



USAREUR/7A OPTEMPO Study

In-Progress Report (IPR) 7
Special Topic: Leadership in USAREUR from the
perspective of the junior enlisted soldier

**Prepared by the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe
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Heidelberg, Germany**

**Under the auspices of the Office of the Command Surgeon
United States Army-Europe**

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Purpose

- Leadership is critical to the success of the US Army.
- In this report, leadership is examined through the eyes of the junior enlisted soldier (E1-E4). Both Officer and NCO leadership are studied in conjunction with OPTEMPO, job attitudes, career intentions, family issues, and military & medical readiness.

- These data were collected as part of the OPTEMPO study being conducted in USAREUR by the United States Army Medical Research Unit-Europe





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Summary of Key Findings (1 of 2)

- Soldiers who reported working long duty hours rated their NCO leadership lower than soldiers who reported working shorter hours.
- Soldiers who viewed their leaders as good communicators, reported less “work overload” than soldiers who rated their leaders as poor communicators.
- Soldiers who reported high degrees of job satisfaction and job control, rated their Officer and NCO leadership higher than soldiers with low job satisfaction and control.
- Soldiers who felt that their leaders recognized and appreciated their work rated their leadership higher. Job recognition had the strongest relationship of all job attitudes with leadership.
- Soldiers with positive perceptions of Officer and NCO leadership expressed stronger intentions to stay in the Army than soldiers with negative perceptions of their leadership.
- Soldiers reporting a high degree of work-family conflict rated their leaders lower on all measures of leadership. This effect was stronger for married soldiers.



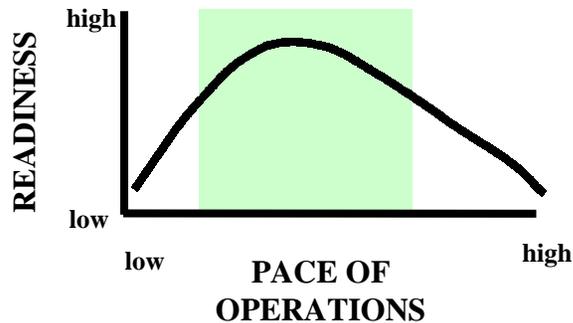
Summary of Key Findings (2 of 2)

- Soldiers who rated their Officer and NCO leadership higher, reported higher levels of military readiness in their unit.
- Unit cohesion and soldier morale were strongly and positively related to all measures of leadership.
- Soldiers with higher depression scores rated their Officer leadership, NCO leadership, and leader communication lower than soldiers reporting lower depression scores.
- Psychological well-being was strongly and positively related to all measures of leadership.
- Soldier reports of physical symptoms were negatively related to measures of Officer, NCO, and quality of leadership.
- When leadership ratings were examined across deployed, garrison, and training environments, we found that soldiers rated their leadership highest when in training and lowest during deployment.
- When soldiers reported that their leaders were good communicators, they rated their job satisfaction high, even when their workload was high. When soldiers reported that their leaders were poor communicators, they rated their job satisfaction low, especially if workload was high.



OPTEMPO Readiness Model

Area of Optimal Soldier and Unit Performance



- The model predicts that pace of operations affects optimal soldier and unit readiness. When the pace is either very high or very low, soldier and unit readiness decline.

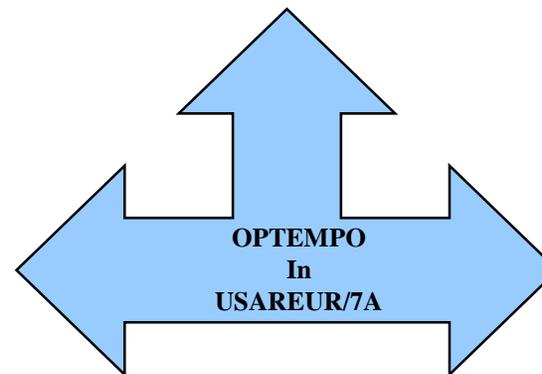
- The model consists of three major components: military deployments, training exercises, and garrison duties.

Deployments

- Peacekeeping
- Humanitarian
- Combat

Training

- Exercises
- Schools
- Temporary Duty (TDY)



Garrison

- Rear detachment
- Garrison support



Overview

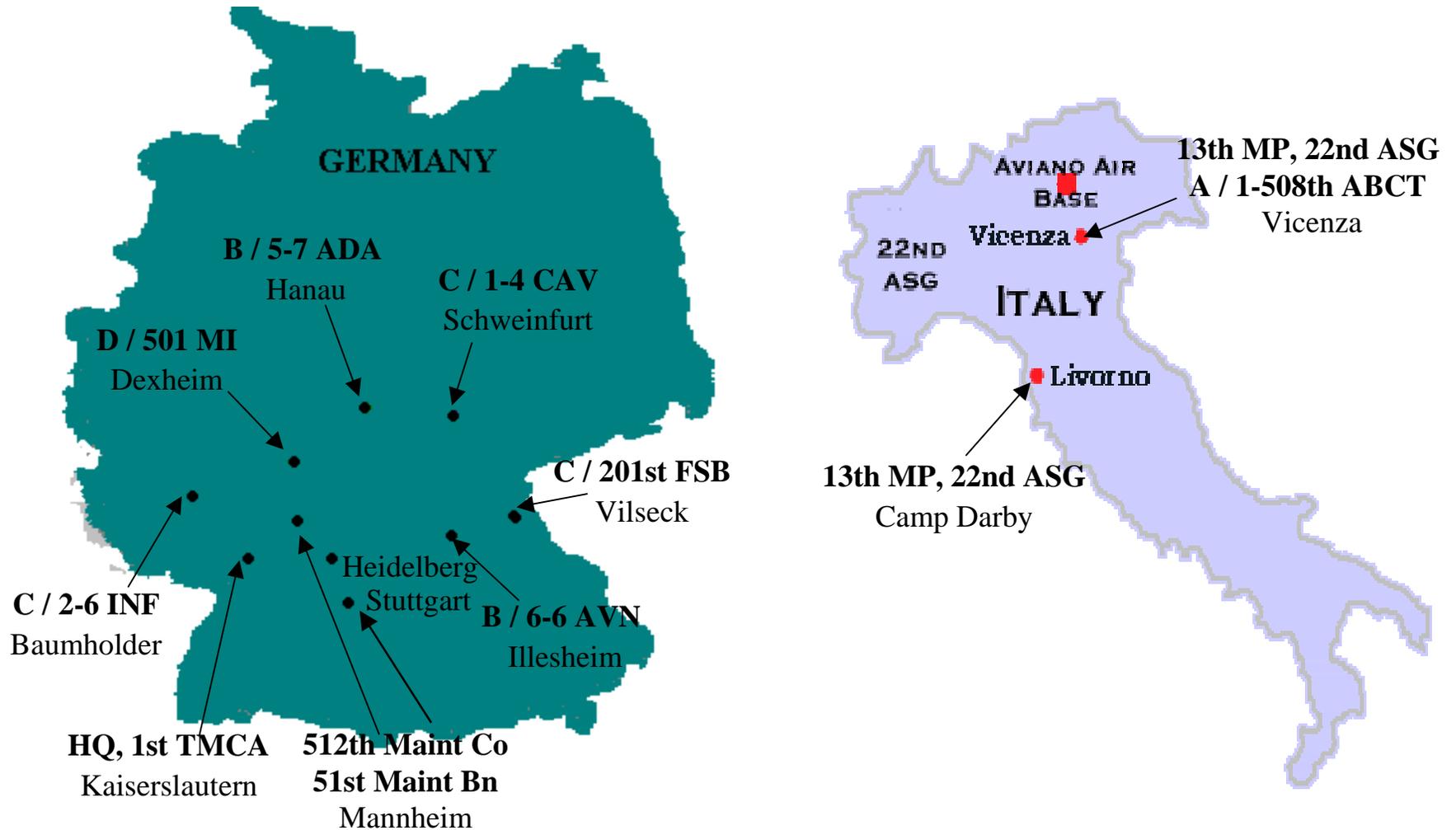
- To understand the impact of leadership in our ongoing OPTEMPO study, we assessed leadership in conjunction with OPTEMPO, job attitudes, soldier & family issues, and mission readiness.





