INFLUENCE OF ONE OR MORE DOMESTIC RELOCATIONS ON ADOLESCENT

SOCIAL SKILLS PERCEIVED BY FORMER MILITARY PARENTS

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BY

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DEDICATION

God's mercy has blessed me to complete this task. This achievement is dedicated to my mother, Minnie P. McClenney, my children Mitchell and Michele, each veteran and spouse participant, and a host of supporters to vast to name, they each have inspired me and provided motivation for me to recognize my potential to be a better me throughout this process.

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research was to describe the experiences of former military parents regarding their adolescents' social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocation. Specifically, the study highlighted the effect of domestic relocations on military adolescents' social skills through the parents' perspective. In addition, this study was designed using Bowen's family theory and Erickson's stages of psychosocial development theory. Interviews were used to discover the research questions that guided this study: "What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation" and "How would additional social skills education benefit adolescents in military families?" Seven veterans and spouses, 41 years of age and older, shared their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding military adolescents' social skills. Emerging themes were anxiety, community, adaptability, availability, and make a difference. Previous research supports findings that emphasize military adolescents' social skills that indicate the importance of adapting behaviors. Suggestions are provided for overcoming barriers and future research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Domestic relocations are a common component in the U.S. military. In 2017, the

data shows the active duty military force was over 1.34 million (Barroso, 2019; Military

OneSource, 2018). Active duty military gender dynamics have drastically changed over

a span of 50 years, with more women joining, resulting in more ranking officers who are

women. The data indicated that service members may relocate every 2 to 3 years due to

the mission of their branch of service (Aronson, Caldwell, Perkin, D., & Pasch, 2011). As

of 2017, there was a downward decline in active duty members in the U.S. military,

which had decreased from 1.46 million to 1.34 million (Barroso, 2019; Military

OneSource 2018). Constant relocation can affect the entire family, especially the level

of stability in a family. Carter and Wozniak (2018) discovered relocations within the US

causes an increase in marriages. Interestingly, Army members recognized marrying is

costly; however, marrying during a relocation lowers the cost of the marriage. There are

17.7% officers and 82.3% enlisted members on active duty. In 2017, it was found that

87.5% active duty members are domestically relocated in the United States or U.S.

territories (Military OneSource, 2018). Additionally, there are of 52,000 single active

duty members with children, over 412,000 are married to a civilian with children, and

32,000 are dual military married with children. There are over 87% active duty members

who are parents. Most importantly, studies show that 21% of parents have an adolescent

who is between the ages of 12 and 18 years old (Military OneSource, 2018). In 2013, the

existing number of spouses and children exceeded the number of service members and its ratio was 1.4 to 1 (Clever & Segal, 2013). These numbers alone represent a slight decline in the relocation program within the branches of the military for service members and their families.

Some of the U. S. military relocations are welcomed by active duty military members, others are not. Relocating can mean the start of a new life that involves moving the family and belongings from one military base to another. For other military members, relocating can mean family disruption from something as small as daily routines to familiarity with the community. In such case, military members with adolescents may experience unexpected changes in physical, cognitive, and social development.

Relocations are deep-seated in the culture of military life and may affect the family's daily functionality. Stable family functioning is necessary for the family structure and development of children (Freistadt & Strohschein, 2013). Family members' roles and responsibilities allow the family to function properly. It is vital to ensure that each family member has a clear understanding of his/her individual role (mother, father, brother, or sister). In turn, understanding responsibilities and being able to carry out each task, such as: 1) taking out the trash, 2) determine who in the family cooks meals, and 3) who will support the family financially.

Military relocations can happen unexpectedly and cause issues with family functioning. Studies have found these other factors may also affect military families, such as: (a) recurrent relocation, (b) separation from family of origin, (c) deployment, (d) separation from immediate family, and (e) the danger of injury or death (Aronson et al.,

2011; Chandra et al., 2010; Kaslow & Ridenour, 1984). Because of these factors, other studies have discovered that military families suffer high levels of stress which cause: (a) emotional problems, (b) anxiety, (c) social withdrawal, (d) sadness, and (e) anger (Aronson et al., 2011; Chandra et al., 2010;; Kaslow & Ridenour, 1984).

The issues encountered by military families caused by having to relocate every 2 to 3 years can be daunting (Aronson et al., 2011). A military person can be relocated in two ways: 1) permanent change of station where the family moves with the military person; 2) deployment in which the military person is given orders to relocate for a limited time to another U.S. military base (Aronson et al., 2011). Oftentimes, military members are required to attend conferences, classes, and temporary duty assignments causing them to be away from the family. Military members are more than likely to be assigned to hazardous job duties and/or places that put them in danger of injury or death. Any or all the common factors found in military families may affect family functioning.

The process of relocation involves house-hunting and may affect family functioning. According to Blue Star Families (2018), 79% of active duty members and military spouses viewed relocation as their top stressor. Aronson et al. (2011) reviewed unique military family challenges involving: (a) home; (b) school; (c) family stress; (d) peers; and (e) communities that exist for military children experiencing frequent relocations and need more social skill orientation. Blaisure (2012) concurred and found that the challenges sustained military families. In addition, the study found that military adolescents showed increased responsibility, independence, and higher confidence (Blaisure, 2012).

Military members, their families, and adolescents are continually challenged through changes that require resilience when stress and crises exist. Adolescents are faced with stress, crisis situations, and risks when they relocate to new environments. Previous studies examined military children (Clever & Segal, 2013; Kudler & Porter, 2013) by exploring known stressors and crises. Relocations can disrupt military family routines and social relationships. Moreover, challenges that relate to home and school, family stress, peers, and community among military adolescents that need to be explored (Aronson et al., 2011; Hosek, & Wadsworth, 2013). As a child grows within the military family, domestic relocations may require coping, recovery, and the use of protective factors. Furthermore, resilience can allow the child to learn and adjust from past military relocations. Stress factors, coping, and risk patterns closely relate to resilience and issues that can fall within a military child's developmental path (Pinheiro Mota & Matos, 2012). Several researchers have found that some children function quite well under stressful environmental conditions. Through hardships, military children who develop into adolescents are offered an opportunity to build their resilience and confidence to prepare for the next relocation. These findings indicate a continuous need for communities to develop local services and programs that assist military families amid relocations.

Statement of the Problem

The military relies on the mobility of service members to meet the mission. To meet mission requirements, military families relocate often. In doing so, relocations may inadvertently affect adolescents' social skills. A search of the literature on the influence of military relocations on adolescents' social skills through the perspectives of the parents

revealed two studies: Bowen, Mancini, Martin, Ware, & Nelson, 2003 and Chandra et al., 2010. Additional research is needed on this topic to help stabilize military families with relocation as they serve in the military. Reviewing the frequency of domestic relocations during adolescence may show a greater risk to adolescents during the relocation period.

A review of literature indicated a lack of studies focusing on behavioral experiences and perceptions of the former military parent concerning adolescent male and female social skills due to military domestic relocations. More research supporting interventions inspiring efforts to prevent the effects of domestic relocations on military adolescents' social skills is needed. Consequently, the researcher used phenomenology to explore this issue among former military families.

Purpose of the Study

Although some research studies continue to examine military relocations and adolescent social skills independently, they do not focus specifically on the effects of military relocations on adolescent social skills perceived by their military parents (Aronson et al, 2011; Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari, & Blum, 2010; Cillessen, & Bellmore, 2011; Davis & Finke, 2015; Jackson-Lynch; Garcia & Hwang, 2014).

The purpose of this research was to describe the experiences of former military parents regarding their adolescents' social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocations. A phenomenological approach, one of several research methods, guided this study. According to Reiners (2012), phenomenologists assumed that knowledge is achieved through interactions between researchers and participants and is considered subjective, inductive, and dynamic. Furthermore, a German mathematician,

Edmund Husserl, founded phenomenology. He also learned that phenomenology removes beliefs and is associated with consciousness, which is based on the meaning of an individual's experience of perception, thought, memory, imagination, and emotion leading to finding an answer to this question, "What do we know as persons?" Husserl's descriptive approach takes out the possibility of interpretations concerning perceptions and allows for experiences of the participant's thoughts, memories, imagination, and emotions (Reiners, 2012). Using the phenomenology approach assisted with interpreting experiences in this study and may lead to a better understanding of military adolescents' social success.

Currently, a gap exists in literature for military parents with adolescents 12 through 18 years old in examining their social skills related to one or more domestic relocations. The results of this study may increase the body of knowledge on the influence of domestic relocations on the development of social skills among adolescents as perceived by former military parents. The participants in this study included veteran and spouse former military parents who discussed challenges they experienced with their adolescent children.

Significance of the Study

Relocations are deep-seated in the culture of military life and may affect the family's daily functionality. Current family models are based on characteristics of non-military families and not in consideration of the lack of adolescents' social skills of military children as a result of relocation. Thus, having an understanding of the challenges and stressors that impact these families is of importance. This research study

provides the voices of former military parents on the issues that impacted their children's social skills development. Moreover, this study contributes knowledge and is significant to the family studies literature by providing qualitative research that outlined novel challenges of adolescent children of former military families in Texas. This study reveals barriers encountered, and strategies implemented by former military parents and is a tool in opening up dialogue with the military, school, and community leaders. Stable family functioning is necessary for the family structure and development of children (Freistadt & Strohschein, 2013). The significance of this study describes detailed descriptions of former military parents' perceptions of their adolescents' social skills associated with one or more domestic relocations. Describing former military parents' quality and meaning of their experiences with their adolescents during relocations provided descriptions in the parents' own words to help understand the situations and differences experienced. Thus, allowing more insight into adolescents' social skills and needed education to help them overcome the challenges associated with one or more domestic relocations. More studies exploring the challenges of former military parents and their adolescents is recommended for future studies.

Theoretical Frameworks

The family systems theory and the psychosocial development theory are the theoretical frameworks utilized for this study. Bowens' family systems theory demonstrates the interdependence found in families through emotions and family functioning (Chibucos, Leite, & Weiss, 2005). While Erik Erikson's human development theory looks at social experiences and stages of development from childhood to

adulthood (Thomas, 2005). Of the eight stages that Erickson identified in his psycho-socio development theory, this dissertation focused on Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion Stage 5. Military life offers not only belonging within an immediate family but also life within a supportive community that has strong values and a shared mission. The phenomenological constructs of research were used to gather and analyze the research data.

The conceptual framework of family systems theory helped appreciate the experiences and perceptions of former military parents during multiple domestic military relocations. The whole family is a single unit or entity (McGoldrick & Carter, 2001). This concept does not focus on individual members of the family but interactions, relationships, and family dynamics within the family (Gilbert, 1992; McGoldrick & Carter, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2012). Military domestic relocations may produce changes in family functioning that relate to the service member, adolescents, and families (Jackson-Lynch et al., 2014). Furthermore, military family relocations bring changes which in turn may affect the entire family. The relocation itself is one change that the entire family will experience together. Moreover, locating a new job for the spouse is another change the family experiences. Other change experiences for the family are locating new schools and new community activities. Due to the relocation, adolescents may need some time to adjust and adapt to the new location.

According to Chibucos et al. (2005), family systems theory contains the following key concepts: "…interdependent components, inputs/outputs, boundaries, hierarchy of systems, rules, goals, feedback mechanisms, nonsummativity, change, and equifinality"

(p. 279-280). Individually, the key concepts reflect integral roles in a service member's life. Roles in a family, such as the couple adapting to the family, the parents adapting to the family, and the children adjusting to changes within military families along with several other factors are associated with family systems theory. The actions of one person within the family may start a reaction of other family members much like a machine. When one part fails within the machine, that part can affect the other parts. As the parts of domestic relocations form (e.g., receiving Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, relocating children from school, leaving friends, locating housing, making household goods appointments, out-processing, in-processing, making new friends, etc.) the opportunity for any part throughout the relocation may fail (Mancini, Bowen, O'Neal, & Arnold, 2015). "Systems theorists seek to explain the behavior of complex, organized systems of all sorts—from thermostats to missile guidance computers, from amoebas to families" (Boss, Doherty, LaRoosa, Schumm, & Steinmetz, 1993, p. 325). The family systems theory focuses on the whole family as it develops. It also explores the family member roles, interactions within the family, and how the family adapts to change. For family relationships to work, family members need to work jointly to ensure gender roles change as a necessary element to maintain the family unit during relocations.

Participants are individuals who live individual experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Furthermore, this concept focuses directly on individual members of the family and each family member's experiences which are perceived, described, felt, judged, and talked about with others (Patton, 2002). Military domestic relocations may produce changes in family functioning that relate to the service member, adolescents, and families

(Jackson-Lynch et al., 2014). Challenges that children may face when transitioning to a different place may cause an increase in family tension, particularly when a move was unanticipated; having difficulty separating from friends and facing the challenge of assimilating into established social networks to form new friendships; learning and adapting to a new school and community; dealing with differences between the old and new schools, leaving and developing new student-teacher relationships; and getting accepted into extracurricular activities. Thus, relocations bring changes which in turn may affect the entire family. The relocation changes can impact each family member differently, such as, locating a new job for the spouse or locating new schools and new community activities. Due to the relocation, adolescents may need some time to adjust to the new location and during this time new experiences may develop.

Erik Erikson's Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion points out the conflict's adolescents go through while searching for self. These conflicts are parents, brothers and sisters, friends, and others (Erikson, 1963; Thomas, 2005). Additionally, Erikson's theory began with the adolescent years and allowed expansion of the other stages. Military adolescents 12 through 18 years old will go through Stage Five specifically and endure problems in their adolescent years (Thomas, 2005). Erikson developed the ego identity, which helps adolescents find themselves and know how they fit in with the rest of the world. It is a time for parents to pay more attention to their adolescents as they develop. Adolescents, boys and girls, may involve themselves in drug or alcohol activity, or adolescents may avoid this type of activity and save themselves from the consequences of poor decisions.

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Philosophical Perspective

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), phenomenology was derived from German philosophy. Additionally, it is also closely related to hermeneutics, a methodology that can be used to examine text that involves in-depth long interviews with individuals who have experienced an area of interest. Focusing on the shared experience with others who had a similar experience brings out the true meaning of phenomenology. As similar experiences unraveled during the study, the analysis determined clear, specific similarities in the lived experiences. Bringing lived experiences together with other similar lived experiences are what makes the phenomenology approach best for families who experience one or more domestic relocation.

To complete the purpose of this study, the research questions used focused on two issues. The interview questions were open-ended to allow participants to freely contribute:

1. What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation?

2. How would additional social skills education benefit adolescents in military families?

Researcher's Assumptions

Assumptions for this study included:

1. Participants will be volunteers.

2. Participants will respond truthfully concerning their experiences and perceptions as military parents of adolescents.

Definition of Terms

1. Adolescence – developmental stage in life from around age 12 through 18 (Steinberg, 2011).

2. Domestic relocation – permanent change of stations within the continental United States (Clever & Segal, 2013).

3. Experiences, n.d. – the conscious events that make up an individual's life.

4. Family functioning – "the extent to which family members are emotionally bonded, effectively communicate emotions and information, and respond cooperatively and flexibly to problems" (Freistadt & Strohschein, 2013, p. 954).

5. Individual lived experiences – how individuals perceive the experience, describe the experience, feel about the experience, judge the experience, remember the experience, make sense of the experience, and talk about the experience with others (Patton, 2002).

6. Military parents – military members who birth, adopt, foster, and raise, children /adolescents while on active duty.

7. Perception – the procedure or outcome of becoming conscious of items, unions, and events by way of the senses, that comprises activities like acknowledging, viewing, and discriminating. These activities enable living beings to order and interpret the stimulants received into meaningful insight (Nugent, 2013).

8. Service member – men and women who are molded into Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, and Seamen who have similar physical and value standards reflecting military war-fighting beliefs (Nayback-Beebe & Yoder, 2011).

9. Social Skills – one's ability to manage and operate successfully in a social environment (Cillessen & Bellmore, 2011).

10. Spouse – individual married to the U.S. military member. May or may not have retired from the U.S. military or may or may not have retired from a civilian job.

11. Retired – individuals who served the allotted years in the U.S. military to reach retirement status.

Delimitations

Delimitations are important in qualitative studies and should be identified as they increase credibility (Patton, 1990). The following delimitations apply to this study:

1. Participants will be former military parents.

2. Participants will be parents who have experienced one or more domestic relocations during active duty.

3. Participants will be parents/caregivers of adolescents who were 12 through 18 years old while the parent/caregiver was active duty.

4. Participants may not care to share personal information relating to their adolescents.

Summary

Military adolescents are bound to experience social skills during this stage in life. For military families, this experience may be associated with relocations. There is a need for additional research with military adolescent social skills during domestic relocations. More research on this topic would be helpful to many military adolescents.

