outside of VA educational benefits after being discharged or separated after the military than male veterans. Female veterans also indicated that they received less flight training and job training than male veterans. Recommendations regarding future research as well as implications for policymakers and practitioners were presented in this study.

Keywords: Veterans Affairs, Educational benefits, GI Bill

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE VETERANS IN THEIR
PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS: A NATIONAL
ANALYSIS

In 2008, the United States Congress and then President George W. Bush added additional educational benefits for men and women who previously served in the military after September 11, 2001 (Sandler, 2013). This expansion of benefits was referred to as the Post-9/11 GI Bill but was formally entitled the Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 (Phelps, 2015; Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). During the first year of implementing the Post 9/11 GI Bill, 30,000 veterans received educational benefits for college (Santos et al., 2015). Not only was the Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits package an increase for individuals who served 90 days or more after September 11, 2001, but the Post 9/11 GI Bill was an incentive for men and women to join the military after 9/11 to cover the growing costs of college and other expenses. In comparison to the Post 9/11 GI Bill, the earlier Montgomery G.I. Bill-Selected Reserve and the Reserve Educational Assistance Program provided noticeably lower payments to veterans (Ford & Vignare, 2015).

Compared to former GI Bill recipients, Post 9/11 veterans were more likely to join the military due to financial concerns such as, housing, health care, and childcare (Brown & Routon, 2016). Post 9/11 veterans often entered the military with a lower socioeconomic status. As a result, the expectation was that the military could serve as a social economic status bridge for a person to cross into a higher socioeconomic class (Brown & Routon, 2016; Evans, Pellegrino, & Hoggan, 2015). In fact, when returning to their civilian lives, Post 9/11 male and female veterans might still face disappointing

setbacks such as unemployment, economic downturns, low compensation for military skills, and discrimination (Miles, 2016; Vick & Fontanella, 2017). Yet, according to Brown & Routon (2016), enrolling in college can be one method of transitioning into a better civilian life due to the GI Bill and the increase of earning potential over time from years of military service.

Thus, the Post-9/11 GI Bill offered many veterans, especially Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation New Dawn (OND), and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) veterans the means to transition into civilian life by enrolling in college, which created the potential for economic well-being. Norman et al. (2015) reported that more than a million veterans who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts had redeemed VA educational benefits. Although a growing number of veterans who can and/or who have claimed Post 9/11 educational benefits is documented, a gap exists in the literature regarding relationships between ethnicity/race and gender and veterans' perceptions of educational benefit use.

Borsari et al. (2017) determined that, in general, military research is largely centered on male veterans. In the mid-1980s, sociologist Glen Elder Jr., explored the influence of wellness over the lifespan of only World War II (WWII) male veterans in relation to their military occupation (Segal & Lane, 2016). In 1986, Elder articulated that the GI Bill influenced positive wellness outcomes (e.g., financial services, personal grit, and group support) for the males in his lifespan study (Elder as cited in Segal & Lane, 2016). Readers should note; however, that women were excluded in Elder's study. The lack of inclusion of women in military studies, such as Elder's WWII male veteran lifespan study, merely exacerbates the literature gap regarding gender and GI Bill

perceptions today. More research efforts are needed regarding the perceptions of both male and female veterans and the degree to which gender differences might be present in how the GI Bill is interpreted.

In an attempt to add to the lack of 21st century literature on female veteran perceptions, DiRamio et al. (2015) explained that the transition from military to civilian life for female veterans should be analyzed as carefully as the transition has been for male veterans, especially because female veterans have unique transitional barriers that might differ from their male peers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, Heitzman and Somers (2015) examined the experiences of 51 females at a 4-year university who formerly served in the military; 15% of the women were Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans. Heitzman and Somers (2015) indicated that 85% of the participants stated that they planned to use the GI Bill benefits to attend their preferred college. Segal and Lane (2016) reported that female veterans might use their educational benefits more than male veterans in pursuit of a college degree. Also, Heitzman and Somers (2015) concluded that 65% of the women in the study had children but were confident in their academic ability to persist to graduation.

In a related qualitative case study, Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015) interviewed two confident female veterans who were mothers to explore their unique needs transitioning at a two-year college. According to Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015), one participant, Jessica, left the military after she had her first son but reenlisted due to increased family expenses. After eight years in the military, three deployments, and four children, she depended on the housing stipend associated with her GI Bill to offset childcare and transportation costs (Pellegrino & Hoggan, 2015).

Amy, a Navy veteran and mother of two, was the second participant who took classes full-time with a goal to finish her degree in four semesters. She wanted to gain more time with her children (Pellegrino & Hoggan, 2015). Both women veterans relied heavily on their GI bill benefits. In sum, Pellegrino and Hoggan (2015) cautioned college leaders at 2-year institutions to understand the different barriers of women veterans with children, particularly single veteran mothers who might depend on the GI Bill to relieve financial stress and balance family and school demands.

Both male and female veterans can exhibit stress-induced characteristics caused by several factors: (a) years of deployment, (b) military relocations, (c) part-time enrollment status to care for dependents, (d) life with physical disabilities, and (e) the continuous management of mental health issues due to combat trauma (Evans et al., 2015; Ford & Vignare, 2015). Such experiences in the military might influence how well student veterans use their educational benefits to transition into college. In particular, women veterans (e.g., women veterans with lower SES, women veterans with children, single-parent female veterans) might need to rely on their educational benefits as a method of transitional support more so than male veterans who were documented to have less trouble with their post-military transitions (e.g., finding jobs, returning to school, and locating reasonable housing) than female veterans (Baechtold & De Sawal, 2015; Reppert et al., 2014).

Moreover, Segal and Lane (2016) argued that women veterans suffered over time compared to their male peers. After years of service in a male dominated environment, seemingly, women veterans might ascribe to societal gender roles or pressures that affect the increase use of their VA educational benefits. DiRamio et al. (2015) evaluated the

help-seeking attitudes of female college veterans. Three themes were revealed in the help-seeking attitudes of female college-going veterans. These themes involved: (a) gender expectations, (b) accountability attitudes, and (c) male dominance (DiRamio et al., 2015).

One meaningful finding expressed by DiRamio et al. (2015) was that many female veterans resolved that they might not be worthy enough to use resources that would be more suitable for males, especially male veterans who served in combat. In essence, female college veterans communicated that their military service only deserved VA educational benefits, not the additional help-seeking benefits (e.g., VA health care and VA counseling) afforded to them. DiRamio et al. (2015) summarized those non-help-seeking attitudes for women veterans might be cultivated by working in a male-dominated environment.

DiRamio et al. (2015) recorded how one female participant was conflicted regarding the use of benefits other than the GI Bill. The participant stated:

Education benefits are easy to take advantage of but as far as counseling or financial or asking for help, you feel like, have you really done anything to even deserve this because there are so many people who have done so much more than I have you know that's for them? All that stuff is for them. It's not for me because I didn't really do anything. (p. 9)

Alfred, Hammer, and Good (2014) examined the level of conformity of masculine norms among male student veterans in association with their psychological health to determine that males can experience the effects of male-dominated, non-help seeking norms. The 117 male participants were enrolled at military colleges and or technical

colleges, and they participated in the Student Veterans of America organization. Male student veterans attending college who conformed to masculine norms experienced lower emotional well-being based on hardiness self-reports (Alfred et al., 2014).

Thus, the male student veteran participants exhibited a low sense of motivation or expectation for positive change and growth because of their ascribed male conformity (Alfred et al., 2014). Half of the males in the study were deployed at least once during their military experience, having served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, or both. Considering these findings, more research was needed on the perceptions of male veterans when exiting the military and entering college life by means of receiving or not receiving help-seeking benefits beyond the GI Bill compared to female veterans.

Heitzman and Somers (2015) confirmed that the allotment of GI Bill benefits was a helpful factor for female veterans to attend their university of choice, and their participants ultimately signified that years of military service taught them resilience and the “intent to persist” in college as former women soldiers (p. 23). In a similar manner to Heitzman and Somers (2015), Segal and Lane (2016) suggested that educational benefits from the GI Bill could produce similar positive mental and economic outcomes for female veterans similar to Elder’s life course study on WWII male veterans (Elder, 1986). In sum, more research investigations could assist college financial aid advisors in advising male and female veterans based on their perceptions and the potential difference regarding how they utilize their educational benefits.

Statement of the Problem

Historically, the military has encouraged soldiers to use educational benefits to transition from active duty to civilian life. The Serviceman Readjustment Act of 1944 permitted nearly approximately two million veterans of diverse backgrounds to afford and attend college after WWII (Nugent, 2018). In fact, WWI and WWII served as major catalysts toward advancing innovative forms of veteran benefits that differed from past war pensions (e.g., Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican-American War, and the Civil War). Former soldiers no longer had to return to fields or industrial buildings; they could receive a vocational education (Kiester, 1994). As such, the government began an unexpected, circumstantial relationship with university organizations after WWII (Thelin, 2004).

Postsecondary institutions have now experienced a second wave of college enrollments from this familiar and reemerging student population. As of 2013, over one million student veterans and their spouses and dependants have used educational benefits from the 2008 Post 9/11 GI Bill at the cost of \$12 billion dollars (Irwin, 2016). Post 9/11 veterans are a new generation who choose to capitalize on their government educational benefits. Today's student veterans can use the GI Bill in addition to other Pell Grants and college aid compared to their WWII forefathers (Field et al., 2008). Despite such generous educational awards that reduce the financial strain often experienced by all college students, student veterans still remain an at-risk population for not persisting to degree completion. Thus, college administrators can become aware of the perceptions and the uses of educational benefits of the growing college veteran population. If college administrators do not understand the perceptions and methods of educational benefit

utilization, then student veterans might continue to be classified as at-risk and will lose available opportunities to transition well beyond their military careers (Parks et al., 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits between male and female student veterans. In particular, the purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which male and female veterans perceived their educational benefits as an important factor in meeting their life goals. Through the use of a national dataset, perceptions linked to the use of educational benefits of the life goals of male and female veterans were determined.

Significance of the Study

Currently, literature does not exist in terms of the comparisons of military service branches or service duration times related to both gender and educational benefit use. Researchers (e.g., Borsari et al., 2017; Mankowski et al., 2015) stated that more comprehensive research and evaluation should be provided to legislative leaders and higher education administrators and scholars with an analysis of the different gender perceptions and use of educational benefits of service members who transition post military. Thus, research was warranted regarding gender perceptions about the use of educational benefits for male and female veterans. The information obtained from such studies can be beneficial to college administrators and legislators (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study: (a) What is the difference in other education or training assistance received beside VA educational benefits between male veterans and female veterans since discharge or separation?; (b) What is the difference in male veterans and female veterans who took college or university coursework leading to a bachelor or graduate degree?; (c) What is the difference between male veterans and female veterans who attended business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma?; (d) What is the difference between male and female veterans who participated in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training program?; (e) What is the difference between male and female veterans who took correspondence courses?; (f) What is the difference between male and female veterans who took flight training?; (g) What is the difference between male and female veterans who received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training ?; and (h) What is the difference between male and female veterans who attended a teacher certification program?