Unit Locations

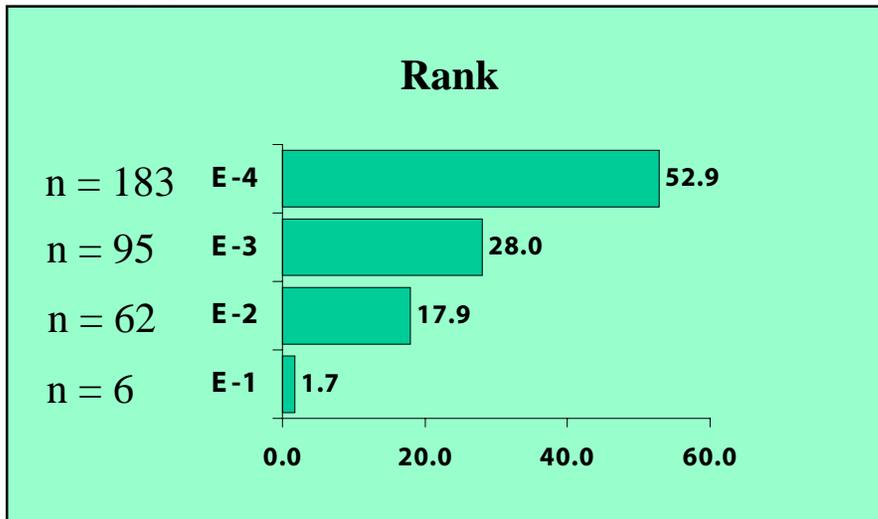
- The 10 units in this study are located throughout USAREUR.





Sample Characteristics (N= 346)

- This report is based on data collected from junior-enlisted soldiers from the 10 companies participating in the OPTEMPO study from OCT-DEC 2000.



Education

HS diploma/GED:	57.5%	n = 199
Some college:	36.1%	n = 125
Some high school:	2.9%	n = 10
Bachelors degree:	3.5%	n = 12

Gender

Male:	82.1%	n = 284
Female:	17.9%	n = 62

Marital Status

Single:	62.4%	n = 216
Married:	31.8%	n = 110
Separated/Divorced:	3.5%	n = 20

Race

White:	55.8%	n = 193
African American:	19.7%	n = 68
Hispanic:	15.6%	n = 54
Asian:	1.2%	n = 4
Other:	6.1%	n = 21



Measuring Leadership

“Leadership is influencing people--by providing purpose, direction, and motivation--while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization” FM 22-100

Scales & Sample Item

Vertical Cohesion-NCO, $\alpha = .90$

“The NCOs in my unit delegate work effectively”

Vertical Cohesion-Officer, $\alpha = .91$

“The officers in my unit are interested in my personal welfare”

Leader Communication, $\alpha = .90$

“I receive up to date information concerning unit missions”

General Leadership Quality, $\alpha = .89$

“My chain of command works well”

Interviews & Focus Groups

Career Decision Interviews

n = 83

- Soldiers who are in their re-enlistment window were interviewed on their intentions to stay or leave the Army, as well as factors that affect their decision.

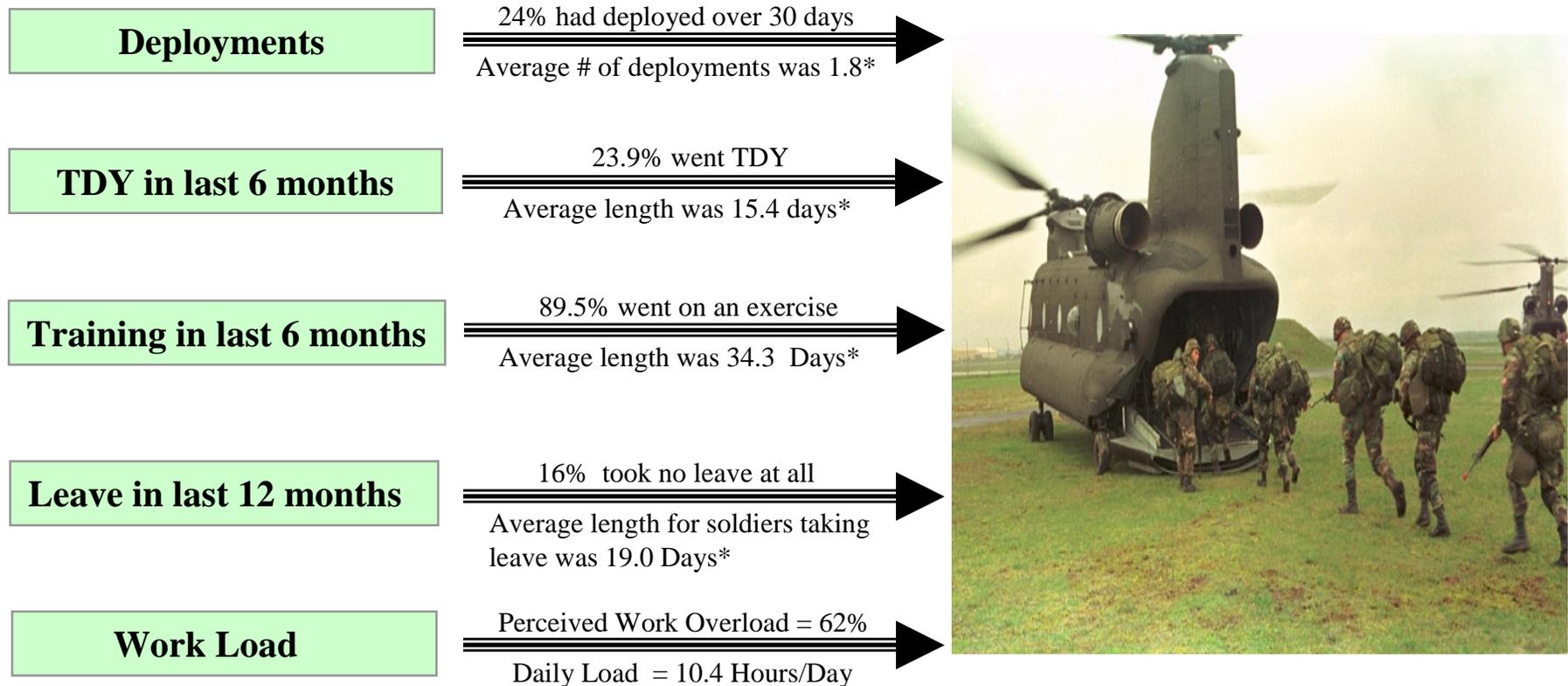
Junior Enlisted Group Interviews 10 Groups (50-60 soldiers)

- Group interviews are designed to generate guided discussion among the soldiers and to better understand their views of how the unit is functioning.