This study described the experiences along with perceptions of former military parents had of their adolescent children during one or more military domestic relocations. The study used qualitative research and theoretical framework to explore social skills of military adolescents associated with domestic relocations as perceived by the military parent. More research on military adolescents associated with domestic relocations will help military families, schools, communities, and practitioners working with military adolescents understand their needs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Parents have a unique relationship with their adolescents that no one else may have. As children grow into adolescents, parents' experience much of the changes the adolescent experience day-to-day. Parents observe their relationships with adolescents through learned social skills and new relationships within and outside the family (Karney & Crown, 2007; Weber 2012). Each relationship shapes the adolescent differently as new social skills may originate. In fact, this is quite different for military children. Military adolescents experience family relationships and learned social skills somewhat distinctly from non-military adolescents due to the nature of military life (Easterbrooks, Ginsburg, & Lerner, 2013). In general, military life involves numerous changes and relocations. This chapter reviews literature through the lens of Bowen's family systems theory to examine how one or more domestic relocations may affect military parents' perceptions and interactions that indirectly produce impact on adolescents' social skills.

Theoretical Frameworks

The family systems theory and the psychosocial development theory are the theoretical frameworks for the study. Bowen's family systems theory validates the interdependence found in families through emotions and family functioning (Chibucos et al., 2005). While Erikson's human development theory discusses social experiences and stages of development from childhood to adulthood. Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs.

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Diffusion is the focus of this study (Thomas, 2005). The Bowen's Family Systems theory

offers a framework to consider social skills of military adolescents related to one or more

domestic relocations. When Murray Bowen conceptualized the Bowen family systems

theory in the 1950s, his goal was to study the human in a way that opened innovative

avenues surrounding human phenomenon (Friedman, 1991; Gilbert, 1992; Jackson-

Lynch et al., 2014; McGoldrick & Carter, 2001). Furthermore, Bowen based the family

systems theory on the family rather than the individual yet recognized that each

individual is different. Furthermore, through Bowen's research with schizophrenic

patients, family systems theory became clear as family members visited patients gave

Bowen an opportunity to observe interactions with the entire family. These observations

assisted Bowen in shifting his studies from the individual to the entire family system.

Bowen's research on the family brought about the realization that individual members in

families have emotional expressions rooted and fused in multigenerations (Bowen 1978;

Gilbert, 2006; Haefner, 2014). Figuratively speaking, a military family is one of many

families in the military operating as a unit; one of an emotional system where each

member of a military family is a small part of generations of families before them.

Bowen's family system theory speaks clearly to describe how people function in

emotional systems (Bowen, 1978). Bowen theorized that separation and loss exist within

a family's anxiety. Furthermore, he realized that people who have anxiety about

separation and loss react in predictable ways, as do people who are together too much.

Separation and loss or being together too much can cause behavioral reactions such as:

(a) conflict, (b) adapting, (c) triangulating, and (d) cutting oneself off from others. Gilbert

(2006) also found that the anxiety quality exists inside the emotional system of a family. Furthermore, emotions that become conscious are feelings and although anxiety automatically occurs most of its occurrence is from awareness. Using Bowen's research, military adolescents' family of origin can be viewed through social relationship patterns in military families.

Erik Erikson, known for the psychosocial development theory, accepted other theorists' beliefs concerning personality. He recognized that one area of development had little focus; therefore, he set out an identified characteristic of the healthy personality to benefit human development (Thomas, 2005). Erikson concentrated on childhood development and proposed eight stages of childhood. Specific to adolescents in Erikson's Stage Five theory, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion, which is used in this study, an adolescent child will go through conflicts while searching for self. Furthermore, as the child grows and develops, they will experience conflicts that occur within the family and with others outside the family (Erikson, 1963; Thomas 2005). During the adolescent's development, identity diffusion may take over (Erikson, 1959, 1963). In the case of military adolescents 12 through 18 years old they are more than likely to experience additional problems due to relocation issues (Thomas, 2005). Erikson identified that during Stage Five, the adolescent develops their identity, which helps them develop a sense of self during this phase. Erikson's Stage Five is a time for parents to pay more attention to their adolescents as they develop. Adolescent boys and girls can take one of two paths, either they will involve themselves in drug or alcohol activity or develop into well-balanced adults.

Erikson identified an imbalance in unhealthy and healthy personality research and began his own research to learn more (Thomas, 2005). He found during childhood a gradual development that takes place where the adolescents know who they are and accept it as well as develop character and culture (Thomas 2005). Military adolescents live and grow within Erickson's Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion. These changes in the adolescent can affect the family in several ways.

Adolescents' Social and Emotional Development

While adolescents develop both socially and emotionally, the two are distinctly different and necessary for development. Gilbert (2006) found typical adolescent social experiences are: (a) taking risks, (b) having a desire to be liked, (c) being part of a group associated with their peers, (d) forming friendships and intimate relationships, (e) being peer pressured, (f) having self-esteem concerns, (g) desiring independence, and (h) learning social skills. Likewise, typical emotional developments experienced by adolescents are: (a) anger, (b) hurt, (c) sadness, (d) worry, (e) frustration, (f) shame, and (g) anxiety. Emotionally, families are aware of anxiety within the family group because anxiety moves between and among the individuals within the group. An example of Bowen's family systems theory for military families is news of a domestic relocation, which indicates a U.S. base change for the military member but also affects family members individually and as a group. Anxiety builds, and an emotional impact moves between and among the individuals of the military family from the first relocation throughout subsequent relocations. This anxiety could especially affect military adolescents during one or more domestic relocations (Bowen 1978; Gilbert, 2006).

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Domestic Relocations

Relocation affects military families three times more than nonmilitary families (Beuttner, Andrews, & Maloney, 2011; Davis, & Finke, 2015). Aronson et al. (2011) found that relocations can be associated with higher rates of child dysfunction, behavioral problems, and poor grades at school. Furthermore, when relocations coincide with other stressful events, the effects of relocations may be understandably more dramatic. Moreover, for children who relocate after a divorce, they may experience heightened difficulties with attachment, psychological health, and social problems.

Relocation is a stressful time for children, youth, and families. Aronson et al. (2011) stated that adults rated relocation 28th out of the 43 most stressful life events. In the same study, teachers and mental health workers rated relocation to be 19th out of the 37 most stressful life events for children. Furthermore, children rate relocation to be 7th out of the 37 most stressful life events for children. Additionally, three affected areas are usually mentioned by children who experienced relocations: (a) social, (b) school, and (3) relocation related preparation. Social aspects refer to social/life skills or behaviors necessary to function with others. School areas refer to social behaviors that occur in a school environment. Preparation areas refer to social behaviors that occur during relocations (e. g., leaving friends, making new friends, leaving school, attending a new school, etc.). Relocation may not be welcomed by military family members because there is little advance notice (Aronson et al., 2011). However, nonmilitary occupations such as police officers or doctors may require unscheduled work hours and may deal with the threat of death, injury, or job-related relocations. Nonmilitary members deal with

fewer of these concerns and stress than military members (Kaslow & Ridenour, 1984). Furthermore, relocations can potentially disrupt school functioning. In contrast, Clever and Segal (2013) found that while relocations have potential to disrupt progress, relocations can help make a turn for the better by eliminating bad habits and improving the parent-child relationships.

Military orders for relocation can occur at any time, which often happens at the most inconvenient times for adolescents in school. Aronson et al., (2011) found that on average, military school-aged children will attend six to nine schools during their kindergarten through 12th grade school years (Aronson et al., 2011). School transitions for military children are often understood as difficult because they require making multiple adjustments (e. g., leaving old friends, making new friends, having credits transferred, facing higher or lower academic demands at the new school, relocation to a school with greater or fewer resources, and learning a new school and community's culture) that can sometimes be unpleasant (Aronson et al., 2011). Relocations are also associated with some negative outcomes for children and adolescents. Relocation has been associated with higher rates of child dysfunction, behavioral problems, and failing a grade in school (Aronson et al., 2011). Furthermore, lower test scores, poor grade-point averages, and the use of special education services have occurred due to relocations. Furthermore, the service member's job duties require them to relocate frequently and endure lengthy separations from their families. Military families who relocate frequently may also face other unique stressors with the military lifestyle. However, one area within military life will not change and that is the unique military culture.

Military Culture

The military culture is quite different from the culture of other organizations. To

understand how military members and their families are impacted in a military culture,

unique characteristics such as the worldview, the mindset, and military history must be

understood (Hall, 2011). Understanding military terminology, structure, reasons for

joining, commitment, honor, sacrifice, and strengths and challenges will assist with

becoming familiar with military families (Blaisure, 2012; Hall, 2011). Each military

service has unique differences in individual services and commonalities across each

branch: Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. As a whole, the population of military

members is made up of many cultures that speak languages and use acronyms unfamiliar

to nonmilitary individuals. An aspect of military culture is that adolescents are more than

likely to be without one or more parents for a period of time, which can cause them to

experience insecurity and fear (Hall, 2011).

The military has some general characteristics that have remained intact for almost

three decades. These characteristics include:

(a) frequent separations and reunions; (b) regular household relocations; (c) living

life under the umbrella of the 'mission must come first' dictum; (d) the need for

families to adapt to rigidity, regimentation, and conformity; (e) early retirement

from a career in comparison to nonmilitary counterparts; (f) rumors of loss during

a mission; (g) detachment from the mainstream of nonmilitary life; (h) the

security of a system that exists to meet the families' needs; (i) work that usually

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involves travel and adventure; (j) the social effects of rank on the family; and (k) the lack of control over pay, promotion, and other benefits (Hall, 2011, p. 8).

Studies found that repetition and emphasis concerning patterns created in families and communities produce the most important cultural beliefs in a child's cultural environment (O'Neal, Mallette, & Mancini, 2018; Underwood & Rosen, 2011). Moreover, these types of shared patterns are combined with deep cultural practices within the community and parents who involve their children in the culture. Culture also helps with raising children. As military children grow in a military culture, lasting family relationships form.

Military Family Relationships

Several types of family structure exist in today's active duty force, National Guard, and Reserve families. Clever and Segal (2013) identified the typical family structure as either nuclear, single-parent, blended, multiple-generational, or dual-service military families. Each military family type is vital in its own way. Moreover, examples of nontraditional military families exist such as cohabiting adults and same-sex partners. According to Mancini et al. (2015), the family structure relates to active duty military family members consisting of a military member and a nonmilitary spouse. Another type of typical military relationships are dual military marriages that contain children as well as military members who are single with children. Additionally, nontraditional military families may not fall under military regulation as a family member with dependent status. Of the types of families in the military, the most important family is the military family itself (Park, Martin,, Anderson, & Matthews, 2011). The military, sometimes described as

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a second family, can be perceived to be more important than the family itself. Most military families take the military mission with them everywhere, otherwise the life of the military member means extraordinarily little, because the mission takes precedence over the spouse, children, or parents (Kaslow & Ridenour, 1984). Being involved in two families is a tough balancing act. However, with the help of local communities, military families have access to activities and resources to help maintain family relationships.

Military youth and families need to be aware and prepared for separations from the service member. In addition, they also need to always be expecting there will be relocations and school transitions (Aronson et al., 2011).

<div align="center">

Community and Social Support

</div>

Community support plays an important role in military families. It was found that the community offers assets and resources that can help adolescents thrive and foster resilience (Easterbrooks et al., 2013: O'Neal, Lucier-Greer, & Mancini, 2019). Communities provide libraries, parks, and community-based after school and summer programs. Each of these activities in a community gives military families an opportunity to become part of a community outside of the military.

The U.S. military base and local community support were necessary for military adolescents and families to function (Mare, Smeeding, Grusky, & Snipp 2015; Peterson, Park, & Castro, 2011). The Army currently uses the U.S. Army Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program to assist soldiers with necessary skills that build resiliency by increasing psychological strength along with positive performance in order to reduce maladaptive reactions in hardships (Cornum, Matthews, & Seligman, 2011). The Army is

extending this fitness program to include the psychosocial well-being of the soldier and their family (Park et al., 2011; Peterson et al., 2011; Rohall, Segal, & Segal, 1999). With the establishment of the CSF program, not only is the soldier being tested and trained on mental and physical resilience skills, but the CSF program has an additional tool for the family called the Global Assessment Tool (GAT) that measures an individual's physical, emotional, social, and spiritual strengths (Peterson et al., 2011). The GAT is not associated with promotion (advancement in rank), command (military unit), or schooling (educational degrees). It provides individual feedback to soldiers that includes empirically based guidance geared to self-development, ultimately allowing opportunities for improvement through continuous monitoring. Traditionally, the Army developed the GAT program to focus on preparing for war. However, they added the component for the family after recognizing the original plan did not take the family into consideration (Cornum et al., 2011).

Neighborhood Influence

According to Sharkey and Elwert (2011), when looking across generations, the role of neighborhoods may have an adverse impact on the original direction of an individual and/or family. Additionally, if adolescents are raised in harsh disadvantaged neighborhoods, their exposure to such disadvantaged neighborhoods may stay with them even though they relocate to another neighborhood. Efforts are extremely high for resilience when providing education for military youth; however, the efforts may not be sufficient when considering the challenges, environment, and family structure (Berg, 2008).

Meredith et al. (2011) found that more social support is necessary for military families. Aligning formal military installation supports and informal nonmilitary community supports are recommended. The two supports systems (formal and informal) together may create a "community practice" model promoting the well-being of military adolescents and families. Much research exists on the shortfalls of children and yet little exists to explore the strengths found in ways military adolescents thrive (Meredith et al., 2011). Socially, children who encounter adversity need the support from adults who are available to assist in every way. Social networks are a buffer mechanism to stress that can foster resilience. A strong family relationship assists youth in understanding adversity, encouraging strengths, feeling connected, and being able to navigate stress filled situations through family values (Easterbrooks et al., 2013). The family's strong relationship can also help build social skills.

Adolescents' Social Skills

Social scientists have shown an interest in adolescents for years. During the 1980s and 1990s, literature was full of studies involving the developmental process of adolescents (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The literature noted problem behaviors during the adolescent lifespan and most adolescents live through the challenges without being severely affected by social, emotional, or behavioral complications. Bronfenbrenner focused on the periods of change in the adolescent's development during the ages of 12 to 18. At that time, the literature focused positively on normal, healthy adolescent development and behaviors.

Prior to the 1980s and 1990s, Erikson's theory of pre-adolescent identity development and Piaget's (1970) theory of formal operations were universally used to examine pre-adolescent research. Erickson's theory helps to understand the preparation the pre-adolescent goes through while developing a healthy personality which enhances the character, the socialization skills taught through a particular culture, and the ego identity which helps solves identity crises through the stages of growth. Additionally, Piaget studied the adolescent years using verbal problems while having the adolescent arrive at the solutions (Steinberg, 2011; Thomas, 2005).

During early adolescence, Erath, Flanagan, Bierman, and Tu (2010) found that changes in the social groups of schools and an increased size of peer groups, abstract reasoning occurs. Additionally, at this time in an adolescent's life, social anxiety disorder or experiences with severe adjustment problems such as: (a) educational underachievement, (b) peer relationship problems, (c) substance abuse; and (c) any number of additional mood disorders, may occur. Unfortunately, psychosocial issues (e. g., loneliness, low feelings of social self-efficacy, and peer victimization) may produce struggles in socially anxious adolescents. Some studies (Erath et al., 2010; Oh, Rubin, Bowker, Booth-LaForce, Rose-Krasnor, & Laursen, 2008) found that preadolescents, who were moderately socially withdrawn due to peer exclusion, friendship instability, etc., became more withdrawn through middle school. Throughout the same time span, preadolescents who were more withdrawn and did not have social problems became less withdrawn.

Adolescents' Committed Relations

Erath et al. (2010) found that adolescents who have friendships may offer protective factors against enormous amounts of psychosocial distress associated with social anxiety. Moreover, close friendships are instrumental in providing emotional support that may protect socially anxious youth from loneliness and peer victimization. Additionally, this protective factor may enhance the transition to the adolescence stage while friendships play a supporting role in social-emotional adjustment. Erath et al. (2010) found that having close friendships may be a benefit for socially anxious adolescents because these types of relationships give an opportunity for anxious youth to be themselves and have positive social interaction. Boys who are socially anxious while having close friendships may be protected from peer victimization. On the other hand, socially anxious boys with few close friendships may be vulnerable. Furthermore, anxious, or timid boys are more vulnerable to peer maltreatment and this potential risk may be compounded depending on the number of close friends' boys may have. When considering the association between social anxiety and peer victimization, it is almost nonexistent for boys who have a high number of close friends (Erath et al., 2010). Additionally, when children are anxious their friendships may show greater anxiety and depression over a period of time.

