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# Army Spouses' Perception of Support Resources During Multiple Deployments

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Abstract

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Psychology

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Abstract

The U.S Army and support resource providers have become interested in the experiences of Army spouses during deployments. Previous research indicated that military spouses' perceptions of support resources were integral in the usage of support services. However, little research has examined the combined effects of Army spouses' opinions and perceptions regarding their sense of community and support resources available during multiple deployments. This quantitative study, based on the family stress theory, recorded the opinions of 174 Army Spouses using the Army Spouses' Perception Survey and the Sense of Community Index 2. Predictor variables constituted sense of community opinions and support resources such as awareness, access, communication, and utilization. The criterion variable was Army spouses' perception of support resources during multiple deployments. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple hierarchical regressions. Analysis revealed a significant relationship between individual variables on the military and civilian sense of community index and the domain support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments on a spouses' perception of available support resources. The influence of Army spouses' opinions significantly impacted how available resources were perceived and used during multiple deployments. These findings will provide empirical evidence to military and civilian leaders on Army spouses' experiences of support resources. Such information may provoke changes that yield more consistent usage of support resources during multiple deployments, thereby promoting positive social change.

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my husband and my son, Anthony and Phillip Brannon. Your support and sacrifice of family time can never be repaid.

To my sisters, who took time out of their busy schedule to help me with my mommy duties, I can never repay you.

To my parents, Clarence and Alene Nalls, without your guidance, help and encouragement over the years this would not have been possible.

And to my grandparents and great grandparents whose lives taught me the value of an education. Many things can be taken from you in this life, but knowledge is not one them.

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First I give glory and honor to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Without You this would not have been possible! I am who You say I am. I will do what You have predestined for me to do. I trust that with You all things are possible.

I am overwhelmingly thankful to my chair and advisor Dr. Arcella Trimble. Her honesty, guidance, and support were immeasurable. Your clear, precise guidance during this process has made me a better writer and researcher. I would also like to thank my other committee members for their patience and the expertise they gave me along the way.

Finally to all of the men and women who serve this country, their spouses and other family members who serve along with them, thank you. Your commitment to our country and your sacrifice of family are attributes few will ever truly understand.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

## Introduction

The United States Armed Forces and their families have been the focal point of many debates, speeches, news stories, and research over the last ten years (Evers, Clay, & Jumper, 2004). Barnicle and Haase (2008) state that The United States Global War on Terrorism has significantly increased the frequency of military induced separations experienced by Army Military Personnel (herein referred to collectively as Soldiers) and their families. According to Barnicle and Haase, the Army is the major ground protection force of the United States Armed Forces. The Army undertakes the missions to which it is assigned by training and deploying many of its approximately 1 million soldiers (Barnicle & Haase, 2008). Dating back to September 11, 2001, the United States Department of Defense has deployed approximately 1.7 million service members to Afghanistan or Iraq. Nearly 600,000 of these 1.7 million service members have deployed more than once. Thus, the Army deploys the highest number of military personnel out of all the US branches of service (Barnicle & Haase, 2008).

Deployments and trainings have increased in duration and frequency in the Army in order to meet peace keeping needs around the world (Barnicle & Haase, 2008; Segal & Harris, 1993). Army deployments and trainings often have durations ranging from 3 to 18 months. Many Soldiers return from deployments and trainings only to leave for another deployment or training within months or sometimes weeks of their return home (Barnicle & Haase, 2008). Back to back deployments and trainings (herein referred to collectively as multiple deployments) present challenges to Soldiers and their Army spouses (herein referred to collectively as spouses) often causing strain and stress that

could potentially impact mission and family readiness necessary for a successful deployment cycle (Blount, Curry, & Lubin, 1992; Evers et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007).

Spouses often find themselves overwhelmed with added responsibilities of daily routines, rearing of children, household management, marriage relationship, loneliness, employment problems, and other stressors associated with the military lifestyle (Orthner & Rose, 2005). Multiple deployments exacerbate the challenges, compounding the stress and emotions experienced by spouses (Davis, Ward, & Storm, 2009; Jumper et al., 2005). The inconsistency in the stability of the family unit caused by the fluctuating presence and absence of the Soldier creates unclear boundaries in family roles, causing challenges to adjusting and building successful lives together before, during, and after multiple deployments (Boss, 2006; Davis et al., 2009; Orthner, 2005).

Spouses who live near a military installation or are connected to the Army lifestyle on a daily basis appear to be more accustomed to the demands of deployments and trainings (Jumper et al., 2005; Pennington & Lipari, 2007). This familiarity helps spouses who live near a military installation or are connected to the Army lifestyle to develop more resiliencies in dealing with the challenges associated with adjusting and building successful lives before, during, and after multiple deployments. Spouses who do not live near a military installation or are not connected to the Army lifestyle on a daily basis appear to be less accustomed to the demands of deployments and trainings. Many of these spouses' Soldiers are in the Army part time as members of the Army Reserve or National Guard. A part-time Army lifestyle is defined as weekend drills, annual trainings, and call to emergency peacekeeping missions. The most common part-time Army

lifestyles are strategic military campaigns on a temporary fulltime basis around the world until no longer needed. Strategic military campaigns are also known as deployments (Burrell, Durand, & Furtado, 2003; Department of Army, 2004; Jumper et al., 2005; Pennington & Lipari, 2007).

Whether spouses live close to a military installation or are geographically displaced from a military installation, the potential problems associated with the absenteeism of their Soldiers creates unique struggles that are often isolated to military families. Struggles encountered by military families are often the direct result of challenges associated with sustaining a combat ready force. These challenges include the ability for Soldiers and their spouses to meet with success the stress and strain of multiple deployments through utilization of military support, family trainings, and information and referrals offered to assist families of deploying Soldiers (Department of Army, 2004; Jumper et al., 2005).

A key link for increasing a spouses' preparedness and sense of wellbeing for the deployment cycle is the creation of environments that foster teamwork, self-reliance, self-care, and family/team care. These environments are created by integrating military and civilian communities to aid the Spouse in adapting to the challenges presented during this stressful time. Researchers have found that family members who perceive that their military and civilian support systems are genuinely concerned and actively committed to provide assistance if needed tend to handle adjustments before, during, and after the deployment with a more positive disposition (Department of Army, 2004; Martin, Ware, & Nelson 2003; Orthner, 2005).

The impact of civilian community outreach and support for spouses while their Soldiers are away fosters healthier adjustments for military families. Military families living away from military installations and coping with deployments while living in nonmilitary communities receive the greatest benefits from civilian community support (Bowen, Mancini, Martin, Ware, & Nelson 2003; Department of Army, 2004; Orthner, 2005; Pittman, Kerpelman & McFayden, 2004). Researchers have also found that in these nonmilitary communities, civilian support is often unaware of the complexity of challenges that affect the military family during deployments and trainings (Orthner, 2005). This lack of understanding makes it difficult for civilian support personnel to empathize with military families and understand the military culture and experiences (Bowen et al., 2003; Department of Army, 2004; Orthner, 2005; Pittman et al., 2004).

Experts believe that support and resources made available to military personnel, their spouses, and other family members would provide more tools for positive adjustments and building stronger Army families while they are living in stressful and challenging situations, such as multiple deployments ranging at least three months in duration (Orthner, 2005). Recent studies allude to a correlation between support services during deployments and family members' perceptions of these services. Researchers suggest that more empirical studies are needed to support this idea and validate this concept through statistical data (Caska & Renshaw, 2011; Lap et al. 2010). Statistical data would be needed to substantiate the idea of inconsistencies in the delivery and utilization of support resources by military personnel and their families. Research concerning the perception of military spouses' and other family member's perceptions of support and resources during multiple deployments has yet to be conducted.

## Background of the Study

Orthner and Rose (2005) found that spouses' perceptions of military supportive environments that encourage family interconnectedness and provide formal support through internal and external (civilian) community networks, along with how they construe the deployment cycle process, are key indicators for the spouses' ability to adapt to stressors. Spouses' perceptions of military supportive environments were also key indicators of the frequency of use of support resources to aid them in gaining coping strategies during the deployment cycle. Burrell et al. (2003) noted that it is not the number of times spouses are separated from their Soldiers, but the spouses' perceptions of their experiences during the deployment cycle that influenced their state of wellbeing.

Military support systems have a formal design that is sequentially arranged to provide support before, during, and after the deployment cycle with the purpose of (a) identifying a military family's readiness for deployment, (b) promoting resilience within military families, and (c) fostering opportunities for positive adjustment results (Martin et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007). Ideally, socially supportive systems should occur when families are surrounded by practical encouraging and emotionally sound individuals, but there are disparities and barriers in the support systems that inhibit the building of consistently cultivated socially supportive environments. The disparities in the support systems are in the delivery and utilization of support, services, information, and referrals in the different components of the Army, Active Duty, Reserves, and National Guard (Martin et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007). Barriers in the support systems are lack of child care, lack of knowledge concerning available support services,

and the spouses' inability to access support services (Martin et al., 2004; Orthner, 2005; Pennington & Lipari, 2007).

The impact of war and deployments on the effectiveness of support resources for service members and their families has implications that center around perception. According to the Department of the Army (2004), short and long term deployments cultivate many emotions for Soldiers, their spouses, and other loved ones that change or increase with each stage of the deployment. Service members and their families perceived that the helpfulness of support resources available during each stage of deployment is vital to the relevancy of these services as effective sources for coping strategies (Caska & Renshaw, 2011; Evers et al 2004; Lap et al. 2010; Whitestone, 2011).

Though recent studies have found the linkage between effective support services during deployments and family members' perceptions of these services, more generalized findings need to be validated using statistical data (Caska & Renshaw, 2011; Lapp et al. 2010). Such substantiated facts and statistics could creditably assess the helpfulness of established support resources available to aid military personnel and their families as they face the challenges of life before, during, and after deployments from their points of view (Whitestone, 2011).

Experts believe that support resources made available to spouses and families provide tools for positive adjustments and build stronger Army families who are living in stressful and challenging situations, such as multiple deployments ranging at least three months in duration (Orthner, 2005). Actual research of spouses' perception of support resources during multiple deployments has not yet occurred. Researching and evaluating the spouses' perceptions of their experiences during multiple deployment cycles is an

important factor in determining military spouses and families' state of wellbeing and their ability to adapt and adjust to stressors. Lack of evaluations of support resources may lead to the initiation, implementation, or continued use of ineffective support resources for spouses and families during multiple deployment cycles (Burnam et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2009).

## Problem Statement

The combined effects (influence and potency) of Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community and support resources applicable to assist in resolving issues that impact military spouses' perception of available support resources during multiple deployments has yet to be identified.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to explore spousal perceptions of support resources as predicted by variables constituting domains of the Army spouses' sense of community opinions and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments. This study examined the effects (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource service skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses'

perception of available support resources(Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel, Snowden & Nelson, 1993).

## Research Question and Hypothesis

The research question and the hypotheses below were formulated based on the purpose of this study and findings from the literature review.

RQ: What is the combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources?

$H_0$: There is no combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the SCI-2 (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by Soldier demographics and support attribute questions(including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services,

communication of military resource  services, military resource services skills,
utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource
services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian
resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian
resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources
(Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008;  Frankel et
al., 1993).

$H_1$: There is a combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses'
opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the SCI-2   (including
variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community
within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist
during multiple deployments as measured by Soldier demographics and
support attribute questions (including variables concerning awareness of
military resource services, access to military resource services,
communication of military resource services, military resource services skills,
utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource
services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian
resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian
resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources
(Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008;  Frankel et
al., 1993).

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework guiding this research was the family stress theory. The family stress theory was developed by Hill (1949) and posits that the family relationship consists of stressors, challenges, and crises. According to Malia (2006), most families have consistent and predictable cycles in which they operate and function. Sudden events, sequential events, or even anticipation of events have the propensity to disturb the normal life-cycle of a family, causing disturbance in their balance or equilibrium. To restore family equilibrium, specialized coping strategies or skills may be required to make necessary adjustments (Hill, 1949; Klein & White, 1996; Malia, 2006).

Hill (1949) presented the ABC-X model of the family stress theory during World War II. Hill studied the separation and reunion deployment experiences of 135 families. Hill's research model (ABC-X) was based on four components, the stressor event(A), resources used to deal with the event (B), the family's perception of the event (C), and the crisis resulting from family's capabilities lacking the ability to meet demands of the stressor (X).