Measuring OPTEMPO

“Right now, the operational tempo of the armed forces is the highest it's been since the Vietnam War. They are operating at an absolutely frenetic pace that is literally wearing out people and equipment.” Defense Analysis by the Council for Foreign Relations

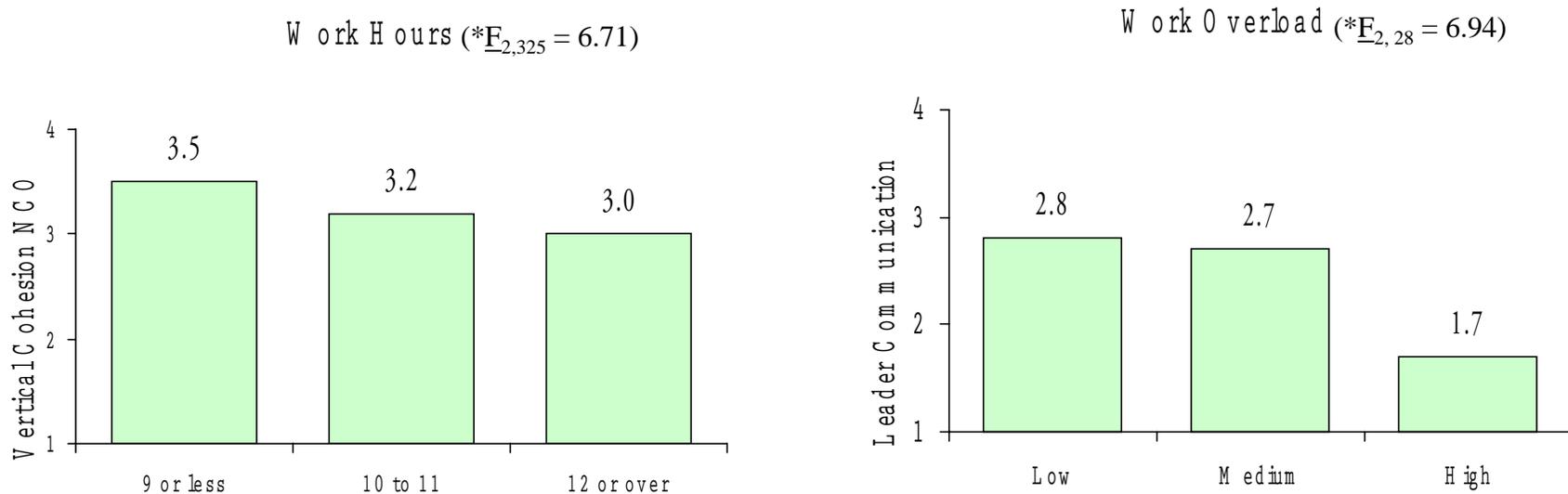


*Of those who have deployed, went TDY, went on field exercise.



OPTEMPO: Workload & Leadership

- Soldiers who worked 9 hours or less per day rated NCO leadership significantly higher than those who worked 10 or more hours per day.
- Soldiers reporting high workload, rated their leaders lower in leader communication than soldiers reporting low or medium workloads.



“They [leaders] have got to learn to say no! If it’s detail after detail after detail and if we’ve got a heavy workload, say no! What are they [leaders] going to do? Bend your dog-tags and send you back home?” **Junior Enlisted Soldier**

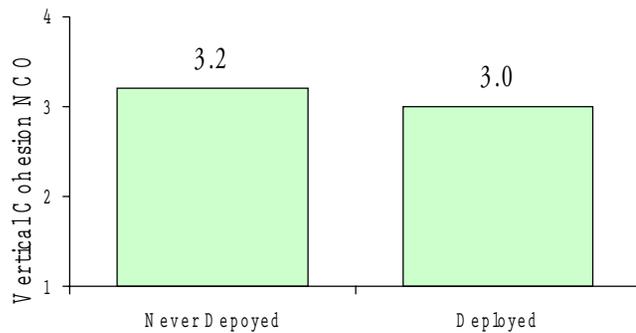
* $p < .01$



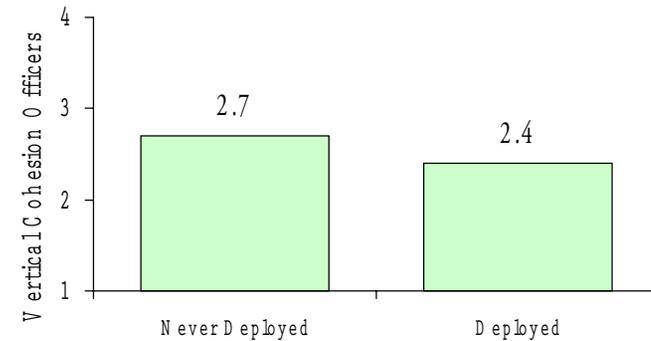
OPTEMPO: Deployments & Leadership

- Soldiers who have not deployed before rated NCO, Officer, and quality of leadership significantly higher than soldiers who have deployed at least once.

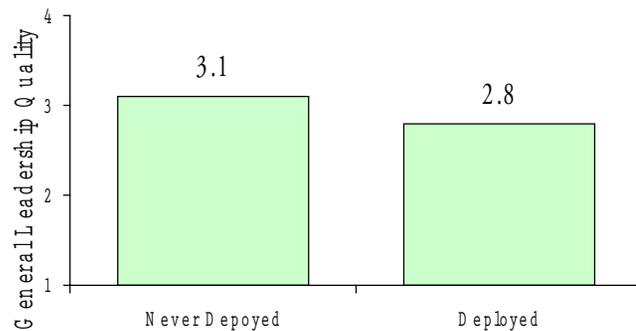
Deployment history * ($t_{338} = 2.31$)



Deployment history * ($t_{332} = 2.14$)



Deployment history * ($t_{340} = 2.07$)



* $p < .05$



Measuring Job Attitudes

"The Army is not made up of people, the Army is people."

General Creighton W. Abrams

- In considering the relationship between OPTEMPO and job attitudes, leadership played a critical role.

Scales Assessing Job Attitudes

Job Satisfaction, $\alpha = .91$

Job Control, $\alpha = .80$

Job Engagement, $\alpha = .88$

Job Recognition, $\alpha = .74$

Sample Item

“I am satisfied with my job in the Army.”

“I am allowed to my job without constant supervision from others.”

“How well I do my job matters a great deal to me.”

“My supervisors generally appreciate the way I do my job.”