Method

Research Design

A non-experimental, causal-comparative research design (Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2014) was used in this study. An archival dataset, specifically data from veterans who completed the 2010 NSV, including: Active Duty Service Members, the Demobilized National Guard, Reserve Members, Family Members, and Surviving Spouses were analyzed herein. The 2010 NSV was one survey in a series of national surveys from the Department of Veterans Affairs and published by the Office of

Enterprise Integration (OEI) within the VA. The 2010 NSV was the sixth compressive and most recent survey published by the OEI since 2001. However, the survey was modified in 2017 (USA.gov, 2018). The objective of the researchers, as a part of the 2010 NSV study, was to sample the current state of the veteran population and monitor VA service trends. According to USA.gov (2018), the 2010 NSV survey was designed to create new programs and resources for future veterans. For instance, compared in the NSV were the profiles of veterans who used VA benefits with veterans who chose to opt out of using VA benefits. In terms of best practices, the VA gathered information from the NSV to improve how benefits were disbursed, their role in offering services to veterans, and to provide updated veteran information for improved policy development.

Because of the use of an already existing dataset, the dependent variables of the survey questions already occurred (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Consequently, the dependent variables represented events that had occurred in the past. For instance, dependent variables analyzed from the dataset were the perceptions of veterans who used other educational benefits (e.g., a student loan or scholarships) after leaving the military and the independent variable was veteran gender. Of special note, the survey dataset sample was obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs website. The available online data sample was downloaded from 2,848 veterans, active duty service members, and other stakeholders survey responses (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2010).

Participants and Instrumentation

The dataset collected from the 2010 NSV data file totaled 704 veterans. According to Cate (2014), the NSV survey included a total of 8.8% of the 2010 NSV

sample who were active duty or served after 2001. Approximately, 324 of the 704 veterans reported in the NSV sample used VA educational benefits (Cate, 2014).

The NSV (2010) was an instrument used in this study that included six surveys and 19 questionnaire segments related to Veteran benefits, preferences of Veteran correspondence, and the future intended use of benefits for Veterans. Each survey within the NSV had tailored questionnaire segments for Veteran interest groups. Questionnaire segments expanded from 9 to 15 depending on the interest group. For instance, the Active Duty Spouse Survey contained nine questionnaire segments compared to the Veteran, Demobilized National Guard, and Reserve Member Survey that has 15 questionnaire segments for participants to complete. The six surveys and 19 questionnaires within the NSV do not necessarily relate to the overall targeted Veteran population. Some survey questions were specifically designed for a Veteran spouse or household member rather than a Veteran. Thus, the number of questions and style of questions differed in each survey. Veteran participants answered questions related to the type of education they received (e.g., technical college or bachelors), if they graduated, if they used their educational benefits, and what was their gender.

Results

To ascertain whether differences were present between male and female veterans in their perceptions and benefit uses regarding VA educational benefits, Pearson chi-square analyses were conducted. This statistical procedure was viewed as the optimal statistical procedure to use because frequency data were present for male and female veterans for their responses to survey items on veteran education benefits. As such, a chi-square analysis was the statistical procedure of choice because the variables were

categorical in nature (Slate & Rojas-LeBouef, 2011). In this study, the assumptions were checked and verified prior to the Pearson chi-square calculations.

Results for Research Question One

For the first research question in which the focus was placed on the perceptions and benefit use regarding other education or training assistance received outside VA educational benefits between male and female veterans, the result was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 15.91, p < .001$. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .04 (Cohen, 1988). As revealed in Table 2.1, a very high percentage, 87.0%, of the male veterans reported that they did not receive any other education or training assistance since discharge or separation outside of VA assistance. A lower percentage, 81.1%, of the female veterans indicated that they did not receive other education or training assistance after leaving the military. A statistically significantly higher percentage, 18.9%, of female veterans indicated that they had received assistance outside of VA assistance than was reported by male veterans, 13.0%.

 Insert Table 2.1 about here

Results for Research Question Two

With respect to the second research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding classes taken that lead to a college or graduate degree for male and female veterans, the Pearson chi-square did not reveal the presence of a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 2.61, p = .11$. As such, similar percentages of male veterans, 63.8%,

and of female veterans, 69.2%, reported that they took college classes leading to degree attainment. Table 2.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 2.2 about here

Results for Research Question Three

Concerning the third research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma between male and female veterans, the Pearson chi-square procedure did not yield a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 0.21, p = .65$. Similar percentages of male veterans, 23.3%, and female veterans, 24.7%, indicated that they attended business, technical, or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma. Revealed in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 2.3 about here

Results for Research Question Four

In regard to the fourth research question on participation in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training, a statistically significant difference was revealed between male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 14.48, p < .001$. The effect size for this result, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). As delineated in Table 2.4, a statistically significantly higher percentage of male veterans, 8.4%, reported they had participated in apprenticeship or on-the-job program than did female veterans, 1.3%.

Insert Table 2.4 about here

Results for Research Question Five

Concerning the fifth research question on taking correspondence courses, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 2.61, p = .11$. Similar percentages of male veterans, 7.8%, and female veterans, 4.8%, indicated they had taken correspondences courses. Table 2.5 contains the descriptive statistics of this analysis.

Insert Table 2.5 about here

Results for Research Question Six

Regarding the sixth research question, the extent to which differences were present between male and female veterans in whether or not they took flight training, the result was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 6.47, p < .001$. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). A statistically significantly higher percentage of male veterans, 3.6%, reported that they had taken flight training than was reported by female veterans, 0.4%. Delineated in Table 2.6 are the frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

Insert Table 2.6 about here

Results for Research Question Seven

With respect to the research question on receiving tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training, the result was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 1.47, p = .23$. Similar percentages of male veterans, 1.4%, and of female veterans, 0.4%, indicated that they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. The frequencies and percentages for this analysis are revealed in Table 2.7.

 Insert Table 2.7 about here

Results for Research Question Eight

Concerning this research question on attending a teacher certification program, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.74, p = .79$. Similar percentages of male veterans, 1.5%, and of female veterans, 1.8%, reported that they had attended a teacher certification program. Delineated in Table 2.8 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 2.8 about here

Discussion

In these analyses of a national dataset of male and female veterans, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between male and female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed

to make these determinations. Eight survey items on this national survey were analyzed in this investigation.

Male veterans and female veterans differed on the following three survey items. First, statistically significantly higher percentages of female veterans reported that they had received other education or training assistance outside of VA education assistance, 18.9% in comparison to male veterans, 13.0%. Second, statistically significantly higher percentages of male veterans indicated that they had participated in an apprenticeship or job training program; 8.4% compared to female veterans, 1.3%. Third, statistically significantly higher percentages of male veterans, 3.6%, claimed they had participated in flight training compared to female veterans, 0.4%. Presented in Tables 2.1, 2.4, and 2.6 are the results for these three statistically significant differences between male and female veterans.

Male and female veterans had similar responses on five of the eight survey questions. Male and female veterans reported similar percentages who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they had taken correspondences courses; in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training; and in whether they had attended a teacher certification program. Readers are referred to Tables 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.8 for the results of these five survey items.

Connections with Existing Literature

Some researchers (e.g., DiRamio et al., 2015; Mankowski et al., 2015) have contended that female veterans might perceive the use of other VA benefits as being

burdensome or that they are less worthy than male veterans, especially male combat veterans for benefits beyond educational benefits. Thus, female veterans tend to capitalize more on the use of VA educational benefits in contrast to other VA benefits. Mankowski et al. (2015) concluded that female veterans were more likely to use their educational benefits compared to male veterans. In short, female veterans were perceived as highly motivated students who strived to graduate with a college degree compared to male veterans with similar academic and societal barriers (Routon, 2014).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Based on the findings of these analyses of the NSV dataset, the following implications for policy and practice can be made. With respect to policy, an internal audit or conducting student self-surveys could identify the degree to which scholarships, loans, and campus employment options might be of high interest and readily available for male veterans enrolled in college courses. Such campus policies could assist in meeting the unique needs of some male student veterans who reported underutilizing non-military or campus resources or college aid. Moreover, the differences between male and female veterans regarding perceptions and educational benefit usage revealed that male veterans were less likely to use educational benefits outside of VA assistance, in contrast to female veterans.

As noted in this study, male veterans had lower motivation to graduate in comparison to female veterans with similar academic and societal challenges. Thus, higher education leaders must be intentional in their efforts to promote campus scholarships, financial aid, work study, and other student resources and or aid to male veterans outside of their GI Bill benefits. Concerning implications for practice, college

financial aid and Bursar office administrators or academic advisors who are answerable for student accounts and enrollment might carefully review these findings when implementing student success programs and tuition payment solutions for student veterans. In sum, U.S. leaders representing the field of higher education might consider conducting research that determines the reasons for differences in perceptions and benefit usage as state and federal education reform changes emerge in government and propose modifications that extend the G.I. Bill that supports veterans in college after military service.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several recommendations for future research can be made based on the results of this empirical investigation. First, in this article, data from the 2010 NSV were analyzed. Other researchers are encouraged to replicate this study using data from past or future NSV datasets to discover national trends. For example, conducting a cross-sectional analysis from the other 2001 NSV would expand existing literature. In essence, an extended version of this study with a different year is recommended for future researchers.

Another recommendation is to extend this study to veterans who represent the increasing population of Hispanics in the military to determine whether the results are generalizable to Hispanic male and female veterans. In future studies, researchers could focus on Hispanic veterans who received education benefits or training after 9/11 and Black male and female veterans because both racial/ ethnic groups are expected to surpass White male soldiers as the majority of service members in the decades to come. Lastly, researchers interested in a qualitative study could interview veterans to seek the

underlying reasons why more female veterans use other education and training benefits outside of VA education assistance than male veterans.

Conclusion

In this article, the degree to which perceptions and educational benefit uses differed between male and female veterans was investigated using data from the 2010 NSV. Of the eight research questions used for this study, three statistically significant differences were identified. More female veterans used educational assistance than VA educational benefits, in comparison to male veterans. Additionally, male veterans received more job and flight training compared to female veterans after transitioning from the military.

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Table 2.1

Frequencies and Percentages of Other Education or Training Besides VA Assistance

Received After Discharge or Separation for Male and Female Veterans

Other Education or Training	Male	Female
Received	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 1,005) 13.0%	(<i>n</i> = 108) 18.9%
No	(<i>n</i> = 6,716) 87.0%	(<i>n</i> = 8) 81.1%

Table 2.2

Frequencies and Percentages of Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment for Male and Female Veterans

Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 1,876) 63.8%	(<i>n</i> = 157) 69.2%
No	(<i>n</i> = 1,063) 36.2%	(<i>n</i> = 70) 30.0%

Table 2.3

Frequencies and Percentages of Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion for Male and Female Veterans

Attended Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 686) 23.3%	(<i>n</i> = 56) 24.7%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,253) 76.7%	(<i>n</i> = 171) 75.3%

Table 2.4

*Frequencies and Percentages of Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training Program**Participation for Male and Female Veterans*

Apprenticeship or On-the-Job	Male	Female
Training Program Participation	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 246) 8.4%	(<i>n</i> = 3) 1.3%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,693) 91.6%	(<i>n</i> = 224) 98.7%

Table 2.5

Frequencies and Percentages of Participation in Correspondence Courses for Male and Female Veterans

Participation in Correspondence Courses	Male	Female
	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 229) 7.8%	(<i>n</i> = 11) 4.8%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,710) 92.2%	(<i>n</i> = 216) 95.2%

Table 2.6

Frequencies and Percentages of Flight Training for Male and Female Veterans

	Male	Female
Flight Training Participation	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 106) 3.6%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 0.4%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,833) 96.4%	(<i>n</i> = 226) 99.6%

Table 2.7

Frequencies and Percentages of Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training for Male and Female Veterans

Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 41) 1.4%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 0.4%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,898) 98.6%	(<i>n</i> = 226) 99.6%

Table 2.8

Frequencies and Percentages of Attended a Teacher Certification Program for Male and Female Veterans

Attended a Teacher Certification Program	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 45) 1.5%	(<i>n</i> = 4) 1.8%
No	(<i>n</i> = 2,894) 98.5%	(<i>n</i> = 223) 98.2%

CHAPTER III

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS BETWEEN HISPANIC MALE AND FEMALE VETERANS: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

In this investigation, the perceptions of Hispanic male and female veterans toward their educational benefits were examined based on data from the 2010 NSV. Through inferential statistical analyses, Hispanic female veterans reported that educational benefits were statistically significant and more important in terms of degree attainment and career opportunities to them than was reported by Hispanic male veterans. More Hispanic female veterans indicated that they attended a teacher certification program compared to Hispanic male veterans. Implications of the results, as well as recommendations for future research, were discussed.

