

Shared Sacrifice? An Inquiry into the Willingness to Perform Compulsory Military Service

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The recurring debate over mandatory military service has been revived as the U.S. all-voluntary military force is stretched to its limits in a war on terrorism with no clear end in sight. In 2003, Representative Charles Rangel, Democrat from New York, called for “shared sacrifice” as he introduced a bill to reinstate the military draft. The proposal required all citizens and permanent residents between ages 18 and 26 to complete two years of compulsory service, either in the military or in civilian capacity.¹ Although the bill was defeated, calls for a broader distribution of the burden of war have only increased.²

According to Kestnbaum, one of the pillars of the American military service is the principle of citizen service, which includes the obligation of citizens to serve as well as the state’s prerogative to compel.³ Proponents of national compulsory service argue that a draft distributes more equitably the burden of war and may even be necessary to reach adequate recruitment levels.⁴ In addition, they contend that “the sense of duty

¹ John Greenya, "National Service," *CQ Researcher* 16, no. 25 (2006).

² "Strains on Ground Forces Limit U.S. Options in Iraq " *USAToday* (2007), <http://www.usatoday.com>, Gordon Lubold, "Few Americans Share Iraq War's Sacrifices," *Christian Science Monitor* (March 26 edition) (2007), <http://www.csmonitor.com>.

³ Meyer Kestnbaum, "Citizenship and Compulsory Military Service: The Revolutionary Origins of Conscription in the United States," *Armed Forces and Society* 27, no. 1 (2000).

⁴ Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960)," (2007).

that comes with public service also would rub off on large numbers of young people,"⁵ who "are likely to develop an appreciation for helping others that could change the way they lead the rest of their lives."⁶ In contrast, supporters of the current all-voluntary force view a draft as involuntary servitude and argue that free choice ultimately legitimizes the composition of today's military.⁷ They posit that raising personnel compensation can raise the number of recruits to desired levels within the current all-voluntary framework.⁸ A recent study prepared by the Congressional Budget Office further discusses the advantages and disadvantages of conscriptions versus voluntary enlistment.⁹

Given the recurrent interest in compulsory service, the purpose of this article is to present an inquiry into the characteristics of individuals that are more willing to perform compulsory military service. The research sheds light on preferences for compulsory military service, and may also provide insights into the groups that may be shouldering a disproportionate share of the costs of war.

Theoretical framework

This study is conducted within the framework provided by the literatures on public service motivation (PSM) and occupational choice. Scholars have defined public service motivation as a "motivational force that induces individuals to perform meaningful public service."¹⁰ or as a "general altruistic motivation to serve the interests

⁵ Editorial, "Time to Reconsider Compulsory Service," *Army Times* 59, no. 26 (1999), p. 44.

⁶ Robert E. Litan, "The Obligations of September 11, 2001: The Case for Universal Service " in *United We Serve? The Promise of National Service*, ed. E. J.; Drogoz, Dionne, Kayla Meltzer. Robert E. Litan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), p. 104.

⁷ Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960)."