Hill's family stress theory is based on several assumptions: (a) stress is normal; (b) stress disrupts family equilibrium; (c) stressors and resources are subjective based upon an individual's or families' perception; (d) an individual's or families' ability to adapt or be resilient is influenced by their perception of stressors, the situation, services, and resources available to help deal with the circumstance; and (e) the importance of families understanding the impact of stressors and challenges they may encounter within their communities and cultures with regard to how they respond to these stressors or

challenges. Hill's (1949) research concluded that the organization of each family is unique, yielding different responses to stressors and crises (Hill, 1949).

Hill's (1949) ABC-X model was modified by McCubbin and Patterson (1983) to account for the number of stressors that often compound during situations. This modification also identified how people adapt to different components of stress. McCubbin and Patterson's (1983) modification model is known as the Double ABC-X model. The Double ABC-X model has two major concepts: (a) the idea that people can adapt positively or negatively to stressors, and (b) the idea that interaction between stressors, the resources used to deal with these stressors, and individual's perceptions of these stressors are the catalysts that bring about adaptation.

This research used the family stress theory to explore the spouses' experiences in regards to (a) back to back (multiple) deployments, (b) the sense of community resources available within military and civilian communities and other applicable support resources, and (c) perceptions of support available during multiple deployments or trainings( back to back that range in duration from 3 to 18 months) (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008;  Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

**Nature of the Study**

This is a quantitative descriptive research study. Descriptive statistics were utilized to describe participants of various demographics, support resources, and to register a sense of community opinions. Correlated analysis was conducted to assess the positive or negative relationship between various variables. This study used HMR to analyze the linkage between available support resources and Army spousal perceptions of these

support resources as predicted by military and civilian community opinions and by military and civilian support resources during multiple deployments (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Gravette and Wallnau, 2007).

**Definition of Terms**

*Active duty* is defined as full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. This includes members of the reserve components serving on active duty or full-time training duty, but does not include full-time National Guard duty (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Army quality of life* is defined as services, programs, policies, regulations and laws that increase or enhance the standard of everyday living by Soldiers, civilians, veterans and their family members (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Civilian resources* are defined as government and organizational policies, regulations, laws, programs, services, people, benefits, entitlements, information, events, and referrals within a civilian community that are provided to support to individuals, couples, and the family unit in regard to dealing with the challenges of military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009; Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

*Civilian support* is defined as the act of civilian communities and personnel who advocate for, provide, aid, assist, and establish resources to empower, strengthen, sustain, and maintain individuals, couples, and the family unit in regard to military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009; Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

*Deployment* is defined as the movement of military forces overseas prior to battle, war, or a peacekeeping mission. This movement of military force only involves military

personnel. Family members are never deployed with military personnel (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Deployment cycle* is defined as the progression between the phases of predeployment, deployment, reunion, and reintegration as well as reflecting multiple deployments when this process is repeated with redeployment (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Deployment process* is defined as the progression between the phases of predeployment, deployment, reunion, and reintegration as well as reflecting multiple deployments as this process is repeated with redeployment (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Duty station* is defined as the geographical location where service members complete or carry out their military obligations (Drummet, Coleman & Cable, 2003).

*Military reserve force* is defined as a military organization composed of citizens of a country who combine a military role or career with a civilian career. They are not normally kept under arms and their main role is to be available to fight when a nation mobilizes for total war or to defend against invasion. Reserve forces are generally not considered part of a permanent standing body of armed forces. The existence of reserve forces allows a nation to reduce its peacetime military expenditures while maintaining a force prepared for war. It is analogous to the historical model of military recruitment before the era of standing armies (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Military resources* are defined as government and department of defense policies, regulations, laws, programs, services, organizations, people, benefits, entitlements, information, events, and referrals provided to support individuals, couples, and the family

unit in regard to dealing with the challenges of military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al, 2009; Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

*Military support* is defined as the act of  military personnel and military assets in advocating for, providing, aid to, assisting, and establishing resources to empower, strengthen, sustain, and maintain individuals, couples, and the family unit in regard to military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009;  Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

*Multiple deployments* are defined as the movement of military forces overseas prior to battle, war, or a peacekeeping mission to another war or peacekeeping mission within the span of 3 to 5 years (Department of the Army, 2004).

*National Guard* is defined as subordinate units stationed in each of the 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia operating under their respective governors. The Army National Guard may be called up for active duty by the state governors or territorial commanding generals to help respond to domestic emergencies and disasters, such as those caused by hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. The National Guard may be called up for federal active duty in times of congressionally sanctioned war or national emergency (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Predeployment* is defined as the preparation prior to a military movement overseas for battle, war, or peacekeeping missions (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Redeployment* is defined as multiple deployments that occur consecutively (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Reintegration* is defined as the last phase of deployment, which involves the process following the recent family separation of renegotiation and adjustment between the service member's changes and family unit changes (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Resources* are defined as policies, regulations, laws, programs, services, organizations, people, benefits, entitlements, information, events, and referrals provided to support individuals, couples, and the family unit in regard to dealing with the challenges of military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009; Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

*Return* is defined as the military forces or units rotating from a tour of war or a peacekeeping mission overseas back home to the United States (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Reunion* is defined as military service members reunited with family members after being separated because of military duty (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Sense of community* is defined as a feeling of belongingness to an identified community or communities (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008).

*Sense of Community Index II* is defined as the quantitative measure of the sense of community in regard to perception of four elements: membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection (Chavis et al., 2008).

*Soldier* is defined as a military personnel member of the United States Army. This includes members of the Regular Army (also known as Active Duty), Reserve, and National Guard Components (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Spouse* is defined as the wife or husband of a military personnel member of the United States Army. This includes members of the Regular Army (also known as Active Duty), Reserve, and National Guard Components (Department of the Army, 2004).

*Support* is defined as the act of advocating for, providing, aiding, assisting, and establishing resources to empower, strengthen, sustain and maintain individuals, couples, and the family unit in regards to military life (Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009; Mancini, Bowen, & Martin, 2005).

## Assumptions

A number of assumptions pertained to this research study. The first assumption was that Army spouses utilized support resources during a soldier's multiple deployments. The second assumption was that Soldier's spouses have experienced multiple deployments and these deployments have been back to back. The third assumption was that Army service members' Spouses, having experienced multiple deployments, have therefore experienced all phases of the deployment cycle (including predeployment, deployment, return/ reunion, reintegration, and redeployment). Fourth, it was assumed that the Spouse of a Soldier completed this survey. Finally, it was assumed that all survey participants answered the survey truthfully.

## Scope and Delimitations

Demographic data was not collected directly from the Soldier, but this information was ascertained from the Soldier's spouse, whose knowledge may have been limited. An assessment conducted by the Army Family Team Building (AFTB) (2002), stated that Soldiers were frequently unreliable in passing on information to their spouses concerning their military demographic information such as rank, pay grade, benefits, and so forth.

This assessment found that many Soldiers do not have time or forget to pass this information to their Spouses. This assessment also noted that some Soldiers deliberately keep this information from their Spouses (AFTB, 2002). The final delimitation in this study was that it does not include Army Spouses who have not experienced multiple deployments or trainings in order to keep the findings relevant concerning the specific needs of Army Spouses who have experienced multiple deployments or trainings.

## Limitations

A limitation of this research study was that the survey questions only explored the more basic and less complicated possible perceptions of Army spouses' available support services during multiple deployments. Nonetheless, the substantiated facts and statistics of this study should prove helpful in understanding the relationship between spousal perception and established support resources. However, the findings of this descriptive research established the need for further research (Huebner et al., 2007; Jumper et al., 2005).

Complications of survey data collection was another limitation of this research study due to the low response rate of online surveys. According to a recent study conducted at Kansas State University, survey participants are less likely to respond to online surveys (Miller, 2010). Another limitation of this survey was the answering of the sense of community survey. The sense of community survey is comprised of two components. One component covers the military community. The second component covers the civilian community.  The possible limitation that may have occurred was due to the fact that the questions were the same for both communities. Answering the questions twice for two different communities could have impacted the participant's answers.

The last possible limitation was participants not answering survey questions truthfully. There is an unwritten but understood taboo in the military community concerning the possible negative effects on the careers of military personnel if they or their family seek support services or resources, especially in the mental health area. Seeking help for personal matters in the military is often seen as a sign of weakness or command embarrassment (Drummet et al., 2003).

## Significance of the Study

The Army acknowledges its commitment to building and maintaining strong Army families. The Army has endeavored to prepare families for challenges associated with sustaining a ready combat force through the utilization of resources and support systems. The purpose of these resources and support systems is to provide opportunities for family resiliency and cohesion before, during, and after deployments. A gap in the literature addressed by this study is the lack of adequate inclusion of Army spouses' perceptions of the ability of these support resources to provide such opportunities in regards to multiple deployments (Department of the Army, 2004).

The Army's focus has been on providing tools and opportunities for its families to meet Army life challenges, especially those associated with trainings and deployments. The Army currently offers support, information, and training through resources in both military and civilian communities. Literature has also noted a need for research regarding the true impact of military and civilian community support resources that are made available to the families of deployed military members (Evers et al., 2004; Housman, 2007; Huebner et al., 2009; Jumper et al., 2005).

The social change initiative of this research study is that it provides an opportunity to bring awareness to the military and civilian communities concerning the perceptions of Army spouses regarding the support resources rendered during multiple deployments. The awareness brought about from this research could possibly provide a positive forum of dialogue and communication between Army spouses' whose Soldiers have been deployed back to back, Army leaders, and military and civilian communities regarding the effectiveness of services and resources rendered to support families during these multiple deployment phases (Albano, 2002).

Cultivating these relationships may lead to positive improvement of support resources for spouses who's Soldiers are sent on multiple deployments. The social change goal of this study is to impact the quality of life for spouses during multiple deployments, which indirectly impacts the quality of life and human potential of the Soldier before, during, and after deployments. When military leaders, civilian leaders, and military and civilian support systems are made aware of Army spouses' viewpoints concerning the helpfulness or lack of helpfulness of support resources made available during multiple deployments, other factors that impact a military family's ability to adapt successfully may be identified, resulting in an overall enhancement of military and nonmilitary services that may aid in building and keeping Army families strong and resilient (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers, 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007).

**Summary**

The roles of the Army spouses during multiple deployments often produce stress and challenges followed by adaptation. Military and civilian communities and their support resources are designed to have significant positive impact on the lives of Army spouses

during times of military induced separation from their Soldiers. Spousal perceptions concerning the effectiveness of military and civilian community support resources available to assist them in resolving psychological and sociocultural issues such as daily routines, rearing of children, household management, marriage relationships, spirituality, and other stressors associated with multiple deployments is lacking in literature (Evers et al., 2004; Housman, 2007; Huebner et al., 2009; Jumper et al., 2005).

These psychological and sociocultural issues of the significant stress that accompanies adaptation to multiple deployments frequently leave military spouses feeling frustrated with the military lifestyle and culture (Ruger, Wilson, & Waddoups, 2002). Military and civilian support resources are established to aid and assist spouses during these stressful and challenging times. These support resources may be utilized to aid in developing resiliency or they may be underused, unused, or fail to offer the tools needed to help families build coping skills that will yield resiliency during multiple deployments (Davis et al., 2009). How a Spouse adapts to the challenges and stressors of military life is directly correlated to their perception of military and civilian support communities and resources (Orthner, 2005). Spousal perceptions are also important in identifying the implications of the use of support resources in learning and using coping skills and strategies (Orthner, 2005).

An overview of the background of the study, problem statement, and the purpose of the proposed study is presented in Chapter 1. The proposed research question and statistical hypothesis along with the research study domains, variables, and terms were also defined in this chapter. Chapter 2 includes the literature review findings relevant to the proposed research study domains and variables in relation to the Army spouses'

perceptions of support resources during a Soldier's multiple deployments and trainings. The proposed social change analysis and summary of the study methods relevant to the literature reviewed concludes Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 includes the purpose of the study and rationale for the proposed research design and approach. Criteria for participation in the study, sampling strategies, and protection of the participant's rights are outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

**Introduction**

Soldiers are active duty, Reserve, and National Guard Army personnel whose mission is to protect and defend the United States. Dating back to September 11, 2001, the United States Department of Defense has deployed approximately 1.7 million service members or more to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other overseas peace keeping missions. More than 600,000 of these 1.7 million service members have deployed more than once (Clerisme, Barnicle, & Haase, 2008). Peacekeeping duties and the war on terrorism have created new nontraditional roles for soldiers and other military personnel. In preparing for these new nontraditional roles of peacekeeping, Army trainings can range from 2 weeks to 6 months, reoccurring multiple times within the year. The Army's deployment cycle has the potential to range 3 months or longer with multiple deployments possibly occurring within a 3-year cycle of time (Albano, 1994).