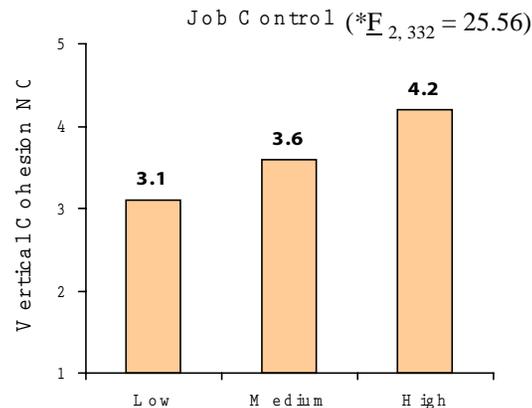
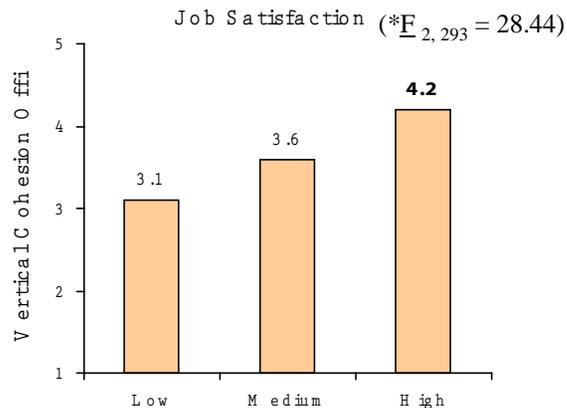


Job Attitudes & Leadership

"When you got NCOs fitting in with the soldiers, because everybody's working in there, getting their hands dirty, then it's cool!"

Junior Enlisted Soldier

- Soldiers who reported higher job satisfaction also reported higher Officer leadership.
- Soldiers reporting more job control rated their NCO leadership higher than soldiers who reported low job control.
- Soldiers who reported higher job engagement also rated the general quality of leadership in their unit higher. (* $F_{2, 338} = 17.29$)



"The NCOs don't put themselves higher than the soldiers, even though their collar is higher than the soldiers. They joke around, they fit in, they're like one of the boys. When you work like that your soldiers are more productive."

Junior Enlisted Soldier

* $p < .001$



Job Recognition & Leadership

- Job recognition was the job attitude most strongly predictive of leadership ratings.
- We theorize that job recognition and leadership are mutually predictive.

"If your platoon sergeant tells you 'good job' it's alright, but if HE [Company Commander] tells you 'good job,' you KNOW you're doing a good job!"

Junior Enlisted Soldier

- Strong predictors: $r =$ greater than .50 or less than -.50.
- Moderate predictors: $r =$ between .30 and .50 (-.30 and -.50).
- Weak predictors: $r =$ between .20 and .30 (-.20 and -.30).

Job
Recognition

Leadership Measures

* $r = .60$

Vertical
Cohesion
NCO

* $r = .52$

Vertical
Cohesion
Officer

* $r = .61$

General
Leadership
Quality

** $r = .48$

Leader
Communication

* $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$



Measuring Career & Family Issues

"We enlist soldiers, but we re-enlist families...Sustaining the Army community and the well being it engenders is instrumental to retaining soldiers with the experience, skills, and leadership necessary in the 21st century Army."

United States Army Posture Statement FY01 (Honorable Louis Caldera & General Erik K. Shinseki)

Measures Assessing Career & Family Issues

Sample Scale Item

Career Intentions

"Describe your Active Duty Army career intentions." (Ranges from definitely leave to definitely make a career)

Work-Family Conflict, $\alpha = .94$

"I am allowed to do my job without constant supervision from others."

Family-Work Conflict, $\alpha = .94$

"How well I do my job matters a great deal to me."

Career Decision Interviews

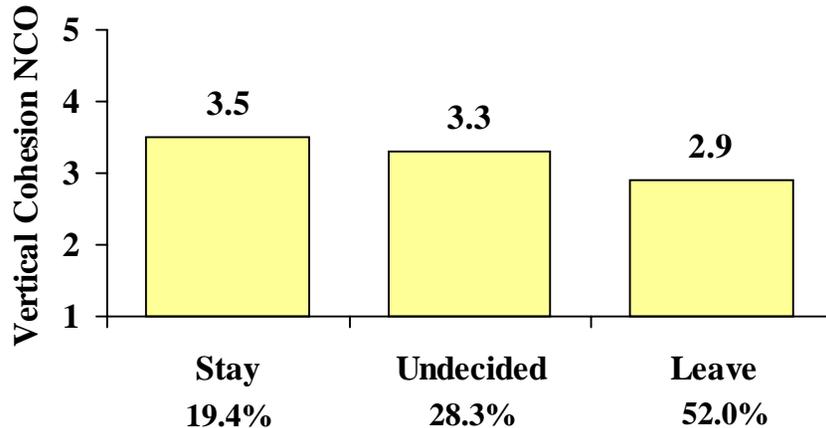
Structured interview addressing factors that influence soldier re-enlistment/attrition.



Leadership & Career Intentions

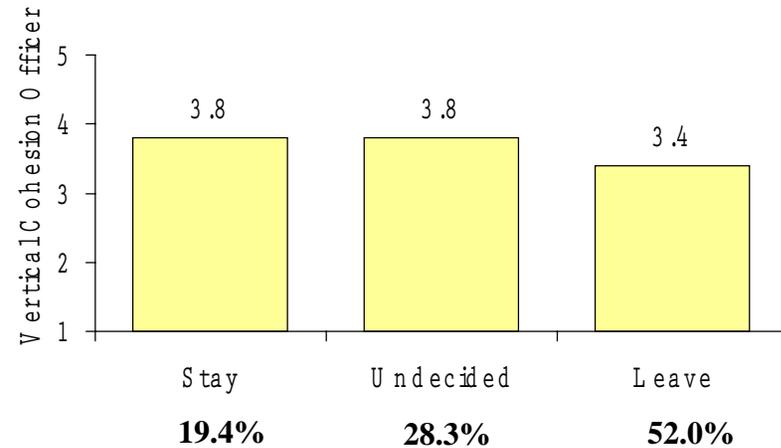
- Soldiers with positive perceptions of both Officer & NCO leadership expressed stronger intentions to stay in the Army than soldiers with negative perceptions.

Career Intentions (* $F_{2,337} = 12.42$)



* $p < .001$

Career Intentions (* $F_{2,331} = 8.19$)



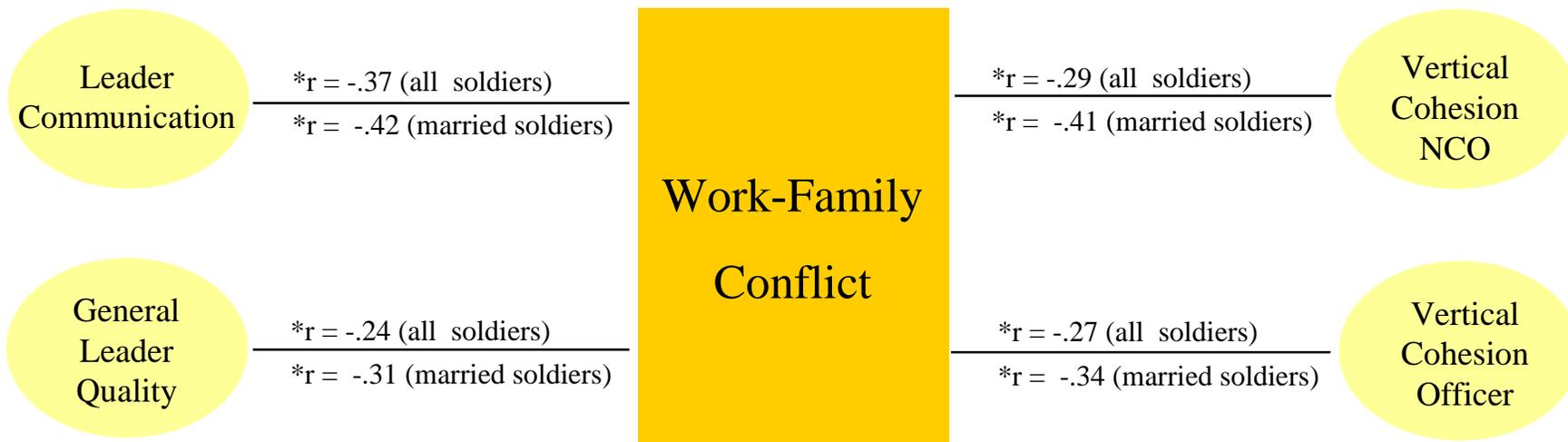
"The basic reason I am staying is because of the NCOs—good NCO leadership. The NCOs here encourage improvement of myself, so I get a little professional development. Learning the job and making rank means you see the bigger picture and that is where I want to be, dealing with soldiers in the right way and taking care of them."

