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Isolating Effects of Moral Injury and Low Post-Deployment Support Within the U.S.**Military****Claire Houtsma*, Lauren R. Khazem, Bradley A. Green, & Michael D. Anestis****Department of Psychology, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS, U.S.**

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Abstract

Suicide rates within U.S. military components, particularly the National Guard, are significantly higher than the general population suicide rate. To better understand and prevent suicide within this population, we must identify mechanisms of risk contributing to these discrepancies. One risk factor relevant to military service is moral injury, a term for experiences that violate one's moral beliefs. Using a series of hierarchical multiple regressions, the current study examined the moderating role of post-deployment social support on the association between moral injury (self-transgressions, other-transgressions, and betrayal) and thwarted belongingness among military personnel. The current sample was comprised of 552 military personnel with at least one previous deployment. Partially consistent with hypotheses, results revealed that other-transgressions and betrayal were significantly associated with thwarted

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