Adolescent Coping Skills

Adolescents are aware of changes occurring within the household. The nature of their parents' military role can be a main source of stress that exists in military adolescents (Morris & Age, 2009). Furthermore, stressful circumstances can create

adjustment difficulties (e. g., depression and anxiety). Clever and Segal (2013) found that today's all-volunteer force increases the importance of families in the military. Since the draft no longer exists, individuals are free to decide on their own to join or not join the military. Military families receive greater attention in the media and from scholars who recognize the sacrifices, support, and the connection of the service member to the military. Morris and Age (2009) explained that stressful circumstances can be due to pressures on the military youths' coping capabilities and likely internal and external resources.

Social anxiety occurs when enormous distress in social conditions happens due to extreme fears from a negative assessment that takes place (Erath, et al., 2010). Military adolescents may fear the departure of a mother or father who is heading to a temporary duty assignment and do not understand why the parent must go. Furthermore, a common source of discomfort between socially anxious adolescents occurs during peer interaction. This may occur with the understanding of rank in the military. Adolescents may be beginning to realize the differences in rank between the parents and may emulate the parents' social treatment toward each other. Moreover, schools and other areas may offer opportunities to show avoidant behavior and cognitive distress. Once an adolescent shows signs of disapproval or bodily arousals, these actions may be taken out of context, leading adolescents to demonstrate avoidant behavior (Erath et al., 2010).

Relocations have a history of impacting military families due to stress or their social support system changes and children may demonstrate behavior concerns while adjusting to their new surroundings (Booth et al., 1999; Davis & Finke, 2015; Drummet,

Coleman, & Cable, 2003). Additional research relating to relocating military families indicated poorer marital happiness, retention, and physical health as well as psychological health (Davis & Finke, 2015). When relocations take pace in conjunction with additional nonnormative stressors such as divorce, children may go through attachment, mental health issues, and behavior problems (Aronson et al., 2011; Cramm, McColl, Aiken, & Williams, 2019).

Learning adaptive and positive behaviors are important skills adolescents must develop (Morris & Age, 2009). When stressful situations occur, adolescents utilize specific coping strategies and learn when to use them. Morris and Age (2009) found that each stressful situation allows children and adolescents to learn the following: (a) the usefulness of coping strategies; (b) the importance of matching particular coping strategies to the current situation; and (c) how to assimilate coping strategies into self-regulatory processes that occur as children psychologically develop. Englund, Levy, Hyson, and Sroufe (2000) stated that functioning in group situations is of high importance in the adolescence stage.

Children need essential coping skills to deal with stress and emotions. Englund et al. (2000) found that peer interactions increase significantly in middle childhood and throughout the adolescent years because adolescents spend a great deal of time with peers of their age. The nature of the peer relationship changes especially during middle childhood. Additionally, the particular peer group the child finds themselves in, is now more influential in certain areas of the child's life and becomes extremely important and special in adolescent development (Englund et al., 2000). For military adolescents, their

development takes place through several entities: (a) military parents, (b) other family members, (c) caregivers, (d) schools, (e) communities, (f) culture, and (g) operational tempo of the military (Kudler & Porter, 2013).

Military Parents

Adolescents whose parents are unresponsive and inconsistent will most likely have emotional and conduct problems (Morris & Age, 2009). In contrast, parents who show warmness and direction will have adolescents who are socially responsible and independent with academic success. Furthermore, parental responsiveness may help reduce problem behaviors. Additionally, responsive parents demonstrate extraordinary levels of sensitivity towards their adolescents by ensuring their needs are met and making themselves available and accessible to their adolescents. Displaying sensitivity and accessibility helps children to manage distress and self-regulate their emotion and behavior (Morris & Age, 2009).

Morris and Age (2009) explored coping effortful control and mental health concerns of 65 subjects, ages 9 to 15, using a mixed methods design utilizing a survey and interviews. Furthermore, during early adolescence, sex differences emerge; whereas girls suffer more from depression which is an internalized problem, and boys suffer more from conduct disorder which is an externalized problem. Additionally, children in late childhood/early adolescence are in a developmental state of: (a) increased stress, (b) emotional reactivity, and (c) psychosocial vulnerability. Coping and effortful controls are most important during this critical development period (Houppert, 2005; Pinheiro & Matos, 2012; Morris & Age, 2009).

Parents' Perceptions

Parents are often the ones who first identify changes that occur in their adolescents' developmental process. On other occasions, teachers, coaches, medical staff, and others may witness variations in an adolescent's behaviors. De Goede, Branje, and Meeus (2009) found the adolescent process brings about numerous changes in the parent-child relationship such as: (a) sibling rivalry, (b) conflicts, and (c) interpersonal relationships. One common change that occurs is the amount of time spent between adolescents and their peers. Gradually, adolescents spend little time with the family and more time with peers enjoying activities not associated with the family (De Goede et al., 2009). In fact, the characteristics of adolescence first indicate a unique period of storm because adolescents were described as having irrational thoughts and conflicting behaviors with their family and social norms (Hall, 1904), leading to a short decline in closeness, a rise in conflicts, and added equal power (De Goede et al., 2009). As a result, this may negatively affect their interactions with parents.

Adolescent socialization grew from views of parental influences on developing competence surrounding childhood (Baumrind, 2016; Steinberg, 2011). Children are influenced by their parents who serve as the basis for socialization. The parental socialization process evolves by being receptive to the child's needs, views, and the amount of communication exchanged from parent to child (Evans, Carlson, & Grubs Hoy, 2013). As the child matures into an adolescent, the adolescent parent relationship develops.

Families who experience adolescent relationship difficulties are fewer than 10% and adolescents who experience 15-30% serious developmental difficulties are characterized as being in a troubled period due to fluctuating hormonal factors (Hines & Paulson, 2006). Normal transitions for adolescents produce low levels of conflict, moodiness, and risk-taking. Storm and stress beliefs may affect adults' interactions with adolescents. De Goede et al. (2009) found styles of social relations focus on close relationships through models that highlight interdependence. While the social relational perspective demonstrates that conflict is deeply rooted in close relationships, a variety of objectives and expectations are fundamental. During adolescence, parents and children adjust relationships as changing circumstances occur.

Interactions of Parents

Parenting styles and the family environment play an integral part in the parent's interaction with adolescents. Aunola, Stattin, and Nurmi (2000) found that understanding processes parents use in certain parenting styles may be influential in an adolescent's academic performance. Furthermore, family environment may affect the development of an adolescent achievement strategy as described in three substages (Aunola et al., 2000; Cantor, 1990; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). First, for some challenging situations, adolescents see failure or success according to what may have occurred in earlier experiences and similar situations (Cantor, 1990; Diener & Dweck, 1978). Second, individuals devise a plan to either to invest effort (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990) or withdraw to avoid the task (Dweck, 1986), passivity or indicate task-irrelevant actions (Jones & Berglas, 1978). Third, if the individual succeeds or fails, he/she evaluates the

outcome through casual acknowledgements (Aunola et al., 2000; Cantor, 1990; Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck, 1986).

Parents also interact with adolescents through four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful), which play an integral part in how adolescents are raised socially. These parenting styles demonstrate separate parenting techniques that describe parenting behaviors in each family. It is worth noting that patterns found in a research study are not foregone conclusions. First, authoritative parents' demand their children behave and ensure their expectations when it comes to conduct are clear, yet they respond to their child's needs through involvement, open communication, and trust. Adolescents raised by authoritarian parents are the most competent (Bednar & Fisher, 2003; Evans et al., 2013). Second, neglectful parents neither demand or respond and are basically disengaged and uninvolved by rejecting their child and parenting responsibilities (Bednar & Fisher, 2003; Evans et al., 2013). Additionally, adolescents raised by neglecting-rejecting parents are the least competent, cannot self-regulate themselves, and have poor social skills. Third, permissive parents respond to their children but are not demanding and do not exercise parental control. These parents are the most lenient. Permissive parenting is described as not requiring their children to show mature behavior, self-regulate themselves, and run from confrontation. Yet these parents provide love to their children. Adolescents with permissive parents reject rules and guidance given by outsiders (Bednar & Fisher, 2003; Evans et al., 2013). Fourth, authoritarian parents demand from their children but are not responsive. A low level of trust and engagement exists between child and parent, open communication is

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discouraged, and strict control is apparent. Adolescents raised by authoritarian parents demonstrate confrontation and are unprepared when it comes to making their own decisions (Bednar & Fisher, 2003; Evans et al., 2013).

Summary

This chapter examined the development of military adolescents' social skills through one or more domestic relocations while noting the importance of the parent's perceptions using Bowen's family system theory and Erickson's human development theory, specifically Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion. The family system theory directly relates to military adolescents and their families as it recognizes each individual in a family is different. Erikson's Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion brings understanding to the development of the adolescent while experiencing conflict and finding self. Military domestic relocations come with the job when joining the military and are expected of each military member. Frequent moving from one U.S. military base to another U.S. base can cause disruptions in family routines and add more responsibility on family members before, during, and after a move. Adolescents within military families involved in relocations can have developmental issues occurring within the adolescents that can affect themselves and the family at the time of the move. As the adolescent develops naturally, social skills for that age group may show behaviors that affect the relocation and the family. Through the military parents' experiences and perceptions, more can be learned to assist adolescents with coping before, during, and after military relocations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this research was to describe the experiences of former military

parents regarding their adolescent's social skills associated with one or more military

domestic relocations. This dissertation was guided by phenomenological principals of

German philosopher Edmund Husserl (Reiners, 2012). Much research exists on the

shortfalls of children in general, yet little to no research explores the challenges of

military adolescents and impact to social skills because of domestic relocations (Meredith

et al., 2011). The results of this study explored the perceptions of former military parents'

relocation experiences with their military adolescents and how the adolescents' social

skills were impacted. The results of this dissertation may benefit researchers, policy

makers and the public on relocation challenges of military families, specifically

adolescents and development of age appropriate social skills.

The researcher attended Texas Woman's University in Denton, TX as a doctoral

student. This researcher was aware she was credible in qualitative research design and the

main instrument of data collection (Creswell, 2014). Two agency sites gave approval to

recruit participants for research purposes (see Appendix A). Once the flyer (see Appendix

B) and demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) were distributed, no one from the

private security agency responded to the recruitment materials. Thus, participants were

recruited from the second agency. Snowballing and word of mouth allowed for connections between the researcher and additional veterans and spouses to be made.

Face-to-face structured interviews were conducted with seven participants at locations that were convenient for them. Utilizing the phenomenological approach helped describe the participant's lived experiences (Creswell, 2007). According to Reiners (2012), phenomenologists assumed that knowledge is achieved through interactions between researchers and participants and is considered subjective, inductive, and dynamic. The researcher used the phenomenological research strategy to describe the rich experiences of former military parents regarding their adolescent's development of age specific social skills after one or more military domestic relocations. The phenomenological approach is known as the human experience and differs from other qualitative approaches (Creswell 2014).

Data were described in a qualitative research approach manner to answer the research questions. This chapter includes the methods for data collection and plan of analysis. Moreover, the participants were described as well as the interview setting provided. Coding methods and ethics were examined. Lived experiences of the participants were described using the phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2014). Triangulation, using multiple methods of data collection and crosschecking each method was applied to increase credibility and enhance the validity of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Triangulation was achieved through the following methods: (1) actively listened during interviews creating field notes, (2) member checking, (3) reduced researcher's bias by utilizing two civilians to remove researcher's

military bias, and (4) consecutively reviewed transcripts, and demographic questionnaires (see Appendix C) for analytic concepts. Data were gathered to solely express the views of each participant.

Former military parents, raising adolescents, 12 through 18 years old, while active duty, during one or more domestic relocation(s), were interviewed to describe their experiences and perceptions of their adolescent's development of age appropriate social skills. A digital recorder was used to capture each interview to ensure exact wording. To help add validity, trustworthiness, and grounding, participants were encouraged to take part in the member checking process and peer debriefing (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002).

The study related to two research questions:

1. What, if any, experiences occur involving social skills in adolescents before or during a military domestic relocation?

2. How would additional social skills education benefit military adolescents?

This section addressed population, sampling procedures, protection of human subjects, procedures for data collection and analysis, and the role of the researcher.

Population

The population for this study consisted of former military parents whose adolescents were in the age range of 12 through 18 years old, who experienced at least one or more domestic relocations due to active duty obligations. Twenty former military parents responded to the recruitment flyer and seven evolved as meeting the inclusion criteria and were interviewed.

Participants were recruited through two agencies, and snowballing was also used to recruit participants. Recruitment commenced with an approved letter from each agency giving the researcher permission to conduct recruiting on their premises. The gatekeepers for each organization, someone who had knowledge of the potential participants, assisted with recruitment. The recruitment flyer containing an overview of the study and the researcher's contact information was put on the seats at the church. Potential participants were asked to refer interested friends (a snowballing technique). Each participant was a former military member who raised adolescents ages 12 through 18 while on active duty were the target population. Additionally, the former military member had participated in one or more domestic relocations.

Sampling Procedures

To select typical participants, purposeful and criterion sampling techniques were used. An email was distributed to potential participants and predetermined criterion (Patton, 2002) was presented to participants and those who met the criterion were selected. To be selected for the study, participants had to meet these criteria: (a) be a former military member or spouse of a former military member, (b) be a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) who were 12 through 18 years old while the parent/guardian was active duty, (c) participated in one or more domestic relocations and accompanied by the 12 through 18 years old adolescent, and (d) voluntarily agree to take part in an interview.

To recruit participants, a gatekeeper was established at both sites. The researcher was affiliated with both gatekeepers, the security guard's supervisor, and head deacon at

the church. Participants in the study were seven former military parents identified as security guards and church members who resided in the Dallas/Fort Worth area within the state of Texas in the United States. The inclusion criteria included: a) former military parents, b) 30 years old and over, c) who were former military members.

Each parent had experience raising adolescents while on active duty, as well as experienced at least one or more domestic relocations. Participants were both male and female, former military members, representing one of the five military branches of service: (1) Army, (2) Air Force, (3) Navy, (4) Marine Corps; and (5) Coast Guard to allow for a wide-range of participants. The north Texas church congregation had several members who were of various military branches. The security guards were not members of the church; however, the researcher was a member of the church. Both sites had potential participants of former military parents. The participants in the study went through at least one or more domestic relocations. Furthermore, each participant agreed to express his or her thoughts willingly, concerning the development of age appropriate social skills of his or her adolescent while on active duty. Participants were asked to contribute during data collection, as well as during the analysis process.

Once the consent form (See Appendix D) was approved by the Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to perform research, the recruitment process started.

Agency Descriptions

Paragon Systems, Inc. is a US based private security agency and its headquarters are in Virginia. While Paragon Systems are located nationwide, this Paragon Systems

supervisor and guards protect staff across three buildings in the southern part of the US.

The supervisor has an office in three buildings in Denton, TX. Westside Baptist Church is

in Lewisville, TX. Westside was established 36 years ago and has seen 30,000 members

come through its doors. The security guards are not members of Westside Baptist

Church. Security is one duty found in all five branches of service, and in a sense,

prepares military members for employment with Paragon Systems. Westside Baptist

Church may have members in all five branches of service and be in various occupations.

The researcher is a member of Westside Baptist Church and is not an employee of

Paragon Systems Security.

Paragon Systems Security Agency Recruitment Process

The recruitment process for Paragon Systems Security was as follows:

Step 1: The researcher requested permission to recruit participants from the local

security guard agency supervisor using the request for participants letter (see Appendix

A). The researcher obtained approval from the security guard agency supervisor to recruit

former military parents. The security guard's agency supervisor oversees security guards

across three buildings in north Texas and the researcher is a member of Westside Baptist

church but not directly employed as a security guard.

Step 2: Once the Texas Woman's University IRB reviewed and approved this

research study (see Appendix E), the researcher worked together with the security guard

agency supervisor to contact the participants.

Step 3: The researcher used purposeful sampling via a distribution email from the

supervisor and snowballing to recruit participants with the use of the flyer (see Appendix

B). The flyer explained the study's purpose and included the researcher's contact information (email address and cellular phone number). No prior contact was made by the researcher with the sample population. Participants interested in the study reached out to the researcher.

Step 4: Flyers (see Appendix B) were also placed in the supervisor's office in each of the three buildings.

Step 5: Participants interested in this research were contacted by the researcher directly, using the email address and/or cellular phone number of the researcher per instructions on the flyer (see Appendix B).

Westside Baptist Church Recruitment Process

The recruitment process for Westside Baptist Church was as follows:

Step 1: The researcher requested permission to recruit participants from Westside Baptist Church Head Deacon using the request for participants letter (see Appendix A). The Head Deacon gave permission for the researcher to recruit participants.

Step 2: The Texas Woman's University IRB reviewed and approved the research study, (see Appendix E) the researcher worked together with the Head Deacon to contact the participants.