Junior Enlisted Soldier



Leadership & Work and Family

- Overall, soldiers reporting high work-family conflict rated their leaders lower on all leadership measures.
- The inverse relationship between work-family conflict and leadership was even stronger for married soldiers (n = 110 of 346)



- Strong predictors: $r = \text{greater than } .50 \text{ or less than } -.50$.
- Moderate predictors: $r = \text{between } .30 \text{ and } .50 \text{ (} -.30 \text{ and } -.50)$.
- Weak predictors: $r = \text{between } .20 \text{ and } .30 \text{ (} -.20 \text{ and } -.30)$.

* $p < .05$



Measuring Military Readiness

“We have a readiness challenge that is unprecedented in American military history...In the midst of transforming itself, the Army must continually provide strategically adaptive, trained and ready forces. In short, we must be trained and ready for today—and tomorrow.”

General Dennis J. Reimer, Former Army Chief of Staff

Military Readiness Measures

Combat Readiness, $\alpha = .84$

Operational Readiness, $\alpha = .77$

Unit Cohesion, $\alpha = .80$

Soldier Morale, $\alpha = .85$

Sample Scale Item

“I have real confidence in my unit’s ability to perform its mission.”

“I am confident in my unit’s mission-essential equipment.”

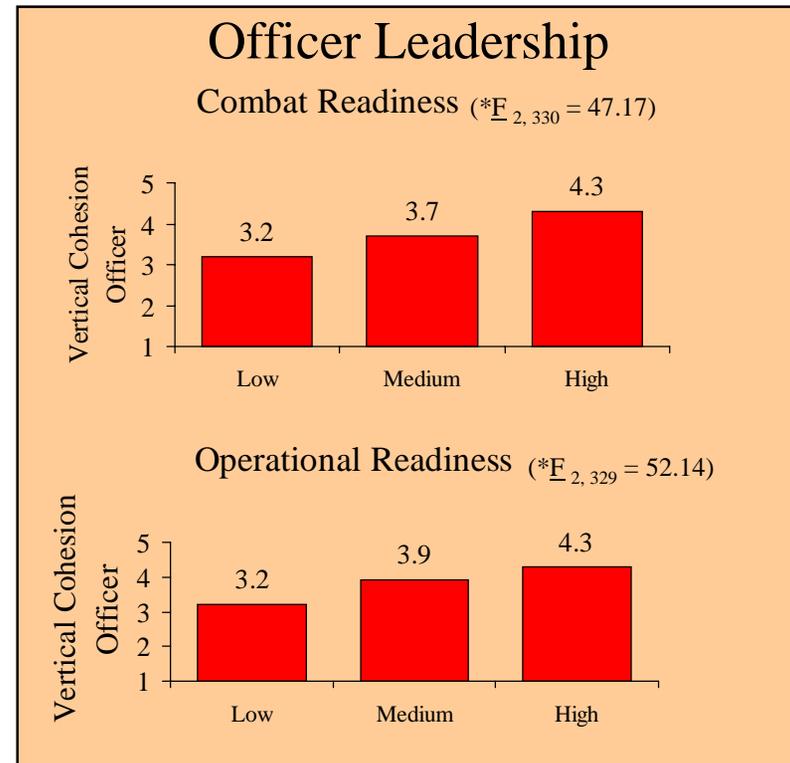
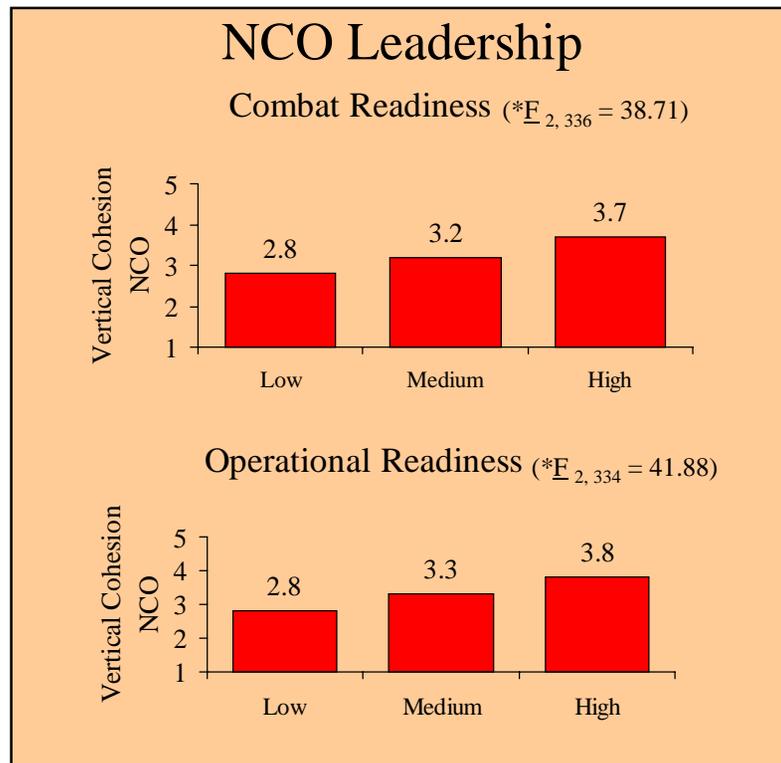
“The members of my unit know that they can depend on each other.”

“The morale in my unit is...” (rated on a scale from very low to very high.)



Leadership & Military Readiness

- Soldiers with positive perceptions of both Officer & NCO leadership reported higher levels of military readiness than soldiers with negative perceptions of leadership.