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

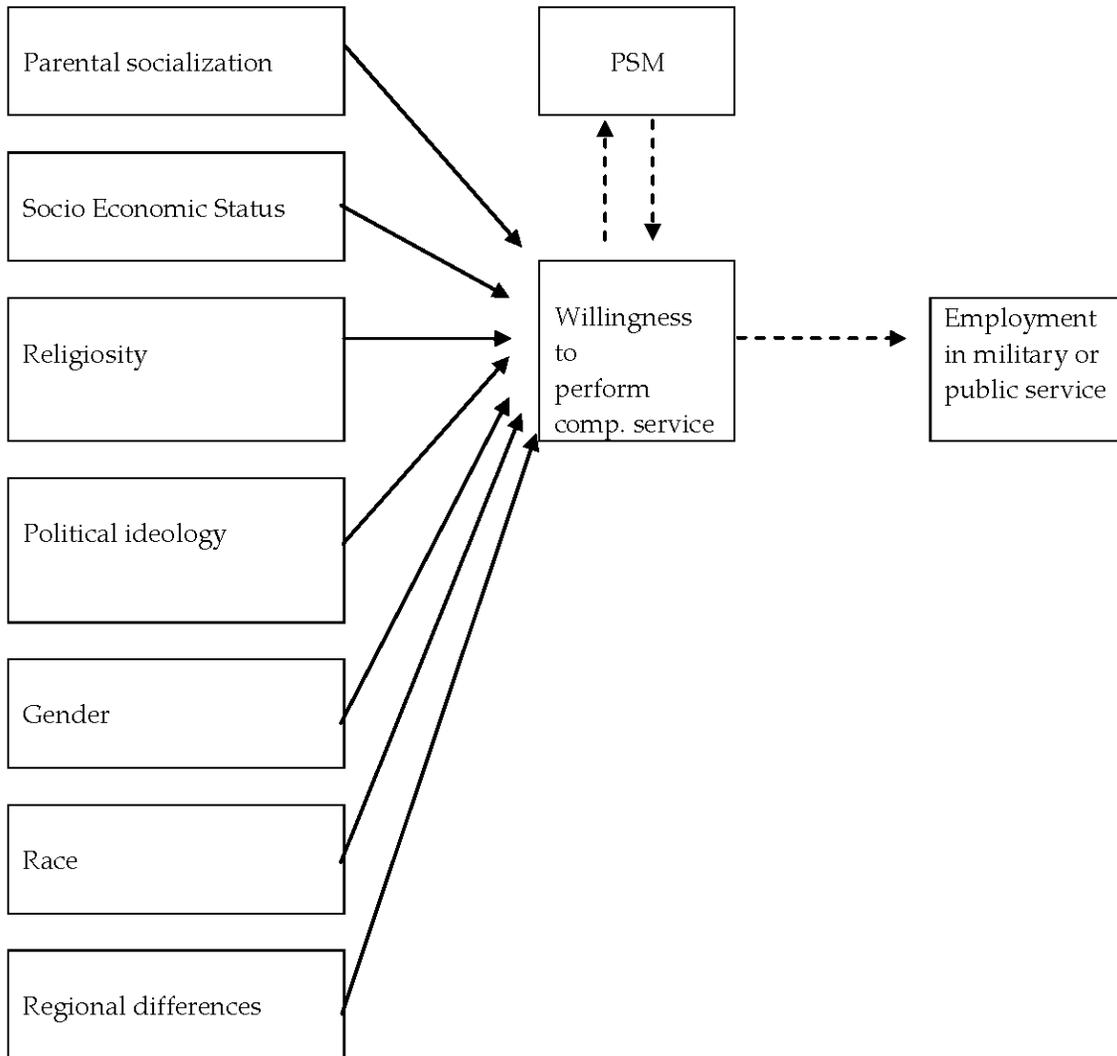
¹⁰ Gene A. Brewer and Sally Coleman Selden, "Whistle Blowers in the Federal Civil Service: New Evidence of the Public Service Ethic," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 8, no. 3 (1995), p. 417.

of a community of people, a state, a nation or humankind.”¹¹ Perry and Wise have posited that “the greater an individual’s public service motivation, the more likely the individual will seek membership in a public organization.”¹² Figure 1 provides a basic diagram of the theoretical framework of this study. Willingness to perform compulsory service is assumed to be correlated with public service motivation, and consistent with Perry and Wise, to lead to employment in the military or public service. In other words, the model essentially posits that preferences for compulsory service agree with preferences for employment in military and public service. A person is more likely to prefer compulsory service to the degree that the person is more likely to enter military or public service voluntarily. As shown in Figure 1, this general conceptual framework is applicable to both military and public service. However, consistent with the purpose of this article, the remainder of this section focuses on military service.

¹¹ Hal G. Rainey and Paula Steinbauer, "Gallopig Elephants: Developing Elements of a Theory of Effective Government Organizations," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 9, no. 1 (1999), p. 22.

¹² James L. Perry and Lois Recascino Wise, "The Motivational Base of Public Service," *Public Administration Review* 50, no. 3 (1990), p. 370.