Keywords: Hispanic Veterans, Gender, Educational benefits, GI Bill, Importance, Degree attainment, Teacher certification program

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS BETWEEN HISPANIC MALE AND FEMALE VETERANS: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS

The diversity of the armed services in the United States is unique in many ways, largely because ethnic/racial minorities have served in the military since the American Revolutionary War (Harris, 2014). In 2014, minorities constituted 31.2% of all enlisted soldiers in the United States military, with 12% being of Hispanic origin (Minority Veterans Report, 2017). As a result, minority veterans as a group continue to increase as well. In 2014, The Veterans Population Model projected that five million or approximately 22.6% of military veterans were minorities. Researchers (e.g., Harris, 2014; Minority Veterans Report, 2017) commented that the percentage of underrepresented veterans would continue to increase substantially for years to come.

In fact, minority veterans are expected to increase from 21% to 34% within the next two decades. Even though the military will decline from 22.7 million veterans to 14.5 million veterans by 2040, both Black and Hispanic veterans will increase in comparison to other ethnic/racial groups (Harris, 2014). Harris (2014) estimated that the percentage of Hispanic veterans should double in size by 2040.

Although trends are that the veteran population is on par with the growth of the more racially and ethnically diverse population in the United States, researchers (e.g., Minority Veterans Report, 2017) revealed that large diverse demographic profiles have long been documented throughout the history of the United States. For example, during the War of 1812, Hispanics participated in military service by fighting against the British in what is referred to as the second battle for independence (Harris, 2014). Moreover,

historians detailed that of the two million soldiers who served from 1944 to 1956, approximately 500,000 were Hispanic males who fought in WWII (Harris, 2014; Leal, 2003, Santos et al., 2015). Hispanic veterans who served in WWII were able to receive educational benefits under the GI Bill that was signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1944 (Thelin, 2004). The GI Bill was a catalyst that offered Hispanic veterans a pathway to attend college and transition into the civilian world, but also provided a platform for change for a large population of Hispanics.

Rosales (2011) conducted a historical literature review on the effects of the GI Bill and the identity development of WWII Hispanic veterans through a comprehensive literature review with archival and/or census data and a sample of oral historical interviews from 14 Hispanic veterans of Mexican descent who served during WWII and utilized the GI Bill. One important finding was that many WWII Hispanic veterans faced barriers when attempting to use their educational benefits for college or training. Interestingly, the challenges faced by many Hispanics veterans sought opportunities beyond addressing VA discrimination to develop a capacity for greater activism (Rosales, 2011).

One example was that Hispanic veterans became active in an organization called The American GI Forum. The American GI Forum was a sounding board for issues associated with veteran benefits; however, the group expanded their interests to include other political and social concerns for the entire Hispanic population (Leal, 2003).

Thelin (2004) stated:

While the GI Bill enhanced postsecondary education opportunities for modest-income veterans, it had limited the impact on race relations at colleges and

universities...the terms of the GI Bill carried no requirement that participating institutions demonstrate nondiscrimination. Colleges that had traditionally excluded racial minorities continued to do so, with no penalty from the federal government...the U.S. armed services still had no policies of racial and ethnic discrimination, especially in the United States Navy. The economic benefits of educational opportunity had yet to be extended to concern for civil rights. At best, the doctrine of “separate but equal” would be the operating principle for race relations in American organizations...It [GI Bill] was large but finite, a temporary accommodation to alleviate a specific problem. (p. 267)

Leal (2003) reported the effects of military service and acculturation on Hispanic veterans during their years of service during both the draft era and the modern volunteer-era. Using archival data from the Latino National Political Survey which comprised 2,817 veteran participants of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban descent and a small veteran sample of White participants, Leal (2003) analyzed responses on intercultural development and racial tolerance. Specifically, 197 participants were draft-era veterans, and 50 were veterans who served during the All-Volunteer Force era. Leal (2003) determined that Hispanic veterans experienced several positive acculturation outcomes related to their military experience. As a result, Hispanic veterans developed more friends with Whites, communicated in English more at home, and notably were more likely to recognize Cesar Chavez. Leal (2003) added that “military service therefore removes people from civilian society and put them through an unusual experience at an especially formative stage in their lives” (p. 208). Despite the positive outcomes of cultural exchanges between Hispanic and White service members, Hispanic veterans

were more likely to report incidents of discrimination due to increased exposure to Whites during their military service (Leal, 2003).

Of note, acts of discrimination similar to findings by Leal (2003) toward Hispanic veterans were also revealed by Segal, Thanner, and Segal (2007), who investigated the representation of Hispanic and Black soldiers in the US military. Segal et al. (2007) used unpublished data from the Department of Defense database and annual population representation reports. A key finding was that 20% of Hispanics in the military reported incidents of discrimination in the 1970s because of their race/ethnicity. This percentage merely exacerbates the need for more research on the experiences of Hispanic male and female soldiers who will transition to college with a veteran status (Segal et al., 2007).

In a more recent analysis of archival data, Santos et al. (2015) examined the experiences of military-connected Hispanic students. The researchers analyzed a subsample of 142, first-year Hispanic enrolled military-connected students from the 2011 UCLA Higher Education Research Institute Freshman Survey. Of note, many Hispanic veteran college students indicated that they had some college prior to their first-year as military-connected students. According to Santos et al. (2015), a majority of the Hispanic student veterans were also first-generation college students.

Approximately, 48.6%, of the reported Hispanic college veterans exhibited no financial anxiety about tuition costs and nearly 43% stated that they had access to \$10,000 or more in education assistance that would not need future remittance. Santos et al. (2015) concluded that researchers might aspire to learn more about the advantages and disadvantages of racial/ethnic underrepresented military-connected veterans. In particular, Santos et al. (2015) implied that research should be conducted on why young

adult Hispanics consider the military as an indirect path to college instead of other methods for college preparation. Lastly, Santos et al. (2015) noted that the increase of the Post 9/11 GI Bill has attracted the majority of veterans to use their educational benefits, but future researchers could investigate if educational benefits influence upward mobility for different minority groups who served in the military.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, the Hispanic population has surged nationwide. Despite the rapid growth of the Hispanics within the US population, the educational attainment rate for Hispanics has been relatively low due to high drop-out rates compared to other races and ethnicities (Krogstad, 2016). In 2014, only 15% of Hispanics graduated with at least a 4-year degree compared to 63% of Asians, 41% of Whites, and 22% of Blacks (Krogstad, 2016).

Krogstad (2016) explained that Hispanics might have unique financial barriers that discourage potential students from enrolling in college because of familial constraints. In addition, Huerta (2015) offered that first generation, Hispanic males with a low socioeconomic status might enter the military as a way to finance college through the GI Bill, avoid gang membership, and prevent being a burden on their families. Thus, military benefits offer more than a means to pay for college; VA educational benefits could lead to job stability and change an individual's life course, especially Hispanic females in the military who now outnumber Hispanic males in the military (Huerta, 2015; Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010; MacLean & Elder, 2007). In sum, research is non-existent on the relationship between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veteran

educational benefits usage and how college administrators can support the expanding population of Hispanic veterans who use VA benefits from enrollment to graduation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions of the importance of educational benefits for Hispanic male veterans compared to Hispanic female veterans. Specifically, the degree to which differences in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits were present between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans was examined as a function of both groups meeting educational goals.

Significance of the Study

According to Scommegna (2004), Hispanics became the largest group of minorities in the United States in 2002. Hispanics in college also increased. Researchers (e.g., Arevalo, So, & McNaughton-Cassill, 2016) stated that many Hispanic students might enter college, but some students may leave without a degree because of tuition costs. Vega (2016) called the imbalance of college access compared to college graduation a “social injustice” for Hispanic students (p. 308).

Yet, Santos et al. (2015) suggested that the GI Bill might ease financial strain and offer a financial safety net for Hispanic-military connected college students to succeed. In addition, Hispanic students are often encouraged by the idea that joining the military could offer benefits to cover the cost of college classes after exiting the military (Santos et al., 2015). More research regarding the differences of VA educational benefit use for Hispanic male and female veterans who served after 9/11 is provided in this study. The results of this study can help policymakers and higher education administrators make

decisions based on the revealed perceptions and GI Bill use of Hispanic male and female veterans.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study: (a) What is the difference in the perceptions of the importance of VA educational benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans to meet educational goals or to secure a better job?; (b) What is the difference in other education or training assistance received besides VA educational benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans since discharge or separation?; (c) What is the difference in Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans who took college or university coursework leading to a bachelor or graduate degree?; (d) What is the difference between male veterans and female veterans who attended business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma?; (e) What is the difference between male and female veterans who participated in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training program?; (f) What is the difference between male and female veterans who took correspondence courses?; (g) What is the difference between male and female veterans who took flight training?; (h) What is the difference between male and female veterans who received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training?; and (i) What is the difference between male and female veterans who attended a teacher certification program?

Method

Research Design

A non-experimental causal-comparative research design was used in this study (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The independent variable was not manipulated, because of this type of non-experimental, causal comparative research. According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), archival data reflect events that had already occurred. The independent variable in this investigation was the gender of Hispanic veterans who completed the survey. The dependent variables were analyzed based on survey responses regarding the use of VA educational benefits.

Participants and Instrumentation

The archival data set retrieved from the 2010 NSV data file totaled 704 veterans. Approximately, 8.8% of the total 2010 NSV sampled were active duty or military members who served after 2001(Cate, 2014). The sample included responses from 324 of the 704 veterans reported in the NSV sample who used VA educational benefits (Cate, 2014).

The NSV (2010) included six surveys and 19 questionnaire segments linked to Veteran benefits, preferences of Veteran correspondence, and the intended future use of benefits for veterans. The NSV had customized questionnaire segments for each Veteran interest group. Participants chose to complete between 9 to 15 questionnaires related to their specific interest group. For example, the Active Duty Spouse Survey contained nine questionnaire segments compared to the Veteran, Demobilized National Guard, and Reserve Member Survey that had 15 questionnaire segments for participants to complete their responses. Within the NSV, the six surveys and 19 questionnaires were not all

related to the overall targeted Veteran population. Veteran spouses or household members other than the person with military service could complete survey sections geared towards their military-connected responses. Hence, each survey could have had a set amount of questions based on different aspects (e.g., spouse support, burial needs, educational use) surrounding a veteran's military benefits. In short, the responses by veteran participants often depended on what type of benefit was of interest or who used a particular VA educational benefit.