Step 3: The researcher used purposeful sampling and snowballing to recruit participants with the use of the flyer (see Appendix B). The potential participants had to meet the inclusion criteria in order to be included in the study. These included, a) be a parent of an adolescent 12 through 18 years of age, b) experience domestic relocation; and c) have military experience. The flyer explained the study's purpose and included the

researcher's contact information (email address and cellular phone number). No prior

contact was made by the researcher with the sample population. Participants interested in

the study initially reached out to the researcher.

Step 4: The Texas Woman's University IRB reviewed and approved this research

study (see Appendix E), the researcher worked with the Head Deacon at the north Texas

church to connect participants. Researcher informed the Head Deacon the date flyers

would be distributed.

Step 5: The researcher personally distributed the flyers (see Appendix B) to each

adult Sunday School class and placed a copy of the flyer in each seat of the Sunday

School rooms prior to the start of Sunday School class.

Step 6: Participants interested in this research contacted the researcher directly

and used the email address and/or cellular phone number of the researcher per

instructions on the flyer (see Appendix B). Participants contacted the researcher to

answer questions by phone, email, or in person.

Protection of Human Participants

The current study utilized policies and procedures established by Texas Woman's

University's IRB in Denton, TX, to ensure participants in the study were protected, by

submitting a Protection of Human Subjects application. Participants demonstrated interest

in the study and replied to the request. Both agencies, the security guard agency, and the

north Texas church, supplied a letter of support. Each participant was informed their

rights and allowed to withdraw at any time. Participants were asked to sign a consent

form. Any risks that related to the research study were discussed in addition to ways to

dismantle those risks. Numerical codes were assigned to each participant for confidentiality purposes which indicated the order each interview was completed beginning with number one. Identifiable information was accessed by the researcher only.

Ethical practices according to Patton (2002), such as reviewing the study's purpose, maintaining returned consent forms, examining confidentiality statements, and the protection and access to data during the interview were discussed. Interviews were opened with a review of the informed consent as it was signed prior to the interview. At any time during the interview, participants had opportunities to openly ask questions and to discontinue participation or refuse to answer any question at any time without penalty. Community resources (see Appendix F) were shared with participants in an effort to reduce emotional distress. Also, participation was voluntary. Participants preferring to receive the results of the study provided their email address on the consent form. Each participant was given the researcher's contact information for questions that might arise after the interview.

Confidentiality was protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The consent forms, notes, and writings were stored in the researcher's home in a locked safe. Computerized files or electronic documents, audio recordings and transcriptions along with the coded list of names were stored separately in the researcher's home in a separate locked cabinet. Each applicant received this information orally, as well as in writing.

Data Gathered

This study allowed the voice of the former military parents to share their feelings, perceptions and experiences within the military while raising adolescents, between the ages of 12 and 18 years of age, and who experience domestic relocation. Data were gathered utilizing a demographic questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and field notes. The demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was used to collect information pertaining to: (a) retirement status, (b) branch of service, (c) age, (d) education level, (e) race, (f) gender, (g) income, (h) married or single while on active duty, (i) parent(s) to adolescents age 12 through 18, (j) number of adolescents within the family while on active duty, (k) religion; and (l) number of relocations. Collecting and analyzing data from the participant enforced a holistic approach by taking the position of an emphatic neutral investigator, caring about each participant and his or her interests (Patton, 2002). The researcher showed respect and was neutral without bias during the interview. The interview was semi-structured to allow for in-depth questioning and openness of participants to share their perceptions and experiences. Patton (2002) recognized the researcher could have the qualities of a participant due to the experiences within a group or culture. The method the researcher handled fieldwork revealed credibility and direct quotes were captured. Marshall and Rossman (2006) found that the aim of a qualitative researcher is to give full descriptions of each situation in an individual's world defining events that occurred to everyday people.

Procedures for Data Collection

The procedures for data collection were as follows.

Step 1: After participants contacted the researcher for the study, participants were thanked for volunteering, purpose of the study was explained and information needed for the interview was explained, such as: the criteria to be a participant, the informed consent form (see Appendix D), and the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) which pertained to: (a) retirement status, (b) branch of service, (c) age, (d) education level, (e) race, (f) gender, (g) income, (h) married or single while on active duty, (i) parent(s) to adolescents age 12-18, (j) number of adolescents within the family while on active duty, (k) religion; and (l) number of relocations, the interview questions/guide (see Appendix G), the resource list (see Appendix F), and that at the end of the interview, participants could volunteer to member check using the member checking instructions (see Appendix H). The researcher explained member checking (see Appendix H) and how the participant was able to review a participant's own transcript of the interview for accuracy. Participants who requested a copy of the study summary were provided a copy.

Step 2: The demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was emailed or mailed to the researcher prior to the interview. Once the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was received, participants who did not meet the criteria of the study were informed. A blank master interview schedule (see Appendix I) was sent to participants who met the criteria. Participants selected one of three dates with appointment times for the interview. If the dates and times shown were inconvenient, the researcher worked around the participant's schedule. Names were not on the master interview schedule sent

to the participant. The demographic questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes and the interview schedule with times indicated the scheduled interview. The researcher worked with the participants' schedule to allow all participants to interview. Each interview was audio-recorded to ensure transcripts were accurate. Participants were mailed or emailed a copy of the consent form (see Appendix D), the interview questions /guide (see Appendix G), the interview schedule (see Appendix I), the resources list (see Appendix F), and the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) to review prior to the scheduled interview.

Step 3: Participants who volunteered for the study were asked to return the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) and the interview schedule (see Appendix I) to the researcher by email or mail. Once received, a code name was placed on the questionnaire and later the interview date was added. The researcher maintained the code and secured all questionnaires in a locked location.

Interview questions are highly favored in qualitative research. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) interview questions "may be the overall strategy or only one of several methods employed" (p. 147) in qualitative research. While, various types of interviewing practices exist, the in-depth interview covers a mutual topic between two or more individuals who communicate shared themes or interests (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Additionally, utilizing in-depth interviewing places focus on the participant, who provided valuable information to the research and at the same time allowed the interviewer and interviewee to build a relationship during the process.

The procedures for the interviews were as follows.

Step 1: The semi-structured interview was conducted in a local library private meeting room which was reserved for individual interviews that allowed for privacy. Each semi-structured interview (see Appendix G) began with an explanation of the consent form (see Appendix D).

Step 2: A hard copy of the consent form (see Appendix D) was available at the interview for signature along with the resource list (see Appendix F).

Step 3: The consent form (see Appendix D) was signed in duplicate in the presence of the researcher. The copy was given to the participant and the original remained with the researcher.

Step 4: The interview questions/guide (see Appendix G) covered the participant's perceptions and experiences of the adolescent while the participant was active duty, the participant's multiple domestic relocations, the adolescent social skills, being a military parent of an adolescent, and education offered on social skills for adolescents on U.S. military bases.

Step 5: Interviews were audio-recorded for accuracy. Each interview lasted between 45-60 minutes. Participants took a break during the interview and resumed when they were ready, and they had the option to withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. The researcher took field notes throughout each interview. Field notes contained: (a) direct quotations, (b) the researcher's overarching reactions to information received from participants, (c) interpretations of the researcher, (d) first analysis, and I hypotheses (Patton, 2002).

Step 6: During the interview, the researcher hand wrote field notes in a composition notebook and/or in a password protected Microsoft document.

Step 7: Participants received a gift bag containing either a man's or woman's handkerchief, hand sanitizer, and a $5.00 gift card at the end of the interview.

Procedures for Data Analysis

The purpose of this research was to describe the experiences and perceptions of former military parents who experienced one or more domestic relocations and the development of age appropriate social skills by their adolescents. In doing so, data analysis was continuous throughout the study. Each interview was digitally recorded, transcribed, and checked for accuracy. Audio recordings and transcriptions were stored separately in the investigator's home in a locked cabinet. A password was utilized to protect computer documents and files, while a back-up copy of all digital files was also maintained. Email correspondence was printed and deleted, and hard copies of emails were stored at the researcher's residence in a locked filing cabinet.

While phenomenology was the philosophical approach used in this study, inductive content analysis helped the researcher develop themes and thematic statements found in the narrative interviews. Reiners (2012) suggested phenomenologists assumed that knowledge is achieved through interactions between researchers and participants and is considered subjective, inductive, and dynamic. Saldaña (2013) found inductive content analysis was utilizing the process of abstraction, which helped to reduce group data that allowed answers to study questions through concepts, categories, or themes. Specifically,

Saldaña (2013) led the researcher to methods that developed shared meanings or experiences of each veteran and spouse.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggested that trustworthiness associated with qualitative research can be measured. Evaluating credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability will help measure trustworthiness. Furthermore, credibility of the study will enrich the design, so the findings can be transferable and applicable to other groups of people. The researcher spent time with each participant to establish rapport prior to beginning the interview to enhance credibility. Explanations throughout the study of the data will be trustworthy and accurate.

Coding

Organizing and sorting qualitative data to develop codes and themes is time consuming and requires creativity (Stuckey, 2018). A set of codes was identified; however, additional codes were added during the study. Patton (2002) recognized transcribing utilized multiple methods to form patterns and themes. Once the interviews and transcribing were complete, the next step was coding. However, in addition to interviewing and transcribing, member checking was accomplished by requesting veterans and spouses confirm, edit, or add missing data on the transcripts. Member checking demonstrates trustworthiness and credibility of results (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Each transcribed narrative was returned to participants to verify wording stated during the interview.

To code, the researcher thoroughly read the transcribed data question by question and manually organized the narrative data on a computer using tabs for each open-ended

interview question. Each tab was titled Question 1, Question 2, etc. When each tab was opened it showed the narrative interview question relating to the title of the tab. On the Question 1 tab, the question is listed in the first field in large font. Each field following the interview question that listed each participant's narrative answer for that question number (i.e., Veteran or Spouse 1, Veteran or Spouse 2, etc.).

The research questions provided direction that helped in understanding the purpose of the study and aligned, as well as focused on relevant themes expressed in the coding (Stuckey, 2018). Additionally, to analyze the data, coding was necessary to locate similar data meanings, which help the researcher find and cluster relating words and segments. The researcher noted her interpretations of the data using words and short phrases developing concepts and themes. According to Patton (2002), utilizing a small sample with a wide variety of participants allowed for high quality, in-depth descriptions detailing uniqueness in the finds and shared patterns. Codes from the data were found to be emergent focusing on concepts, actions, and meanings. Narratives from each former military parent guided the coding structure and notes were annotated that assisted with interpretations. Having the data broken down into parts made the data more manageable and user-friendly. Data coding along with analysis occurred from the beginning of data collection and continued throughout the process. The researcher protected the data by immediately transcribing following each interview. According to Saldaña (2013), first and second cycle coding, adds value to the study, which the researcher chose to use. Additionally, the researcher selected two approaches for the first cycle coding: holistic coding and initial coding. The study's theoretical frameworks guided the process as

stated by Bernard and Ryan (2010). Themes and patterns were identified after coding and synthesized.

Holistic Coding

Saldaña (2013) found that codes are devised using words or short phrases found in the data; thus, identifying exploratory coding as holistic coding. Coding ensures the analysis process focuses on areas that will describe the experiences of former military parents regarding their adolescent's social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocations. Bernard and Ryan (2010) recognized coding as theme development that expanded from data and theoretical knowledge. The researcher aligned herself carefully with Saldaña (2013) in addition to Bernard and Ryan (2010) in order to code the data in this study. Additionally, interviews and field notes enhanced this coding process. Field notes were recorded during the interviews and recorded after the interview for each participant. Annotating field notes consisted of the researcher capturing the time, and complete note taking, and note making. Specific dates along with the participant's name assisted with the organization of the field notes. Ensuring accuracy of the research and performance established an audit trail.

Coding consisted of two phases. The first coding process phase allowed the researcher to look for possible topics, patterns, and themes in the data. According to Creswell (2009), clustering related topics or ideas begins the process of determining initial categories and initial codes. This procedure may require multiple attempts to narrow down the coding process (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Creswell, 2009; Saldaña,

2013). The researcher meticulously reviewed statements and assigned words and phrases to capture the veterans' and spouses' points, which limited her thoughts in the process.

Initial Coding

A more thorough review of the data is called initial coding. This coding approach gave the researcher and three volunteer peer debriefers the opportunity to dive deeper and use a narrowing technique and the table used by the researcher, or in a Word document format. This narrowing process helps to summarize and reduce each statement made by the veteran and spouse.

Trustworthiness

A validity check of the research study took place, indicating trustworthiness and credibility were utilized (Shenton, 2004). To help add validity, trustworthiness, and grounding, participants were encouraged to take part in the member checking process and peer debriefing (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Member checking demonstrated trustworthiness and credibility of results (Birt et al., 2016). Each transcribed narrative was returned to participants to verify wording stated during the interview and debriefers reviewed all transcribed narratives. Strategies used to ensure trustworthiness were: 1) credibility; 2) triangulation; 3) peer debriefing; and 5) member checks.

Credibility

The researcher used triangulation to improve the credibility of the research using individual interviews, interview questions, field notes, audio recording, member checking and coding. These different methods of data collection compensated for methodological

limitations, supported the data, and increased credibility (Creswell, 2014). Interviews

were evaluated and analyzed for existing themes and other characteristics. Identifying

information was removed from interview transcripts, as well as any identifying

demographic information. Transcripts and demographic information were identifiable

only by an assigned participant's code also ensuring credibility.

Triangulation

Data analysis included triangulating inconsistencies. By reviewing inconsistencies

in a variety of ways, validity of the data is added to the study. Triangulation, using

multiple methods of data collection helped to increase credibility and enhance the validity

of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Family systems theory was used

as the framework. Data collection followed the following order: (1) interview questions

developed, (2) the interviews take place, (3) field notes will be used, and (4) audio was

recorded. To ensure the accuracy of the data analysis and theme creation member checks

and peer debriefing improved trustworthiness.

Peer Debriefing

Lincoln and Guba (1985) found peer debriefing is one of many strategies in data

analysis that helped to retain authenticity that reveals the participants' experiences.

According to Creswell (2009), colleagues who exchange ideas concerning the research

study is known as peer debriefing. The researcher used two peer reviewers who were

doctoral candidates at Texas Woman's University. These individuals had finished

advanced qualitative methods coursework and were familiar with qualitative research.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an in-person meeting was impossible. An electronic

copy of the table with research questions, interview questions, code names and narratives were emailed to the peer debriefers, along with code examples. The researcher spoke separately with each peer debriefer telephonically and answered any questions pertaining to the table and process. Peer debriefers thoroughly reviewed the narratives and a second call was made to finalize conclusions and consensus was established.

Member Checking

Member checking helped add validity and trustworthiness to the research study (Patton, 2002). Participants were encouraged to take part in the member checking process. Prior to interviews, participants received an explanation on the member checking process. Participants who agreed to participate in the member checking process signed the consent form (see Appendix D) in the member checking section, questions were answered, and each received an electronic copy of their individual transcript to review. Participants agreed to make corrections to the transcript where necessary and were given a copy of established codes. Participants were given 5 days to reply either by phone or email with clarifications. Only four participants responded and verified their transcript.

<div align="center">

Role of the Researcher

</div>

According to Patton (2002), qualitative studies indicate the researcher, being a person, is part of the research process. The researcher plays an integral part of experiences through certain biases, gender, age, culture, and experiences that may impact the findings. The researcher must make known this possible impact.

The researcher is an African American, female graduate student at Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas. She retired from the military, a veteran, raised

two children, and became a foster parent while active duty. In addition, she experienced relocating her family on active duty. She has a passion for education and training and works full-time as a training specialist in the government. She has a deep desire to educate families and became a certified family life educator, provisional, allowing her to increase that passion for education by starting a small business to educate families, including military families. This researcher will guard against biases throughout the study, being aware that complete separation is difficult when working with qualitative research. The participants were allowed to express themselves through their story without assumptions in any way.

My initial thoughts at the onset of this study were to dive into the former military parent's perspective concerning their adolescents' social skills, during and after one or multiple domestic relocations. As a former military veteran and parent for 21 years in the U.S. Air Force, give me an opportunity to reflect on my military and family experiences during my active duty time. My reflections centered around resources being available but somewhat difficult to utilize due to work scheduling and difficulties encountered for single parents. Through this study, I have come to realize the challenges I encountered with my children were some of the same concerns of other military parents. Knowing a need existed for your adolescent or you as a parent and not being able to fulfill it due to other commitments or situations caused me to highly respect other former military parents for not giving up.

I am proud to be a former military parent and would have enjoyed working with more participants. Understanding the difficulties in sharing or remembering can be hard, I

encourage other former military parents to share their input on military adolescent social skills because their opinions are valuable to other military parent, school administrators, and military administrators.