Figure 1. Antecedents of the Willingness to Perform Compulsory Service



This study is interested primarily in the antecedent variables that may explain the willingness of individuals to perform compulsory military service. As depicted in Figure 1, six variables are hypothesized to have an impact on the willingness of individuals to perform compulsory military service: Parental socialization, socio economic status, religiosity, political ideology, gender, race, and regional differences. The first hypothesis is that positive parental socialization increases the willingness of performing compulsory military service. Social learning theory posits that an individual is more likely to express a preference for an occupation if he or she (1) receives positive

reinforcement for engaging in activities associated with successful performance of the occupation, (2) is positively reinforced by a valued person who models or advocates engaging in the occupation, and (3) is exposed to positive words and images associated with the occupation.¹³ This proposition is supported by empirical research conducted by Pallone, Rickard and Hurley who found that the most potent influencers of occupational preference were persons holding the preferred job as well as same-sex fathers and mothers.¹⁴ Similarly, Rosenhan found that parental modeling of altruistic behaviour is related significantly to high altruism by their children in adulthood.¹⁵ Clary and Miller found that volunteers who reported warm and positive relationships with parents who modeled altruism were more likely to sustain their altruistic commitments.¹⁶ Based on this literature, we hypothesize that individuals with a parent in the military are more willing to perform compulsory military service (H1).

The second proposition contained in the model is that socioeconomic status (SES) has a negative impact on the willingness to perform compulsory military service (H2). Socioeconomic status is a composite measure that is typically based on family income, parental education, and occupation. Some sociologists have long held that career aspirations and opportunity structures are determined in part by social status.¹⁷ Opportunity structures can be defined as the range of life chances or options which are available to an individual. Persons in different social classes have different opportunity structures. For example, individuals in lower classes have a limited opportunity structure in comparison to individuals in the middle and upper classes. These ideas can be applied to make the case that military service is an employment opportunity that is

¹³ John D. Krumboltz, "A Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making," in *Social Learning and Career Decision Making*, ed. Anita Mitchell, Brian Jones, and John Krumboltz (Cranston, RI: Carroll Press Publishers, 1979).

¹⁴ Nathaniel J. Pallone, Fred S. Rickard, and Robert B. Hurley, "Key Influencers of Occupational Preference among Black Youth," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 17, no. 6 (1970).

¹⁵ David Rosenhan, "The Natural Socialization of Altruistic Autonomy," in *Altruism and Helping Behavior*, ed. Jacqueline Macaulay and Leonard Berkowitz (New York: NY: Academic Press, 1970).

¹⁶ Gil E. Clary and Jude Miller, "Socialization and Situational Influences on Sustained Altruism," *Child Development* 57, no. 6 (1986).

¹⁷ K Roberts, "The Entry into Employment: An Approach Towards a General Theory," *Sociological Review* 16 (1968), K Roberts, "The Developmental Theory of Occupational Choice: A Critique and an Alternative," in *People & Work*, ed. G. Esland, G. Salaman, and M. Speakman (Edinburg: Holmes McDougall with Open University Press, 1975).

more accessible throughout the social structure as compared to opportunities in the private, for-profit sector. In a country like the United States where patriotism is exalted, military readiness is a top priority, and the memory of previous wars is fresh, occupation in the military is clearly an alternative visible and accessible to most. One would thus expect that as socio economic status increases and as other occupation alternatives enter the opportunity structure of individuals, the interest in military decreases as less visible occupational opportunities arise which can be accessed and secured by individuals in higher socio-economic brackets. The content of military recruitment marketing, which offers opportunities of career or educational advancement, is consistent with this view.

This is an area in which preferences for military occupation or compulsory service may not agree with actual enlistment, given the selection criteria of the military. Reports indicate that the military avoids, in general, recruiting individuals without a high school degree, thus excluding the very poor from enlistment.¹⁸ The military also refrains from recruiting in affluent neighbourhoods given that the proportion of the enlisted that comes from families with income greater than 60,000 is virtually zero.¹⁹ Consistent with this pattern, the Congressional Budget Office has found that both the very poor and the very rich are underrepresented in the military.²⁰ However, this underrepresentation of the poor may not mean a weak preference for military occupation. Were they to be admitted, it could well be that the very poor would enter the military.