Results

To ascertain whether differences were present between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veterans in their perceptions and benefit usage regarding VA educational benefits, Pearson chi-square analyses were conducted. This statistical procedure was viewed as the optimal statistical procedure to use because frequency data were present for Hispanic male and female veterans for their responses to survey items on veteran education benefits. As such, a chi-square analysis was the statistical procedure of choice when variables are categorical in nature (Slate & Rojas-LeBouef, 2011). In this study, the assumptions were checked and verified prior to the Pearson chi-square calculations.

Results for Research Question One

Concerning the first research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding the importance (i.e., Extremely Important, Very Important, Moderately Important, Slightly Important, Not At All Important) of educational benefits, the Pearson chi-square procedure revealed a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(4) = 10.01, p = .04$. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was small, .25 (Cohen, 1988). As presented in Table 3.1, over four fifths of Hispanic female veterans, 88.2%, who were surveyed

indicated that educational benefits were extremely important to meeting their educational goals or obtaining better employment compared to less than half, 49.6%, of Hispanic male veterans. Regarding responses to the item, Not At All Important, four times as many Hispanic males, 4.3%, perceived educational benefits as not being at all important than was reported by Hispanic female veterans.

 Insert Table 3.1 about here

Results for Research Question Two

For the second research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding other education or training assistance received outside VA educational benefits, the Pearson chi-square did not reveal the presence of a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 2.48, p = .11$, between Hispanic male and female veterans. Similar percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 11.3%, and Hispanic female veterans, 20%, reported that they did not receive other education or training assistance after leaving the military. Table 3.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.2 about here

Results for Research Question Three

With respect to the third research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding classes taken that lead to a college or graduate degree for Hispanic male and female veterans, the result was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.09, p = .77$. As such,

similar percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 61.0%, and Hispanic female veterans, 64.7%, reported that they took college classes leading to degree attainment. Delineated in Table 3.3 are the frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.3 about here

Results for Research Question Four

Concerning to the fourth research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma between Hispanic male and female veterans, the Pearson chi-square procedure did not reveal a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 1.04, p = .31$. Similar percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 29.4%, and Hispanic female veterans, 17.6%, indicated that they attended business, technical, or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma. Revealed in Table 3.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.4 about here

Results for Research Question Five

Regarding the fifth research question on participation in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.01, p = .91$. Similar low percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 6.6%, and Hispanic female veterans, 5.9% reported that they had

participated in apprenticeship or on-the-job program. Table 3.5 contains the descriptive statistics of this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.5 about here

Results for Research Question Six

With respect to the sixth research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding taking correspondence courses, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Hispanic male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.13, p = .25$. Similar low percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 2.2%, and Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, indicated that they had taken correspondences courses. The frequencies and percentages for this analysis are revealed in Table 3.6.

 Insert Table 3.6 about here

Results for Research Question Seven

For the seventh research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding taken flight training, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Hispanic male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.38, p = .54$. As such, similar low percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 2.2%, and Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, reported they had taken flight training. Delineated in Table 3.7 are the frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

Insert Table 3.7 about here

Results for Research Question Eight

With respect to the research question on receiving tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training, the result was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.38, p = .54$. Similar low percentages of Hispanic male veterans, 2.2%, and Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, indicated that they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. The frequencies and percentages for this analysis are revealed in Table 3.8.

Insert Table 3.8 about here

Results for Research Question Nine

Concerning the ninth research question on attending a teacher certification program, a statistically significant difference was revealed between Hispanic male and female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 8.05, p < .001$. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was small, .23 (Cohen, 1988). As revealed in Table 3.9, no Hispanic male veterans reported that they had attended a teacher certification program. In contrast, a small, but statistically significantly higher percentage, 5.9%, of Hispanic female veterans indicated that they had attended a teacher certification program

Insert Table 3.9 about here

Discussion

In this analysis of a national dataset comprised of Hispanic veteran responses, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Hispanic male and female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed to make these determinations. Nine survey items from this national survey were examined in this investigation.

Hispanic male and female veterans differed on the following two survey items. First, the percentage of Hispanic female veterans reported that educational benefits were extremely important, 88.2% in comparison to Hispanic male veterans, 49.6%. Second, statistically significantly higher percentages of Hispanic female veterans indicated that they had attended a teacher certification program, 5.9%, compared to no Hispanic male veterans. Presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.9 are the results for these two statistically significant differences between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veterans.

Hispanic male veterans and female veterans had similar responses on seven of the nine survey areas in this study, which included other education or training received outside of VA education assistance; who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they participated in an apprenticeship or job training; in whether they had taken correspondences courses; in whether they took flight training and in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency

training. Readers are referred to Tables 3.2 through 3.8 for the results of these seven survey items.

Connections with Existing Literature

According to Krogstad (2016), some Hispanics perceive a college education as an asset. College debt, however, is often viewed as a greater threat to household incomes. The GI Bill counters that threat by offering a financial safety net for Hispanic college seeking students who often join the military because the GI Bill might ease financial strain. This financial relief from college expenses is especially beneficial for veterans from low-socioeconomic families, who are usually the first individuals in their family to enroll in college classes (Huerta, 2015).

Additionally, researchers (Huerta, 2015; Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010; MacLean & Elder, 2007) confirmed that the population of Hispanics who are currently serving in the military will increase, especially Hispanic female soldiers who are estimated to surpass Hispanic males by the year 2040. Moreover, Mankowski et al. (2015) claimed that female veterans were more likely to use their GI Bill in comparison to other VA benefits, which aligns with the lower responses from Hispanic male veterans regarding the importance of utilizing VA educational assistance. Mankowski et al. (2015) substantiated the results of this study, that most Hispanic female veterans determined that their educational benefits were extremely important for college completion and career goals.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Based on the findings of this analysis of a national dataset, the following implications for policy and practice can be made. With respect to policy, an internal

audit or conducting student self-surveys could identify the degree to which scholarships, loans, and campus employment options might be of high interest and readily available for Hispanic male veterans to change their perception regarding non-VA educational assistance. Such campus policies could aid in meeting the unique needs of Hispanic male student veterans who often report being first-generation and from lower social economic families, yet view educational benefits as not as important compared to Hispanic female veterans.

Of note, no Hispanic male veterans reported attending a teacher certification program in this study. Higher education leaders must be intentional in their efforts to promote teaching as viable career option for Hispanic male veterans. Concerning implications for practice, college recruiters and campus career coordinators or academic advisors who are accountable for offering guidance on college majors and career pathways might carefully consider these findings when administering career assessments, facilitating class schedules, and or suggesting financial assistance for Hispanic student veterans. In sum, higher education leaders might consider conducting research in which the reasons for difference in perceptions and benefit use could be determined between Hispanic male and female veterans as state and federal officials continue to approve tuition and fee increases and expand workforce programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several recommendations for future research can be made based on the results of this empirical investigation. First, in this article, data from the 2010 NSV were analyzed. Other researchers are encouraged to replicate this study using data from past or future NSV datasets to discover national trends. For example, conducting a cross-sectional

analysis from the other 2001 NSV would expand existing literature. In essence, an extended version of this study is recommended for future researchers.

Another recommendation would be to extend this study to veterans who are represented within specific zip codes to determine whether the results are generalizable to Hispanic male and female veterans by region. In future studies, researchers could focus on veterans who received education benefits or training after 9/11 who are Hispanic and Black male and female veterans because both racial/ethnic groups are expected to surpass White male soldiers as the racial majority group of service members within the next 30 years. Lastly, researchers interested in a qualitative study could interview veterans to seek the underlying reasons why more Hispanic female veterans report educational benefits as extremely important and attend a teacher certification program compared to Hispanic male veterans.

Conclusion

In this article, the degree to which perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Hispanic male and female veterans was investigated using data from the 2010 NSV. Of the nine research questions specific to this study, two statistically significant differences were identified. In sum, approximately half of 100% Hispanic female veterans indicated that educational benefits were extremely important in terms of meeting their college and career goals, 88.2%, in comparison to Hispanic male veterans, 49.6%. A higher percentage of Hispanic female veterans also identified that they attended a teacher certification program, 4.3% than was reported by Hispanic male veterans, 0.0%. Present in both statistically significant differences, survey items had small effect sizes.

In contrast, no statistically significant differences were determined in regard to other education benefits received other than VA assistance, taken college course work leading to a degree, attended business, technical, or vocational training leading to a certificate or diploma, taken correspondence courses, taken flight training, and received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training as a function of race/ethnicity and gender. Hispanic male and female veterans shared similar responses regarding the aforementioned survey items. Previous researchers (Huerta, 2015; Santos et al., 2015) agree that the educational benefits for Hispanic male and female veterans due to the GI Bill might contribute to less financial stress when pursuing higher education; however, gender may influence certain perceptions (i.e., the importance of educational benefits and career suitability after the military) between Hispanic male and female veterans.

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Table 3.1

Frequencies and Percentages of the Importance of Educational Benefits for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

	Male	Female
Importance	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Extremely Important	(<i>n</i> = 69) 49.60%	(<i>n</i> = 15) 88.20%
Very Important	(<i>n</i> = 46) 33.10%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.90%
Moderately Important	(<i>n</i> = 11) 7.90%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.00%
Slightly Important	(<i>n</i> = 7) 5.00%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.90%
Not At All Important	(<i>n</i> = 6) 4.30%	(<i>n</i> = 8) 0.00%

Table 3.2

Frequencies and Percentages of Other Education or Training Besides VA Assistance

Received After Discharge or Separation for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Other Education or Training	Male	Female
Received	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 34) 11.3%	(<i>n</i> = 8) 20.0%
No	(<i>n</i> = 267) 87.7%	(<i>n</i> = 32) 80.0%

Table 3.3

Frequencies and Percentages of Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 83) 61.0%	(<i>n</i> = 11) 64.7%
No	(<i>n</i> = 53) 39.0%	(<i>n</i> = 6) 35.3%

Table 3.4

Frequencies and Percentages of Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Attended Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 40) 29.4%	(<i>n</i> = 3) 17.6%
No	(<i>n</i> = 96) 70.6%	(<i>n</i> = 14) 82.4%

Table 3.5

*Frequencies and Percentages of Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training Program**Participation for Male and Female Veterans*

Apprenticeship or On-the-Job	Male	Female
Training Program Participation	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> =9) 6.6%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%
No	(<i>n</i> = 127) 93.4%	(<i>n</i> = 16) 94.1%

Table 3.6

Frequencies and Percentages of Participation in Correspondence Courses for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Participation in Correspondence Courses	Male	Female
	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 10) 7.4%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%
No	(<i>n</i> = 126) 92.6%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100.0%

Table 3.7

Frequencies and Percentages of Flight Training for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Flight Training Participation	Male	Female
	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 3) 2.2%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%
No	(<i>n</i> = 133) 97.8%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100.0%

Table 3.8

Frequencies and Percentages of Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 3) 2.2%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%
No	(<i>n</i> = 133) 97.8%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100.0%

Table 3.9

Frequencies and Percentages of Attended a Teacher Certification Program for Hispanic Male and Female Veterans

Attended a Teacher Certification Program	Male <i>n</i> and %age	Female <i>n</i> and %age
Yes	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%
No	(<i>n</i> = 136) 100%	(<i>n</i> = 16) 94.1%

CHAPTER IV

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTION AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF VETERANS BETWEEN BLACK AND HISPANIC MALES AND BLACK AND HISPANIC FEMALES: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

In this investigation, the perceptions of Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans toward their educational benefits were examined based on data from the 2010 NSV. Through inferential statistical analyses, it was revealed that no Hispanic male veterans indicated that they attended a teacher certification program compared to responses by five Black male veterans. Of particular note, Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans also shared similar percentages on all survey items (i.e., importance of educational benefits; taken college classes leading to a degree; attended business, technical or vocational school training; received a certificate or diploma; participated in an apprenticeship or job training; taken correspondences courses; taken flight training; received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training, and attended a teacher certification program. For example, low percentages of Black female veterans reported that they had attended a teacher certification program 2.6%, compared to 5.9% of Hispanic female veterans. Future researchers might apply these findings to conduct qualitative and quantitative research to closely investigate how perceptions and educational benefits use relates to race/ethnicity and gender among student veterans.