Summary

This chapter explained the research methods associated with recognizing experiences and perceptions of former military parents on the challenges of raising adolescents' and how military adolescents' social skills may be hampered due to multiple military, domestic relocations. The recruitment process for participants was also discussed. The participants who agreed to participate were interviewed in face to face meetings at locations chose by the participants. The participants' answers were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed. The data were kept in a locked office for security reasons. The transcriptions were reviewed by the researcher for reoccurring themes, experiences, and perceptions of former military parents.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative research was to describe the experiences of former

military parents regarding their adolescents' social skills associated with one or

more military domestic relocations. Seven former military parents volunteered to be

participants and were interviewed using semi-structured interview guide. The interviews

were audio-recorded, transcribed, and subsequently scanned for recurring themes. The

transcriptions uncovered valuable subthemes. Chapter Four provides the results of the

findings for this qualitative study. Data analysis followed the holistic approach and

phenomenological philosophical perspective to uncover five main themes and 10

subthemes (Creswell, 2014; Saldaña, 2013). The following research questions were

investigated:

1. What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before

   and after a military domestic relocation?

2. How would additional social skills education benefit military adolescents?

The first section of this chapter describes the sample, then continues with procedures for

data collection, data analysis, research findings, and a summary of the data.

Description of Sample

This study consisted of former military members or spouses of former military

members. Specifically, this study included seven veterans and spouses ranging from 41

years of age and older, who lived in the north Texas area. A demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C), interview questions for individual interviews (see Appendix G), and observations and field notes were used. Meeting locations were local private library meeting rooms familiar to all former military parents. Semi-structured, 45-minute interviews were conducted in a face-to-face manner. Interview sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. After the interview session the researcher assigned a code name for each participant. The demographic sample was depicted as: (a) characteristics related to the research indicated by each participant, (b) an offering of factors focused on the former military parent's perception of the adolescent's social skills, and (c) the veteran's and spouse's snapshot. Each former military parent completed a demographic questionnaire and emailed to the researcher.

The demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was used to collect information pertaining to: (a) retirement status, (b) branch of service, (c) age, (d) education level, (e) race, (f) gender, (g) income, (h) married or single while on active duty, (i) parent(s) to adolescents age 12 through 18, (j) number of adolescents within the family while on active duty, (k) religion; and (l) number of relocations (see Table 1). A detailed demographic sample (see Appendix J) was used to provide a vivid description of each veteran and spouse.

Table 1

Veteran and Spouse Demographic Characteristics

Factors	Choices	*N*	*n*	Percent
Parent		7		
	Yes		7	100
	No		0	0
Status		7		
	Veteran or Spouse		6	86
Gender		7		
	Male		6	86
	Female		1	14
Age		7		
	30–35		0	0
	41–45		1	14
	46–50		1	14
	51–60		5	72
	61–65		0	0
Branch of service		7		
	Army		3	43
	Air Force		4	57
	Navy		0	0
Years of service		7		
	Less than 5 years		0	0
	11–15		1	14
	16–20		4	57
	21 years or more		2	29
Years of domestic relocations w/adolescents		7		
	Less than 1 year		0	0
	2–3		0	0
	11–15		1	14
	16–20		4	57
	21 or more years		2	29

This study identified factors relating to former military parents' perceptions of one or more domestic relocations on adolescents' social skills. The literature found that military adolescents experienced family relationships and learned social skills somewhat

distinct from non-military adolescents due to the nature of military life (Easterbrooks et al., 2013). In general, military life involves numerous changes and relocations. Relocation affects military families three times more than nonmilitary families (Beuttner et al., 2011; Davis, & Finke, 2015). Aronson et al. (2011) found that relocations can be associated with higher rates of child dysfunction, behavioral problems, and poor grades at school. Furthermore, when relocations coincide with other stressful events, the effects of relocations may be understandably more dramatic. Moreover, for children who relocate after a divorce, they may experience heightened difficulties with attachment, psychological health, and social problems. Table 2 offers a summary of the demographic characteristics of seven ($N = 7$) veterans and spouses in this study.

Table 2

Summary of the Factors for Influence of Multiple Domestic Relocations on Adolescent Social Skills Perceived by Former Military Parents (IMDRA SSPFMP)

Factors							
	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7
Parent	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Status V/S/B	V	V	V	V	V	V	S
Retired	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gender M/F/O	F	M	M	M	F	M	F
Age	51–60	51–60	51–60	51–60	51–60	41–45	46–50
Branch of Service A/AF/N/M/O	A	A	AF	AF	AF	A	AF

Years in Service	16–20	16–20	>21	16-20	>21	16–20	11–15
Years of Domestic Relocations w/Adolescent	4–5	2–3	2–3	2–3	1	2–3	2–3
Number of Domestic Relocations	6–7	4–5	2–3	2–3	>7	2–3	2–3
Marital Status M/D/S/W/S/O	D	D	D	M	M	M	M
Race/Ethnicity AA/A/C/H/O	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	C	AA
Education HS/GED/SC/T-YC/F-YC/MD/DD	F-YC	SC	F-YC	F-YC	F-YC	MD	SC
Yearly Income	$20,001-$30,000	$20,001-$30,000	>$61,000	>$61,000	>$6100 0	$50,000-$60,000	<$10,000
Religion B/Ca/Ch/J/M/P/O	Ca	Ch	Ca	Ch	Ch	Ch	M

Current Job Title	Retired	Retired	Info Tech Spec	Accountant	Program Mgt BC	Minister	Babysitter
Weekly Work Hours	<10	<10	31–40	31–40	31–40	31–40	21–30
Years in Current Position	<1	<1	2–5	11–15	2–5	6–10	2–5
First Relocation							
Stationed at base	Ft Polk, LA	Ft Knox, KY	Tinker AFB, OK	Tyndall AFB, FL	Maxwell AFB, AL	Ft Hood, TX	Little Rock AFB, AR
Relocated to base	Ft Sam Houston, TX	Ft Bullis San Antonio, TX	McGuire AFB, NJ	Hill AFB, UT	Fairchild AFB, WA	Ft Rucker, AL	Eglin AFB, FL
First Relocation Age of Adolescent #1	12–13	12–13	18	16–17	14–15	12-13	16–17
Gender of Adolescent (M/F/O)	F	F	F	M	F	M	F
First Relocation Age of Adolescent #2		12–13					

Gender of Adolescent (M/F/O)	M						
Second Relocation Stationed at base	Ft Campbell, KY	Ft Bullis San Antonio, TX	McGuire AFB, NJ	Hill AFB, UT	Fairchild AFB, WA	Ft Rucker, AL	Eglin AFB, FL
Relocated to base	Ft Benning, GA	Ft Sill, OK	Andrews AFB, MD	Dover AFB, DE	Luke AFB, AZ	Ft Sill, OK	Keesler AFB, MS
Second Relocation Age of Adolescent #1	12–13	14–15	18	18	16–17	12-13	18
Gender of Adolescent (M/F/O)	M	F	F	M	F	M	F
Second Relocation Age of Adolescent #2	14–15	12–13					
Gender of Adolescent (M/F/O)	F	M					

*Note * V/S/B = Veteran, spouse, or both*
A/AF/N/M/O = Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Other

Snapshot Description of Sample

Finally, a snapshot description with the biographical details of each veteran and spouse is provided below. The snapshot provides the following biographical information details for each veteran and spouse: (1) parent, (2) military status, (3) retired, (4) gender, (5) age, (6) branch of service, (7) years in service, (8) years with at least one adolescent at home, (9) a number of domestic relocations, (10) marital status during a military career, (11) Race/Ethnicity and (14) religion. The remaining biographical details about the veteran's and spouse's current status were: (12) highest level of education, (13) income, (15) current job title, (16) rank in current job, (17) current weekly work hours, and (18) years in current position. Relocations indicated: (1) the first and second relocation bases, (2) number of adolescents, (3) gender of adolescents, and (4) ages of adolescents.

Veteran 1 retired from the U.S. military, a female, and parent of two adolescents. Her age ranges between 51-60 years old; her branch of service is Army with total years in service ranging between 16-20 years; her years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home ranged between 4-5 years and the number of domestic relocations during her military career were 6-7 relocations. She was divorced during her military career. Her race/ethnicity is African American; her highest level of education is college; her income ranges between $20,001- $30,000, yearly; and her religion is Christian. Her current status indicates her current job title as Retired from the Army, current rank as N/A, current weekly work hours as less than 10 hours, and years in current position as less than one year. Her first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Ft. Polk, Louisiana, and she relocated to Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. She had one adolescent

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who was a female, and the adolescent's age ranged between 12–13 years old. Her second relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, and she relocated to Ft. Benning, GA. She had one adolescent who was a male aged ranged 12–13 years old and one adolescent who was a female aged ranged 14–15 years old.

Veteran 2 retired from the U.S. military, a male parent of two adolescents. His age ranges between 51–60 years old; his branch of service is Army with total years in service ranging between 16–-20 years; his years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home ranged between 2–3 years, and the number of domestic relocations during his military career were 4–5 relocations. He was divorced during his military career. His race/ethnicity is African American; his highest level of education is some college; his income ranges between $20,001–$30,000 yearly; and his religion is Christian. His current status indicates his current job title as Retired from the Army, current rank as N/A, current weekly work hours as less than 10 hours, and years in current position as less than one year. His first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Ft. Knox, Kentucky, and he relocated to Ft. Bullis San Antonio, Texas. He had two adolescents, one was a female aged ranged 12–13 years, and one was male age range between 12–13 years old. His second relocation with an adolescent to a U.S. military base was Ft. Bullis San Antonio, Texas and he relocated to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He had one adolescent who was a female aged ranged 14–15 years old, and one adolescent who was a male aged ranged 12–13 years old.

Veteran 3 retired from the U.S military, a male parent of two adolescents. His age ranges between 51–60 years old; his branch of service is Air Force with total years in

service ranging between 21 years or more; his years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home ranged between 2–3 years, and the number of domestic relocations during his military career were 2–3 relocations. He was divorced during his military career. His race/ethnicity is African American; his highest level of education is college, his income is $61,000 or more yearly; and his religion is Catholic. His current status indicated his current job title as an Information Technology Specialist, current rank as N/A, current weekly work hours as 31–40 hours, and years in current position as 2–5 years. His first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, and he relocated to McGuire AFB, New Jersey. He had one adolescent: a female aged 18 years old. His second relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was McGuire AFB, New Jersey, and he relocated to Andrews AFB, Maryland. He had one adolescent, who was a female, aged 18 years old.

Veteran 4 retired from the U.S. military, a male parent of one adolescent. His age ranges between 51–60 years old; his branch of service is Air Force with total years in service ranging between 16–20 years; his years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home ranged between 2–3 years, and the number of domestic relocations during his military career were 2–3 relocations. He was married, during his military career. His race/ethnicity is African American; his highest level of education is college; his income ranges between $61,000 yearly; and his religion is Christian. His current status indicates his current job title Accountant, current rank as N/A, current weekly work hours are 31–40 hours, and years in current position as 11–15 years. His first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent His first relocation to a U.S.

military base with an adolescent was Tyndall AFB, Florida, and he relocated to Hill AFB, Utah. He had one adolescent: a male ranging between 16–17 years old. His second relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Hill AFB, Utah and he relocated to Dover AFB, Delaware. He had one male adolescent who was age 18 years old.

Veteran 5 retired from the U.S. military, a female parent of one adolescent. Her age ranges between 51–60 years old; her branch of service is Air Force with total years in service 21 years or more; her years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home were 2–3 years, and the number of domestic relocations during his military career were seven relocations or more. She was married, during her military career. Her race/ethnicity is African American; her highest level of education is a 4-year college, her income is $61,000 or more yearly; and her religion is Christian. Her current status indicated her current job title as Program Management Branch Chief, current rank as GS-13, current weekly work hours is 31–40 hours, and years in current position as 2–5 years. Her first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Maxwell AFB, Alabama and she relocated to Fairchild AFB, Washington. She had one adolescent: a female ranging 14–15 years old. Her second relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Fairchild AFB, Washington and she relocated to Luke AFB, Arizona. She had one adolescent who was a female between the ages of 16–17 years old.

Veteran 6 retired from the U.S. military, a male parent of one adolescent. His age ranges between 41–45 years old; his branch of service is Army with total years in service ranging between 16–20 years; his years during domestic relocations with at least one adolescent at home ranged between 4–5 years and the number of domestic relocations

during his military career were 2–3 relocations. He was married during his military

career. His race/ethnicity is Caucasian; his highest level of education is a master's degree,

his income ranges from $50,001–$60,000 yearly; and his religion is Christian. His current

status indicated his current job title as Minister, current rank as N/A, current weekly work

hours as 31–40 hours, and years in current position as less than 6–10 years. His first

relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Ft. Hood, Texas, and he

relocated to Ft. Rucker, Alabama. He had one adolescent: a male whose age ranges from

12–13 years old. His second relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Ft.

Rucker, Alabama and he relocated to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He had one adolescent who was

a male age ranged 14–15 years old.

Veteran 7 spouse, retired from a civilian job, a female parent of one adolescent.

Her age ranges between 46–50 years old; her branch of service is Air Force with total

years in service ranging between 11–15 years; her years during domestic relocations with

at least one adolescent at home ranged between 2–3 years, and the number of domestic

relocations during her military career were 2–3 relocations. She was married during her

military career. Her race/ethnicity is African American; her highest level of education is

some college, her income ranges from $10,001–$20,000 yearly; and her religion is

Muslim. Her current status indicated her current job title as babysitter, current rank as

N/A, current weekly work hours as 20–30 hours, and years in current position as 2–5

years. Her first relocation to a U.S. military base with an adolescent was Little Rock

AFB, Arkansas, and she relocated to Eglin AFB, Florida. She had one adolescent, a

female, age ranging 16–17 years old. Her second relocation to a U.S. military base with

an adolescent was Eglin AFB, Florida and she relocated to Kessler AFB, Mississippi. She had one adolescent which was a female age 18 years old.

Data Analysis

According to Reiners (2012), phenomenologists theorized that knowledge was achieved through interactions between researchers and participants and is considered subjective, inductive, and dynamic. The researcher in the current study used the phenomenological research strategy to describe the experiences of former military parents regarding their adolescents' social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocations.

Data coding played an integral part in this study. The data was protected, transcribed, and analyzed using Holistic and Initial Coding. Through the coding process Table 3 was developed to show an example of Holistic Coding.

Table 3 provides a Holistic Coding example.

Table 3

Example of Holistic Coding

Interview Question and Response	Holistic Codes
Participant 3	
Interviewer: Explain your perception of your adolescent's attitude toward leaving their friends after a domestic relocation. And did the adolescent stay connected?	Anxiety, Unsure
	Able to Make New Friends
There was definitely some anxiety about leaving her friends after a relocation, but something that helped was staying connected. But it all depends on the age too because being very young, my daughter	Stayed Connected

was able to make new friends but yet she still
stayed in contact with those old friends as well
because they would see each other down the road
years later.

Initial Coding. A more thorough review of the data is called Initial Coding. This

coding approach gave the researcher and three peer debriefers the opportunity to dive

deeper and use a narrowing technique like NVivo. The NVivo technique codes each

transcribed line of the participants' words. This narrowing process helps to summarize

and reduce each statement made by the veteran and spouse. Table 4 illustrates one

example of Initial Coding.

Table 4

Example of Initial Coding

Interview Question and Response	Holistic Codes
Participant 3	
Interviewer: Explain your perception of your adolescent's attitude toward leaving their friends after a domestic relocation. And did the adolescent stay connected?	"some anxiety" "leaving her friends" "staying connected" "depends on the age"
There was definitely some anxiety about leaving her friends after a relocation, but something that helped was staying connected. But it all depends on the age too because being very young, my daughter was able to make new friends but yet she still stayed in contact with those old friends as well because they would see each other down the road years later.	"able to make new friends" "stayed in contact with old friends" "see each other years later"

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Second Cycle Coding. A focused coding approach during this cycle assisted the researcher with determining categories or themes which were significant codes (Saldaña, 2013). Codes can then be clustered to produce broader, deeper themes (Saldaña 2013). Themes were established and agreed upon utilizing the researcher, her major professor, and the peer de-briefer. Triangulation, using multiple methods of data collection and crosschecking each method was applied to increase credibility and enhance the validity of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Triangulation was achieved through the following methods: (1) actively listened during interviews creating field notes, (2) member checking, (3) reduced researcher's bias by utilizing two peer debriefers to remove researcher's military bias, and (4) consecutively reviewed transcripts, demographic questionnaires for analytic concepts. Bowen family systems theory, and Erikson's human development theory were associated with the collected data and peer debriefed findings.

Findings

This area consisted of themes developed from the data analysis. Themes were analyzed and linked to the research questions and the following five major themes appeared: (1) anxiety, (2) community, (3) adaptability, (4) availability, and (5) make a difference. The findings consisted of the research questions, interview questions, themes, and verbatim transcript from seven veterans and spouses. Table 5 below indicates research questions and related interview questions.