The third proposition is that religiosity has a positive impact on willingness to perform compulsory military service (H3). Previous literature has suggested the relationship between religiosity and public service motivation.²¹ This relationship is grounded in the emphasis on compassion and self-sacrifice that is contained in the dogma of mainstream religions in the United States. Schumm and Rotz find that

¹⁸ Rosa Brooks, "Was Kerry Right?," *Los Angeles Times*, November 03 2006 (Retrieved on August 2007 from <http://www.latimes.com>), Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960).", National Priorities Project, "Military Recruiting 2006," retrieved on August 22, 2007, from <http://www.nationalpriorities.org>.

¹⁹ Brooks, "Was Kerry Right?."

²⁰ Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960)."

²¹ James L. Perry, "Antecedents of Public Service Motivation," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 7, no. 2 (1997).

approximately two-thirds of veterans in Ohio “indicated agreement or strong agreement with an internal commitment to their religious beliefs.”²² Rosa Brooks reports that members of the military are significantly more religious than civilians.²³ In addition, religion has been documented as an important factor in the lives of public employees.²⁴

The fourth hypothesis posits that political ideology has an effect on willingness to perform compulsory military service. Perry hypothesized that liberal individuals would have higher levels of public service motivation.²⁵ This proposition is based on the meaning commonly attributed to the terms liberal and conservative. Liberals are considered pro-active individuals that advocate a broad role for government and may see in public service an opportunity to change society. On the other hand, conservatives generally advocate a small role for government, and are viewed as more attached to the status-quo and resistant to social change. This notion suggests that liberals are more willing than conservatives to perform compulsory public service. However, this may not hold true in the case of compulsory military service. While conservatives may subscribe to the principle of small government, they adhere to strong national defence. For this reason, they may be more willing than liberals to perform compulsory military service (H4). This proposition agrees with results from the 2005 and 2006 Military Times polls, which finds that 45 to 50 percent of the enlisted described themselves as conservative or very conservative, 33 to 37 percent as moderate, and only 7 to 9 percent as liberal or very liberal.²⁶ Additional evidence of greater preference for military service among conservatives can be found in reports showing higher levels of recruits in rural areas and lower levels in urban areas.²⁷ Indeed, studies have documented the

²² Walter R. Schumm and Paul L. Rotz, "A Brief Measure of Intrinsic Religiosity Used with a Sample of Military Veterans," *Psychological Reports* 88 (2001), p. 351.

²³ Brooks, "Was Kerry Right?."

²⁴ Stephen M. King, "Religion, Spirituality, and the Workplace: Challenges for Public Administration," *Public Administration Review* 67, no. 1 (2007), David J. Houston and Katherine E. Cartwright, "Spirituality and Public Service," *Public Administration Review* 67, no. 1 (2007).

²⁵ Perry, "Antecedents of Public Service Motivation."

²⁶ Military Times Media Group, "Military Times Poll," retrieved on August 06, 2007 from <http://www.militarycity.com/polls>.

²⁷ National Priorities Project, "Military Recruiting 2005," retrieved on August 22, 2007, from <http://www.nationalpriorities.org>, Brooks, "Was Kerry Right?."

prevalence of the conservative ideology in rural areas relative to the more liberal urban areas.²⁸

Ginzberg et al. report a preference of females for public service occupations.²⁹ Research on public service motivation differences across gender groups has been mixed.³⁰ Again, the case of military service may be different. Military service has been a male-dominated occupation for reasons that may be grounded in traditional gender roles, as well as the physically-demanding and violent nature of the job. Although the right of females to enter the military has been increasingly recognized, this does not necessarily change female preferences for military service or at least not in the same measure.³¹ We hypothesize that males are more willing to perform compulsory military service than females (H5).

Race is included to test the perception held by some that a disproportionate number of minority groups make up the enlisted ranks of the military (H6).³² A recent study performed by the Congressional Budget Office does not find significant disproportionate burdens across ethnic or racial lines.³³ Finally, the model also tests for

²⁸ See, for example, David Knoke and Contance Henry, "Political Structure of Rural America," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 429 (1977).

²⁹ Eli Ginzberg et al., *Occupational Choice: An Approach to a General Theory* (New York: NY: Columbia University Press, 1951).