In the past 10 years, military missions have been characterized as exhibiting more detrimental challenges and stressors on service members and their families than in the past (Clerisme et al., 2008). These challenges and stressors are often activated at the beginning of the deployment cycle if not a few months before (Castaneda et al., 2008). The demographics among Soldiers range from being on active duty status located on a military installation, rooted in the military lifestyle, to being on reserve status as a civilian, grounded in the civilian community with limited knowledge or experience with the military lifestyle (Jumper et al., 2005). These various dimensions of demographics among Soldiers present challenges to the Department of Defense (DoD) in accurately accounting for Soldier's families during training and deployment cycles (Castaneda et al.,

2008). The inability of DoD to provide more effective deployment coping mechanisms for Soldiers' families indirectly affects the support services and resources that are made available to spouses, children, other dependents during trainings and deployment cycles (Castaneda et al., 2008; Jumper et al., 2005).

Military service members and their families are constantly attempting to acclimate to the required demand of more frequent deployments ranging 3 months or longer. Mobilization of a unit or individual service members often encourages the spouse and children to use formal and informal support systems to help build resilience and resolve issues created by the added responsibility associated with deployments (Bowen et al., 2003; Drummet et al., 2003; Pryce, Oglivey-Lee, & Pryce, 2000).

Limited research was available documenting the quality of life, sense of community, and details of family matters involving service members, their spouses, and other family members during short and long term multiple trainings or deployments that are often back to back (Housman, 2007). To date, little research has been conducted concerning how Army spouses feel in regard to the military support, civilian support, and other resources available for use before, during, and after multiple back to back trainings and deployments. How an Army Spouse feels in regard to support resources before, during, and after multiple deployments directly impacts the Army's ability to maintain a continued state of mission readiness. It is also important for the Army's awareness of the quality of a Soldier's life in and outside of the Army. This chapter will include a review of literature that reflects (a) the challenges and stressors that affect the Army Spouse, (b) the extent and types of military support services and resources and civilian support services and resources, (c) a sense of military community, (d) a sense of civilian

community, and (e) the deployment cycle process for Army spouses and other family members. The need for further research from the theoretical framework of the family stress theory that pertains to Army spouses' perceptions of available military and civilian services and resources is shown in the literature review.

Chapter 2 reviews literature relevant to variables relating to Army spouses' perceptions of available services and resources during trainings and deployments. This chapter also includes a review of recent literature pertaining to the experiences of spouses during trainings and deployments. A review of the Army training and deployment cycle process for Army spouses, the family stress theory, and existing research concerning military and civilian communities' impact on spouses of deployed Soldiers is included in this chapter's review of literature.

## Literature Search Strategy

A search of literature was conducted using of several strategies. EBSCO host was the primary source of reference articles. Multiple databases were selected for use in EBSCO such as Academic Search Premier, Military & Government Collection, Nursing & Allied Health Source, ERIC, PsycBooks, PsycArticles, PsycINFO and SocINDEX. These databases were searched using key words such as *military, deployment, military families, Army, Army deployment, Army families, family readiness, military family support, military spouses, family stress theory, military Spouse perceptions, military family resilience, military services, military resources, military civilian services support, military civilian resources, sense of community,* and *military families*. The articles retrieved from the search of key words and phrases provided more resources not found in the initial EBSCO search. Google Scholar was also used to locate and retrieve many of

the reference articles not accessible by EBSCO host. Google Scholar provided additional library systems such as the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University and the Defense Manpower Data Center. Books were also reviewed providing more in-depth knowledge of military families and the family stress theory.

## Theoretical Foundation

### Military Culture

The cost of war and military service is significant and the loss of time with family poses social costs in the military community and abroad that have yet to be accounted for (Ruger et al., 2002; Sollinger, Fisher, & Metscher, 2008). Active duty spouses often feel socially isolated in the civilian communities in which they live because they are geographically separated from extended family and friends and frequent military moves do not provide opportunities for them to establish community stability (Black, 1993). Reserve spouses generally are geographically stable with family and friends in close proximity, but they are often socially isolated from a military community where they would have more accessibility to military resources and services (Black, 1993).

Most military spouses are forced to deal with the unique stressors of relocations, frequent separations, and constant family reorganization due to deployments and reunions within the confines of a structured military environment revolving around military policies, guidelines, expectations, and rank. Military members and spouses often feel pressure to conform to military expectations due to fear of reprisal from the military. These feelings often lead to more stress and dissatisfaction with the military way of life (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003).

The military lifestyle is rooted in a culture that is defined by rigid guidelines and policies. This culture is also shaped by a unique belief system of morals, norms, and ethical values that influence the behaviors, lifestyles, and perceptions of military personnel and their family members (Black, 1993; Bowen et al., 2003; Huebner et al., 2009; Military Family Resource Center, 2000). The military culture is anchored in the philosophy and mandate of duty and service to country first for the military service member, which will always put military spouses, children and other family members second (Black, 1993; Pryce et al., 2000).

The structured environment of the military culture induces pressure within the military community to follow and live by various unwritten codes of conduct and rules of behavior that influence conformity to military ideas and concepts within the functioning of the military family (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003; Rotter & Boveja, 1999). This situation, although understood and carried out in the military community, is not always understood and accepted in the civilian community. This lack of understanding often causes conflict and challenges for service members and their families who may need distinct or specific support services or resources during trainings and deployments (Bowen et al., 2003; Martin & McClure, 2000).

The military lifestyle is based on the premises that military service members are resilient and have been trained to handle any situation physically or mentally that may come their way. When help or assistance is needed, the military has fostered the idea within the military community that it will take care of its own, providing whatever assistance is needed to the service members and their families (Black, 1993; Darwin & Reich, 2006; Martin & McClure, 2000; Pryce et al., 2000). According to Drummet et

al.(2003), over the last decade or so the DoD has been battling with overcoming the unofficial military taboo against seeking help, especially outside of the military community, viewing it as negative, a sign of weakness, and command embarrassment. This type of belief may discourage military service members, military spouses, and children from reaching out to support services and resources when they may need their help the most (Drummet et al., 2003).

**The Deployment Cycle**

Army deployments focus in three major areas 1) strategy and tactical planning, 2) information and technical training, and 3) peacekeeping and physical training (Clerisme, 2008). Deployment training generally occurs at or near the military service member's home duty station. However, the Army requires deploying Soldier's to train two to four weeks in Fort Irwin, California at the Army's National Training Center (NTC). The Army's NTC prepares Soldier's for the rigorous, harsh conditions of combat situation through simulated conditions and practical application scenarios (Clerisme, 2008).

Army deployments involve several types of separations: 1) peacekeeping or support operations throughout the world, 2) temporary change of station ranging 12 to 24 months (TCS), 3) unaccompanied tours ranging approximate 12 months, 4) extended temporary duty ranging four to six months (TDY), 5) field exercises ranging 1 day to 4 weeks, 6) short and long term training exercises ranging from one week to six weeks in military training centers such as National Training Center (NTC), Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), and the Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) (Orthner and Rose, 2005). Pincus et al. (2005) describes the deployment process as a cycle of phases that begin and end at the same point. The cycle of phases in deployment form definite and predictable patterns that

military couples and families go through with each deployment. Wiens and Boss (2006) suggest that the cycle of phases in a deployment occur in spiral patterns ending at different points each time than the beginning of the deployment due to functional changes that occur in the Soldier, Spouse, and other family members during the deployment.

These spiral patterns occur in four phases, 1) pre deployment, 2) deployment, 3) redeployment (return and reunion), and 4) reintegration (post deployment). These four phases are known collectively as deployment. For the service member, Spouse or other family members to effectively manage the deployment cycle they must understand the deployment cycle phases collectively (Davis et al., 2009; Frankel et al., 1993; Jumper et al., 2005; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006).

According to Pincus et al. (2005), it is critical for service members, spouses, children and other family to understand not only the physical components of deployments, but also the emotional challenges of the entire deployment cycles. In the seminal research conducted on the emotional perspective of deployment, the actual deployment cycle was examined in two separate phases. The first phase examined in the seminal research was the first month of service member being deployed. The second phase examined remainder of the absence of the service member from their family during the deployment (Pincus et al., 2005). The following sections will discuss separation and deployment as one phase collectively identified as a deployment cycle.

**Predeployment**

This is the phase of preparation. The timeframe for predeployment is generally from the time of notification that will deployment will occur until the military service members actually deploy. Once notified of deployment military personnel, spouses, other family

members, support services, and resources begin to prepare for the departure of the deploying service member. The predeployment phase may last one hour to 12 months or more (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003; Figley, 1993; Jumper et al., 2005). In a research study conducted by Jumper et al. (2005), 15% of Soldiers and their family members considered predeployment as the most stressful stage of the deployment cycle.

This is the time that military members, spouses, and other family members begin to identify challenges or stressors they may face during the deployment (Drummet et al., 2003). During this phase military and civilian support services are introduced and often times connected with service members and spouses to provide the emotional or physical support needed during the deployment (Jumper et al., 2005).   This cycle is the beginning of long work hours, and intense skill training for service members (Hosek, Kavangh, & Miller, 2006). Although the service members have not deployed yet, the extensive absence from home and the emotional stress of knowing their service member is getting ready to deploy produces psychological stressors that begin building emotional distancing between the military service member, their Spouse, and other family members (Hosek et al., 2006; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006; Orthner & Rose, 2005).

**Deployment**

This is the phase where the military service member physically leaves their family members to carry out their obligation to protect and serve their country. The timeframe for deployment is generally from the time  the military service members actually deploy or leave until they return back home. This second phase of the cycle is known for the building of adjustment patterns within the families of deployed service members (Black Jr., 1993; Drummet et al., 2003; Figley, 1993; Jumper et al., 2005).

While service members are deployed to carry out their mission at their designated duty their spouses and families are attempting to adjust to the separation (Drummet et al., 2003). During the deployment spouses, children and other family members are left to figure out how to deal with the challenges and stressors that are occurring since the dynamics of the lives have drastically changed. The patterns formed during this phase are unique to each military Spouse or family due to the different roles and responsibilities that are needed to make the couple or family unit function successfully (Hosek et al., 2006; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006; Orthner & Rose, 2005).

The most challenging stressor during this phase is communication. Communication with deployed service member as the family knows it is disrupted and changed. During the beginning of the deployment phase family members often have limited access to their service member and limited information concerning their deployed service member (Hosek et al., 2006; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006; Orthner & Rose, 2005). Communication and information between service members and their families is limited due to DoD protocols and restrictions. In a research study conducted by Jumper et al. (2005), 25% of Soldiers and their family members indicated the beginning of the deployment phase as the most stressful stage of the deployment cycle. To decrease and minimize the stress of limited communication and information concerning their deployed service members, families are encouraged to  communicate through emails, letters, care packages, and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Myspace, and Facebook ( Davis et al., 2009; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006).

Adapting to the challenges and stressors of communication are not the only changes that are occurring at this time.  During the midpoint of the deployment phase spouses and

other family members are also building patterns to successfully adapt to their new routines of daily living. Attempting to keep normalcy in their lives spouses and other family members are now establishing new routines that will hopefully foster successful coping strategies for healthy resiliency during the deployment cycle (Davis et al., 2009; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006). Jumper et al. (2005) notes that the problems and circumstances which may occur during this phase of adaptation initially feel overwhelming. In a research study conducted by Jumper et al. (2005) 33% of Soldiers and their family members believe the midpoint deployment phase is the most stressful timeframe of the deployment cycle. spouses, children, and other family members seek out military or civilian support and resource service to  help, give assistance, or guide them in coping and sustaining a productive lifestyle during this season of unexpected situations and problems during their loved ones deployment (Hosek et al., 2006; Pincus et al., 2005; Wiens & Boss, 2006; Orthner & Rose, 2005).

**Post Deployment**

This phase is also known as redeployment which is the act of transitioning from deployment status to non deployment status. This is the phase where the military service member is preparing to return home to their family members.  At the same time family members are preparing for the reunion with their service members. The timeframe for post deployment generally begins from the time  the military service members actually leaves deployed assignment until they return back to their home of duty. This third phase of the cycle is often called the honeymoon stage because patterns of high expectations for perfect reunions begin to form in the thought processes of service members, spouses,

other family members and friends (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003; Figley, 1993; Jumper et al., 2005).

