In this article, Stephen Scanlan and J. Craig Jenkins examine the effects of military power and food security in less-developed, more impoverished countries. Food security is extremely problematic in these countries. Military power is a dominant and integral voice in policy-making and discussions of the military-induced starvation. The two main points they focus on are the impacts of military power on food supply and child hunger. "Food security should be at the center of ongoing discussions about social welfare in LDCs (define this acronym earlier). … food security is among the most fundamental of human needs and, as such, should be viewed as a basic human right" (Scanlan and Jenkins 2001:183). Research on the social impact of military power prior to this article has been limited due to multiple reasons. The focus has generally been on economic growth when it should be extended to more specific questions of whether the military power is benefiting or harming social welfare of the countries. Also, instead of generalizing whether the military powers are helpful or detrimental, breaking the power down into more specific aspects is more beneficial. Certain aspects add to the increasing hunger of countries while some are helpful.

The authors evaluate the entitlement theory thesis which states that hunger is not necessarily due to food scarcity, but rather to the distribution of food. A trickle down from economic growth to underprivileged groups exists but is mostly for the more developed countries in poverty. Growth in the worst countries like Ethiopia and India does not trickle down (Scanlan and Jenkins 2001). Table 5 presents data of changes including healthy-weight children and availability of food. The equations show that changes are largely due to economic growth and scarcity has no significant effect on the majority of the data. Increased military spending contributes to hunger, while military participation reduces it. Military spending diverts the attention of economic difficulties from important development at the societal level.

Multiple equations are calculated in regards to the importance of militarism with hunger. Equation 4 shows that internal wars create hunger and equation 5 shows that “geno-/politicides wash out this internal war effect, indicating that the major problem is severe internal repression” (Scanlan and Jenkins 2001: 180). Countries, like Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, that show a combination of extreme ethnic discrimination and military instability are susceptible to child hunger problems. These equations support the military famine thesis that states that food distribution problems are due to great repression, internal war, and ethnic discrimination with unstable militaries.

Overall, results in the article show that militarization has both positive and negative aspects. Hunger levels are increased with increased military spending. Economic resources are relocated to the military instead of more beneficial areas. On the other hand, increased participation reduces hunger. Increased food supply does not diminish hunger because it is connected to the successful economic growth of more privileged less-developed countries. This supports arguments involving ever-increasing international inequality in poor countries leading to famine.

Good choice and a good summary