³⁰ Perry, "Antecedents of Public Service Motivation.", Leonard Bright, "Public Employees with High Levels of Public Service Motivation," *Review of public personnel administration* 25, no. 2 (2005), Leisha DeHart-Davis, Justin Marlowe, and Sanjay K. Pandey, "Gender Dimensions of Public Service Motivation," *Public Administration Review* 66, no. 6 (2007), Donald P. Moynihan and Sanjay K. Pandey, "The Role of Organizations in Fostering Public Service Motivation," *Public Administration Review* 67, no. 1 (2007).

³¹ According to the Congressional Budget Office study cited in this article, until 1967 women could only represent 2 percent of the military and had occupation and unit restrictions. Since then, many of the limitations have been lifted although some remain: Females continue to be barred from ground combat positions, certain types of units (such as special operations forces) and Navy submarines. They now represent 14 percent of active-duty enlisted personnel.

³² Charles B. Rangel, "Bring Back the Draft," in *United We Serve? The Promise of National Service*, ed. E. J. Dionne, Kayla Meltzer Drogosz, and Robert E. Litan (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

³³ Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960)." More specifically, the study finds blacks to be slightly underrepresented if the "active duty enlisted recruits in 2005" is considered, and slightly overrepresented if the "entire active-duty enlisted force in 2006" is considered. Hispanics are found to be slightly underrepresented. Finally, the study finds whites to be slightly overrepresented in combat positions and deaths.

regional variations in willingness to perform compulsory military service. Reports have provided consistent evidence of high levels of recruits in the South and low levels in the Northeast.³⁴

Empirical Model and Data

Data for the empirical model is taken from the 1984 High School and Beyond Survey (HSB) sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The 1644 observations in the sample consist of high school students. Of these, 267 observations have missing values in one or more, but not all, variables. Missing data were imputed using a technique known as multiple imputation.³⁵ Table 1 summarizes the construction and description of the different variables used in the model.

³⁴ Brooks, "Was Kerry Right?," Tim Kane, "Who Bears the Burden? Demographic Characteristics of U.S. Military Recruits before and after 9/11 (Report #05-08)," (2005), Retrieved on August 22, 2007, from <http://www.heritage.org>, National Priorities Project, "Military Recruiting 2005."

³⁵ Multiple imputation has become the dominant method for treating missing data. The specific variant of multiple imputation utilized in this study is the one contained in the ICE command written by Patrick Royston for Stata (statistical package). See Patrick Royston, "Multiple Imputation of Missing Values," *Stata Journal* 4, no. 3 (2004), Patrick Royston, "Multiple Imputation of Missing Values: Update," *Stata Journal* 5, no. 2 (2005), Patrick Royston, "Multiple Imputation of Missing Values: Update of Ice," *Stata Journal* 5, no. 4 (2005). The essence of the procedure is as follows: (1) variables with missing observations are regressed on the other variables in the model using the appropriate technique (OLS, logit, multinomial logit, etc.); (2) a vector of estimates is randomly drawn from the Bayesian posterior distribution of the vector of estimates obtained from the regression; (3) these randomly drawn estimates are used to impute missing observations and to generate a complete data set; (4) the procedure is repeated several times—in this study the procedure was repeated 20 times thus generating 20 complete data sets; (5) the compulsory service model is run on each of these 20 data sets and the results are combined into one, specifically regression coefficients are averaged to produce the ultimate estimates. For comparison purposes, the compulsory service model was also run on a data set where observations with missing values were dropped. Wald tests were performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the coefficients produced with either method. No significant difference was found. For more on multiple imputation, the reader is referred to David C. Howell, "The Treatment of Missing Data," in *Handbook of Social Science Methodology*, ed. William Outhwaite and Stephen Turner (London: Sage, 2007).