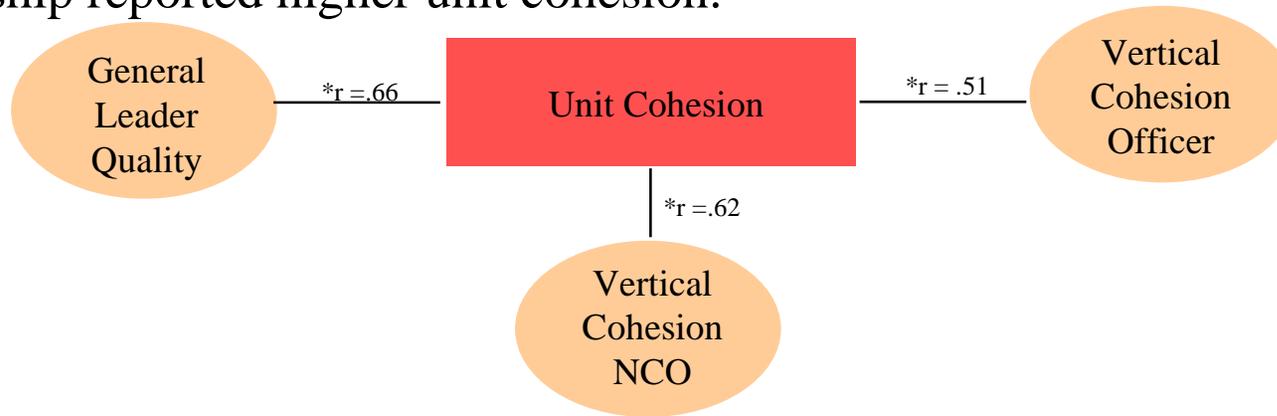


* $p < .001$

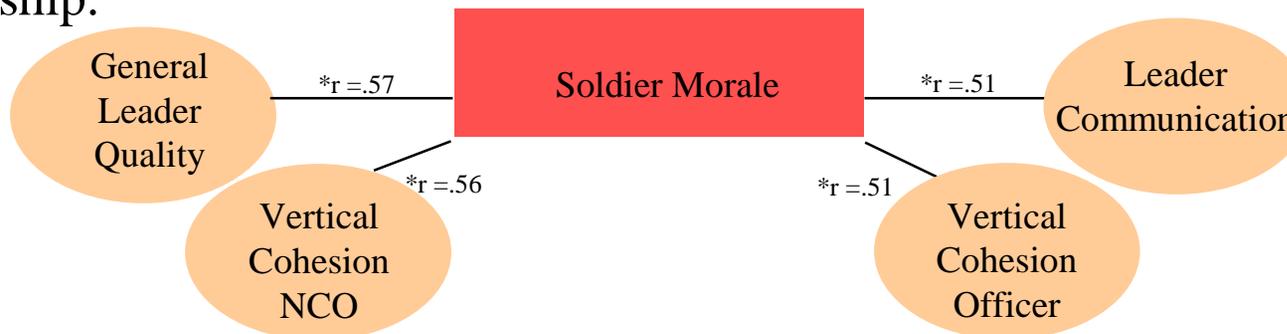


Leadership & Cohesion and Morale

- Soldiers with positive perceptions of leadership quality, and Officer & NCO leadership reported higher unit cohesion.



- Soldiers reporting high morale rated leaders high on all measures of leadership.



- Strong predictors: $r =$ greater than .50 or less than -.50.
- Moderate predictors: $r =$ between .30 and .50 (-.30 and -.50).
- Weak predictors: $r =$ between .20 and .30 (-.20 and -.30).

* $p < .001$



Measuring Medical Readiness

“Soldier health is inextricable from readiness.”

Office of the Surgeon General, Army Medical Department



Medical Readiness Measures

**Psychological Well-Being,
 $\alpha = .74$**

Depression, $\alpha = .90$

Physical Symptoms

Sample Scale Item

“Rate the extent to which you could not overcome your difficulties within the last week.”

“Rate the extent to which you have felt that everything has been an effort in the last week.”

“Respond to a list of physical symptoms by checking if they currently apply to you, e.g., head colds, back problems.”

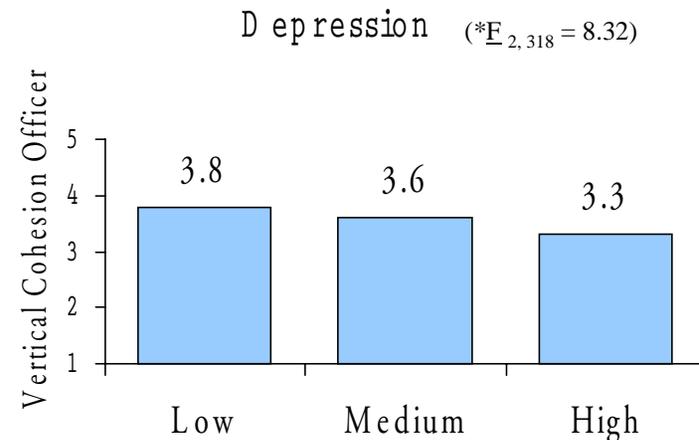
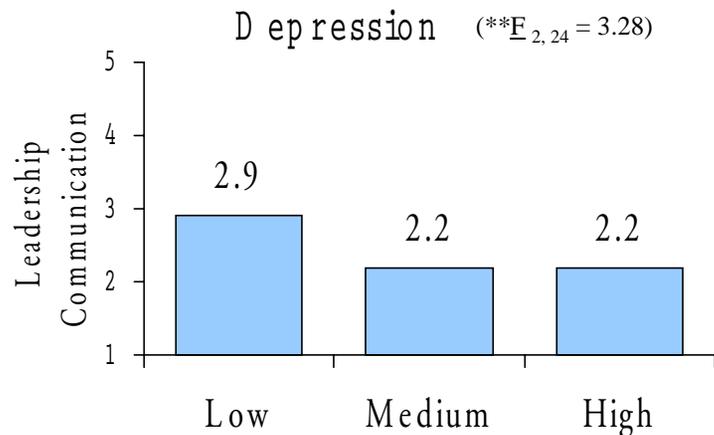
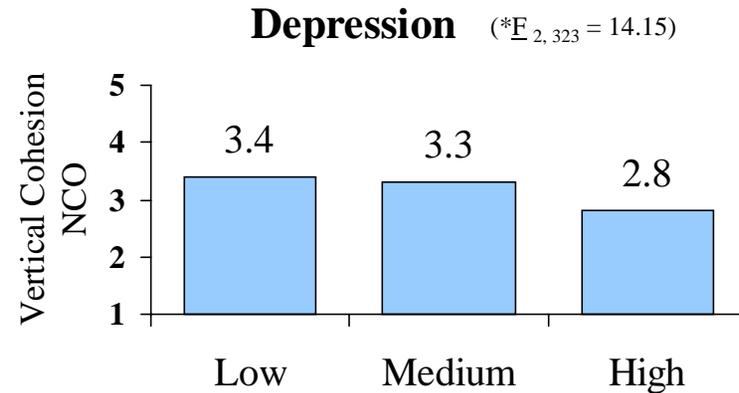


Leadership & Medical Readiness (1 of 2)

- Soldiers reporting higher depression scores rated leaders lower across all measures of leadership.

