Enhancing the Coping Skills of Submariners: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Skills Based Stress Management Training

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Psychology (Clinical), Murdoch University, 2007.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

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2007

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.0 Descriptive Findings

4.1 Demographic Data

The data was collected from submarine personnel serving in HMAS Sheean, HMAS Dechaineux, HMAS Waller and HMAS Rankin. Depending on postings and/or availability, some subjects only commenced participation at the second stage of testing (baseline alongside & pre-test) and others were 'lost' at this phase due to posting changes. Thus, the subject numbers vary at each phase. The total sample comprised 75 men, and 3 women (all three women were in the control condition). As the number of women in the sample was too small to allow meaningful generalisations, their data was removed from the data set. Table 4 shows the breakdown of participants at each of the testing phases.

Table 4

Number of Male Respondents Participating in Each of the Testing Phases

Test Phase	No Treatment	Treatment	Total
Baseline sea	58	13	71
Baseline alongside	43	16	59
Pre-test	45	16	61
Intervention	0	16	16
Post-test	27	16	43
Follow-up	21	7	28

The mean age of the sample was 30.12 years (*SD*=5.27), with a mean of 9.19 years served in the RAN, 5.5 years in Submarine Service, and 13.4 months in their current posting. Qualified submariners made up 88% of the sample group, with the remaining 12% being trainees. The majority of personnel had achieved a secondary school level of education (64%). In terms of marital status, 34.7% were married, 6.7% recognised

defacto, 13.3% non military recognised defacto, 38.7% single members, and 6.7% were divorced or separated. Forty-two percent of participants had dependent children.

Junior Sailors represented 68% of the sample group, with Senior Sailors and Officers making up 20% and 12% of the group respectively. Table 5 represents the breakdown of the job categories.

Table 5

Number of Personnel in Each Category

Category	Number of Personnel
Cook	6
Steward	5
Medic	2
Marine Technician *	18
Electronic Technician *	10
Acoustic Warfare Analyst	9
Electronic Warfare Analyst	10
Communication Information Systems	5
Marine Engineering Officer *	1
Seaman Officer	9

***** Technical categories

The Marine Technician category (24%) had the highest number of personnel participating, and the categories of Electronic Technician (13.3%), Electronic Warfare Analyst (13.3%), and Acoustic Warfare Analyst (12%) also featured strongly in the sample group. The figures in this study for rank and category are generally reflective of the crew of submarines.

In Chapter 5 (Historical Comparisons) and Chapter 6 (Categorical Comparisons) a subsample group of n=56 comprised the data sample for the pre-test and baseline alongside measures. Similar figures were obtained for the descriptive findings. The mean age of this subsample was 30.10 years (SD=5.22), with a mean of 9.01 years

served in the RAN, 5.32 years in Submarine Service, and 13.14 months in their current posting. The sample consisted of 89.3% qualified submariners and 10.7% trainees. A secondary level of education was held by 60.7% of subjects, and 35.7% of subjects were married, 5.4% recognised defacto, 14.3% non military recognised defacto, 5.4% were divorced or separated and 39.3% were single. Forty-three percent had dependent children.

As with the larger sample, Junior Sailors made up the majority with 71.4%, with 21.4 % being Senior Sailors, and 7.1% were Officers. Marine Technicians also featured strongly with 28.6%, followed by Electronic Technicians (17.9%), 12.5% Electronic Warfare Analysts (12.5%), and Acoustic Warfare Analysts (10.7%).

These descriptive figures for this subsample group are considered comparable with the total sample group of 75.