TABLE 1. Variable description for the compulsory service model

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>% of sample in category</i>
COMPSEV	Choice of compulsory service: 1=military service; 2=public service; 3=undecided; 4=avoid both.	18.5% of sample chose military service, 21.7% public service, 31.0% undecided, and 28.7% avoid both.
PARNTMIL	1=dad/mom is in the military; else=0.	2.6% of sample has parent in the military. Only one mom. All others have dads in military.
SES-med	1=medium SES; else=0. Comparison category is low SES.	45.0% of sample has medium SES.
SES-high	1=high SES; else=0. Comparison category is low SES.	24.1% of sample has high SES.
RELIG-swhat	1=somewhat religious; else=0. Comparison category is not religious.	63.5% of sample is somewhat religious.
RELIG-very	1=very religious; else=0. Comparison category is not religious.	16.0% of sample is very religious.
IDEO-con	1=ideology is conservative; else=0. Comparison category is liberal.	9.8% of sample is conservative.
IDEO-mod	1=moderate; else=0. Comparison category is liberal.	33.4% of sample is moderate.
IDEO-none	1=none; else=0. Comparison category is liberal.	9.4% of sample has no ideology.
IDEO-dk	1=don't know; else=0. Comparison category is liberal.	26.8% of sample does not know its ideology.
RACE-black	1=black; else=0. Comparison category is white.	13.7% of sample is black.
RACE-hisp	1=Hispanic; else=0. Comparison category is white.	5.7% of sample is Hispanic.
RACE-other	1=American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, and other; else=0. Comparison category is white.	3.3% of sample belongs to other races.
FEMALE	1=female; 0=male	53.1% of sample is female.
MOUNTAIN	1=if in Mountain state; 0=else Comparison category is Northeast. Classification established by Census.	3.5% of sample is in Mountain state.
PACIFIC	1=if in Pacific state; 0=else Comparison category is Northeast. Classification established by Census.	14.8% of sample is in Pacific state.
SOUTH	1=if in Southern state; 0=else Comparison category is Northeast. Classification established by Census.	33.7% of sample is in Southern state,
MIDWEST	1=if in Midwest state; 0=else Comparison category is Northeast. Classification established by Census.	26.9% of sample is in Midwestern state.

Note: N=1644.

The dependent variable, compulsory service or COMPSEV, is taken from a survey item that asks the following: Which would you choose if forced into compulsory service? Possible answers are 1. military, 2. public service, 3. undecided and 4. avoid both. Hence, the dependent variable is a nominal scaled variable with four possible outcomes.

The independent variables included in the model are the following. A variable labelled PARNTMIL which distinguishes individuals with a father or mother in the

military from those that do not is included to test the effect of parental socialization (H1). To test the effect of SES (H2), two dummy variables are included, one for individuals with medium socioeconomic status (SES-med), and another for individuals with high socioeconomic status (SES-high). The comparison or omitted category contains individuals with low SES. The effect of religiosity (H3) is tested with two dummy variables, one for somewhat religious individuals (RELIG-swhat) and another for very religious individuals (RELIG-very). The comparison category contains individuals that are not religious.

The impact of political ideology (H4) is tested with four dummy variables for individuals with conservative (IDEO-con) or moderate (IDEO-mod) ideologies, as well as for individuals with no ideology (IDEO-none) or who do not know their ideology (IDEO-dk). The comparison category contains individuals with liberal ideology. Similarly, the effect of race (H6) was tested with three dummy variables for blacks (RACE-black), Hispanics (RACE-hisp), and other races (RACE-other). The comparison category contains whites. The effect of gender (H5) is tested with a binary variable coded one for females and zero for males (FEMALE). Lastly, regional differences are tested with four dummy variables, namely MOUNTAIN, PACIFIC, SOUTH, and MIDWEST. The omitted category contains individuals from the Northeast.

Findings

Given the nominal nature of the dependent variable and the multiplicity of outcomes, multinomial logit regression is employed. This regression technique allows the researcher to explain, at the same time and using the entire data set, all possible choices between any two of the outcomes contained in a nominal scaled dependent variable with three or more outcomes, like COMPSERV.

It is similar to performing multiple simultaneous binary logits, if it were possible. The limitation of binary logit is that only the choice between two outcomes can be examined at one time. Hence, if two or more choices between three or more outcomes were analyzed with binary logit, multiple sequential regressions would have to be

performed in which the observations for all except the two outcomes of interest would have to be dropped each time. The sample size would be different for each regression, and smaller in each case relative to multinomial logit. Thus, multinomial logit uses the information contained in the data set much more efficiently and is a preferable technique in the case of nominal scaled variables with three or more outcomes.