During post deployment spouses and other family members are anxiously awaiting the arrival of their service members. They begin preparing grand reunions and celebrations to display their happiness and excitement for their love coming home (Evers et al., 2004). Although excited, spouses and family members are also going through an emotional roller coaster. They are now faced with the realities of changing the new routines they have taken ownership of and grown accustomed to during the deployment of their military service member (Evers et al., 2004; Hosek et al., 2006).

In the Hosek et al. (2007) study researchers found that it is often difficult for military service members, spouses, children, other family members and friends to settle in back into life the way it was before the deployment. This research study found all individuals involved in the deployment cycle have changed causing frustration and stressors that interfere with the realities of daily routines.

**Reintegration**

This is the phase where the military service member has arrived back home. They are now processing experiences from combat or peacekeeping while having to get reacquainted with family and friends (Huebner et al., 2007; Jumper et al., 2005). At the same time family members are trying to readjust to having their service member home and being an active part of their daily lives. The timeframe for reintegration is generally from the time the military service arrives home until 6 months or 180 days after their arrival home (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003; Figley, 1993; Jumper et al., 2005). This fourth and final phase of the cycle is often called the "now what?" stage because patterns

of uncertain adjustment needs form as service members begins to reconnect more intimately with spouses, other family members and friends (Wiens & Boss, 2006; Boss, 2002).

During reintegration the service members may be physically present in their family unit, but psychologically absent. This is known as ambiguous presence (Boss, 2002). Ambiguous presence occurs as service members' transition from a combat or peacekeeping zone culture to a noncombat peacetime environment (Boss, 2002). The DoD has mandated that all service members that have return from deployment attend Yellow Ribbon Reintegration events that occur in 30, 60, and 90 day intervals with follow up event at the 120 and 180 day marks. The purpose of these events is to provide the support and resources service members need to gradually acclimate from a combat zone lifestyle to a noncombat way of life. Although it is required for service members to attend, it is only recommended for family members to attend (Faber et al., 2008; MacDermid, Samper, Schwarz, Nishida, & Nyaronga, 2008).

Researchers have documented that is often takes time for service members to abandon their combat or peacekeeping survival behaviors (Hosek et al., 2006). Difficulties leaving these behaviors behind along with the changes that have occurred in the service member, Spouse, and other family members during the course of the deployment make it challenging to reestablish relationships into healthy functioning units (MacDermid et al., 2008). Marriage and family conflicts may begin to surface as service member, Spouse, children and other family members are learning to adjust to changes in each other, their roles and daily routines(Evers et al., 2004; Faber et al., 2008) . In a research study conducted by Jumper et al. (2005) it was identified that approximately 43% of military

families who had services members return from deployment were concerned with the possibility of their service member having to deploy again and the effects it would have on their families.

<div align="center">**Conceptual Framework**</div>

**Family Stress Theory**

    **ABC-X Model.**

The concept of the Family Stress Theory was originated by Rueben Hill in 1949 when he conducted a study of 135 military families that experienced the separation and return of their service member during World War II.   The results of Hill's 1949 study are the premise for today's research in family stress (Hill, 1949; Klein & White, 1996; Malia, 2006).  Hill's 1949 research study yielded the ABC-X model. This model is based on (A) the stressor event, (B) resources used to deal with the event, (C) the family's perception of the event, and (X) the crisis resulting from family's capabilities lacking the ability to meet demands of the stressor. The initial findings and conclusions to Hill's 1949 study is the foundation for understanding the dynamics of family units under pressure or extreme stress in today's society, such as the effects of deployments on military families (Hill, 1949; Klein & White, 1996; Malia, 2006).

    **Stressors (A).**

Sudden events, sequential events or even anticipation of events have the propensity to disturb the normal life-cycle of a family causing a disturbance in their equilibrium. In order for the family unit to resume homeostasis and balance specialized coping skills may be required to make the necessary adjustments. Successful adaptation and adjustment to

extreme stress caused by the onset of sudden events and extraordinary circumstances result in family resiliency (McCubbin, & McCubbin, 1989).

Families end up in crisis when they fail to recognize, understand or get help for the problems or situations that arise in the natural life-cycle of a family (Boss, 2004, 2007; Hill, 1949; McCubbin, & Patterson, 1983). When families understand their patterns of behavior they can begin to identify behaviors that are working and use tools from healthy resources to aid them in making small attainable changes to reduce or eliminate negative, non-effective and unwanted behaviors that lead to successful and effective adaptation yielding a balance, equilibrium or homeostasis in the family (Boss, 2004, 2007; McCubbin, & McCubbin, 1989; Patterson, 2002).

The experiences of a family spans the lifetime of the unit with changes in structure and roles at every stage of each individual's life. Each stage of life presents itself with new developmental growth opportunities and responsibilities (Boss, 2004, 2007). The success and survival of the family unit is dependent on each family member's ability to adapt and adjust as needed to the accumulation of challenges and stressors. The more challenges and stressors that accumulate over time the higher the probability that a crisis will occur (Van Breda, 2004). The original ABC-X Model originated by Hill in 1949 is designed to only deal with one stressor or challenge at a time. In 1983 McCubbin and Patterson designed a revision of Hill's (1949) ABC-X model to reflect the accumulation of stressors by doubling the pattern of the model's variables that require adjustment and adaptation due to the initial stressor adaptation. This revised model is called the Double ABC-X model. As a family experiences crisis it creates a benchmark by which they can gage how they will handle future accumulation of stressors (Hill, 1949; McCubbin and

Patterson, 1983; Patterson, 2002; Van Breda, 2004). Researchers are finding that the more crisis or deployments that military families experience the more confident and resilient they become in making the necessary adjustments during a deployment cycle (Hill, 1949; Boss, 2004, 2007).

The Family Stress Theory conceptualizes the relationship between stressors and crises by assuming 1) stress is a normal part of the family cycle, 2) equilibrium is disturbed by stress and restored coping, 3) stressors and resources are uniquely defined by the perception of each individual and family, 4) adaptation to stress is normal, 5) adaptation is influenced by the individual's or families' perception of stressors, circumstances, resources, and coping skills, 6) Personal, family, cultural, and community stressors are apparent and understood and 7) how individual or family responds or reacts to stress is identified (Hill, 1949; Klien, 1996).

The Family Stress Theory also presents a model by which families actively engage to adjust and bring balance after encounter minor or major strain to their family unit through the use of coping behaviors, tangible services and psychosocial resources (McCubbin, 1989). Research conducted by Van Breda (2004) indicate that minor or major shifts in the paradigm of an Army spouses' routine(s) can cause psychological, physical, and socio-cultural challenges that can result in positive or negative outcomes.  Soldiers and their spouses experience stressors in the areas of finance, marriage, household management, child rearing, spirituality, communication, education and extended family that often trigger problems which overtime erupt and erode the functioning fabric of their working relationship or family unit (Boss, 2004, 2007; Huebner et al., 2009; Orthner, 2005).

The experiences of a family spans the lifetime of the unit with changes in structure and roles at every stage of each individual's life. Each stage of life presents itself with new developmental growth opportunities and responsibilities. The success and survival of the family unit is dependent on each family member's ability to adapt and adjust as needed (Nye, 1966).

Families who experience stressors go through phases of adjustment and adaptation. While experiencing a stressor families will have a range of variables that will interact with one another throughout the process of bringing resolve (Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983; Patterson, 2002; Van Breda, 2004). McCubbin and Patterson (1983) the creators of the Double ABC-X Model, added coping mechanisms to the model to give better understanding of how families can become resilient in crisis as they adjust and adapt to the challenges of stressors as they occur over time. The continuum of adjustments and adaptations exists in the life-cycle of a family paradigm to insure survival of the family over a period of time (Patterson, 2002; Van Breda, 2004).

Family Systems Theory gives understanding to the idea of how small shifts alter family functioning leading to resilience to maladaptation. This theory conceptualizes the idea of families being interconnected with interdependence on each other in the forms subsystems and alliances constantly changing within the family unit causing rules and boundaries to constantly change (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). The family is an emotional unit composed of individuals who influence each other to differentiate among themselves resulting in unique individualized definitions of self. These differentiations among each individual creates a system in which person has a role to play (Kerr, 1981).

The Family Development Theory yields an analysis of normative and non-normative transitions within families making the assumptions that 1) development occurs on the individual and collective level, 2) development is inevitable, a necessities and continuous and 3) families change with time(Carter & McGoldrick, 1988).

According to a survey conducted by Orthner & Rose (2005), Army spouses reorganize their lives to account for the absence of their deployed soldier. The purpose of this reorganization is to adjust for the challenges presented by military induced separations with the smoothest transition possible to continue living in as much normalcy as possible. After extended deployments, Soldiers and their spouses then have to deal with the readjustments accompanied with the Soldier and family reuniting after the deployment or separation is over. The reuniting of Soldiers and their families after deployment can be very challenging because of the changes that have occurred individually and collective during the time of separation (Orthner, 2005).

**Support Resources (B)**

In the 1940's the Army introduced family support resources in the form of medical care, housing and food rations with the passing of Public law 490 to help Army families deal with the challenges and stressors of the military lifestyle. Shortly after the passing of Public Law 490 military support resource organizations such as the Army Emergency Relief, Wives' Club, the Red Cross and the Untied Service Organization (the USO) were formed to meet other identified needs of military families. As the United States evolved in the areas of gender and race equality during the 1950's through the 1970's the military begin to evolve into a systematic approach towards family support resources (Albano, 1994).

According to Albano (1994), the Army published their partnership philosophy between mission readiness and family support resources in 1983 with a statement of concept called the "White Paper". This new concept prompted the Department of Defense to create, pass and implement public laws such as 101-189 and 101-510 in the 1990's mandating the development of Military Family Centers around the world housed with specialized services to support families.  These centers were to be manned by trained specialist in various social service fields with the intent of providing military families with the tools needed to help cope with the stress often caused by deployments and other missions.  This network of support resources laid the foundation for our current military support resources today.

Family support resources are much more complex today.  The military  family support resources are now  inclusive of cost of living adjustments, government housing or housing allowance, medical and dental care, commissary and exchange privileges, survivor's benefits, counseling and many more services and programs to aid families in adjusting to every stage of military life.  These support resources are free of charge and standardized across branches of service and military installations for better accessibility for military family members (Albano, 1994).

Research conducted by Hill (1949) was the first study to indicate the possibility of family restructuring by developing and identifying the same stressor event through what the family member may perceive and then using support resources to search for possible solutions. Support resources are intended to provide a bridge between spouses, military leadership, military benefits, military entitlements and family resiliency during

deployments and trainings (Bowen et al., 2003; Department of Army, 2004; Orthner, 2005).

Support resources are people, information, organizations, etc. made available to provide tools for positive adjustments in building stronger Army families while living in stressful and challenging situations, such as multiple deployments ranging three months or longer (Evers et al., 2004; Orthner, 2005). Support resources can be formal through internal (military) or informal support through external (civilian) community networks, and informal military family networks (Bowen et al., 2003; Department of Army, 2004; Orthner, 2005; Pittman et al., 2004).

**Perceptions (C)**

Perception is an individual(s) view point on an event(s) or experience(s). The perception of support and resources is the spouses' viewpoint or thoughts concerning military supportive environments which encourage family interconnectedness, and formal support through internal and external (civilian) community networks along with how they construe the deployment cycle process (Bowen et al., 2003; McCubbin, 1989; Pittman et al., 2004). The perception of support and resources is also the spouses' viewpoint or thoughts concerning their ability to respond or react to identified stressors (Hill, 1949; Klien, 1996). The spouses' perception of their experiences during the deployment(s) or training(s) is an important influence on their ability to adapt and adjust to the challenges and stress associated with the next deployment or training (Burrell et al., 2003).

The families perception of the stressor itself is defined by how they understand the problem or situation they are going through at the time (Bowen et al., 2003). Perception is the last component of the ABC-X model, but is the first component in understanding,

adjusting and adapting in order to manage the stressor (Boss, 1992). McCubbin and Patterson (1983) study found that families experiencing deployments in the 1970's preferred not to utilize any resources or make any changes. These families believed that stressors would go away over time and the situation would get better.

Wheeler and Stone (2009) recently explained avoidance as a major component of the coping strategies utilized by the spouses of deployed National Guard members. Participants in this study often reported the following: (1) ignoring and avoiding all issues dealing with their Soldier's deployment, and (2) immersing into work, volunteering, or organizational responsibilities because they were unable to accept the reality of their Soldier's deployment.