Keywords: Black, Hispanic, Gender, Educational benefits, GI Bill, Importance, Teacher certification program

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTION AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
OF VETERANS BETWEEN BLACK AND HISPANIC MALES AND BLACK AND
HISPANIC FEMALES: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS

The number of underrepresented veterans in the United States was estimated at five million in 2014. The percentages of these underrepresented veterans who used a minimum of one Veteran Administration (VA) benefit or service increased from 35.2% in 2005 to 44.1% in 2014. In 2014, 1.4 million minority veterans received services or benefits from the Veterans Benefits Association (Minority Report, 2017). With these documented increases in using benefits by minority veterans, readers should note that only 12.9% of the total 22.6% of underrepresented veterans used their educational benefits in 2014 (Minority Report, 2017).

McCaslin et al. (2013) contended that an increasing number of veterans were using their VA educational benefits because of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Ford and Vignare (2015) added that the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, also called the New GI Bill, did increase the number of veteran beneficiaries because of expanded benefits for veterans who served 90 or more days after 9/11. The updated and expanded benefits were an attractive incentive for most veterans because benefits included a higher tuition cap for public or private colleges, including: (a) \$1,000 book stipends, (b) prorated housing allowances for online students, (c) rollover of unused benefits for dependents, and (d) the inclusion of educational benefits for National Guard service members and reservists (Ford & Vignare, 2015).

Despite the general increase of using benefits by underrepresented veterans and the generous expansion of 9/11 GI Bill benefits, Black and Hispanic veterans might

perceive and experience using their educational benefits differently. For example, Onkst (1998) reported that historically the GI Bill was not a turning point for most Black male WWII veterans, especially Black veterans from the Deep South. Many Black male WWII veterans might have been hopeful for social and economic mobility from the GI Bill after the war ended, but, instead, faced waves of discrimination from local VA offices managed by White clerks who made the process of gaining job security, unemployment aid, and home loans difficult. Onkst (1998) determined that only 12 Black GI Bill officials were hired at VA centers in 1947. Thus, the military offered no accountability, no diverse staffing, and no protections for Black veterans who encountered racism by the VA, despite the fact that GI Bill policies forbade the mistreatment of all former soldiers. On the positive side, some southern communities had organized veteran' leagues, such as the all-Black Georgia Veteran's League in Atlanta that assisted Black veterans with workforce education in a segregated South (Onkst, 1998).

Similarly, Leal (2003) determined that Hispanic male veterans who served in WWII needed to organize and to push back against discriminatory practices faced after returning home from war. Markedly, the American GI (e.g., a generic term for a US soldier) Forum was implemented by Hispanic veterans in Texas who experienced problematic or poor administration of their veteran benefits by the government. The American GI forum ultimately rejected the norm that WWII Hispanic veterans would be oppressed politically and economically. Therefore, the American GI forum decided to expand their agenda to include political issues harming Hispanic veterans transitioning

post war and became Congressional activists demanding a brighter future for the community of Hispanic veterans (Leal, 2003).

As stated by McCardle (2017), WWII minorities who desired to use their GI benefits and who were admitted into college often had a “strong will” to pursue a higher education (p. 122). To elaborate, 14 years after the GI Bill was signed; if Black male veterans did receive access their GI benefits to go to college, they might have dealt with Jim Crow laws, such as campus discriminatory housing practices and death threats from community members. In short, McCardle (2017) suggested that “the search to cash in on the federal government’s promise of a college education was anything but democratic and practical” for Black males who fought in WWII and later attended a desegregated college (p. 133).

DiRamio and Jarvis (2014) acknowledged the general challenges when today’s Post 9/11 veterans try to adjust socially to civilian life, but with “GI bill limitations ...and health impairments (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder and physical disabilities) as a result of their service,” these Post 9/11 veterans, Black male veterans face additional systematic discriminatory practices that mitigated their likelihood for college success (p. 19). Ottley (2014) determined that such factors might explain why Black veterans tend not to use their educational benefits, especially Black male veterans. Ottley (2014) provided a possible rationale for the lack of using educational benefits:

If someone falls in a pit and a ladder is let down to rescue him, but the distance between the rung is too great to climb from one to the next, then the ladder is of little use to the victim of the pit. If funds for education are available to the

returning vet but there are barriers (access) and obstacles (readiness) to utilizing those funds, then they are of little use to those who may be eligible for such funds. (p. 79)

In sum, additional college preparation for Black veterans before leaving the military could be a warranted investigation, to ensure that postsecondary education can be pursued without bias, using the GI Bill benefits. Such interventions could circumvent a perilous, pre-destined and metaphorical pit for Black male veterans (Harris, 2014; Ottley, 2014). Researchers (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011; Ottley, 2014) concluded that more literature could be needed to understand the experiences of Black male veterans who use their GI Bill benefits over time. Thus, the call for an investigation on “structural and institutional contexts” from longitudinal studies could determine why educational benefits are underused by Black veterans (Ottley, 2014, p. 84).

In contrast to male veterans, Prokos and Cabage (2017) stated, the long-term effects of women who have served in the military is still limited because most military scholars have focused on male veterans and their experiences with educational outcomes and/or gainful employment from the GI Bill. Women with military service did not receive the same benefits or career advances offered to male veterans until years after WWII (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011). Cooney et al. (2003) agreed that historically, men have served in the military longer than women. However, women who do possess military experience can take advantage of the military’s selection process that screen women applicants heavily for armed duty. Thus, women veterans often gain combat and other technical skills through their military service, which might make them preferable candidates in the labor force compared to women without military experience. In fact,

Black women in the military preferred the instant access of their military and VA benefits compared to the 30, 60, 90 trial periods embedded in the civilian labor force (Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010).

Black women in the military have served since the start of the All-Volunteer Force and 30% of Black women currently serve in the military, but numbers of Black enlisted service members have decreased because of the end of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts (Kelty et al., 2010). As such, Black female veterans are overrepresented as a veteran group. Veteran status for Black female veterans are associated with certain benefits (e.g., stable incomes and access to technical education) that allows them to compete with those individuals who have not served in the military (Cooney et al., 2003). Notably, Black female veterans who use their GI Bill benefits have more education compared to their non-veteran peers (Cooney et al., 2003).

In comparison, Hispanic female veterans have served in the military since the 1994 establishment of the All-Volunteer Force and Hispanic females, similar to Black female soldiers and Black male soldiers outnumber Hispanic males in the military. In addition, both Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans earn more than their peers without military service because the pay gap for women in the military is slightly smaller than in the labor market. Underrepresented service members typically have higher levels of education because of military entrance requirements and their access to the GI Bill (Kelty et al., 2010). Accordingly, researchers (Kelty et al., 2010; Segal et al., 2007) stated that Hispanic and Black female veterans might perceive that their benefits aid them in combating biased social norms that can make them twice as vulnerable as women and minorities (Kelty et al., 2010). Overall, minority perceptions of the GI Bill

are complex. More research regarding why some veterans opt in or opt out of their educational benefits deserves further analysis. Future scholars could use literature from this study as findings that promote greater homecoming support for veterans transitioning out of the military and enrolling in college or post-secondary workforce program (Kelty et al., 2010).

Statement of the Problem

According to Prokos and Cabage (2017) and Ray (2017), the U.S. veteran population is undergoing a demographic reversal. This inflation is largely because female veterans are expected to comprise 20% of the military by 2020. Therefore, by the year 2045, female veterans will increase two times the number of enlisted women in 2016. In contract, the male veteran population will decline by nearly 50% (Ray, 2017). To specify further, more Black and Hispanic women will comprise the population of military veterans over the course of the next 30 years as compared to male veterans, regardless of racial or ethnic background (Ray, 2017).

Of note, Black male veterans have historically faced instructional discrimination when seeking to use their GI Bill benefits at local VA offices. In addition, when Black males were admitted into a college or university they might have had to rebuke any segregation or Jim Crow laws that made it difficult for Black men, in particular, to persist to graduation. Similarly, Hispanic male veterans might have had their citizenship questioned or experienced a lack of VA support when trying to acquire their GI Bill benefits (Santos et al, 2015). Moreover, both Black and Hispanic veterans might face college readiness issues after making the transition from the military. In sum, college administrators must understand the perceptions and methods of educational benefit use to

help Hispanic and Black veterans attain successful outcomes when enrolling in college after a military career (Parks et al., 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which differences existed regarding the importance of educational benefits and the perception and use of educational benefits between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans. Specifically focused in this article was the degree to which perceptions and uses of educational benefits differed between Hispanic male veterans and Black male veterans who used educational benefits to meet their life goals. Similarly addressed in this study was the degree to which differences were present in the perception and uses of educational benefits between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans who have used educational benefits to meet life goals.

Also analyzed were the perceptions and uses of other training received outside of the VA that may exist between Hispanic male veterans and Black male veterans. In addition, the perceptions and uses of other training received outside of the VA between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans were determined in the study. Moreover, the extent to which VA educational benefit use differs between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans, including the degree of differences of VA educational benefit use between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, were addressed. An examination of the differences in perceptions and uses of educational benefits between Black and Hispanic male veterans and between Black and Hispanic female veterans who took college classes resulting in a postsecondary degree(s)

was included in this study. In sum, the findings from nine research questions based on a national study could be used in nationwide legislation and college advising.

Significance of the Study

Few scholarly works exist in which researchers have addressed the presence of racial/ethnic and gender differences among different veteran groups (Cooney et al., 2003; Segal et al., 2007). Within the subset of male and female veterans, Black veterans and Hispanic veterans are integral members of unique populations with complex military experiences that influence their perceptions and usage of their GI Bill benefits (Leal, 2003; McCardle, 2017; Ottley, 2014; Santos, 2015). Current research using a national military data sample does include comparisons of Black and Hispanic veterans but does not specifically include the perceptions of using GI Bill benefits. According to researchers (e.g., Borsari et al., 2017; Mankowski et al., 2015; Santos et al., 2015), an examination of this empirical investigation might offer higher education leaders information to make decisions that justify resource allocations and customized support services for the influx of multiple underrepresented veteran identities enrolling in higher education institutions (Kelty et al., 2014; Ottley, 2014).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study: (a) What is the difference in the perceptions of the importance of educational benefits between Hispanic male veterans and Black male veterans to meet educational life goals or to secure a job?; (b) What is the difference in the perceptions of the importance of educational benefits between Hispanic female veterans and Black female veterans to meet educational life goals or to secure a job?; (c) What is the difference in Black male veterans and Hispanic

male veterans who took college or university coursework leading to a bachelor or graduate degree?; (d) What is the difference in Hispanic female veterans and Black female veterans who took college or university coursework leading to a bachelor or graduate degree?; (e) What is the difference between Hispanic male veterans and Black male veterans who attended business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma?; (f) What is the difference between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans who attended business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate or diploma?; (g) What is the difference between Black male and Hispanic male veterans who participated in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training program?; (h) What is the difference between Black female and Hispanic female veterans who participated in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training program?; (i) What is the difference between Black male and Hispanic male veterans who took correspondence courses?; (j) What is the difference between Black female and Hispanic female veterans who took correspondence courses?; (k) What is the difference between Black male and Hispanic male veterans who took flight training?; (l) What is the difference between Black female and Hispanic female veterans who took flight training?; (m) What is the difference between Black male and Hispanic male veterans who received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training?; (n) What is the difference between Black female and Hispanic female veterans who received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training?; (o) What is the difference between Black male and Hispanic male veterans who attended a teacher certification program?; and (p) What is the difference between Black female and Hispanic female veterans who attended a teacher certification program?