As noted above, the main focus of this research is on ascertaining the characteristics of individuals that are more willing to perform compulsory military service. Therefore, the main choice of interest is the one that entails selecting outcome 1 over 4 in COMPERV, i.e. the choice of military over avoiding both, which is represented with the symbol (M|A) in Table 2. This is the decision between performing compulsory military service or not.

However, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the decision made by individuals in favour of compulsory service in the military, the analysis also presents results for the decision of selecting outcome 1 over 2 in COMPSEV, i.e. military over public service, which is represented with the symbol (M|P) in Table 2, and the decision of selecting outcome 1 over 3, i.e. military over undecided, which is represented with the symbol (M|U) in Table 2. In this way, the decision to perform compulsory military service is analyzed relative to all other possible alternatives contained in the variable COMPSEV.

Results are presented in Table 2. The model is highly significant ($LR\chi^2=262.5$, $d.f.=51$, $p<.01$) and accurately predicts the choice made by 37.7 percent of the observations (Count R^2). Table 2 presents the results for the three alternatives faced by individuals choosing military service. The second column presents the effect of the independent variables on the decision of choosing military service over avoiding both (M|A). The third column presents the effect of the independent variables on the decision of choosing military service over public service (M|P). The fourth column presents the effects on the decision of choosing military service over remaining undecided (M|U).

TABLE 2. Regression results for the compulsory service model

Variables	M A Decision			M P Decision			M U Decision		
	β	z	Sig	β	z	Sig	β	z	Sig
PARNTMIL	1.83	3.09	***	1.01	1.98	**	0.65	1.59	*
SES-med	-0.86	-4.51	***	-0.57	-2.79	***	-0.51	-2.82	***
SES-high	-1.34	-5.69	***	-1.19	-4.79	***	-0.70	-2.95	***
RELIG-swhat	0.08	0.41		-0.09	-0.40		-0.12	-0.59	
RELIG-very	0.34	1.26		0.03	0.10		0.07	0.24	
IDEO-con	0.88	2.88	***	0.70	2.35	**	0.51	1.73	**
IDEO-mod	0.03	0.14		0.43	1.88	**	-0.21	-0.96	
IDEO-none	-0.33	-1.03		0.11	0.32		-0.61	-1.93	**
IDEO-dk	-0.39	-1.55	*	0.10	0.39		-0.81	-3.35	***
RACE-black	0.11	0.45		0.65	2.36	***	0.06	0.25	
RACE-hisp	0.05	0.15		-0.19	-0.53		0.04	0.10	
RACE-other	0.73	1.53	*	0.60	1.26		0.16	0.41	
FEMALE	-1.24	-7.14	***	-1.74	-9.57	***	-0.82	-4.96	***
MOUNTAIN	0.98	2.21	**	0.43	0.98		0.47	1.12	
PACIFIC	0.61	2.20	**	0.15	0.54		0.10	0.37	
SOUTH	0.60	2.67	***	0.43	1.76	**	0.07	0.30	
MIDWEST	0.25	1.06		-0.07	-0.29		0.09	0.37	
CONSTANT	0.23	0.74		0.73	2.12	***	0.40	1.25	
Log likelihood	-2113.5								
Model sig.	LRChi ² =262.5, d.f.=51, p<.01								
Count R ²	37.7%								

Note: N=1644. *p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<.01 (one-tailed tests).

First, the results for the M|A decision are discussed. As shown in Table 2, all the variables in the model have the expected signs, and all except for religiosity significantly influence the decision of choosing military service over avoiding both. In those variables that have three or more categories, the difference between at least two categories significantly influences the M|A decision. A cursory look at the results reveals, all else equal, the following: (1) having a parent in the military increases the

likelihood of choosing military over avoiding both; (2) individuals with lower SES are more likely to choose military service over avoiding both; (3) conservatives are more likely than liberals, and what is an unexpected result, individuals with no ideology or who express not knowing their ideology are even less likely than liberals to make this choice; (4) females are less likely than males; and (5) individuals in the Mountain, Pacific, and Southern regions are more likely than in the Northeast. With regards to race, after controlling for socioeconomic status and other variables, neither blacks nor Hispanics have a significantly greater likelihood than whites of choosing military over avoiding both. However, other races do have a significantly greater likelihood than whites of making this choice.