When a family understands the depth of a crisis they can help others effectively learn, adjust, utilize, adapt and cope with a crisis. Luthar (2006) states individuals cannot be defined as resilient unless they are exposed to some sort of significant stress or adversity. According to research conducted by MacDermid et al. (2008) coping skills, positive adjustment and competent use of resources are not enough to deem a person as resilient because these attributes can be achieved in the absence of adversity and extreme or traumatic stress due to the fact if an adverse event were to occur resilience many not follow.  Based on these authors' research resilience is an attribute that can only be accurately observed in act of experiencing and dealing with traumatic or adverse circumstances.

According to Boss (2007), service member's spouses who react to traumatic or adverse situations with resilience provide more support for their service member to endure challenges more successfully and aid in reducing negative consequences of other

family members. Spouses who are unable to acknowledge the presence of a stressor and identify its meaning, will be unable to move forward into use of resources or the strategies they may provide (Boss, 2007).

Faber et al. (2008) defined a family unit as a bio psychosocial model functioning as a living system which members are connected by through interpersonal relationships. These interpersonal relationships consist of interdependent emotions and social connections. Faber et al. (2008) conducted a qualitative study of 16 Soldiers and their family members during a deployment cycle. Family members in this study struggled with making decisions without their Soldier being present and taking on the additional roles within the family unit of the deployed Soldier.

The Faber et al. (2008) study also indicated that spouses had a very difficult time transitioning responsibilities back over to their service member when they returned from deployment. The Soldiers in this study reported uncertainty in how to reconnect to previous responsibilities upon return from deployment without interfering with their families' new routines. These service members were also unsure about disrupting their spouses newly established independence in carrying household responsibilities.

According to Castaneda et al. (2008), as a living system a military family is automatically forced to reorganize when separated by war, reuniting from war or other emergencies. The reorganization constitutes changes and adjustments to rules and roles that will inevitably place a strain on the family system. During war and times of conflict, deployment brings with it many stressors that are associated with the separation of the service member and their family. These stressors may emerge in various faucets such as: 1) having to deal with the policies, regulations and procedures of military bureaucracy,

2) family routines being disrupted, 3) standard of living changing, 4) Rumors and misinformation generated by the media, 5) having to assume new roles and responsibilities within the family unit, 6) lack of service member's support, 7) not being able to make plans for the future, 8) concern with the welfare of service member and 9) fear of the long term effects of the war on the family unit (Hobfoll et al.,1991).

As the family deals with disruption caused by the stressors in their lives that demand change in their life-cycle, solutions to their crisis are often found by accessing available support resources. Available support resources generally exist in the form of interfamilial systems and community. Interfamilial support resources, also known as internal support resources, include extended family unit assistance (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983). Other resources available to the family unit are personal finances, values, goals, principals, coping mechanisms, defined roles in family unit, and communication techniques (Boss, 1992; Evers et al., 2004). According to Castaneda et al. (2008), because military families are different stages throughout the deployment cycle, variability will exist among military family stressors creating challenges in developing effective support resources. Community support resources, also known as external support resources that influence sense of community, may appear in the form of norms and values of society, social supports, public and program policies (Patterson, 2002).

**Sense of Community**

Numerous research studies use The Sense of Community Index (SCI) to quantitatively measure sense of community in the area of social science. This index has been used to cover and explore different cultures in many contexts (rural, urban, educational, workplace, etc.). The SCI is based off of the McMillan and Chavis (1986) theory that

stated the sense of community perception was based on four concepts: membership, influence, meeting needs, and shared emotional connection. Community Science Organization shares the SCI -1 and SCI-2 with other organizations and individuals who are exploring or researching the psychological sense of community. This type of psychological tool focuses on community experiences, unlike other indexes that look at structure, settings, formation, etc. The SCI is different from other theoretical approaches because it asks questions about the community residence perception, attitudes, feelings and understanding about the community in which they live. The SCI also explores individuals and their community relationships with others in order to get a more multifaceted idea of the complete sense of community (Chavis et al., 2008).

Active duty spouses often feel socially isolated in the civilian communities in which they live for several reasons 1) they are geographically separated from extended family and friends and 2) they relocate so frequently there is no time to establish community stability.  Reserve spouses generally are geographically stable with family and friend in close proximity, but they are often socially isolated from a military community where they would have more accessibility to military resources and services (Burrell, Adams, Durand & Castro, 2006).  In one study of Soldiers and their families approximately 31% of the service members at least 100 miles from (1) the nearest military installation, and (2) their drill unit (Castaneda et al., 2008). In another study conducted by Evers et al. (2004) 2, 600 Soldiers and family members were surveyed, 78% did not live on the military installation and 38% did not live within 49 miles of any military installation. Military family readiness experts report that military families that do not live near a

military installation have more challenges accessing support resources (Castaneda et al., 2008).

**Military Sense of Community**

Bowen et al. (2003) conducted a study revealing insights on how families receive their foundations of sense of community from military units and community services support. The influence of these two support systems fosters a network of resources for families that encourage strong successful adaptation to the military lifestyle and military induced separations. Interactions with others have a great impact on sense of community. Sense of community is closely related to increased resilience among military families. The first level of support for military families is at the unit or company level. Not only is the unit the first level of support, it is the first imprint of support in a military community type environment whether it be formal or informal. This first encounter with support at the unit level stamps an impression of the significance and importance of helping military families do more than survive the military life, but thrive successfully living the military lifestyle by becoming involved with informal community support and regular use of formalized community services (Bowen et al., 2003).

Other factors affecting a military family's ability to adapt and have a sense of community are how many children they have, where the military installation is located, location of housing and how long they resided in the community. It should be noted that these factors are generally a reflection of pay grade (rank). There is a call for research on impact of military pay grade (rank) in regards to sense of community because rank is the primary structure of the armed services reflecting status and socioeconomic standing. Sense of community in a military setting often reflects two dimensions, work and

relationships. These two dimensions are often a reflection of geographic location, military politics and psychological mind set concerning military (Bowen et al., 2003).

The high operation tempo of the United States military has forced the branches of services, especially the Army to provide more comprehensive and extensive support resource services to aid families in actualizing the resilience needed to be well adjusted during multiple deployments ranging 3months or longer (Orthner & Rose, 2005). The typical Army Community Services center provides 1) family life skills education, 2) assessment, information and referral counseling, 3) career development and employment assistance, 4) quality of life seminars and consultation, 5) leadership classes for volunteers and soldiers working with military families, 6)relocation services, 7) transition assistance programs for soldiers and their families who are exiting the army and entering back into the civilian or general population, 8)emergency financial assistance and financial management services, 9) after school and summer programs; computer and phone centers, 10) lending closets, 11) deployment, mobilization, reunion and between services, 12)family advocacy, 13) victim advocacy, 14)exceptional family member program, 15) Army family team building, 16) Army family action plan, 17) sexual assault prevention and response, and 18) survivor outreach services (Other and Rose, 2005).

**Civilian Sense of Community**

Hoshmand and Hoshmand (2007) completed research pointing out the lack of service within civilian communities geared toward the wellbeing of military families. This research states that two thirds of military families reside in a larger civilian community. This article states that military demographics are continuously changing. The face of

today's current military families is couples 35 years or younger, joint-service couples and single parent households. The new face of the military has yet to be reflected in the support and services provided (Hoshmand & Hoshmand, 2007).

Part of the Army's Well-Being Program focuses on providing tools and opportunities for its families to meet army life challenges, especially those associated with trainings and deployments, by offering support, information and training. In order to meet the possible needs of Army families, the Army has contracted out to local resources (Orthner & Rose, 2005).  According to Hoshmand and Hoshmand, there are 4 types of research that need to be explored to help community psychologist understand the needs of military families: 1) Understanding the stressors and difficulties experienced by military families; 2) Understanding the effect of base closures and troop movement on military families; 3) Understanding the importance of both community and military networks in military family resiliency; and 4) Understanding the need for availability of support for military families before, during and after military induced separations. This study explored the use of local services by Army families and their ability to effectively meet their needs (Hoshmand and Hoshmand, 2007).

**The Collaboration of Military and Civilian Community Services and Resources**

Drummet et al. (2003) study recognized the military inability to meet the needs of its families in a time of increased deployments and military separations and the limited research in this area. Drummet et al. (2003) examined the three unique stressors that face most military families: relocation, separations and reunions. This study revealed the military had established some programs to support military families, but these programs were underutilized due to stigmas associated with use and restricted funding. This study

also determined the need of the military to do more research in developing more innovative programs that would be used my military families (Drummet et al., 2003). Since this study was published, the Army has implemented a Strategic Well-Being Plan in 2005 that targets marriages, relationships skills, family connections in their environments, use of community support, promoting spousal connections with the Army through various employment and volunteer opportunities, interfamily connectedness between Army families and providing time for family (Orthner & Rose, 2005).

Collaborative services such as Operation Military Kids and Military OneSource are examples of military and civilian organizations working together to provide services with an array of resources targeted to help the military services members and their families (Huebner et al., 2009). These programs are not connected to any military installations and are designed to offer telephonic and internet based information and referral support and services (Huebner et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2005). Research conducted by Sprenkle, Ko, and Mac Dermid (2006) indicated that many service members and their families were unaware of programs such as Operation Military Kids and Military OneSource.

### Social Change Analysis

Providing an avenue for Army spouses to express their perception concerning the impact or helpfulness of established military and civilian support systems and resources put in place to aid and assist them during back to back deployments and trainings of their Soldiers was the primary projected outcome of the research study. Bringing awareness to established military and civilian support systems and resources regarding Army spouses' viewpoints concerning the impact or helpfulness of services made available during back

to back deployments and trainings of Soldiers was the secondary projected outcome of this study.

Since this research study only focused on the Army spouses who's Soldiers have deployed or trained multiple times back to back, it was important to explore the potential support systems and resources provided to this specific population of military families. Understanding the various cultural groups, such as military leaders, Army spouses, military and civilian support systems that provide resources and referrals for this population may result in promoting and encouraging other factors that affect a military family's ability to successfully adapt and have a positive sense of community (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers et al., 2004).

Bridging the gaps between military leaders, Army spouses, military and civilian support systems and resources may result in (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007): 1) Improving the quality and effectiveness of services made available to military spouses during training, peace keeping missions, and combat. 2) Fostering a better quality of life for the families of military personnel during back to back trainings and deployments. 3) Non-military service provider understanding of the military culture and its impact on the lives of military soldiers and their families (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007). The results of this study will be applicable to the enhancement of military family support services and resources made available in both military and civilian communities.

## Related Literature Review of Study Concepts

**Literature Related to the Research Methodology**

Quantitative analysis was used in this research study. Multiple hierarchical regressions was the quantitative analysis used to explore the data in this research study. Numerical data was used to explain the possible quantitative methodological relationships that may occur between independent variables and dependent variable. Statistical analysis such as means, standard deviations, structural equation modeling and regressions was used to report quantitative methods numerical data. Studies reviewed for this study included one or both quantitative methodology and multiple regression analysis (Bowen et al., 2003; Burrell et al., 2003; Frankel et al., 1993; Goff et al., 2007; Gould et al., 2007; Hoge et al., 2004; Karney and Crown, 2007; Lavee et al., 1985; Pennington & Lipari, 2007; Pittman et al., 2004; Van Breda, 1999).

Many of the quantitative methods used to explore military families and deployments are implemented through self-administered questionnaires or surveys (Bowen et al., 2003; Burrell et al., 2003; Frankel et al., 1993; Goff et al., 2007; Gould et al., 2007; Hoge et al., 2004; Karney and Crown, 2007). Gould et al. (2007) conducted an experimental method approach to assess the effectiveness a psycho-educational program that decreased the impact of the concept of stigmas in the military. Pennington & Lipari (2007) study used descriptive statistics to report observed data in means and percentages based on a 95% confidence interval. Van Breda (1999) explored the concept of resilience in non-military training program through the use of the experimental method approach. Van Breda used scaled measures before and after participation to measure resilience.

Quantitative methods have been used quite successfully in the past in exploring the Family Stress Theory. Variables measured in the Family Stress Theory such as (A) the stressor event or deployment, (B) resources used to cope with the event, and (C) the family's perception of the available resources to help during the event can be numerically defined individually through a variety of quantitative methods. This variable can also be compared to possible outcomes such as adaptation, satisfaction, or wellness. Frankel et al. (1993) conducted research that explored the partial correlation analysis linking independent variables such as family type, appraisal, family life cycle stage ,accessibility to resources, awareness of resources, usage of resources and coping mechanisms resulting from self-related outcomes such as self, marriage, and parenting that military wives experienced during deployments. Frankel et al. used multiple regressions conclude the impact of independent variables on military wives adjustment and adaptation to deployment.