Table 5

Interview Questions and Research Questions

Research Question 1

1. What, if any, experiences occur involving social skills in adolescents before or during a military domestic relocation?

Research Question 1 Interview Questions

1. Explain your perception of your adolescent's attitude toward leaving their friends after a domestic relocation? Did the adolescent stay connected?

2. Describe experiences that affected your adolescent's ability to socialize after a domestic relocation?

3. Talk about the memories you have of your adolescent's approach to making new friends? Did they make friends quickly or slowly?

4. Describe how your adolescent was impacted socially by multiple domestic relocations?

5. Explain some changes you noticed in your child's social interactions after a domestic relocation? In the home, how did your adolescent spend time alone? With the family?

6. Talk about one of the most memorable instances pertaining to your adolescent's social skills that changed for the better after a domestic relocation? Did anything change for the worst?

7. Describe any resources that were available to you that assisted with your child's adjustment after the domestic relocation?

8. Explain any activities that were most influential to your adolescent in the community after a domestic relocation.

9. Discuss the role that religious beliefs or spirituality played after a domestic relocation in your adolescent's life regarding social interactions.

10. Tell me what you recall about your adolescent's interpersonal communication after a domestic relocation with you, the military parent? What about with other family members?

11. Describe what you, the parent, perceive are the indispensable social skills your adolescent should possess?

Research Question 2

2. How would additional social skills education benefit military adolescents?

Research Question 2 Interview Questions

1. Describe the availability of classes or counseling that dealt with social skills for adolescents on your base?

2. If social skills education programs for adolescents were offered, would it have made a difference for your adolescent's social skills?

Table 6 below indicated research questions and related major themes.

Table 6

Research Questions and Major Themes

Research Questions	Major Themes
1. What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation?	1. Anxiety 2. Community 3. Adaptability
2. How would additional social skills education benefit adolescents in military families?	4. Availability 5. Make a Difference

Major and subthemes are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Major themes and subthemes

Major Themes	Subthemes
Anxiety	Unsure, Not Happy
Community	Scouts, Church

Adaptability	Changed for the Worst, Never Made Best Friends
Availability	Recreation Center, Family Resource Center
Make a Difference	Social Skills Classes, Single Parent Support Group

Presentation of Themes

Each veteran and spouse shared specific characteristics with all other veterans, (i.e., former military parent of an adolescent, veteran, or spouse of a veteran, and retired from the military). Veterans and spouses were primarily recruited through a church in north Texas and the snowball method. Once the flyer and demographic questionnaire were distributed, no one in the private security agency met the criteria. Snowballing and word of mouth allowed for connections between the researcher and additional veterans and spouses to be made. Participants openly and honestly shared their experiences during the interview.

Emerging Themes: Research Question One

Research Question One stated: What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation? Veteran and spouse responses indicated that some adolescent males seemed to be more introverted than were their female counterparts. Even so, adolescent males were more likely to make friends

quickly, while females were slower. Adolescents' social skills interests at the time helped

male and female adolescents' bond with others. Some adolescents did not possess social

skills enough to make friends, more adolescents did not stay connected than did stay

connected, some adolescents showed poor choice behaviors, while some adolescents lacked

emotional support causing anxiety and sadness. Pinheiro and Matos (2012) stated, "social

skills are strongly predicted by the quality of relationships with peers" (p 90).

The family unit assisted in making the relocation easier for adolescents and was

ready to help adolescents socialize. Luke, Maio, and Carnelley (2004) found secure

attachment models that offer a positive view of self and others in order to assist

adolescents in overcoming difficulties and challenges. Veterans' and spouses' responses

also indicated these experiences that affected the adolescent's ability to socialize after

domestic relocations were activities such as sports, video games, Boy Scouts, music, and

family rituals. Their responses to how the adolescent were impacted socially by the

domestic relocation included some adolescents acting out, involved in activities, gained

friendships, issues in parental relationships, adjustment to new location took time, and

acceptance of diversity. In addition, their responses to the adolescent's social interactions

after a domestic relocation included the veteran and spouse parent became a single parent

and not focused on the adolescent; worked a lot, problem adolescent, and learning issues.

Some adolescents became loners. As a result, some veteran and spouse parents spent more

time as a family with adolescent intentionally, right after the relocation. Furthermore, their

responses on memorable instances after the relocation pertaining to the adolescents, were

sports and becoming the football captain, being hired at a local job, going to the prom; and

moms wanted to become their adolescent's best friend. While some of the participants adolescents' behavior declined, as reported by this veteran: "I would say that he did not stay connected...he was an introvert" (Veteran 6).

Resources that were available to the veteran and spouse parents after the domestic relocation were: (a) family support centers, (b) mental health, (c) tutoring, (d) the presence of other families, school, (e) Red Cross, (f) YMCA, and (g) public resources. However, some resources were not used, as explained by this parent: "We didn't seek out resources because we thought everything was okay...it was hindsight that we realized how much the relocating in her high school years, affected her" (Veteran 5). In addition, activities that assisted with the adolescent's social skill adjustment after a domestic relocation were sports, the community center, art, and Girl Scouts.

Veteran and spouse parents' responses on the role of religious beliefs or spirituality, after a domestic relocation, were reported to help the adolescent with development of social skills. However, not one of the veterans and spouse parents did not include religion or spirituality in their household; thus, the adolescents in those homes did not get the same spirituality reinforcement. Furthermore, some adolescents' interpersonal communication with their military parent after the domestic relocation were reported as being difficult and challenging of their parents' house rules. Interpersonal conflict or drama with other family members was also reported, such as in the case where parents may be in a divorce situation and children were divided among the parents. Interpersonal communication with family members was good when family networks were stable.

Veteran and spouse parents in this section, responded to the question of what the most desirable social skill is their adolescent should possess. The responses included: (a) be adaptable, (b) speak to be understood, (c) listen to understand, (d) tolerate differences, (e) compassion, (f) adaptability, (g) tolerant differences, (h) be kind, (i) respectful, and (j) work hard.

Theme One: Anxiety

The participant statements revealed that adolescents felt some anxiety with military relocations. Adolescents begin to make long lasting relationships in this phase of life. Making new friends when arriving at a new U.S. military base can cause some anxiety in adolescents. Additionally, some parents may not recognize anxiety in their adolescent's life:

> There was some anxiety concerning leaving her friends after a relocation; however, something that helped was staying connected. But it all depends on the age too because being young, my daughter was able to make new friends but yet she still stayed in contact with old friends as well because they would see each other down the road years later. (Veteran 3)

> I did not need any additional help or classes. I am not saying that they weren't available. I just did not need them because my children don't-- my adolescent didn't suffer from anxiety, or depression, or anything like that. If they had, I guess I would have searched that out, but I did not need that. (Veteran 7)

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Theme Two: Community

Community has a stronghold in the military. Adolescents can look forward to having some of the same community closeness, functions, resources, and activities at a new U.S. military base that they left behind at the previous U.S. military base. The military community pulls together when welcoming newcomers when departing, during celebrations, and tragedy:

> When you go to a place where the community is used to being somewhat transient, military families know this. And so, they are very accepting of the new kid on the block because all of them were the new kid on the block at some point. So, it makes it easier when you move from one military location to another. Those kids understand and they are very accepting in most instances and certainly, that was the case when we were at that U.S. base out west. And then, moving on to the next place, same thing still. Yeah, he made friends quickly. (Veteran 4)

> Well, we were at Fort Knox when a tragic thing happened where a bus crashed with a bunch of the kids from the school and died. My first sergeant's wife and daughter died. And so, the whole community was just shocked by such a horrible thing. A drunk driver caused it. It is a kind of famous case in Kentucky. But anyway, so they were shocked because they knew these kids. And so, the community got together. They would have big prayer events and big gatherings, and we'd go to those, and I felt like that helped them get past that. It was the first time they ever dealt with death. I heard them say, "I knew this person and now

they're dead." "And they were just on a bus that I might've been on." So, it's just one of those things. (Veteran 2)

Theme Three: Adaptability

Being able to adapt is anticipated in the military. While military parents adapt continuously, adolescents see firsthand how important this attribute is to the family. Adolescents are placed in situations due to military relocations that require them to adapt in every move:

> You must be adaptable to sudden changes when you're in the military. And so, suddenly, you go to work, and okay, it turns out we're not going to be back for two months. You are going to stay with uncle this or grandma that, things like that. Or I am supposed to home. But nope. So, you have to be very adaptable and really kind of-- you have to be a little bit tough, to be honest, to be a military kid. (Veteran 2)

> Being able to adapt to change especially sudden change and being positive and being able to solve problems. That is something that super important to me anyway. And so, I taught that to my daughter… (Veteran 3)
>
> Okay. If the classes were offered. I do not know if it would have made a difference, because my adolescent is one that can adapt easily, has an outgoing personality. So, I don't see where it would have helped. So, I guess my answer to that would be no. (Veteran 7)

Emerging Themes: Research Question Two

Research Question Two stated: How would additional social skills education benefit adolescents in military families? The participant responses on availability of classes or counseling that dealt with social skills for adolescents on the U.S. military base indicated they were not being utilized and others were being utilized such as: teachers, school system, and family resource center. Their responses on whether social skills education programs would make a difference before and after a domestic relocation, turned out to be positive. These veteran and spouse parents stated that an adolescent sponsor program would make a difference. However, veteran and spouse parents indicated that they did not seek social skills education programs as they felt there was no issue. Participants further stated classes and counseling services were available and most of the services were made known to the parents, as each U.S. military base has similar services. Teachers, schools, neighbors, and availability of classes were all there. One veteran stated the school system was outstanding – teachers and counselors. All U.S. military bases had Family Resource Centers or Family Advocacies. However, some parents used the services for their adolescent and some did not. Additionally, some parents did not inquire about available classes or counseling services. Lastly, one veteran indicated the classes or counseling services that dealt with social skills for adolescents were not needed. Responses point to the themes of availability and make a difference as veterans and spouses shared their past experiences involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation.

Theme Four: Availability

The availability of resources and activities provided continuity for adolescents. Having the same resources and activities on each U.S. military base provides adolescents with something to look forward to once they arrive at the new U.S. military base. Military parents can reassure their adolescent of the availability of resources and activities that they were familiar with at the last U.S. military base:

Okay. The church was there as far as like for Sunday school for him and for catechism and things like that, but as far as the-- well, just consistency and availability for worshiping, he really loved we had a church to go to. (Veteran 6)

Okay. For me, or for my family, I did not need any additional help or classes. I am not saying that they weren't available. I just did not need them because my child -- my adolescent didn't suffer from anxiety, or depression, or anything like that. If they had, I guess I would have searched that out, but I did not need that. (Veteran 7)

Yes. Well, there were several things, everything from the Red Cross to the child development center to the–what do they call those things where you go and there's games and you sign them out? – rec center. Rec center, rec center. They would have all kind of things there. They would have gymnastic classes and all sorts of stuff. And I try to put them in as much stuff as they want to do. I never force them into it. But if you make me pay my money, you are going to go. Yeah.

And sometimes it would work. Sometimes it would not work out. But those things

were available. (Veteran 2)

Theme Five: Make a Difference

Being involved in social skills programs for adolescents in preparation for a

domestic relocation might make all the difference to an adolescent. Military parents can

ensure adolescents are engaged in education programs either on the U.S. military base or

in the community off base in preparation for a move:

I think it (social skills education programs) would have. I mean it certainly could

not have hurt. So, I think it could have made a difference. (Veteran 1)

Yes. I mean, that could always help and make a difference. I wish I had had that

because I had zero social skills when I went out into the world. So yeah, that

would make a difference, but I also think her mom and her grandparents did a

good job of that themselves. But it cannot hurt though having those programs that

are available to a young person. (Veteran 3)

But as far as whether I think you would be having a difference. Yeah, I believe so.

I think dealing with coping skills, they are kind of on their own, and at the mercy

of having two parents to kind of help them cope with this topic. But I think that it

might be something that they need to offer at the schools or something if not on

the U.S. base or surrounding the U.S. base, there's some type of program, whether

it be an additional credit type of situation or in homeroom just talk about it or

something. (Veteran 6)

If the classes were offered. I do not know if it would have made a difference,

because my adolescent is one that can adapt easily, has an outgoing personality.

So, I do not see where it would have helped. (Veteran 7)

Synthesis of Themes

The interview's final steps investigated the synthesis descriptions of processes

and perceptions of former military parents regarding their adolescent's social skills

associated with one or more military domestic relocations. Veterans' and spouses'

remarks described the adolescent's social skills before and after domestic relocations.

Emerging themes were: (1) anxiety, (2) community, (3) adaptability, (4) availability, and

(5) make a difference.

Veterans and spouses made relevant statements about making and leaving friends,

socializing, and staying connected, change during relocations, available resources and

activities, interpersonal communication, and education programs. According to these

veterans and spouses, social skills made a difference in an adolescent during and after

domestic relocations. Veterans and spouses reflected on how some adolescents were

introverts, yet others were outgoing. For example, some adolescents found it difficult to

make new friends, others found making friends a natural part of the relocation process.

Additionally, some adolescents were involved in activities like Girl Scouts or Boy

Scouts; these like interests provided opportunities for the adolescents to socialize. During

the relocation, changes occurred in family situations that made a difference to the adolescent such as getting a driver's license. Furthermore, memorable instances helped adolescents with social skills such as graduations and saying goodbye to friends. The availability of classes, counseling, and education programs helped adolescents with social skills during and after relocations.

Veterans and spouses shared indispensable social skills their adolescent should possess. Veteran 1 stated, "be a hard worker." Veteran 2 stated, "be able to fit into a crowd or into a new situation and be yourself and find some way to keep yourself entertained." Veteran 3 shared, "be able to adapt to change especially sudden change." Veteran 4 said, "have the ability to speak clearly and make your thoughts known." Veteran 5 indicated, "have basic communication skills such as talking and listening, compassion and problem-solving skills." Veteran 6 revealed, "be tolerant of other people's differences." Veteran 7 stated "using common sense, being rational, and respectful of others." Each veteran and spouse were thoughtful with their words, and only wanted the best for their adolescent. All veterans and spouses looked proudly back on where their teen was in life at that time and provided social skills, they knew would benefit their teen as a military adolescent during and after domestic relocations.

Being impacted socially, having available activities and resources played an integral part in the adolescents' adjustment during and after domestic relocations. Adolescents were placed in social situations during a move where they had to accept diversity, adjust to the new location which took time, deal with issues in parental relationships, and gained friends which allowed them opportunities to stay connected.

Adolescents also recognized activities and resources such as sports, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, art, the family support center, community center, tutoring, schools, and other families helped with social skills during and after domestic relocations. The same activities and resources were available on or near each U.S. military base leaving lasting memories.

Summary

This chapter began with a demographic description of seven volunteer veterans and spouse who participated in this study. The procedures for sampling, data collection, and data analysis were discussed. Each veteran and spouse completed a demographic questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The interview questions were designed to focus on former military parents' perceptions of one or more domestic relocations on adolescents' social skills. Transcripts were used to develop codes and themes. Themes were developed from first and second cycle coding. Additionally, the demographic characteristics of the samples and emerging themes were introduced. The analysis of the individual interviews and responses along with the responses to the demographic questionnaire discovered the following five major themes: anxiety, community, adaptability, availability, and make a difference. Subthemes emerged that aligned with each major theme. The theme anxiety generated the following subthemes: unsure and not happy. The theme community generated the following subthemes: school and church. The theme adaptability generated the following subthemes: changed for the worst, never made best friends, and more argumentative. The theme availability generated the following subthemes: recreation center and family resource center. The theme make a

difference generated the following subthemes: social skills classes and single parent

support groups. Each veteran and spouse indicated a need for social skills in their

adolescent's life and the importance of developing social skills for the future.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The research study consisted of six veterans and one spouse who were former

military parents, who discussed the challenges they had with social skill development of

the adolescent during one or more domestic relocations. These participants were

interviewed in face-to-face meetings where they shared individual perspectives. This

research contributes to the literature on social skills development of military adolescents,

ages 12 through 18, who are being raised by former military parents. Bowen's family

system theory is a theory of human behavior that views the family as an emotional unit

and uses systems thinking to describe the complex interactions in the unit (Bowen, 1978).

This qualitative research study used purposeful sampling method and the

snowball approach to recruit veterans and spouses. Each veteran and spouse completed a

demographic questionnaire, qualitative data, and individual interviews. Interviews were

transcribed verbatim, coded, and analyzed for themes. A validity check of the research

study took place, indicating credibility and trustworthiness were utilized (Shenton, 2004).