Next, the results for the M|P (military over public service) decision are discussed. Interestingly, there is a stark similarity in the explanatory factors of this choice and the previous choice: A parent in the military, lower SES, being male, and being from the Mountain, Pacific and South regions all enhance the probability than an individual will choose compulsory military service over compulsory public service. Also, religiosity is not a factor in this decision.

However, there are some interesting differences which are worth noting. In the previous decision, the individuals that are most likely to avoid compulsory service were those that either do not have an ideology or do not know their ideology. In contrast, it is clearly liberal individuals that are most likely to choose public service over military service. This finding suggests that the typical conservative-liberal dichotomy is better at explaining the choice between military and public service than between military service and avoidance.

Another importance difference relates to race. Whereas blacks and whites were equally likely to choose military over avoidance, blacks clearly have a greater likelihood than whites of choosing military over public service. In other words, all else equal, blacks tend to enter the military whereas whites tend toward public service. This finding is consistent with the historical increase in the relative share that blacks represent in the military.

Finally, the results for the M|U (military over undecided) decision are discussed. Here too there is similarity in the explanatory factors of this choice and the M|A choice:

A parent in the military, lower SES, and being male enhance the probability of choosing compulsory military service over being undecided. Also, religiosity is not a factor.

However, there are some differences as well. Neither race nor region is a factor in the M|U decision. Ideology also presents an interesting difference. Although conservatives are similarly more likely than liberals to choose military over undecided, those that are most undecided are moderates as well as those that either ignore or don't have an ideology. What this finding suggests is that individuals with a strong ideology, whether conservative or liberal, are least likely to be undecided. In other words, strong ideologies provide strong preferences.

Conclusion

This article has presented an investigation into the determinants of the willingness to perform compulsory military service in high school students. Perhaps the main insight derived from this study is that the determinants of willingness to perform compulsory military service agree substantially with known characteristics of military recruits. In other words, high school students favour compulsory service in the military if they already have a predisposition to enter the military voluntarily. The research shows that the person who may be more willing to perform compulsory military service has the following characteristics: (1) parent in the military; (2) low SES; (3) conservative; (4) male; and (5) from the Mountain, Pacific, and Southern regions. These characteristics agree substantially with less sophisticated studies performed on actual recruits.³⁶ However, several comments are in order.

All of the variables in the model, except for regional differences, have an intuitive explanation discussed in the theoretical framework. Regional differences in willingness to perform compulsory military service are an empirical regularity for which the literature does not provide an adequate explanation. This void provides a rich avenue for future research. Part, but not all, of these regional differences can be accounted by

³⁶ Congressional Budget Office, "The All-Volunteer Military: Issues and Performance (Pub No. 2960).", National Priorities Project, "Military Recruiting 2006.", National Priorities Project, "Military Recruiting 2005.", Military Times Media Group, "Military Times Poll."

regional variations in religiosity. For instance, Southern states are also known as the “Bible belt” for their relatively strong religious fervour, and this may in part explain their relatively strong willingness to perform compulsory service. Indeed, if the variable for regional differences had not been included in the regression, the variable for religiosity would have been mildly significant.

Finally, this research has been performed on a sample of high school students drawn in 1984, which could elicit questions about the currency of the findings if preferences for compulsory military service changed over time. However, the literature does not suggest wide variations in the composition of the armed forces or in willingness to perform compulsory service over time. For instance, the recent Congressional Budget Office study indicates changes in mainly two groups, none of which threaten the findings of this study. The female proportion of the military rose from 2 percent in 1967 to 14 percent of active duty enlisted personnel in 2007. Also, the proportion of blacks in total enlisted military personnel rose after the establishment of the all-voluntary force, from 11 percent in 1969 to 22 percent in the early 1980s. This proportion remained between 21 and 23 percent until 2001, after which it declined to 19 percent in 2006. Regional variations in willingness to perform compulsory service could also change due to migratory patterns. However, given that our findings agree substantially with recent studies on the composition of the military, the research may actually be indicative of relative stability in preferences for compulsory military service over time.