One gap was found in this literature review. There was limited inclusion of Army spouses who had experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers as participants in most of these studies. Therefore, it is important to address the participant findings of the reviewed literature. The inclusion of Army spouses who have experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers in military research was found to be an important variable in this literature review. One research study included exclusively on Army spouses who had experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers as descriptive data was collected on the frequencies and extended deployments of Soldiers (Drummet et al., 2003). Darwin and Reich (2006) research included service members and spouses that had experience multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Castaneda et al. (2008) study of Army spouses who had experienced multiple

deployments of their Soldiers indicated there is inadequate communication in regards to

deployment notice in between multiple deployments. The families in this study who did

not believe they received adequate deployment notice cited struggles with emotional

issues, household responsibilities, and finances due to lack of communication by Army

leaders and resources. Burrell et al. (2006) similarly studied that the number of

separations due to multiple deployments had a significant impact on spouses and families

perception of the deployment experience. One study found that the perceptions and

opinions among military spouses and families is impacted by the experiences with

military life and previous experiences of managing stressors through role distribution

caused by multiple deployments (Patterson, 2002). Many of the quantitative studies

reviewed did not include Army spouses who had experienced multiple deployments of

their Soldiers as participants at all.

**Literature Review of Differing Methodologies**

Since 2001, more exploratory research approaches have been utilized to identify the

more significant areas of study concerning deployments and the military family. Many of

these exploratory research approaches use qualitative methods for analysis through

interviews, surveys, focus groups and data collection (Castaneda et al., 2008; Evers et al.,

2004; Faber et al., 2008; Huebner et al., 2007; Jumper et al., 2005; Rotter & Boveja,

1999). Drummet et al. (2003) research examined three unique stressors that face most

military families: relocation, deployments, and reunions. This study also included Army

spouses who had experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers and collected

descriptive data on the frequencies and extended deployments. This study revealed the

military had established some resources to support military families, but these programs were underutilized due to stigmas associated with use and restricted funding. This study also determined the need of the military to do more research in developing more innovative support resources that would be used my military families (Drummet et al., 2003).

Castaneda et al. (2008) used qualitative methods to study the effectiveness of military support resources during one time and multiple deployment experiences. Qualitative methods were used to avoid challenges of attempting to quantify effectiveness by administering a close-ended survey and open-ended auditory response survey questions. Instead, self-administered open-ended questionnaires evolving around thematic analysis through coding responses and creating categories were used in this study (Evers et al., 2004; Faber et al., 2008; Huebner et al., 2007; Jumper et al., 2005). Sprenkle et al. (2006) conducted a mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) study using 27 focus groups to determine the effectiveness of Military OneSource through a survey, an open ended question, and descriptive methods.

## Summary of Literature Review

Soldiers and their spouses deal with unique challenges caused by frequent separations on a reoccurring basis. Consistent family reorganization due to deployments and reunions within the confounds of a structured military environment is always present. Military members and spouses often feel pressure to conform to military expectations due to assumptions and fear of reprisal against the military member within the military culture. These feelings often lead to more stress and dissatisfaction with the military way of life (Black, 1993; Drummet et al., 2003).

As Soldiers and their spouses assess their satisfaction with the support resources put in place to enhance their quality of life during frequent and lengthy trainings and deployments, subjective appraisal are needed to reflect sense of awareness, purpose, positive relationships, community and family autonomy during deployments (Burrell et al., 2006; Castaneda et al., 2008; Darwin and Reich, 2006; Drummet et al., 2003; Patterson, 2002). A Soldier's satisfaction is generally influenced by the resilience of their family and their spouses' perception of established army support resources received and used before, during, and after trainings and deployments (Evers et al., 2004).

The family stress theory which guided this research measured variables such as (A) the stressor event or deployment, (B) resources used to cope with the event, and (C) the family's perception of the available resources to help during the event or deployment. These variables can be numerically defined individually through independent variables such as sense of community opinions, demographics, accessibility to resources, awareness of resources utilization of resources, and communication of resources during deployments (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983). Multiple regressions, which will be used for analysis in this research, are often used to analyze the impact of independent variables (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

Limited research was available on Army spouses' accessibility to military support resources and utilization of military support resource who have experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers. Less research was even available on civilian support resources that are accessible to Army spouses and are utilized by Army spouses who have

experienced multiple deployments of their Soldiers. Burrell et al. (2003) cites the inabilities to access military support resources have been the assumption for low utilization among Army spouses.

This finding is also supported by Castaneda et al. (2008) whose study indicated similar low usage among Army spouses. This study found that 55% of the spouses surveyed did not use any military support resources. These spouses also indicated that they did not rely on support services, although, some of the same survey participants indicated the relied on friend and family for support. This study found that the spouses' lack of perception regarding the deployment cycle as stressor is identified as a possible reason for low military support service usage (Castaneda et al., 2008).

A study conducted by Davis et al. (2009) described Army spouses as preferring to remain silent about their deployment experiences due to the lack of understanding and inappropriate responses made by their surrounding civilian community. Yet, Castaneda et al. (2008) study proposes another reason for low utilization of military support resources are the use of similar resources with their civilian community.

This research only focused on the perceptions or opinions of Army spouses who experienced their Soldiers deploying or training multiple times. This research explored potential support systems and resources provided to this specific population of Army spouses. By gaining more insight to the various cultural groups, such as military leaders, Army spouses, military and civilian support systems other factors that influence a military family's ability to have a positive sense of community may be brought to the forefront (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers et al., 2004).

The primary projected outcome for this research study was to provide an outlet for Army spouses to express their opinions regarding impact or helpfulness of established resource and support systems in both military and civilian communities during multiple deployments.

The secondary projected outcome for this research study was to bring awareness to both military and civilian communities regarding Army spouses' opinions regarding the resources and support systems offered by their communities during multiple deployments.

The final finding in this literature review was the identification of gaps between military leaders, Army spouses, and military and civilian support resources. Bridging the gaps between military leaders, Army spouses, military and civilian support systems and resources may result in (Albano, 2002; Blount et al., 1992; Evers et al., 2004; Pennington & Lipari, 2007): (a) improved quality and effectiveness of support resources, (b) fostering a better quality of life for the military families of military multiple deployments, and  (c) non-military service providers gaining understanding of the military culture and its impact on the lives of military soldiers and their families.

The Army's ability to cultivate the awareness of the Soldier's entire life in and outside of the Army reflects the challenges and stressors that affect the Army Spouse, military support services/resources, and civilian support services/resources, sense of military community, sense of civilian community, and the deployment cycle process for Army spouses. The results of this study are applicable to the enhancement of military family support services and resources made available in both military and civilian communities.

Chapter Three includes detailed information of research participants, survey, and demographic variables. Chapter Four includes a detailed discussion of descriptive statistics for demographic data, independent variables, the outcome variable, and the Pearson's correlation for these items will be reported.

Chapter 3: Research Method

**Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research design, methodology approach, ethical

considerations, and procedures used in conducting this study. The research study's design

overview discusses the basis for why this research design was selected and its

relationship to the study's research questions and hypotheses. A description of the study's

population, sample size of participants, and eligibility criteria is also included.

Specific information pertaining to data collection process and the instrumentation and

materials utilized in collecting, measuring, and assessing data for this study is reviewed.

A detailed explanation of the analyses procedures for this research is provided and survey

questions used to collect data are identified. The precautions taken in this research study

to protect participants' rights are thoroughly explained.

**Research Design and Rationale**

This study analyzed the perception of Army spouses who were geographically

separated from their Soldiers due to multiple military-induced missions with durations of

3 months or longer in regard to military and civilian communities and available support

resources. The following research question was addressed:

> RQ: What is the combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses'
>
> opinion regarding sense of community (including variables of sense of
>
> community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian
>
> community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple
>
> deployments (including variables concerning awareness of military resource
>
> services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource

services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources?

$H_0$: There is no combined effect (influence and potency) at the .05 level of significance for an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the composite scores of the SCI-2 (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by the composite scores of the ASPS using Soldier demographics and support resource questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

$H_1$: There is a combined effect (influence and potency) at the .05 level of significance for an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the composite scores of the SCI-2 (including variables of sense

of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian

community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple

deployments  as measured by the composite scores of the ASPS using  Soldier

demographics and support resource questions (including variables concerning

awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services,

communication of military resource  services, military resource services skills,

utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource

services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian

resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian

resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources

(Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008;  Frankel et

al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

This research design was quantitative in nature using descriptive statistics and

regression to explain and analyze the results of a research survey tool which consisted of

the Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2), Soldier demographics, and Spouse perception

questions concerning available support resources during multiple deployments. Army

spouses' opinions concerning sense of community were surveyed using the SCI-2

instrument. The spouses' sense of community opinions were measured by the variables of

(a) sense of community within the military, and (b) sense of community within the

civilian community. These were critical components that identified and measured an

Army spouses' sense of support concerning available resources in the military and

civilian communities in which they lived. The Spouse perception questions concerning

available support resources during multiple deployments survey questionnaire was called

the Army spouses' Perception Survey (ASPS). I designed the ASPS questions to measure Army spouses' opinions of support resources (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983). The Army spouses' views concerning support resources were measured by the spouses' (a) Soldier's demographics such as rank, years in service, and number of deployments, and (b) viewpoints concerning support resources in the areas awareness, access, utilization, and communication. These were also critical components that identified and measured support resources available to assist in providing stability to military families during multiple deployments (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983). The composite score of the ASPS and SCI-2 survey instruments was used to measure spouses' perception of available support resources.

**Population**

According to the Department of the Army (2014) they currently maintain a total force of 1, 020,000 soldiers with 480,000 Active Duty Soldiers, 200,000 Army Reserve Soldiers, and 340,000 Army National Guard Soldiers. Slightly more than 56% the Army total force is married (Milano, 2011). The population of this research study represented 38 military installations located throughout the United States and abroad.

**Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

A convenience sampling was used to purposefully survey a sample population of Army spouses utilizing Survey Monkey. A convenience sample is a representation of the total population readily available to the researcher (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Using the convenience sample results yielded limited potential for generalization with increased

sampling error (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Army spouses receiving the invitation to participate were asked to send the invitation and survey link to other Army spouses. The proposed population was Army spouses married to current contracted participating Active Duty, Reserve, or National Guard Component service member.

To determine the appropriate number of necessary participants to produce data that yielded meaningful results for this research study, a power analysis was conducted. A power analysis insured the number of participants necessary for this study was not underestimated or overestimated. The number of participants needed to complete the survey for this research was not an arbitrary number, but was a specific number required to draw a valid conclusion as to whether there was a significant combined effect (influence and potency) of Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments on a spouses' perception of available support resources (Biostat Inc., 2001). This research study utilized the Power and Precision software by Biostat Inc. (2001) to conduct its power analysis.

The required sample size was computed using an alpha level of .05, an allowable error of margin of 0.1, no missing data, and a dispersion of responses standard deviation rate of 0.65 yielding a required sample size of 167 participants to produce a powered study obtaining significant findings. To avoid a Type II error in this research study, which occurs when the data fails to reject the null hypothesis, even if it is false, at least 167 surveys needed to be completed. If this research had failed to reject a false null hypothesis, it would have meant an effect was present but unrecognized by this study. This process was important because the power of a study increases as the probability of a

Type II error decreases. An underpowered research study generally does not obtain significant findings (Biostat Inc., 2001).

**Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

**Recruitment and Participation.**

The Army Spouse was required to be 18 years of age or older. The Spouse must have experienced a 90-day or longer separation from their soldier due to deployment for combat or peacekeeping missions while they were married. No respondent was disqualified from this study due to any disproportionate demographic compilation of the total sample in regards to rank, salary, gender, color, or age.

**Data Collection.**

Various organizations located in the Mid-South region and on the National forefront were contacted by phone, e-mail, and traditional mail with a request to distribute the electronic survey web link via direct e-mail request, verbal announcements in meetings, and newsletter announcements. Organizations contacted in the Mid-South region were Family Readiness Programs, Family Assistance Centers, The Yellow Ribbon Deployment Cycle Program, Veteran Affairs Clinics, and VET Centers. Requests were made to national organizations such as Military HOMEFRONT, National Military Family Association, ARMY Family Readiness Group, and Military Family Network. The research survey link was placed on Twitter. Email invitations were sent to Army spouses who were a part of the Walden University participant pool. The survey invited Army spouses to participate as well as forward the survey web link to other Army spouses for possible participation in this research study.