“Sick call rates are a good indicator of problems in the unit and in particular can be an indicator of bad leadership”

Medical Service Corps Officer

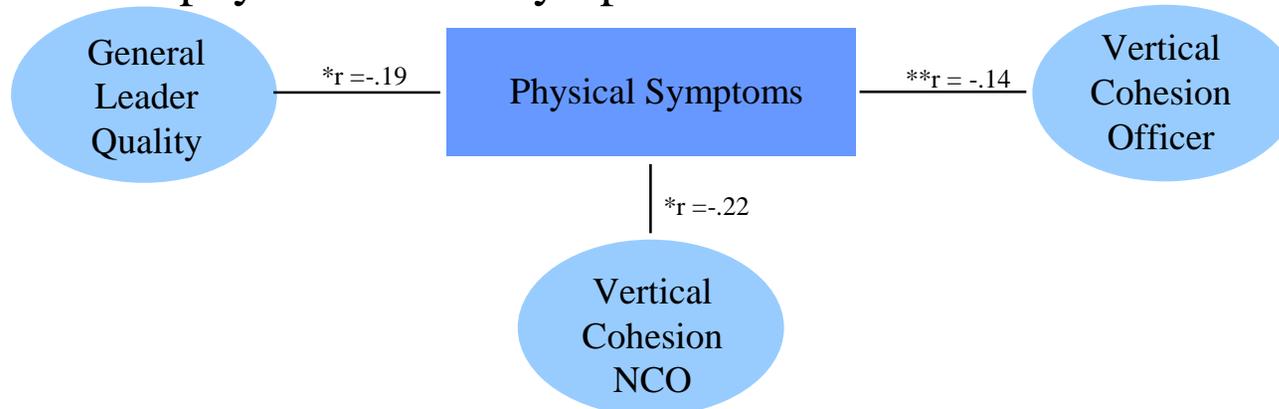


* $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$

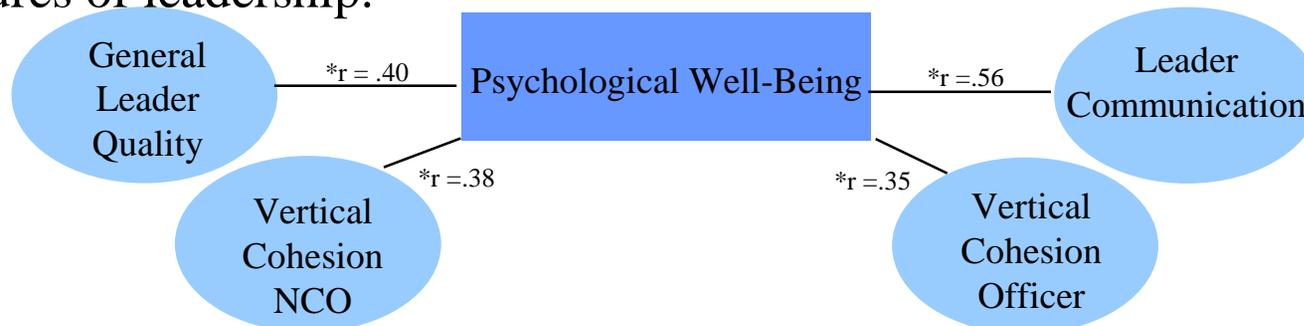


Leadership & Medical Readiness (2 of 2)

- Soldiers who reported higher leadership quality, Officer & NCO leadership reported fewer physical health symptoms.



- Soldiers with high psychological well-being rated their leaders high on all measures of leadership.



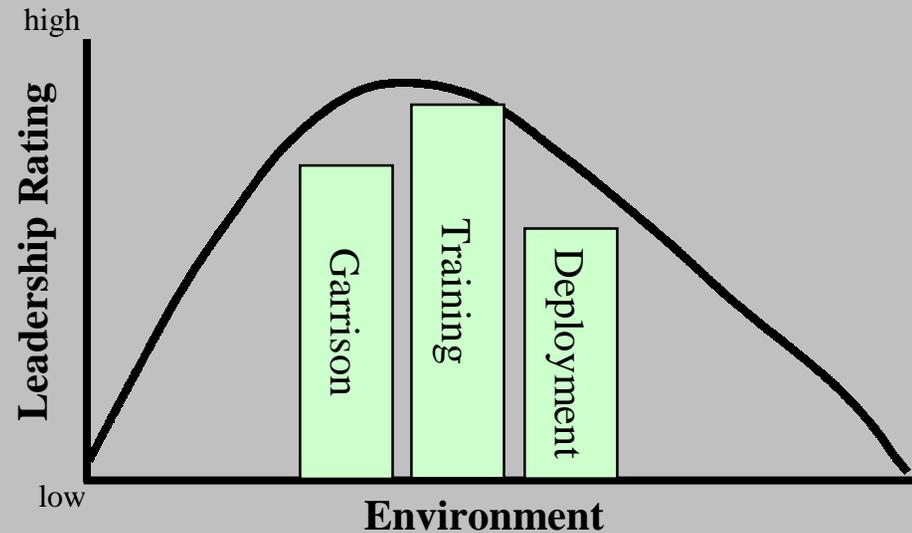
* $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$

- Strong predictors: $r =$ greater than .50 or less than -.50.
- Moderator predictors: $r =$ between .30 and .50 (-.30 and -.50).
- Weak predictors: $r =$ between .20 and .30 (-.20 and -.30).



OPTEMPO: Leadership across settings

- Leadership was examined across settings by comparing soldiers' views on deployments, in garrison, and in training.
- Leaders were rated highest by junior enlisted soldiers in a training environment and lowest when deployed¹.



- Soldiers rated their leadership highest when in training, when they are using the skills and knowledge they were trained in. Conversely, when on deployments, soldiers rated their leaders the lowest.

"Things are getting better since we went to the field. We saw a lot of leadership fights in the field, but things are getting better now. The officers didn't support the commander well, so our morale went down because we didn't know what was going on. Since we have a new commander, I guess things are getting a little bit better."

Junior Enlisted Soldier

¹based on data collections while soldiers were deployed (Jan-Mar 99, n=82) and in training (Jul-Sep 00, n=199).



Leadership as a Moderator

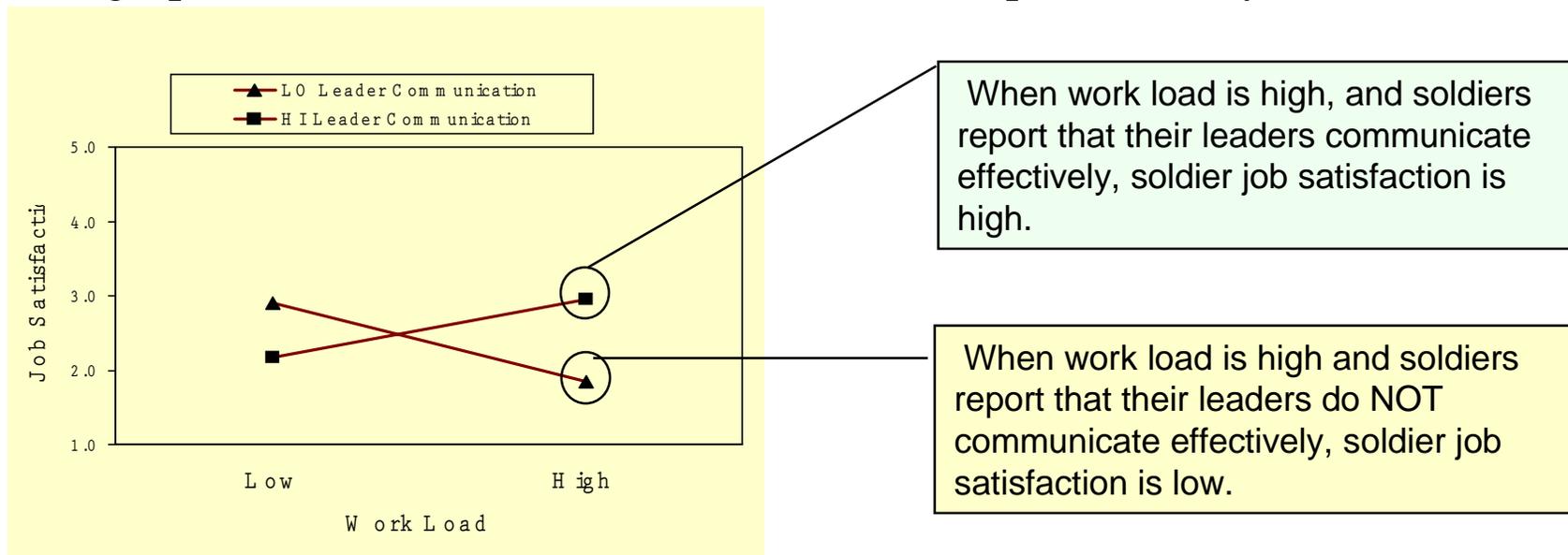
- Recently, we have begun to look at LEADERSHIP as a MODERATOR in the OPTEMPO Readiness Model. A moderator is a variable which can “buffer or exacerbate” the relationship between a stressor and a strain. We hypothesize that good leadership can act as a “buffer” between OPTEMPO stressors and OUTCOME strains.