Method

Research Design

A non-experimental causal-comparative research design was presented in this study (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The independent variable was not manipulated, because of this type of non-experimental, causal comparative research. According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), the archival data that were analyzed were reflective of events that had already occurred. The independent variables examined in this investigation were the gender of Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and the gender of Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans who completed the survey. The dependent variables that were analyzed were the survey responses regarding use of VA educational benefits.

Participants and Instrumentation

The archival dataset that was obtained from the 2010 NSV data file included 704 veterans. Approximately, 8.8% of the total 2010 NSV sampled were active duty or military members who served after 2001 (Cate, 2014). The sample included responses from 324 of the 704 veterans reported in the NSV sample who used VA educational benefits (Cate, 2014).

The NSV (2010) included six surveys and 19 questionnaire segments linked to veteran benefits, preferences of Veteran correspondence, and the potential future use of benefits for veterans. The NSV has customized questionnaire segments for each veteran interest group. Participants chose to complete between 9 to 15 questionnaires related to their specific interest group. For example, the Active Duty Spouse Survey contained nine questionnaire segments compared to the Veteran, Demobilized National Guard, and

Reserve Member Survey that had 15 questionnaire segments for participants to complete their responses. Within the NSV, the six surveys and 19 questionnaires were not all related to the targeted veteran population. Veteran spouses or household members other than the person with military service could also complete survey sections geared towards their military-connected responses. Hence, each survey might have a set amount of questions based on different aspects (e.g., spouse support, burial needs, and educational use) surrounding military benefits. In sum, responses by veteran participants may have depended on the type of benefit that was of interest or who used a particular VA educational benefit.

Results

To ascertain whether differences were present between Black male and Hispanic male veterans and Black female and Hispanic female veterans in their perceptions and benefit uses regarding VA educational benefits, Pearson chi-square analyses were conducted. This statistical procedure was viewed as the optimal statistical procedure to use because frequency data were present in all responses to survey items on veteran education benefits. As such, a chi-square analysis was the statistical procedure of choice when variables are categorical in nature (Slate & Rojas-LeBouef, 2011). In this study, the assumptions were checked and verified prior to the Pearson chi-square calculations.

Results for Research Question One

For the first research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding the importance (i.e., Extremely Important, Very Important, Moderately Important, Slightly Important, Not At All Important) of educational benefits, the result was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(4) = 6.88, p = .14$. Similar percentages of Black male veterans, 46.6%,

who were surveyed indicated that educational benefits were extremely important to meeting their educational goals or obtaining better employment compared to 49.6%, of Hispanic male veterans. Regarding responses to the item, Not At All Important, more than half as many Black male veterans, 9.5%, perceived educational benefits as not being at all important than was reported by Hispanic male veterans, 4.3%.

In addition, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male veterans and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(4) = 5.52, p = .24$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 62.5%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 88.27%, reported that educational benefits were extremely important to meeting their educational goals or obtaining better employment. In contrast, similar low percentages of Black female veterans, 5.0%, and Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, indicated that educational benefits were not important to them. Readers are referred to Tables 4.1 and 4.2 for the descriptive statistics for the perceptions of educational benefits of Black male and Hispanic male veterans and Black female and Hispanic female veterans.

 Insert Table 4.1 and 4.2 about here

Results for Research Question Two

With respect to the second research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding classes taken that lead to a college or graduate degree for Black male and Hispanic male veterans, a statistically significant difference was not revealed, $\chi^2(1) = 0.49, p = .49$. As such, similar percentages of Black male veterans, 57.1%, and of Hispanic male veterans, 61.0%, reported that they took college classes leading to degree

attainment. Moreover, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black female and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.75$, $p = .82$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 61.5%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 64.7%, reported that they had attending business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate.

Table 4.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 4.3 about here

Results for Research Question Three

In regard to the third research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding attending business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male and Hispanic male veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 1.4$, $p = .24$. Similar percentages of Black male veterans, 35.7%, and of Hispanic male veterans, 29.4%, reported attending business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate. A statistically significant difference was also not revealed between Black female and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 1.87$, $p = .17$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 61.5%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 64.7%, reported that they had attending business, technical or vocational school training leading to a certificate. The frequencies and percentages for this analysis are revealed in Table 4.4.

Insert Table 4.4 about here

Results for Research Question Four

Concerning the fourth research question on participation in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male and Hispanic male veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.04, p = .84$. Similar low percentages of Black male veterans, 6.0%, and Hispanic male veterans, 6.6%, reported that they had participated in apprenticeship or on-the-job program. A statistically significant difference was also not revealed between Black female and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.38, p = .54$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 2.6%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 5.9%, indicated that they had participated in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training. Table 4.5 contains the descriptive statistics of this analysis.

 Insert Table 4.5 about here

Results for Research Question Five

With respect to the fifth research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding taking correspondence courses, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.07, p = .79$. Similar low percentages of Black male veterans, 6.6%, and of Hispanic male veterans, 7.4%, indicated that they had taken correspondences courses. A statistically significant difference was also not revealed between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 1.88, p = .17$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 10.3%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, reported that they took correspondence courses. Delineated in Table 4.6 are the frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

Insert Table 4.6 about here

Results for Research Question Six

For the sixth research question on the perceptions and benefit use regarding taken flight training, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 1.72, p = .19$. Similar low percentages of Black male veterans, 0.5%, and of Hispanic male veterans, 2.2%, reported they had taken flight training. In addition, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.44, p = .51$. Similar low percentages of Black female veterans, 2.6%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 0.0%, indicated that they had taken flight training. The frequencies and percentages for this analysis are revealed in Table 4.7.

Insert Table 4.7 about here

Results for Research Question Seven

With respect to the research question on receiving tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training, the result was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.69, p = .41$, for male veterans. Similar percentages of Black male veterans, 100%, and of Hispanic male veterans, 100%, indicated that they had not received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. For Black female and Hispanic female veterans who received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training, the result was

also not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.44, p = .51$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 97.4%, and of Hispanic female veterans, 100%, reported that they did not receive tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. Table 4.8 contains the descriptive statistics for these analyses.

Insert Table 4.8 about here

Results for Research Question Eight

Concerning the ninth research question on attending a teacher certification program, statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 3.80, p = .07$. As revealed in Table 4.9, no Hispanic male veterans reported that they had attended a teacher certification program. Moreover, a similar low percentage, 2.7%, of Black male veterans indicated that they had attended a teacher certification program. Regarding the same research question for female veterans, a statistically significant difference was not revealed between Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, $\chi^2(1) = 0.38, p = .54$. Similar percentages of Black female veterans, 2.6%, and Hispanic female veterans, 5.9%, reported that they had attended a teacher certification program. Delineated in Table 4.9 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 4.9 about here

Discussion

In this analysis of a national dataset comprised of Black and Hispanic veteran responses, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed to make these determinations. Eight survey items from this national survey were examined in this investigation.

Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans shared similar percentages on all survey items. For example, low percentages of Hispanic male veterans reported that they had not attended a teacher certification program 0.0%, compared to 2.7% of Black male veterans. Presented in Tables 4.1 through 4.9 are the results between Black male and Hispanic male veterans and the similar responses shared on all eight survey areas in this study, which included importance of educational benefits, who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they participated in an apprenticeship or job training; in whether they had taken correspondence courses; in whether they took flight training, and in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. With respect to the female veterans, Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans also had similar responses on all eight survey items. Readers are referred to Tables 4.1 through 4.9 to review the results for non-statistically significant differences between Black female and Hispanic female veterans.

Connections with Existing Literature

According to Cancio (2018), approximately 20,000 Hispanics join the armed services annually. The GI Bill provides Hispanics with a low risk option to earn a college education by joining the military without the burden associated with paying off college debt. Therefore, military service could offer the means for individuals with Hispanic heritage to afford a college education in an honorable way that could disrupt a possible predestined life of gangs and jails, especially for young Hispanic males who might not see college as a viable option after high school (Huerta, 2015). In fact, Hispanics who gained technical or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mechanical) work experience from their military service are considered to have effectively created a ripple effect that increases their earned income potential for a maximum of 15 years post-military (Cancio, 2018).

In addition, Hispanic male and Black male veterans have commonalities (e.g., veteran status, underrepresentation, discriminatory factors). Yet, Black males have historically experienced what is known as the Black gender gap that consists of less employment opportunities despite their level of education and risk of incarceration compared to Black females and other races/ethnicities (McDaniel et al., 2011). Hence, more research might be warranted regarding educational pathways of Black male veterans compared to Hispanic male veterans regarding community support and mental well-being, especially of OEF and OIF combat veterans (Herbert et al., 2018).

Black male veterans might also need additional community support when transitioning from the military into college or workforce training programs, particularly based on (McDaniel et al., 2011).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Based on the findings of these analyses of a national dataset, the following implications for policy and for practice can be made. With respect to policy, an internal audit or conducting student self-surveys could identify the degree to which scholarships, loans, and campus employment options might be of high interest and readily available for Black and Hispanic male and female veterans to reflection upon their perceptions regarding non-VA educational assistance. Moreover, campus policies could aid in meeting the unique needs of Black and Hispanic veterans who might need additional college, career, or financial literary counseling to overcome systemic and institutionalized discrimination. Huerta (2015) discussed how social capital, upward mobility, and a college education are required for Hispanic males to curtail such discrimination and create more opportunities for other people of color. Thus, educators and scholars can apply research from this study to college readiness and early college admission policies to through purposeful inclusion and equity practices for Black and Hispanic students, especially young Black and Hispanic male students considering the military as the means to pay for college. Moreover, higher education leaders must be intentional in their efforts to promote teaching as a viable employment opportunity for Hispanic male veterans and reinforce teaching as a career option for Black male veterans as well. Concerning implications for practice, college recruiters, career/academic advisors, and financial aid counselors who are responsible for demonstrating best practices for student success might closely consider these findings when promoting college and career pathways.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several recommendations for future research can be made based upon the results from this empirical investigation. In this article, data from the 2010 NSV were analyzed. Other researchers are encouraged to replicate this study using data from past or future NSV datasets to discover national trends. For example, researchers could compare how generations of Black and Hispanic male and female veterans determined their college or career opportunities with the utilization of the GI Bill with a longitudinal study.