The survey web link had an open window of 4 weeks. Two weeks into the open window, I checked to see how many spouses had completed the survey. Because the number of surveys completed was low at this juncture, I sent out follow-up reminders regarding the survey and its web link via the initial contact methods. When the necessary number of participant responses was not acquired at the end of 4 weeks, I extended the window by 2 more weeks.

Army spouses were given a 42 day open window to access the survey web link to complete the survey. After the 6-week window closed, I accessed the online survey data base establishing the total number of participants who consented to participate in this online survey. Only completed surveys were saved in the online survey data bank. The survey first addressed (a) the acknowledgement of agreement to consent to have completed data used in research study, and (b) the understanding that the identity of participants would not be revealed even to the researcher. The survey contained the following elements: (a) the Army spouses' demographics during multiple deployments as measured by the ASPS, (b) the Army spouses' perceptions of available support resources during multiple deployments as measured by the ASPS, (c) the support resources available to assist spouses during multiple deployments as measured by the ASPS, and (d) the sense of military and civilian community resource effectiveness during multiple deployments as assessed by SCI-2.

## Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The SCI-2 and ASPS survey instruments gave feedback on practices and policies dictating Army support by scaling the areas of communication, awareness, and services from the insight Army spouses who have been geographically separated from their

Soldier due to multiple trainings, deployments, or both within durations of 3 to 18 months

(Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Refer to Table 1 for survey instrument's variables.

Table 1

*Description of Research Study Domains and Variables*

| Construct/Domain | Variable |
|---|---|
| Sense of Community Opinion | Sense of community resources within military |
| | Sense of community resources within civilian community |
| Support resources | Soldier's Demographics |
| | Awareness of Military Services |
| | Access to Military Services |
| | Communication with Military Service |
| | Utilization of Military Services |
| | Awareness of Civilian Services |
| | Access to Civilian Services |
| | Communication with Civilian Services |
| | Utilization of Civilian Services |

**The Sense of Community Index Instrument (SCI-2)**

The Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2) was developed in 2008 by Dr. David Chavis to explore different cultures in many contexts (e.g., rural, urban, educational, workplace). . The SCI is based off of the McMillan and Chavis (1986) theory that stated the sense of community perception was based on four concepts: membership, influence, meeting needs, and shared emotional connection. Community Science Organization shares the

SCI-2 with other organizations and individuals who are exploring or researching the psychological sense of community.

For the purpose of this research the Sense of Community Index also referred to as the SCI-2 was used to collect Army spouses' sense of community opinions applicable to assist during multiple deployments. The SCI-2 measured how Army spouses' feel about the military community and civilian community.

The SCI-2 consisted of 24 Likert type scale questions. This research study administered the SCI-2 twice. It was first administered to measure Army spouses' sense of their military community. It was administered the second time to measure Army spouses sense of their civilian community. It took 30 minutes to complete questionnaires (Chavis et al., 2008). Permission to use the SCI-2 was provided by Community Science Website within the instrument and scoring instructions section (Chavis et al., 2008). A sample SCI-2 questionnaire is in Appendix C and D. The permission to utilize the questionnaire is in Appendix B.

### Sense of Community Index Reliability and Validity.

The SCI-2 was revised and used within a larger survey of 1800 people (Chavis et al., 2008). The analysis of the SCI-2 showed that it was a very reliable measure (coefficient alpha= .94) (Chavis et al., 2008). The subscales also proved to be reliable with coefficient alpha scores of .79 to .86 (Chavis et al., 2008). It should be noted that the validity for the SCI-2 was not reported. (See Appendix B)

### Army Spouses' Perception Survey (ASPS)

The ASPS survey was designed by the researcher to specifically look at support resources available during multiple deployments. A military spouses' perception of

support during the deployment cycle influences how the family defines stressors that occur during deployment which impacts the utilization of resources provided for usage during a deployment (Boss, 1992; Castaneda et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2009; Frankel et al., 1993; Kazak, 1992). Deployment cycle appraisals or situation awareness during deployments have been identified by many researchers as an important key factor in the resiliency of families during the deployment cycle (Boss, 1992; Castaneda et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2009; Frankel et al., 1993; Kazak, 1992; Pittman et al., 2004). Therefore, this study will explore the Army spouses' perception of available support resources during multiple deployments by analyzing support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments.

The ASPS will consist of 29 questions. These 29 questions were designed to look at the following specific areas: (1) Soldiers' demographics (see table 2), (2) awareness of resources, (3) access to resources, (4) utilization of resources, and (5) how resources were communicated to Army spouses (see table 1). The ASPS should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

**ASPS Reliability and Validity**

The reliability for the ASPS was measured by Cronbach's alpha test of reliability after the study is completed. Validity was established.

Table 2

*Demographic Constructs Defined*

| Soldier and Spouse Demographics Description |
| --- |

Soldier's Demographics
• Location of military duty assignment
• Army component assignment (Active, Reserve, or National Guard)
• Army organization, command, or unit affiliation
•Years of Army service
• Army pay grade and rank
•Number of trainings, deployments or both ranging 3 months or more

Army Spouse Demographics
• Residential living accommodations
• Current work status
• Married with or without children
• Dual Military
• Army Resources used

Table 3

*Deployment and Support Constructs Defined*

| Army Resource Support and Deployment Element Descriptions |
| --- |

Army Support
• Alignment with Federal policies, regulations, standards, and assessments
• Alignment with Army Family benchmark needs assessments and expectations for Military Family Resilience
• Established Army Community Services program (ACS) providing social services needs to military service members, spouses, and dependent family members
•Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) support provides stable services over time so that spouses have sustained opportunities to live more resiliently
• Established Civilian Community Services program such as The American Red Cross, The United Service Organizations (USO), and the Women, Infants and Children program (W.I.C) provide social services needs to military service members, spouses, and dependent family members
•Command communicates mission readiness education, preparedness, information and referral resources available to Soldiers, spouses, and family members providing opportunities to grow and maintain healthy lives during times of deployment and non-deployment

Training
• A scheduled mandatory time frame set aside to fulfill operational requirements, priorities, and force readiness
• Coordinating, implementing, and validating mobilization plans, protocols, and activities
• Scheduled drill time for the Reserve and National Guard components
• Rigorous schools and periods of instruction for skill building and enhancement
• Tactical and strategic exercises to increase accuracy, precision, and combat readiness

Deployment
• A military induced combat mission overseas.
• Movement of military forces. Equipment, etc. outside of the United States and its territories
• Operational planning for movement of troops and resources
• All troop activities before, during and after movement of military combat/peace keeping forces
• Implementing protocols, training, equipping, and preparing for air and port embarkation.

Design process
• Initial input by Army spouses concerning feedback regarding established Army support during multiple trainings and/ or deployments
• Initial input by Army spouses regarding established Army support during multiple trainings and/ or deployments to be presented to Army for further research in improving and enhancing standing Army support.

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics was used to organize, simplify, and analyze the data scores for each SCI-2 and ASPS survey question. A graph for each question was created to organize the number of participants and show the frequency and distribution of their answers. Central tendency measured and computed single scores that represent the entire sample of each survey question (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009; Johnson, 2001; Sumter, 2003).

Hierarchical regressions are often used in the family stress theory in order to get a more accurate picture of the simultaneous effect of resources and appraisals as they occur in the family stress process during deployment cycles (Castaneda et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2009; Frankel et al., 1993; Kazak, 1992). Hierarchical regression was used to determine the relationship of an Army spouses' perception of available support resources and the combined effect of the spouses' sense of community opinions and support resources applicable to assist in resolving issues during multiple deployments. See Table 1 for a more detailed list of independent variables within the sense of community opinions domain and support resources domain.

**Threats to Validity**

**Threats to External Validity**

The hidden multiple treatment effects of this research was proximity of Army spouses to military support resources. The findings of this study suggest that proximity to military support resources may influence and impact Army spouses' perceptions of available support resources during multiple deployments. Civilian support resources were included in this research because of its ability to provide spouses that live further away from

military support resources with the same supportive programs in the area in which they live.

The reactive effects, situational effects or Hawthorne effects associated with this study were the possible affect of Army spouses' opinions being altered due to the attention and concern they were receiving from a fellow Army Spouse. To decrease the possible influence of the Hawthorne effect on this study the researcher chose to use an online survey company to execute the questionnaire and various military organizations and affiliated organizations to recruit research participants.

**Threats to Internal Validity**

The recent history that surrounds this research involves the United States government shutdown and the furlough of civilian personnel that supported most military community support resources and many of the civilian community support resources that received government grant or other supplemental monies. Another recent history event that surrounds this research is the possibility of the debt ceiling not being lowered and the total shut down of government. This research specifically covers only perceptions of support resources during multiple deployments not perceptions before the occurrence of multiple deployments or after (Weiner, Campbell, & Stanley, 2007).

The effects of maturation during this research may occur due to the naturally occurrences of pay increase, promotion, or military move etc. To decrease the possible influence of military systematic changes that may occur within this study the researcher has intentionally focused on the perceptions of Army spouses regardless of pay, rank, and geographical location etc. This research specifically covers deployment based on duration and the number deployments (Weiner, Campbell, & Stanley, 2007).

## Ethical Procedures

The initial start of the online survey informed potential participants that this research study was completely voluntary.  It explained to the potential participant that they were free to decline to participate in this study for any reason. It also explained that any participant may also stop participating at any time or refuse to answer any individual questions that may make them uncomfortable. Clarification was given concerning the participant's rights to stop taking the survey even after they have clicked on the survey's electronic button signifying their agreement and consent to participate in the survey.

Each participant was provided an electronic version of an informed consent form at the initial start of the electronic survey. This electronic form indicated approval by the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this research study. This electronic form also provided the prospective participant with the relevant information necessary for making an informed decision whether or not to participate in the study. This electronic version of the informed consent form also discussed (a) an explanation of the purpose of this research study, (b) a description of what the participant was asked to do, (c) a specification of how long it would take to complete the survey if the participant chose to participate, and (d) the clarification that participants would not be compensated for their time.

This electronic version of the informed consent form also clarified (a) the description of any risks involved in participating in this research study, (b) the steps taken to minimize any risks associated with this research study, and (c) the explanation of any benefits to the researcher or the Army as a whole due to this research study.

The potential participants were informed of the following: (a) that their information is kept confidential at all times, (b) not even the researcher knows their identities, (c) all survey information is stored by the researcher in a secure financial institution safety deposit box location for 5 years, (d) only the researcher has access to this location, (e) the contact person for questions concerning the research or participant's rights, and (f) a statement stating the potential participant had the right not to participate and could stop participating at any time during the survey.

## Summary of Methodology

The objectives of this research study was to allow Army spouses the opportunity to bring awareness to concerns and identify best practices which may lead to recommendations that influence positive change regarding Army support resources. It is the intent of this study to provide data and information to military leaders, military support resources, civilian leaders, and civilian support resources regarding Army spouses' perception of available support resources during multiple deployments. By conducting this study the researcher was seeking to provoke changes that yield more consistent usage of support resources during multiple deployments.

The family stress theory and descriptive design was used for this research study (Johns, 2001). The composite score of the ASPS and SCI-2 survey instruments were used to measure spouses' perception of available support resources to establish a benchmark for the research question. Using a Likert scale the questionnaire covered two domains: sense of community opinions and support resources. Descriptive and hierarchical regression statistics was used to collect and analyze the data creating reports and graphs that measured and showed frequency, central tendency, and variability from the survey data

(Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Chapter 4 of this study will present and explain the results of this research.

Chapter 4: Results

**Introduction**

The purpose of this non experimental, quantitative study was to examine the combined effects of an Army spouses' opinion in regards to the spouses' sense of community and support resources on hand to assist in resolving issues that impacted the spouses' perceptions of available support resources. Specifically, this research study examined:

RQ: What is the combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources?

$H_0$: There is no combined effect (influence and potency) at the .05 level of significance for an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the composite scores of the SCI-2 (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by the composite scores of the ASPS using Soldier

demographics and  support resource questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource  services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008;  Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

$H_1$: There is a combined effect (influence and potency) at the .05 level of significance for an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the composite scores of the SCI-2  (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments  as measured by the composite scores of the ASPS using  Soldier demographics and support resource questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource  services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources

(Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993; Hill, 1949; McCubbin and Patterson, 1983).