By applying triangulation, member checking, field notes, debriefing with the major

professor, experience in the military culture, and researcher training, biases were

intentionally reduced, allowing credibility to be sustained (Shenton, 2004). Member

checking was done by requesting veterans and spouses to confirm, edit, or add missing

data on the transcripts. Three volunteer debriefers were used to read and record the data

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for common themes. These themes were compared with the researcher's findings/themes, and the interviews for consistency and validation to prove triangulation. Functional themes emerged. The research concentrated on two research questions:

1. What past experiences occurred involving social skills in adolescents before and after a U.S. military domestic relocation?

2. How would additional social skills education benefit adolescents in U.S. military families?

Adaptability was a recurring comprehensive theme that emerged during data analysis. Whether it was the adolescent's attitude, socializing skills, resources, activities, spirituality, interpersonal communication, counseling, or education programs, participants shared that adolescents need to be able to adapt to change no matter the geographic location. Analysis from the interviews indicated five themes: (1) anxiety, (2) community, (3) adaptability, (4) availability, and (5) make a difference.

This chapter outlined an overview of this research investigation to include former military parents' perception of one or more domestic relocations on adolescent social skills and analyzed themes in responses from veterans and spouses. The research questions, interview questions as well as earlier research conclusions influenced this study and are incorporated. Additionally, limitations, implications of this investigation to include future research and possible recommendations on former military parents' perception of one or more domestic relocations on adolescent social skills are discussed.

Discussion of Findings and Themes

Participants were former military parents ages 41 years of age and above who experienced one or more domestic relocations that affected their adolescents' social skills, during and after domestic relocations. Former military parents described their experiences, perceptions, and fears related to their adolescents' social skills development. These experiences were examined for common statements, which evolved into themes with rich descriptions of how their adolescents' social skills were changed during and after domestic relocations. All veterans and spouses willingly shared their perceptions of their adolescents' social skills.

A flyer was used to recruit veteran and spouse parents. The seven veteran and spouse parents were recruited from either the Army or Air Force. Three of the participants were female, and four were male. Five veterans and spouses had 2–3 years of domestic relocation experiences with their adolescent, while one had 4–5 years of experiences with their adolescent, while still another had only one year of domestic relocation with their adolescent. All participants self-identified as parents, retired from the U.S. military, spouses, and/or veterans.

Discussion of Research Questions

This phenomenological study's purpose was to describe former military parents' experiences regarding their adolescents' social skills development, associated with one or more military domestic relocations. The researcher also inquired of participants, if additional social skills' education may be needed to enhance their level of social skills. Using the Bowen's family system theory and Erikson's human development theory,

specifically Stage Five Adolescent Identity vs. Diffusion, were used to develop the research questions.

RQ1: What, if Any, Experiences Occurred Involving Social Skills in Adolescents Before or During a Military Domestic Relocation?

Each veteran and spouse described various experiences related to their adolescent's social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocation. The military relocations caused issues in the adolescents, characterized as: attitude, interpersonal communication challenges, resources available/unavailable, and social skills education programs. Erickson's theory helps to explain the preparation that a pre-adolescent goes through while developing a healthy personality. Furthermore, the theory describes how the character develops and choices the adolescent makes. The ego identity helps solve identity crises through the stages of growth. Additionally, Piaget studied the adolescent years using verbal problems. He would have the adolescent solve a life problem to help them to be better socially (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Piaget, 1972; Thomas, 2005).

Several veterans and spouses spoke of the importance of the adolescent being adaptable to changes in life, interpersonal communication which gives the adolescent a skill to make friends, and to engage in activities during and after a domestic relocation. Veterans and spouses were in unison that adaptability was a predominant theme (Chibucos et al., 2005; Jackson-Lynch et al., 2014; Mancini et al., 2015).

RQ2: How Would Additional Social Skills Education Benefit Military Adolescents?

Each veteran and spouse's responses showed the adolescent's social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocation by recalling experiences of the adolescent's social skills education through indispensable social skills, classes or counseling, and social skills education programs. Piaget's theory of cognitive development is vital in education and provides importance to social skills training for military adolescents. Instructional strategies from Piaget's work include providing a supportive environment, utilizing social interactions and peer teaching, and helping children see fallacies and inconsistencies in their thinking. Following Piaget's research method, now known as the clinical method, involves conducting intensive interviews with subjects about their thought processes used in qualitative research. These seven veterans and spouses spoke of indispensable social skills, classes or counseling, and social skills education programs that would benefit military adolescents.

Discussion of Veteran and Spouse Interviews: Comprehensive Theme Adaptability

The five themes that emerged from the individual interviews were anxiety, community, adaptability, availability, and make a difference. Research participants recognized adaptability to be the central theme. For adolescents to thrive in a military family and military world, the adolescent should be adaptable to a changing environment. Each military relocation brings changes that require adaptions. The participants indicated that the relocation itself was instrumental in an adolescent's life and how being unadaptable affected the adolescent. In addition to the relocation, the adolescent must

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adapt to a new home and school, social behaviors such as making and leaving friends, relational issues, new activities, and new experiences through physiological and developmental changes (Aronson et al., 2011; Mancini et al., 2015).

According to Erikson (1982) personal identity, social interactions, and relationships develop during adolescence. A gamut of changes takes place daily in and adolescent's life through new experiences and learned information during a military relocation. At this point in the adolescent's life, a parent's role offers proper encouragement allowing the adolescent to have a strong sense of self, independence, and control. Adolescents who develop social skills, relate to others, and build relationships will be more adaptable and successful.

McGoldrick and Carter (2001) viewed the whole family as a unit not focusing on individual family members, relationships, or dynamics. Military families relocate often, and family functioning issues take place (Jackson-Lynch et al., 2014). Domestic relocations become a family affair and can affect the family unit. One of the entities of the family that change is the adolescent. Roles and adjustments take shape within the family; however, the family or any part of the family may fail during a relocation and may affect other parts of the family. Boss et al (1993) found behavior within a family unit changes. Family relationships work well when gender roles change, particularly during domestic relocations.

Steinberg (2011) found a review of the literature revealed the developmental process of adolescents in the 1980s and 1990s. The literature noted problem behaviors

during the adolescent lifespan, and most adolescents live through the challenges without being severely affected by social, emotional, or behavioral complications.

Conclusions

Generally, the participants' statements concerning military adolescents followed Bowen's and Erickson's findings related to one or more domestic relocations on adolescent social skills. Participants rated their adolescents' social skills as either good or bad, and none were rated average. Adolescents' connections with friends were described as being different, depending on the relocation. Also, having an interest on the U.S. military base helped adolescents with socialization skills and bonding with others (Baumrind, 2016; Steinberg, 2011). Interestingly, the sons seemed to make friends easier after the relocation easier than the daughters. Participants also noted that adolescent adjustments after the relocation took time, and parents had to invest more time with the adolescent to smooth the transition (Steinberg, 2011; Thomas, 2005).

Some participants worked extra hours after a military relocation and were not as focused on supervising their adolescent's activities, while others spent more time with the adolescent. Issues in the parental relationship did impact the adolescent, and some adolescents who were affected by the military relocation acted out. Relocations opened different cultures to adolescents and taught acceptance of diversity. Military and public resources were available during the relocation; however, some resources were not used. Community activities, including spirituality, were influential. Indispensable social skills are adaptable, tolerate differences in others, speak to be understood, and listen to understand. Classes and counseling services were available, although some were not

inquired about or used. Veterans and spouses found that having a sponsor program for

social skills would be helpful. Some adolescents did not seek out available programs, and

some parents in this study felt social skills were not an issue for their adolescent.

Reflections as a Researcher on Veteran and Spouse Parents

Being a military parent, the researcher is somewhat familiar with the influence of

one or more domestic relocations on a military adolescent's social skills. Participants

selected the adolescents' communication skills four out of seven times more often than

any other indispensable social skills (Erickson, 1982; Cillessen & Bellmore, 2011).

Interestingly, participants felt the same way concerning social skills education programs

being offered and that these programs would make a difference before and after each

domestic relocation. Participants spoke of the importance of adolescents having

communication skills, being able to communicate with others. Erikson's (1982) model of

human development, Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity vs. Diffusion, focuses on belonging

and community support during adolescence. Adolescents who lack proper encouragement

and are unsure of themselves during this stage of development may remain insecure and

confused throughout their lives. Adolescents who develop positive social skills, are more

likely to be adaptable and successful.

Parents saw a need for social skills education programs being offered and making

a difference before and after each domestic relocation. The experiences of the

participants were relatable to other former military parents who have adolescents between

the ages of 12 and 18. It is challenging to serve in the U.S. military and be a responsible

parent of an adolescent. While persistence and dedication stand out, there is nothing like

resilience when it comes to veterans and spouses. Their strength to pull through situations and adaptability through change reflect highly upon their adolescents and family (Easterbrooks et al., 2013: O'Neal, et al., 2019).

Limitations of the Study

Three main limitations exist. First, unknowing, challenging recruitment efforts existed, which was unexpected. The researcher attempted to recruit participants from a large church population and a security guard company located in north Texas. All indications were good before distributing flyers. Once flyers were distributed, little interest existed. Two veterans agreed to participate from the church. After weeks of snowballing recruitment efforts, seven veterans and spouses emerged, just before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Secondly, the limited number of veterans and spouses may not offer an opportunity for clearer comparison of adolescents' social skills through the former military parents' perspectives. Veterans and spouses had lived experiences, were open and willing to talk, educated, and professionals; each trait showed clearly during the interview. Locating an increased number of veterans and spouses opens opportunities for researchers to dive more thoroughly into the lives of military adolescents through the parents' perspective.

Thirdly, more of an age difference between the adolescents would have given a thorough look at many ages and the factors associated with each age.

Implications

The researcher is aware that one or more domestic relocations of the military family can influence an adolescent's social skills. Thus, allowing more insight into adolescents' social skills and social skills education is associated with one or more domestic relocations perceived by former military parents for future studies, schools, communities, military branches (Gilbert, 1992, McGoldrick & Carter, 2001, Schwartz et al., 2012). These veterans and spouses shared their innermost thoughts into their personal lives to give others a glimpse of their military adolescents. Educating other veterans and spouses will be beneficial during and after military relocations. Examples of family life education programs include parenting skills, parent-child communication, coping and adjusting skills. In addition to available research, more is needed to advance these findings. This investigation demonstrated the influence of one or more domestic relocations has on an adolescent's development of social skills as perceived by former military parents.

The researcher in this study is aware that most military adolescents mentioned in the study were not involved in social skills education although some training and counseling sessions were offered. Taking advantage of U.S. on-base and U.S. off-base resources showed value for adolescents who participated. Parents and adolescents alike became more conscious of activities available on the U.S. military base which helped build social skills such as athletic activities, the recreation center, and churches, these aided the adolescent in building new relationships, therefore building social skills (Easterbrooks et al., 2013; Nugent, 2013; O'Neal et al., 2019).

Access to social skills education programs, when available, were not marketed or well known to all military families. Current and new resources and programs need to be recognized by all military members and their families on all domestic military bases. U.S. military bases can offer education classes through every avenue available for adolescents and parents: face-to-face courses, workshops, seminars, online, virtual, podcasts, and school resources to include any other method of training (O'Neal, et al, 2019). The family advocacy offices can become a liaison between educational resources offered on a U.S. military base and off base. Information should be easily accessed regularly. Policies with the Department of Defense and off-base services would need to exist with contractors, counselors, psychologists, and especially with schools that would allow the development of training resources. As resilient as military adolescents are, having support from on and off U.S. military base resources (i.e., schools, counseling, community activities, and family education services), may help adolescents grow into socially successful adults.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research on military adolescents' social skills associated with one or more domestic relocations as viewed by the parents is limited. This problem requires more research to determine and better understand the challenges today's military adolescents face surrounding social skills during domestic relocations. In addition to a larger population, access to more social skills education for the adolescent and the parent would be beneficial. However, societal issues such as the coronavirus pandemic, and limitation of face-to-face classes have made it somewhat difficult to reach military adolescents.

Future Research Reconceptualizing Military Adolescents

The researcher offers the following future recommendations at the conclusion of this study:

- Future studies would benefit from different recruiting efforts. Having several agencies willing to participate in a study of this nature instead of two agencies would allow a larger population for recruitment.

- Consider expanding the age range of parents to include those who have children younger than 12 to ensure more variety.

- Further research could be conducted on the methods of communication adolescents use to stay connected: Cell phones, Facetime, Snapchat, or other methods.

- Future studies would benefit from exploring additional areas relating to community and social skills, coping, and social skills, or relationships and social skills.

- Future studies would benefit from exploring adults who were previous military adolescents that experienced social skills issues during one or more relocation as an adolescent. Additionally, a recommendation would be to explore the parents' history as an adolescent and development of social skills. Interested in the findings of the adult's past view as an adolescent.

- It is recommended to include additional interview questions to Research Question 2. It would be interesting to explore additional aspects on social skills education.

- Further research could be conducted on the effects of a sponsor program for adolescents. Current programs exist for military members which allows for easier transitions.

Summary

This qualitative study described former military parents' experiences regarding their adolescents' social skills associated with one or more military domestic relocations. The researcher recruited seven veteran and spouse parents who participated in face-to-face audio-recorded interviews. Two research questions were analyzed about the perception of former military parents concerning: (a) past experiences involving social skills in adolescents before and after a military domestic relocation and (b) additional social skills education benefiting adolescents in military families. The Bowen's family systems theory guided the findings in this study. Along with Erikson's (1982) model of human development, Stage Five, Adolescent, Identity versus Diffusion focuses the conflicts adolescents go through while searching for self during adolescence. The researcher utilized the phenomenological approach, combining the participants' views with the researcher's view. Finally, this chapter covered a review of results, discussion of research questions, reflections of the researcher, limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research on one or more domestic relocations on adolescent social skills.

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APPENDIX A

Approved Agency Letter

WESTSIDE

900 Bellaire Boulevard Lewisville, TX 75067
(972) 221-5668 Office www.wbcchurch.org

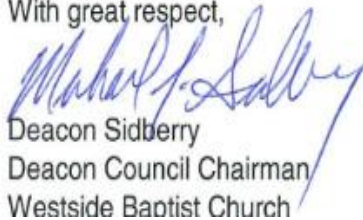September 11, 2018

Ms. Jackson-Lynch,

I am pleased to inform you that I am interested in your research study describing the experiences and perceptions of former military parents in relationships with adolescent social behaviors associated with multiple military domestic relocations. Some church members meet the research study criteria: be a former military parent or spouse of a former military parent, be a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) (12 to 18 years old) while on active duty and participated in one or more domestic relocations(s).

Members of the church are aware of the time requirements involved and that their involvement is completely voluntary. They are also aware that a recorded interview will take place. They look forward to hearing more about your research and reviewing the interview questions.

Thank you for contacting me and the church. We are glad to be of assistance to you, your research on adolescents, and domestic military relocations. Knowing that your research will assist military members, researchers, and policymakers assures us that our participation is worthwhile.

The best of luck with your research study,

With great respect,

Deacon Sidberry
Deacon Council Chairman
Westside Baptist Church

PARAGON
SYSTEMS
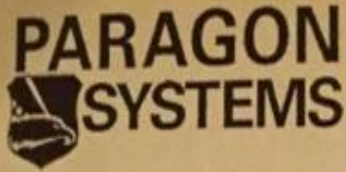
Feb 14, 2018

Ms. Jackson-Lynch

I am pleased to inform you that I am interested in your research study on describing the experiences and perceptions of former military parents in relationships with adolescent social behaviors associated with multiple military domestic relocations. Some of my staff meet the research study criteria: be a former military parent or spouse of a former military parent, be a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) (12 to 18 years old) while on active duty, and (c) participated in one or more domestic relocation(s).

My staff is aware of the time requirements involved and that their involvement is completely voluntary. They are also aware that a recorded interview will take place. They look forward to hearing more about your research and reviewing the interview questions.

Thank you for contacting me and my staff. We are glad to be of assistance to you, your research on adolescents, and domestic relations. Knowing that your research will assist military members, researchers, and policymakers assures us that our participation is worthwhile.

Good luck with your research study.

Regards,

Joseph Guidry
Paragon Systems
(940) 891-8575

APPENDIX B

Flyer

ATTENTION FORMER MILITARY PARENTS!

Check this out!

If you meet the criteria listed below you can be a participant in a research study through Texas Woman's University titled "Influence of Multiple Domestic Relocations on Adolescent Social Skills Perceived by Former Military Parents."

- Be a former military member or spouse of a former military member
- Be a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) who were 12 through 18years old while the parent/ guardian was active duty
- Participated in one or more domestic relocations and accompanied by the 12 through 18years old adolescent
- Voluntarily agree to take part in an interview

Anyone who meets these criteria and is interested in participating in the study, please contact Lena Jackson-Lynch, Doctoral Candidate using the email or phone number below. Face-to-face interviews will be used to collect data regarding experiences and perceptions of military parents in

relationships with adolescent social skills associated with multiple military domestic relocations.