Another recommendation would be to investigate the perceptions and educational benefits uses of other racial/ethnic groups of military veterans. In fact, researchers could expand the examination to focus on veterans of color who received education benefits after 9/11 or conduct a cross-sectional analysis of veterans by military branches. Researchers interested in a qualitative study could interview Black and Hispanic veterans who accepted or denied their benefits. Lastly, future research is recommended for policymakers and practitioners to consider the differences in perception and educational benefit usage between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans regarding college and career readiness post-military.

Conclusion

In this article, the degree to which perceptions and educational benefit uses differed between Black male and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans was investigated using data from the 2010 NSV. Of the eight research questions, no statistically significant differences were identified. Even though, five times as many Black male veterans attended a teacher certification program, 2.7%, in

comparison to Hispanic male veterans, 0.0%. Yet, the same number of Hispanic female veterans and Black female veterans identified that they attended a teacher certification program.

Of note, no statistically significant differences were determined in regard to the importance of educational benefits, taken college course work leading to a degree, attended business, technical, or vocational training leading to a certificate or diploma, taken correspondence courses, taken flight training, and received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training as a function of race/ethnicity and gender for both groups. Thus, Black and Hispanic male and female veterans shared similar responses regarding the aforementioned survey items. Previous researchers (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011; Ottley, 2014) agreed that some VA educational benefits that could assist veterans in their transition after the military are underutilized due to complex issues connected to a lack of information, gender norms, and perceived or transparent racial discrimination. Future scholars could expand these presented findings to introduce more Black and Hispanic male and female veterans to a wider range of college and career opportunities.

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Table 4.1

Frequencies and Percentages of the Importance of Educational Benefits for Black Male and Hispanic Male Veterans

	Black Male	Hispanic Male
Importance	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Extremely Important	(<i>n</i> = 88) 46.6%	(<i>n</i> = 69) 49.6%
Very Important	(<i>n</i> = 47) 24.9%	(<i>n</i> = 46) 33.1%
Moderately Important	(<i>n</i> = 23) 12.2%	(<i>n</i> = 11) 7.9%
Slightly Important	(<i>n</i> = 13) 6.9%	(<i>n</i> = 7) 5.0%
Not At All Important	(<i>n</i> = 18) 9.5%	(<i>n</i> = 6) 4.3%

Table 4.2

Frequencies and Percentages of the Importance of Educational Benefits for Black Female and Hispanic Female Veterans

	Black Female	Hispanic Female
Importance	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Extremely Important	(<i>n</i> = 25) 62.5%	(<i>n</i> = 15) 88.2%
Very Important	(<i>n</i> = 9) 22.5%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%
Moderately Important	(<i>n</i> = 3) 7.5%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%
Slightly Important	(<i>n</i> = 1) 2.5%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%
Not At All Important	(<i>n</i> = 2) 5.0%	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%

Table 4.3

Frequencies and Percentages of Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Courses Taken Toward Degree Attainment	Yes	No
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 104) 57.1%	(<i>n</i> = 78) 42.9%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 83) 61.0%	(<i>n</i> = 53) 39.0%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 24) 61.5%	(<i>n</i> = 15) 38.5%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 11) 64.7%	(<i>n</i> = 6) 35.3%

Table 4.4

Frequencies and Percentages of Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Attended Business, Technical or Vocational School Training Completion	Yes	No
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 65) 35.7%	(<i>n</i> = 117) 64.3%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 40) 29.4%	(<i>n</i> = 96) 70.6%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 65) 35.7%	(<i>n</i> = 3) 17.6%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 25) 64.1%	(<i>n</i> = 14) 82.4%

Table 4.5

*Frequencies and Percentages of Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training Program**Participation for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans*

Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training Program	Yes	No
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 11) 6.0%	(<i>n</i> = 171) 94.0%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 9) 6.6%	(<i>n</i> = 127) 93.4%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 2.6%	(<i>n</i> = 38) 97.4%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%	(<i>n</i> = 16) 94.1%

Table 4.6

Frequencies and Percentages of Correspondence Courses for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Flight Training Participation	Yes	No
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 12) 6.6%	(<i>n</i> = 170) 93.4%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 10) 7.4%	(<i>n</i> = 126) 92.6%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 4) 10.3%	(<i>n</i> = 35) 89.7%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100%

Table 4.7

Frequencies and Percentages of Flight Training Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Flight Training Participation	Yes	No
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 1) 0.5%	(<i>n</i> = 181) 99.5%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 3) 2.2%	(<i>n</i> = 133) 100%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 2.6%	(<i>n</i> = 38) 97.4%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100%

Table 4.8

Frequencies and Percentages of Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Received Tutorial Assistance, Refresher Courses, or Deficiency Training	Yes	No
Black Male	NA	(<i>n</i> = 1) 100%
Hispanic Male	NA	(<i>n</i> = 1) 100%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 2.6%	(<i>n</i> = 38) 97.4%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%	(<i>n</i> = 17) 100%

Table 4.9

Frequencies and Percentages of the Importance of Educational Benefits for Black Male Veterans and Hispanic Male Veterans and Black Female Veterans and Hispanic Female Veterans

Attended a Teacher	Yes	No
Certification Program	<i>n</i> and %age	<i>n</i> and %age
Black Male	(<i>n</i> = 5) 2.7%	(<i>n</i> = 177) 97.3%
Hispanic Male	(<i>n</i> = 0) 0.0%	(<i>n</i> = 136) 100%
Black Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 2.6%%	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%%
Hispanic Female	(<i>n</i> = 1) 5.9%	(<i>n</i> = 16) 94.1%

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions and uses of educational benefits between male and female student veterans. Specifically addressed was the extent to which male and female veterans perceived their educational benefits as an important factor in meeting their life goals. Another purpose was to examine the degree to which differences were present in the perceptions and educational benefits use between Hispanic male veterans and Hispanic female veterans and between Black and Hispanic male veterans and between Black and Hispanic female veterans.

In the first journal article, the extent to which male and female veterans perceived their educational benefits was examined. In the second investigation, the perceptions and educational benefits use were analyzed for Hispanic male veterans and for Hispanic female veterans. Lastly, in the third empirical investigation, perceptions and use of educational benefits were compared and contrasted between Black and Hispanic male veterans and Black and Hispanic female veterans. Each investigation was based on data analyses from the 2010 NSV. In this chapter, a synopsis of each article is provided. Policy and practice implications are discussed with provided recommendations for future research.

Summary of Article One Results

In this analysis of a national dataset of male and female veterans, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between male and female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed

to make these determinations. Eight survey items on this national survey were analyzed in this investigation.

Male veterans and female veterans differed on the following three survey items. First, statistically significantly higher percentages of female veterans reported that they had received other education or training assistance outside of VA education assistance, 18.9% in comparison to male veterans, 13.0%. Second, statistically significantly higher percentages of male veterans indicated that they had participated in an apprenticeship or job training program; 8.4% compared to female veterans, 1.3%. Third, statistically significantly higher percentages of male veterans claimed that they had participated in flight training, 3.6% compared to female veterans, 0.4%. Presented in Tables 2.1, 2.4, and 2.6 are the results for these three statistically significant differences between male and female veterans.

Male and female veterans had similar responses on five of the eight survey questions. Male and female veterans reported similar percentages who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they had taken correspondences courses; in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training; and in whether they had attended a teacher certification program. Readers are referred to Tables 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.8 for the results of these five survey items.

Summary of Article Two Results

In this analysis of a national dataset comprised of Hispanic veteran responses, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Hispanic

male and female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed to make these determinations. Nine survey items from this national survey were examined in this investigation.

Hispanic male and female veterans differed on the following two survey items. First, the percentage of Hispanic female veterans reported that educational benefits were extremely important, 88.2% in comparison to Hispanic male veterans, 49.6%. Second, statistically significantly higher percentages of Hispanic female veterans indicated that they had attended a teacher certification program, 5.9%, compared to no Hispanic male veterans. Presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.9 are the results for these two statistically significant differences between Hispanic male and Hispanic female veterans.

Hispanic male veterans and female veterans had similar responses on seven of the nine survey areas in this study, which included other education or training received outside of VA education assistance; who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they participated in an apprenticeship or job training; in whether they had taken correspondences courses; in whether they took flight training and in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. Readers are referred to Tables 3.2 through 3.8 for the results of these seven survey items.

Summary of Article Three Results

In this analysis of a national dataset comprised of Black and Hispanic veteran responses, the degree to which the perceptions and educational benefit use differed between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and

Hispanic female veterans was addressed. Archival data from the 2010 NSV were obtained and analyzed to make these determinations. Eight survey items from this national survey were examined in this investigation.

Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans shared similar percentages on all survey items. For example, low percentages of Hispanic male veterans reported that they had not attended a teacher certification program 0.0%, compared to 2.7% of Black male veterans. Presented in Tables 4.1 through 4.9 are the results between Black male and Hispanic male veterans and the similar responses shared on all eight survey areas in this study, which included importance of educational benefits, who took college classes leading to a degree; in whether they had attended business, technical or vocational school training and received a certificate or diploma; in whether they participated in an apprenticeship or job training; in whether they had taken correspondences courses; in whether they took flight training, and in whether they had received tutorial assistance, refresher courses, or deficiency training. With respect to the female veterans, Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans also had similar responses on all eight survey items. Readers are referred to Tables 4.1 through 4.9 to review the results for non-statistically significant differences between Black female and Hispanic female veterans.

Connections with the Existing Literature

Revealed in this journal-ready dissertation were differences regarding female veterans who noted that they had received other education or training assistance outside of VA education assistance in comparison to male veterans, a finding that was commensurate with the current literature. Interestingly, researchers (e.g., DiRamio et al.,

2015; Mankowski et al., 2015) have contended that female veterans might perceive the use of VA benefits as being burdensome or that they are less worthy than male veterans to receive them, especially in relation to male combat veterans. Thus, female veterans tend to capitalize more on the use of other VA educational benefits in contrast to VA benefits.

With respect to the percentage of Hispanic female veterans who reported that educational benefits were extremely important, a lack of research was present in the literature. Moreover, researchers (Huerta, 2015; Krogstad, 2016; Mankowski et al. 2015) indicated that the GI Bill does offer a financial safety net for many college seeking veterans who often join the military because the GI Bill might ease possible financial strain. Moreover, Mankowski et al. (2015) claimed that female veterans were more likely to join for GI Bill benefits in comparison to other VA benefits, which aligns with the lower responses from Hispanic male veterans regarding the importance of VA educational assistance.

Regarding differences of perceptions and educational benefit use between Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans, low percentages of teacher certification attendance, exacerbated a growing empirical research literature gap. Of special interest, researcher (Cancio, 2018) explained that Hispanics who gained technical or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mechanical) work experience from their military service could increase their earned income potential for a maximum of 15 years post-military in comparison to non-technical fields, such as teaching. In addition, Hispanic male and Black male veterans have commonalities (i.e., veteran status, underrepresentation, discriminatory

factors). However, Black males have historically experienced what is known as the Black gender gap that consists of less employment opportunities despite their level of education (McDaniel et al., 2011).

Implications for Policy and for Practice

The differences between male and female veterans regarding perception and educational benefit usage revealed that male veterans were less likely to use educational benefits outside of VA assistance, in contrast to female veterans. Higher education leaders must be intentional in their efforts to promote campus scholarships, financial aid, work study jobs, and other funding resources to male veterans their military knowledge of VA assistance. Particularly, financial aid officers, Bursar office administrators, and academic advisors who are answerable for student accounts and enrollment might carefully review these findings when implementing student success programs and tuition payment solutions for student veterans.