Leader Communication as a Moderator (1 of 2)

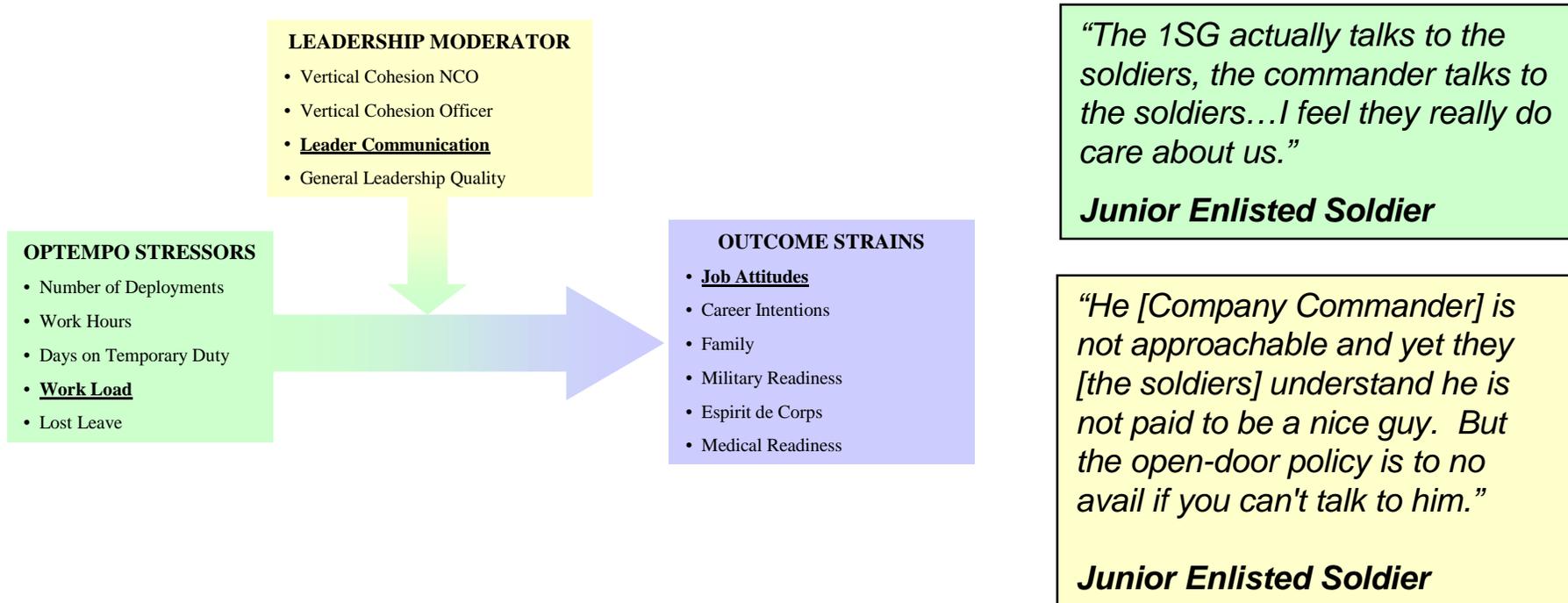
- Many of the stressors associated with high OPTEMPO are unavoidable given the nature of military duty.
- We have begun to focus on what leaders do or can do as a means to buffer their troop against the unavoidable stress associated with military duty.
- Leader actions, unit SOPs, and organizational policies are examples of potential moderators that may buffer the effect of stress on adverse outcomes (e.g., poor retention, lower readiness, higher incidences of depression).
- The graph below illustrates this moderator effect quantitatively.





Leader Communication as a Moderator (2 of 2)

- It is critical to study proactive leader behaviors, like communication, to inoculate soldiers from the impact of OPTEMPO.
- The model below illustrates the moderating effects of leader communication on soldier perceived work load and soldier job satisfaction.
- Soldier interviews support this moderating effect qualitatively.





Conclusions

- Junior-enlisted soldiers view leadership as impacting all aspects of their lives :
 - Job attitudes
 - Career intentions
 - The family
 - Unit readiness
 - Cohesion and morale
 - Medical readiness
- Proactive behaviors that leaders engage in (i.e., communicating effectively) can lessen the impact of workload on junior enlisted soldiers' job attitudes.
- Predictive models are being developed to link other leader behaviors to important Army stressors that affect soldiers:
 - Predictability
 - Information flow
 - Training relevance
 - Soldier recognition



Point of Contact

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Mr. Jackson, SGT Mitchell, Ms. Prayner, Ms. Robertson, Ms. Salvi, Ms.
West, Mrs. Winstead.

Do you have a **family member** enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)?

Yes No

Is your **spouse** in the military?

Yes No

Not Married

How many **years** have you been **in the military**?

Example: If you've been in 9 years, you should write in and bubble in "0" and then "9".

<u>0</u>	<u>9</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

How many **hours** of work have you averaged **per day** in the past week?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

Think about your "days off" during the past week. On average, how many **hours** did you perform duty-related work during a "day off"?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

How many **days** have you been on a **training exercise** in the past 6 months?

Example: If it is 19, you should write and bubble in "0" and then "1," and "9".

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

In the past week, how many **days** have you performed military related work?

<u> </u>

0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>

How many days of leave and/or passes have you **taken** in the past 12 months?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>

How many days of leave and/or passes have you **lost** in the past 12 months?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

How many **days** have you been **TDY** in the past 6 months?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

How many **hours of sleep** have you averaged **per night** in the past week?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

Have you ever served in **combat**? (e.g., Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Grenada, Panama, Somalia)

Yes No

Have you ever served on a **peacekeeping or humanitarian** mission?

Yes No

How many **months** in total, have you served in the **Balkan Region** (e.g. Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Hungary)?

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

In total, how many **deployments** have you completed that lasted more than 30 days? (not including training exercises or unaccompanied tours)

<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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0 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
1 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
2 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>
3 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>
4 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
5 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
6 <input type="radio"/>	6 <input type="radio"/>
7 <input type="radio"/>	7 <input type="radio"/>
8 <input type="radio"/>	8 <input type="radio"/>
9 <input type="radio"/>	9 <input type="radio"/>

