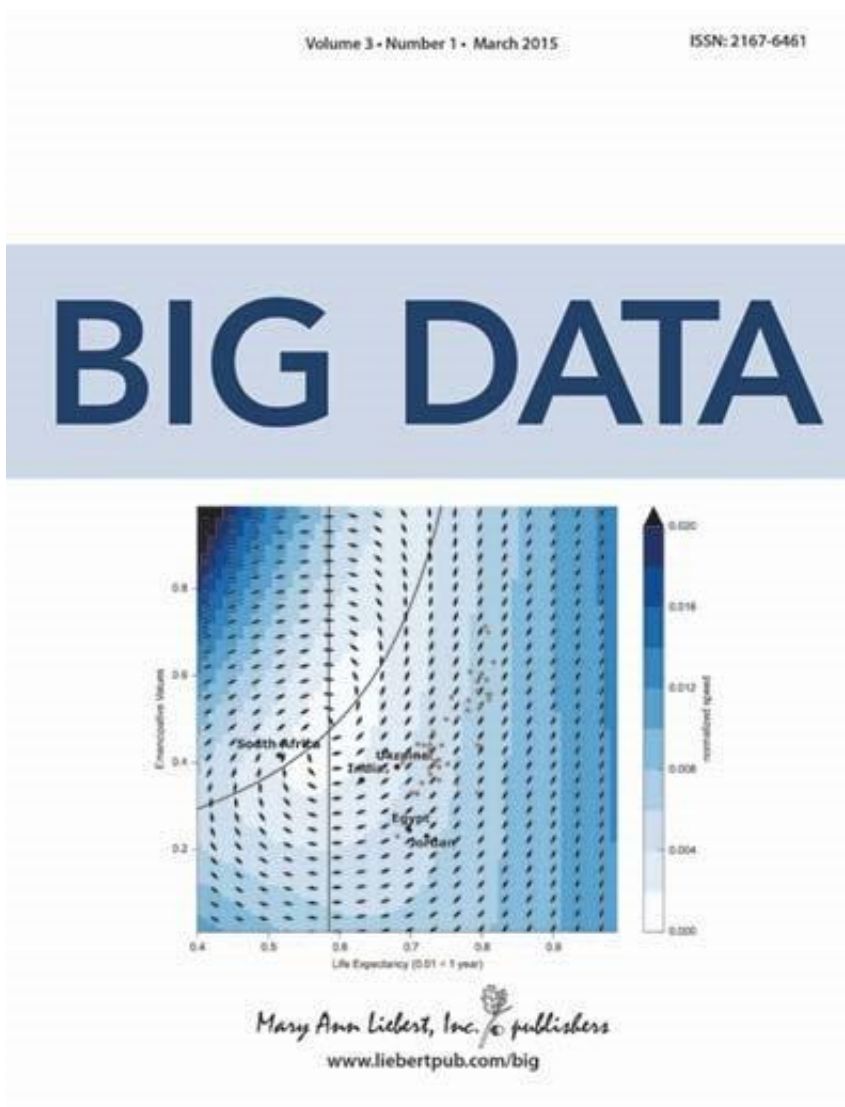


New joint military-civilian database provides insights on health care outcomes, utilization, cost

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

The U.S. Army, Department of Defense, and University of Pennsylvania scientists collaborated to generate the Person-Event Data Environment, a *Big Data* platform that captures financial, health, medical, and other data for every soldier from entry to separation from the armed forces. The significance of this powerful data resource for studying health-related issues is discussed in detail in an article in *Big Data*.

In the article "[The U.S. Army Person-Event Data Environment: A Military-Civilian Big Data Enterprise](#)," authors Loryana Vie, Lawrence Scheier, Paul Lester, Tiffany Ho, Darwin Labarthe, and Martin Seligman, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Army Analytics Group (Monterey, CA), and Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University (Evanston, IL) state that initiative was "necessitated by a growing need to learn more about the relationship between psychology and health assets and health outcomes including health care utilization and costs - issues of major importance for both military and civilian population [health](#)."

In addition to information on soldiers' military experience, the database also includes military contractors and [military](#) dependents. It represents a heterogeneous population from a broad range of geographic regions and ethnicities, with a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and family and medical histories. Funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation supported this collaborative project. Civilian researchers can access the PDE database with permission from the U.S. Army.

"This type of initiative is critical in linking decisions," says *Big Data* Editor-in-Chief Vasant Dhar, Professor at the Stern School of Business, New York University. "Is a specific category of soldiers experiencing abnormally high levels of stress? Are the associated medical costs with such a population higher? For policy makers and the armed forces, the

challenge is to create an infrastructure that links decisions to data that are collected with the right types of questions in mind."

More information: The article is currently available for free on the *Big Data* website until July 6, 2015.

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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