Moreover, if more policy support for scholarships, loans, and campus employment options were promoted and readily available for Hispanic male veterans, a change of their perception and usage of non-VA educational assistance might occur. Such campus policies could aid in meeting the unique needs of Hispanic male student veterans who often report being first-generation and from lower social economic families. Again, many Hispanic male veterans might regard educational benefits outside of the military as less important compared to Hispanic female veterans. Concerning implications for practice, college recruiters and career coordinators who are accountable for offering information on college programs and career pathways might suggest other methods of financial assistance for Hispanic male veterans.

In addition, campus policies could aid in meeting the unique needs of Black and Hispanic veterans who might need additional college preparation, career preparation, and financial literacy counseling before entering college due to systemic and institutionalized discrimination. Huerta (2015) discussed how social capital, upward mobility, and a college education are required, especially for Hispanic males to curtail discrimination. Thus, educators can apply the results delineated herein as a pre-K-12 intervention tool and possible college prep guide. Lastly, college recruiters, career/academic advisors, and financial aid counselors who are responsible for demonstrating best practices for higher graduation rates might closely consider these findings when promoting persistence and student success.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the statistically significant results from the three investigations in this journal-ready dissertation, several recommendations for future research can be made. First, data from the 2010 NSV were analyzed, future researchers are encouraged to replicate this study using data from past or future NSV datasets from different years to discover national trends. For example, extending the study to include a cross-sectional analysis from the 2001 NSV would expand existing literature. In addition, researchers could compare how generations of Black and Hispanic male and female veterans determined their college or career opportunities with the utilization of the GI Bill with a longitudinal study.

Another recommendation for researchers would be to extend this study to veterans who represent specific zip codes to determine whether the results are generalizable to Hispanic male and female veterans by region. Another recommendation

for researchers would be to investigate the perceptions and educational benefits uses of other racial/ethnic groups of military veterans (e.g., Asian-American, Native Americans). In future studies, researchers could focus on veterans who received education benefits or training after 9/11 who are Hispanic and Black male and female veterans, because both racial/ethnic groups are expected to surpass White male soldiers, the racial majority group of service members, within the next 30 years. Further, researchers could conduct a cross-sectional analysis of veterans by military branches (e.g., Army, Navy, and Air Force).

Researchers also interested in a qualitative study could interview veterans to seek the underlying reasons why more female veterans use other education and training benefits outside of VA education assistance than male veterans. Also, qualitative researchers could interview veterans to investigate why more Hispanic female veterans reported educational benefits as extremely important. Lastly, future research is recommended for policymakers and practitioners to address the need for more college and career readiness for Black male veterans and Hispanic male veterans and Black female veterans and Hispanic female veterans post-military.

Conclusion

For the purpose of this empirical investigation, data from the 2010 NSV was acquired. Three statistically significant differences were determined regarding male and female veterans. More female veterans used educational assistance than VA educational benefits, in comparison to male veterans. In fact, nearly 20% of all female veterans received other education or training assistance outside of VA educational benefits.

Regarding perceptions and educational benefit uses that differed between Hispanic male and female veterans, two statistically significant differences were identified. With respect to perceptions and educational benefit uses, approximately, 90% of Hispanic females reported that educational benefits were extremely important in terms of meeting their college and career goals. A higher percentage of Hispanic female veterans also identified that they attended a teacher certification program, in comparison to no Hispanic male veterans.

Of note, five times as many Black male veterans attended a teacher certification program, 2.7%, in comparison to Hispanic male veterans, 0.0%. Yet, the same number of Hispanic female veterans and Black female veterans identified that they attended a teacher certification program. Previous researchers (DiRamio & Jarvis, 2011; Ottley, 2014) agreed that some VA educational benefits that could assist veterans are underutilized due to complex issues connected to a lack of information, gender norms, and perceived or transparent racial discrimination. Future scholars could expand these presented findings to note that more Black, Hispanic male and female veterans should have a wider range of college financial aid and career opportunities by using VA educational benefits.

Overall, more Post 9/11 veterans will continue to enroll in college in the years to come and the demographic shift of the aforementioned population of veterans in college is predicted to be increasing Black, Hispanic, and female. The populations examined in this journal-ready dissertation support that the use of VA educational benefits are perceived to be an extremely important means towards college or a career. Many Black, Hispanic and female veterans also reported that VA educational benefits might be a

positive way to combat racial bias and gender norms, but alas internal and external barriers deter some away from utilizing their educational benefits. Thus, higher education leaders and researchers must become aware that race, ethnicity, and gender can influence the perceptions and uses of VA educational benefits for the many Post 9/11 veterans, which ultimately is strong factor in the long-term success of student veterans and the future of college enrollments in the United States.

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APPENDIX

Date: Jan 28, 2019 3:32 PM CST

TO: Cassandra Boyd
John Slate
FROM: SHSU IRB

This letter is provided in response to your IRB request regarding human subjects involvement in your proposed research titled, "DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS AND USES OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF VETERANS AS A FUNCTION OF RACE/ETHNICITY AND GENDER: A NATIONAL ANALYSIS (IRB #IRB-2019-28)."

This study, which will be conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for your Doctoral degree, does not appear to fit the regulatory definition of human subjects research.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations 45 CFR 46.102(D), defines research as "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities."

DHHS defines human subject as "a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research: (i) Obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or (ii) Obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

What this means for you: while your project meets the definition of research, it does not meet the definition of human subject, since no participant can be linked to the data. Thus, this study does not require IRB oversight as specified in DHHS regulations 45 CFR 46, subpart A.

If I need to provide further information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A blue rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sharla Miles".

Sharla Miles
Research Compliance Administrator
Liaison, Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (PHSC-IRB)
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

VITA

Cassandra D. Boyd

Educational History

Doctorate of Education – Educational Leadership, May, 2019

Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX

Dissertation: Differences in the Perceptions and Uses of Educational Benefits of Veterans as a Function of Race/Ethnicity and Gender: A National Analysis

Master of Arts – Speech Communication, 2011

Texas Southern University, Houston, TX

18 credit hours

Master of Science – Higher Education Administration, 2007

Florida International University, Miami, FL

Magna Cum Laude graduate

Bachelor of Arts – Mass Communications, 2005

Savannah State University, Savannah, GA

Cum Laude graduate

Professional Licensure and Certifications

Adjunct Faculty Certification Program, Lone Star College-North Harris, 2010

A.R.T. (Acquired Residence Training) certification, Bowling Green State University

Exchange Program, 2006, United States Hispanic Leadership Institute

Professional Experiences

2009-Current Lone Star College-North Harris, Student Development,

Program Coordinator, Office of Diversity Initiatives

2011- Current Women's Resource Center Manager

2013- 2015 Lone Star College- North Harris, Fine Arts Department, Adjunct Speech Instructor, Communication Department

2010-2011 Lone Star College- North Harris, Learning Center,

Adjunct Introduction to Education Instructor, Office of Academic Success

2007- 2009 Texas A&M University at Galveston, Office of Student Life,

Student Development Specialist II, Multicultural Services

2007 Bowling Green State University Exchange Program, Residence Life, Learning Community Intern, Kohl Hall

2007 Florida International University, College of Education, Algebra Project

Summer Coordinator, Urban Education in Professional Leadership and Studies Department

2006, Florida International University, Undergraduate Education, Freshman Year
Experience Instructor, First-Year Programs
2005-2007 Florida International University, Division of Student Affairs, Graduate
Leadership Facilitator, Center for Leadership and Service

Honors and Awards

20/20 Award, Lone Star College System, 2019
Outstanding Student in Higher Education Leadership Doctoral Program, Sam
Houston State University, 2018
Southwest Research Educational Research Dean's Awards, San Antonio, 2017
Staff Excellence Award Winner, Lone Star College-North Harris, 2014
Most Registered Participants, Texas A&M University, Southwestern Black Student
Leadership Conference, Lone Star College-North Harris Conference Advisor,
2010
Student Advisor of the Year Award, Texas A&M at Galveston University, 2008
Officer of the Student Government Association Award, Florida International
University, Student Affairs, Graduate Student Affairs Representative, 2006-2007
Certificate of Achievement, Florida International University, Student Affairs
Graduate Association, 2007
Dean's List, Savannah State University, Mass Communications, 2003-2005

Publications

Boyd, C.D. (2016, May). Student engagement and the power of icebreakers. [Online
Newsletter]. *Faculty Matters* (5) 4. Retrieved from
[http://fsc.lonestar.edu/newsletter_v2/may2015/student_engagement_the_power_o
ficebakers.html](http://fsc.lonestar.edu/newsletter_v2/may2015/student_engagement_the_power_of_icebreakers.html)

State/Local Presentations

Boyd, C.D. (2018, February). Transgressive teaching for faculty and student affairs
professionals. Workshop presented at Curriculum Camp at Louisiana State
University, Skype Session.
Boyd, C.D. & Gonzalez, V. (2017, June). Exploring leadership styles: True colors
personality assessment. Workshop presented at Lone Star College-North Harris
Educational Talent Search Summer Leadership Academy, Houston, TX
Boyd, C.D. (2017, February). Exploring the transitions of student veterans in the
classroom. Workshop presented at Southwest Educational Research Association,
San Antonio, TX
Boyd, C.D. & Swaringim, B. (2016, October). Grit: Why leaders gotta have it.
Workshop presented at the Lone Star College-North Harris Fall Lead Retreat,
Houston, TX
Boyd, C. D., Landry, E., Moore, A., & Herrera, E. (2016, February). What they didn't
tell you in school: Advice from women in leadership. Workshop presented at the

Diversity Leadership Conference at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX.

Boyd, C. D. (2014, March). The current state of affairs for women students in higher education, Faculty and Staff In-Service at Towson University, Towson, M.D.

Boyd, C. D. (2013, October). Cultural considerations. Workshop presented at the Lone Star College-North Harris Annual Learning Center Tutor Seminar, Houston, TX.

Boyd, C. D. (2011, October). The challenge: walking the culture line. Workshop presented at the Lone Star College-North Harris Fall Leadership Retreat, Houston, TX.

Boyd, C. D. (2009, October). Testing your cultural lens. Workshop presented at the Lone Star College-North Harris Fall Leadership Training/Retreat, Houston, TX.

Boyd, C. D. (2008, September). Can't we just "lead" along? Workshop presented at Texas A&M University at Galveston Student Leadership Officer Training, Galveston, TX.

Regional Presentations

Boyd, C. D. (2007, April). Got effective group decision making or ineffective groupthink? Workshop presented at Florida International University's Leadership Summit, Miami, FL.

Boyd, C. D. (2006, February). Team building: What graduate advisors should know. Workshop presented at the National Association of Student Personal Administrators (NASPA) Drive-In Conference, Orlando, FL.

Professional Program Evaluations

Boyd, C.D. (2018, June). Program Evaluation of Student Success Institute Leadership Conference, Lone Star College System.

Professional and Academic Association Memberships

American College Personal Association (ACPA)

Houston Area Network Student Affairs Professionals (HANSUP)

Houston Area Urban League Young Professionals (HAULYP)

Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society

Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society (2007)

Professional and Support Staff Association (PSSA)

National Association of Student Personnel Administrator (NASPA)

National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education

Student Affairs Graduate Student Association (SAGA) (FIU Branch)

Textbook Academic Authoring Association (TAA)