Involvement in this study is completely voluntary and those who do not wish to complete the study have the option to withdraw at any time without penalty.

For participation, you will receive a gift bag containing either a man's or woman's handkerchief, hand sanitizer and a $5.00 gift card.

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, electronic meetings, and internet transactions.

Any questions, do not hesitate to call or email me.
Lena Jackson-Lynch
ljacksonlynch@mail.twu.edu
940-xxx-xxxx

APPENDIX C

Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

Social Skills Definition – one's ability to manage and operate successfully in a social environment (Cillessen & Bellmore, 2011). A subset of the more general category of interpersonal intelligence, i.e., the ability to understand other people (Campbell, 2008).

Instructions: This questionnaire has two parts. Please answer Part 1 questions as they pertain to the adolescent's parent in 2019 unless stated otherwise. Answer Part 2 questions as they pertain to the adolescent(s) while the parent was active duty.

Part 1: Questions Pertain to Adolescent's Parent

1. Were you a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) while active duty?
☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Military status: ☐ Veteran ☐ Spouse ☐ Both

3. Retired: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Spouse not retired from military

4. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other (P*lease List*)
☐ _____

5. Age:
☐ 30 – 35 years ☐ 36 – 40 years ☐ 41 – 45 years ☐ 46 – 50 years ☐ 51 – 60 years ☐ 61 – 65 years ☐ 66 years or older

6. Branch of service while active duty:
☐ Army ☐ Air Force ☐ Navy ☐ Marines ☐ Other branch of service
(*Please List*) _____

7. Total years in service(s):
☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 6 – 10 years ☐ 11 – 15 years ☐ 16 – 20 years
☐ 21 years or older

8. Years during domestic relocation with at least one adolescent at home:
☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 2 – 3 years ☐ 4 – 5 years ☐ 6 – 7 years
☐ 7 years or more

9. Number of domestic relocations during your military career:
☐ None ☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 2– 3 years ☐ 4 – 5 years
☐ 6 – 7 years ☐ 7 years or older

10. Marital Status during military career: ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Single ☐ Widowed ☐ Separated ☐ Other _____

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11.Race/Ethnicity: ☐ African American ☐ Asian ☐ Caucasian
☐ Hispanic ☐ Other Race/Ethnicity (*Please List*) _____

12. Highest level of education completed:

☐ High School ☐ GED ☐ Some College ☐ Two-year College
☐ Four-year ☐ College ☐ Master's Degree ☐ Doctoral Degree
☐ Other level of education (*Please List*) _____

13. Income: ☐ $10,000 or less ☐ $10,001 – $20,000 ☐ $20,001 - $30,000

☐ $30,001 – 40,000 ☐ $40,001 - $50,000 ☐ $50,001 - $60,000
☐ $61,000 or more ☐ Decline

14. Religion: ☐ Buddhist ☐ Catholic ☐ Christian
☐ Jewish ☐ Muslim ☐ Protestant

Other religions (*Please List*) _____

15. Current Job Title: (*Please fill in the blank)*)_____

☐ Decline to Answer

16. Rank in Current Job: (*Please fill in the blank*) _____

☐ Not Applicable

17. Current Weekly Work Hours:

☐ Less than 10 hours ☐ 11 – 20 hours ☐ 21 – 30 hours
☐ 31 – 40 hours ☐ 50 hours or above
18. Years in Current Position: ☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 2 – 5 years ☐ 6 – 10 years

☐ 11 – 15 years ☐ 16 – 20 years ☐ 21 years or more

End of Part 1.

Part 2: Questions Pertain to Adolescent(s) While Parent was Active Duty

Instruction: Please answer Part 2 questions as they pertain to the adolescent during a relocation while active duty. The following two questions relate to the 1st and 2nd relocation. List adolescent(s) from oldest to youngest in your household during each relocation.

Think when you were active duty and identify the following for each relocation:

1. First Relocation:

In your first relocation you were stationed at *(indicate base)* _____, and relocated to *(indicate base)* _____.

Adolescent #1 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #2 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #3 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #4 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

2. Second Relocation:

In your second relocation you were stationed at *(indicate base)*
_____, and relocated to *(indicate base)*
_____.

Adolescent #1 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #2 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #3 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

Adolescent #4 *(no name)*	Age of Adolescent	Gender of Adolescent
	☐ 12 – 13 years old ☐ 14 – 15 years old ☐ 16 – 17 years old ☐ 18 years old	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other *(Please List)* _____

End of Part 2.
Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX D

Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY (TWU)
CONSENT TO PARTICIPAT IN RESEARCH

Title of Study
Influence of Multiple Domestic Relocations on Adolescent Social Skills Perceived by
Former Military Parents

Investigator and Advisor Information
Investigator: Lena Jackson-Lynch, B.A., M.ED, M.HR
Email: ljacksonlynch@twu.edu.
Phone: 940-xxx-xxxx

Advisor: Shann Hwa Hwang, Ph.D.
Email: SHwang@twu.edu
Office Phone: 940-898-3155

Summary and Key Information about the Study
You are asked to participate in a study conducted by Lena Jackson-Lynch, a student at
Texas Woman's University, as part of her dissertation. The purpose of this research is to
describe the experiences and perceptions of former military parents in relationships with
adolescent social skills associated with multiple military domestic relocations. This study
will explore social skills of military adolescents associated with domestic relocations as
perceived by the military parent. You have been invited to participate in this study
because you were a military parent. As a participant you will be asked to take part in a
face-to-face interview regarding your experiences and perceptions of a former military
parent. This interview will be audio recorded, transcribed exactly as stated, analyzed by
the investigator, and we will use a code name to protect your confidentiality. The total
time commitment for this study will be about two hours and 5 minutes. Following the
completion of the study you will receive a gift bag containing either a man's or woman's
handkerchief, hand sanitizer and a $5.00 gift card. The greatest risks of this study include
potential loss of confidentiality and emotional discomfort. We will discuss these risks and
the rest of the study procedures in greater detail below.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you are interested in learning
more about this study, please review this consent form carefully and take your time
deciding whether you want to participate. Please feel free to ask the investigator any
questions you have about the study at any time.

Initials _____

Page 1 of 5

Description of Procedures
As a participant in this study you will be asked to spend 45 – 60 minutes of your time in a face-to-face interview with the investigator. An additional 30 minutes may be needed to verify information after the interview. The investigator will ask you questions about your relationship with adolescent social skills associated with multiple military domestic relocations. A local library private meeting room will be reserved for individual interviews allowing for privacy and when the interview will happen. You will be given a code name to use during the interview. As participants are scheduled for the interview, each will be given a code name listed on a Master Schedule List. At the interview, participants will print and sign their name on the Consent Form. Additionally, at the interview and during any other communication, the participants will be referred to by their code name. This is the only time participants will give their names. Only the researcher will have access to the names. Consent Forms and the Master Schedule List along with all confidential information will be stored in the locked cabinet in the researcher's home. The interview will be audio recorded and then written down so that the investigator can be accurate when studying what you have said. In order to be a participant in this study, you must be a former military member or spouse of a former military member, a parent/guardian of one or more adolescent(s) who were 12 through 18years while the parent/ guardian was active duty, participated in one or more domestic relocations and accompanied by the 12 through 18years adolescent. This consent form, interview questions, the interview schedule, the resources list, and the demographic questionnaire will be emailed or mailed for you to review at your home. The consent form will be signed in duplicates in the presence of the investigator. The copy will be given to the participant and the original will remain with the investigator. The interview questions will cover the participant's perceptions and experiences of the adolescent while the participant was on active duty, the participant's multiple domestic relocations, the adolescent's social skills, being a military parent of an adolescent, and education offered on social skills for adolescents on military bases. The demographic questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes and the master interview schedule 3 minutes to complete. The participant will return the demographic questionnaire via email or mail to the investigator prior to the interview. Participants who do not meet the criteria of the study will be informed. A blank master interview schedule indicating three dates with appointment times for the interview will be sent to participants who meet the criteria. Each participant will select one of the three dates and times. If the dates and times shown are inconvenient, the investigator will work around the participant's schedule.

Initials _____

Page 2 of 5

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Participants may volunteer to member check. Member checking is an opportunity to review a participant's own transcribed transcript of the interview and provide corrections for accuracy. Member checking will add value and trustworthiness to the research. To member check, volunteer following the interview. Participants who volunteer to member check will receive a copy of the transcript through the mail or email and will review the transcript of the interview in the home for accuracy. Each participant will return the reviewed transcript to the investigator via mail or email.

Potential Risks
Emotional Distress / Discomfort - The investigator will ask you questions regarding your experiences and perceptions of a former military parent. A possible risk in this study is discomfort with the questions you are asked. If you become tired or upset, you may take breaks as needed. You may also stop answering questions at any time and end the interview. If you feel you need to talk to a professional about your discomfort, the investigator has provided you with a list of resources. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The interview will be held in a local library private meeting room reserved for individual interviews allowing for privacy. A code name, not your real name, will be used during the interview. Only the investigator will know your real name.

Loss of time - The semi-structured interview will last between 45 to 60 minutes. Participants can take breaks during the interview and resume when they are ready.

Emotional Distress / Discomfort - Throughout the interview, participants will be reminded that they can stop answering questions at any time. Participants may also withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, participants can refuse to answer any questions(s) they wish.

Loss of Anonymity - All participants' identifying information will be stored in a locked file cabinet at the investigator's home office. The participant's identity will be protected using pseudonyms.

Coercion - Participation is not mandatory, it is strictly voluntary. Participants can stop answering questions at any time and/or end participation in the study at any time without being penalized. Participation or declining participation will have no impact on their jobs nor their relationship with their church. All participants will be reminded of their right verbally and/or in writing at each stage of the research process.

Initials _____

No videotaping will take place. Audio recordings and transcriptions will be stored separately in the investigator's home in a locked cabinet. The purpose of the audio taping is to capture the interview to ensure exact wording is correct. Only the investigator, her advisor, and the person who reviews the information will hear the audio recording or read the written interview. The audio recording and transcriptions will be destroyed within three years after the study is finished. The signed consent form will be stored separately in the investigator's home in a locked cabinet from all collected information and will be destroyed three years after the study is closed. Written materials and computer will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office at home. Also, computer data files will be stored on the investigator's desktop computer at her home office; to access these computer files they are protected by the investigator's computer log-on username and password. Computerized files or electronic documents relating to the study will be destroyed within three years after the study is finished. The coded list of names will be stored separately in the investigator's home in a separate locked cabinet and destroyed within three years after the study is closed. The results of the study may be reported in scientific magazines or journals but your name or any other identifying information will not be included. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, electronic meetings and internet transactions.

The investigator will remove all your personal or identifiable information (e.g. your name, contact information) from the audio recordings and/or any study information. After all identifiable information is removed, your audio recordings and/or any personal information collected for this study may be used for future research or be given to another investigator for future research without additional informed consent.

> If you would like to participate in the current study but not allow your de-identified data to be used for future research, please initial here _____.

The investigators will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the investigators know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation and Benefits
Your involvement in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Following the completion of the study you will receive a gift bag containing either a man's or woman's handkerchief, hand sanitizer and a $5.00 gift card for your participation. If you would like to know the results of this study, we will email or mail them to you.*

Initials _____

Questions Regarding the Study
You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study, you should ask the investigators; their contact information is at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights s a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the TWU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

*If you would like to know the results of this study tell us where you want them to be sent:

Email: _____ or Address: _____

Appendix E

IRB Approval Letter

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
EST. 1901 | CO-ED. 1994

The Graduate School
P.O. Box 425649, Denton, TX 76204-5649
940-898-3415   Fax 940-898-3412   www.twu.edu/gradschool

0979454

November 26, 2019

Lena Jackson-Lynch
ljacksonlynch@twu.edu

Dear Lena:

I have received and approved the prospectus entitled *Influence of Multiple Domestic Relocations on Adolescent Social Skills Perceived by Former Military Parents* for your Thesis/Dissertation research project.

To help reduce the last minute stress of preparing to graduate the Graduate School provides an online formatting guide, the *Formatting Template and Manual* (https://twu.edu/gradschool/current-students/thesis-and-dissertation/), as well as personal formatting assistance. Once you have a working draft, you have the option to set an appointment with the Thesis/Dissertation Formatter to have the formatting of your paper reviewed, or receive formatting assistance.

Once you have successfully defended your completed Thesis/Dissertation and made any changes requested by your committee, you will submit a copy to the Graduate Reader, by the submission deadline or earlier; (See deadline dates at: https://twu.edu/gradschool/current-students/degree-completion/), who will review it for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations.

Utilizing these resources will allow for a smoother submission process.

Best wishes to you in the research and writing of your project.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth A. Johnson

Ruth A. Johnson, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of the Graduate School
Texas Woman's University

jrk

cc: Dr. Shann-Hwa Hang, HDFS
     Dr. Holly Hansen-Thomas, HDFS

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APPENDIX F

Resources List

Resources List

American Psychological Association Psychologist Locator http://locator.apa.org/

National Register of Health Service Psychologists http://www.findapsychologist.org/

Mental Health of America Referrals http://www.nmha.org/go/searchMHA

Psychology Today Find a Therapist http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/

National Board for Certified Counselors http://www.nbcc.org/CounselorFind

APPENDIX G

Interview Questions Guide

Interview Questions Guide

The following interview questions will be used during the interview process.

Definition of Terms

Social Skills – one's ability to manage and operate successfully in a social environment
(Cillessen & Bellmore, 2011).

Interview Questions

Perceptions and experiences

1. Explain your perception of your adolescent's attitude toward leaving their friends
   after a domestic relocation? Did the adolescent stay connected?

2. Describe experiences that affected your adolescent's ability to socialize after a
   domestic relocation?

3. Talk about the memories you have of your adolescent's approach to making new
   friends? Did they make friends quickly or slowly?

Multiple domestic relocations

4. Describe how your adolescent was impacted socially by multiple domestic
   relocations?

Social Skills

5. Explain some changes you noticed in your child's social interactions after a domestic
   relocation? In the home, how did your adolescent spend time alone? With the family?

6. Talk about one of the most memorable instances pertaining to your adolescent's social skills that changed for the better after a domestic relocation? Did anything change for the worst?

7. Describe any resources that were available to you that assisted with your child's adjustment after the domestic relocation?

8. Explain any activities that were most influential to your adolescent in the community after a domestic relocation.

9. Discuss the role that religious beliefs or spirituality played after a domestic relocation in your adolescent's life regarding social interactions.

Military Parent

10. Tell me what you recall about your adolescent's interpersonal communication after a domestic relocation with you, the military parent? What about with other family members?

11. Describe what you, the parent, perceive are the indispensable social skills your adolescent should possess?

Education

12. Describe the availability of classes or counseling that dealt with social skills for adolescents on your base?

13. If social skills education programs for adolescents were offered, would it have made a difference for your adolescent's social skills?

APPENDIX H

Member Checking Instructions

Member Checking Instructions

Thank you for participating in my dissertation study on military adolescents. For your review, please find verbatim transcriptions collected during our interview. I reviewed the transcripts and annotated my thoughts. I have also added larger themes. Code names were used for confidentiality.

Please review the transcripts, notes, and themes to ensure accuracy, that what I have typed was your answers. If errors are found, correct the information, and return all corrections to me via email or phone. If you find your statements to be accurate, please let me know via email at ljacksonlynch@twu.edu or via telephone, 940-xxx-xxxx.

APPENDIX I

Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Instructions: Select one date.

Check mark one Date	Date	Time	Code Name	Email / Mailing Address	Phone
			XXXXXXX		
			XXXXXXX		
			XXXXXXX		

Please reply no later than: _____

APPENDIX J

Demographic Descriptive Sample

Demographic Descriptive Sample

Number of Years with Adolescent	N	Percentage
11-15 years	1	14%
16-20 years	4	57.10%
21 or more years	2	28.60%

Number of Domestic Relocations	N	Percentage
3 relocations	3	43%
4-5 relocations	2	28.6%
8 or more relocations	1	14.30%

Marital Status	N	Percentage
Married	4	57.10%
Divorced	3	42.90%

Race and Ethnicity	N	Percentage
African American	6	85.6%
Caucasian	1	14.30%

Education Level	N	Percentage
Some College	2	29%
Four-Year College	4	57.1%
Master's Degree	1	14.3%

Yearly Income	N	Percentage
$10,001-$20,000	1	14.3%
$20,001-$30,000	2	28.6%
$30,001-$40,000	1	14.3%
$50,001-$60,000	1	14.3%
$60,001 or more	2	28.6%

Religion	N	Percentage
Catholic	2	28.2%
Christian	4	57.1%
Muslim	1	14.3%

Weekly Work Hours	N	Percentage
21-30 hours	2	28.6%
31-40 hours	3	42.8%
41 or above hours	2	28.6%