In this chapter, a review of the data collection processes and procedures will be presented along with a discussion of the study participants. This chapter also includes a description of the study variables, the results section with data analysis, hierarchical multiple regression (HMR) results, and the chapter summary of results.

## Data Collection

### Analysis, Recruitment and Response Rates

Based on the power analysis, the required sample size was computed using an alpha level of .05, an allowable error of margin of 0.1, no missing data, and a dispersion of responses standard deviation rate of 0.65 yielding a required sample size of 167 participants to produce a powered study obtaining significant findings. The actual sample size of the study was $N = 174$, meaning that one hundred seventy-four surveys were completed. Occasional missing variables were replaced with the variable mean item score for each respective item; this is also known as mean substitution (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009).

The Army spouses Perception Survey (ASPS) was used to assess the following variables: demographics, awareness, access, communication, and utilization. Spouse demographic data included age, gender, ethnicity, level of education, length of marriage, employment status, number of children, number of deployments experienced while married to the Soldier, and proximity to a military installation. Additional data was collected such as the component of the Army with which the Soldier was associated, the Soldier's assigned duty station, the Soldier's pay grade/rank, number of deployments the

Soldier had experienced, the number of years the Soldier had been in the Army, and the Soldier's age, gender, and ethnicity. The military and civilian sense of community variables were measured with the SCI-2. Spouses' sense of community data included (a) important needs being met, (b) similar needs, values, priorities, and goals, and (c) influence of community/influence on community, and so forth.

The data for this study was collected over a 6-week period through convenience sampling with participants being recruited from various organizations. Organizations were contacted via e-mail with a request to distribute the survey web link via e-mail distributions, newsletters, websites, or Facebook. Requests were sent to Army Family Readiness Groups, Army Family Assistance Centers, The Yellow Ribbon Deployment Cycle Program, Veteran Affairs Clinics, Vet Center, Military Home Front, National Military Family Association, Family Readiness Programs, Military.com, and Military Family Network. Approved requests were received from Army spouses Encouragement Readiness Group, Operation Home front, Military.Com/SpouseBUZZ, and the Walden University participant pool.

**Study participants**

One hundred seventy-four Army spouses participated in this research study. These spouses were 18 years or older, married to Army Soldiers currently serving on Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserve status who had experienced more than one deployment or training while married to their Soldier.

In order to get a better understanding of the 174 participants' backgrounds, frequencies and percentages were calculated for the demographic variables of the spouses' age, length of marriage, and number of children (see Table 4). Most of the

participants ranged between 18 to 24 years of age (*n* = 60, 34.9%), with only 1.7% (*n* =

3) ranging 55 years or older. Only seven participants had been married 12 months or less,

representing just 4% of the sample, and 20 participants had been married 20 years or

more, representing 11.6% of the sample population. The majority of the participants (*n* =

147, 84.4%) had been married between 2 and 19 years. In addition, 32.6 % (*n* = 56) of the

participants had no children and 45.7% (*n* = 77) had at least 2 children. The remaining

22.7% (*n* = 39) had 3 or more children.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics: Army Spouses' Demographic Data*

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Spouses' age | | |
| 18-24 years old | 60 | 34.9 |
| 25-34 years old | 54 | 31.4 |
| 35-54 years old | 55 | 32.0 |
| 55 or older | 3 | 1.7 |
| | | |
| Length of marriage | | |
| 12 months or less | 7 | 4.0 |
| 2-5 years | 43 | 24.9 |
| 6-9 years | 41 | 23.7 |
| 10-14 years | 32 | 18.5 |
| 15-19 years | 30 | 17.3 |
| 20 years or more | 20 | 11.6 |
| | | |
| Number of children | | |
| None | 56 | 32.6 |
| 1 | 31 | 18.0 |
| 2 | 46 | 26.7 |
| 3 | 24 | 14.0 |
| 4 or more | 15 | 8.7 |

*N* = 174

This study attempted to identify more detailed information about the participants that

may have influenced their perception of available support resources during multiple

deployments. Spouses were asked their gender, ethnicity, and education (see Table 5).

The majority of participants were female ($n$ = 154, 89.5%). African Americans were the

largest represented ethnic group in this survey ($n$ = 68, 39.5%). Thirteen participants

(7.6%) declined to respond to the question of ethnicity. A little more than 30% of all

participants who completed the survey had a bachelor's degree ($n$ = 53).

Table 5

*Frequency Distribution of Participant's Demographic Data*

| *Variable* | *Frequency* | *Percentage* |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
|     Female | 154 | 89.5 |
|     Male | 18 | 10.5 |
| | | |
| Ethnicity | | |
|     Black/African American | 68 | 39.5 |
|     Caucasian | 54 | 31.4 |
|     Hispanic/Latino | 19 | 11.0 |
|     Decline to Respond | 13 | 7.6 |
|     Asian/Pacific Islander | 11 | 6.4 |
|     Other/Multi-Racial | 4 | 2.3 |
|     Native American/Alaskan Native | 3 | 1.7 |
| | | |
| Education | | |
|     High school diploma or equivalent | 38 | 22.1 |
|     Some college, no degree | 34 | 19.8 |
|     Associate degree | 6 | 3.5 |
|     Bachelor degree | 53 | 30.8 |
|     Graduate degree | 37 | 21.5 |
|     Post Graduate degree | 4 | 2.3 |

*N=172*

This survey asked participants to tell their Soldiers' rank, the number of years their

Soldiers had been in the Army, and the number of times their Soldiers had been deployed

in an attempt to identify the spouses' familiarity with the military lifestyle during

multiple deployments. The majority of spouses reported their Soldier's pay grade/rank as

E5-E6 (30.8%). The largest number of spouses reported their Soldiers being in the Army

at least 10-14 years (24.9%). In regard to deployments, 45 spouses (26.2%) reported that

their Soldiers had been deployed two times. Over half of the spouses (86.7%) indicated

their Soldier was Active Duty Army, 10.4% of the spouses indicated their soldier was

Army National Guard, and 2.9% of the spouses indicated their Soldier was Army

Reserves. Table 6 presents a summary of the Soldiers' Army service and deployment

data.

Table 6

*Soldier's Army Service and Deployment Data Frequency Distribution*

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Soldier's pay grade/rank | | |
| E1-E4 | 30 | 17.4 |
| E5-E6 | 53 | 30.8 |
| E7-E9 | 48 | 27.9 |
| W1-W3 | 5 | 2.9 |
| W4-W5 | 5 | 2.9 |
| O1E-O3E | 2 | 1.2 |
| O1-O3 | 7 | 4.1 |
| O4-O6 | 14 | 8.1 |
| O7-O10 | 8 | 4.7 |
| | | |
| Total number of years in the Army | | |
| 0-3 years | 40 | 23.1 |
| 4-9 years | 41 | 23.7 |
| 10-14 years | 43 | 24.9 |
| 15-19 years | 30 | 17.3 |
| 20 or more years | 19 | 11 |
| | | |
| Deployments | | |
| 2 | 45 | 26.2 |
| 3 | 36 | 20.9 |
| 4 | 30 | 17.4 |
| 5 | 22 | 12.8 |
| 6 or more | 39 | 22.7 |
| | | |
| Army component a member of | | |
| Active Duty | 150 | 86.7 |
| National Guard | 18 | 10.4 |
| Reserves | 5 | 2.9 |

*N*=172

In an attempt to identify participants' and their Soldiers' geographical locations in regard to Army support services and surrounding communities, spouses were asked the location of their Soldiers' assigned duty station and if they lived near a military installation. The majority of the participants' (64.9%) Soldiers' assigned duty stations were within the United States and its territories. The remaining participants' (20.7%, $n =$ 36) Soldiers were assigned to duty stations around the world (e.g., Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Pacific islands). Twenty-five participants (14.4%) did not identify an assigned duty station. The majority of participants (96.6%, $n =$ 168) lived near a military

installation with only five participants (2.9%) indicating they did not live near a military installation. Proximity to a military installation supported participants ($n = 174$) access to military support services with 55.7% ($n = 97$) always having access, 23.0% ($n = 40$) often having access, 15.5% ($n = 27$) sometimes having access, 4.0% ($n = 7$) rarely having access, and 1.7% ($n = 3$) not reporting accessibility. A summary of participants' Soldiers' assigned duty stations and proximity to a military installation is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

*Soldier's Duty Station, Proximity to a Military Installation, and Access to Military Support*

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Assigned Duty Station | | |
| United States and Territories | 113 | 64.9 |
| Europe | 26 | 15.0 |
| Middle East | 2 | 1.1 |
| Asia | 4 | 2.3 |
| Africa | 1 | .6 |
| Pacific Islands | 3 | 1.7 |
| Not Identified | 25 | 14.4 |
| | | |
| Live Near a Military Installation | | |
| Yes | 168 | 96.6 |
| No | 5 | 2.9 |
| Not Identified | 1 | .6 |
| | | |
| Access to Military Support Services | | |
| Always | 97 | 55.7 |
| Often | 40 | 23.0 |
| Sometimes | 27 | 15.5 |
| Rarely | 7 | 4.0 |
| Not Identified | 3 | 1.7 |
| | | |
| Soldier's Assigned Duty Stations as Reported by Participant | | |
| Not Reported | 25 | 14.4 |
| Africa | 1 | .6 |
| Ansbach, Germany | 1 | .6 |
| Barksdale Airforce Base, LA | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Leavenworth, KS | 2 | 1.1 |
| Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar | 2 | 1.1 |
| Camp Ashland, NE | 1 | .6 |
| Camp Casey, South Korea | 1 | .6 |
| Camp Darby, Italy | 11 | 14.9 |
| Camp Humphreys, South Korea | 1 | .6 |
| Camp Red Cloud, South Korea | 2 | 1.1 |
| Camp Shelby, MS | 1 | .6 |
| Clay Center, KS | 1 | .6 |
| El Paso, TX (Fort Bliss) | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Bragg, NC | 3 | 1.7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico | 2 | 1.1 |
| Fort Campbell, KY | 16 | 9.2 |
| Fort Carson, CO | 3 | 1.7 |
| Fort Dix, NJ | 2 | 1.1 |
| Fort Drum, NY | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Eustis, VA | 6 | 3.4 |
| Fort Greely, AK | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Hood, TX | 10 | 5.7 |
| Fort Huachuca, AZ | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Irwin, CA | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Jackson, SC | 9 | 5.2 |
| Fort Knox, KY | 5 | 2.9 |
| Fort Lee, VA | 3 | 1.7 |
| Fort Leonard Wood, MO | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Lewis, WA | 3 | 1.7 |
| Fort Polk, LA | 2 | 1.1 |
| Fort Riley, KS | 5 | 2.9 |
| Fort Rucker, AL | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Sam Houston, TX | 4 | 2.3 |
| Fort Sill, OK | 1 | .6 |
| Fort Stewart, GA | 3 | 1.7 |
| Fort Wainwright, AK | 2 | 1.1 |
| Fort Worth, TX | 1 | .6 |
| Guam | 3 | 1.7 |
| Houston, TX | 2 | .6 |
| Hunter Army Airfield, GA | 2 | 1.1 |
| JRB NAS Fort Worth, TX | 2 | 1.1 |
| Junction City, KS | 1 | .6 |
| Manhattan, KS | 1 | .6 |
| Montgomery, AL | 1 | .6 |
| Pentagon (Arlington, VA) | 2 | 1.1 |
| Red Stone Arsenal, AL | 1 | .6 |
| Salina, KS | 4 | 2.3 |
| Schofield Barracks, HI | 1 | .6 |
| South Atlantic Division (Atlanta, GA) | 1 | .6 |
| USAG, Stuttgart Germany | 14 | 8.0 |
| Washington, DC | 1 | .6 |
| Wiesbaden, Germany | 1 | .6 |

*N* = 174

**Descriptive Statistics**

The dependent variables in this study were the combined effect ( influence and potency) of Army spouses' opinions regarding sense of community (military and civilian) as measured by the Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by the Army spouses Perception Survey (ASPS). The inter-item reliability of the SCI-2 and the ASPS were computed via the inter-item reliability function in SPSS 22.0 (See Tables 8 and 12).

**SCI-2**

Cronbach's alphas for the SCI-2 military and civilian communities consistently ranged from $\alpha$=.96 to .98, which indicated an excellent inter-item reliability. Good reliability for the 24 items on the civilian sense of community was also presented by Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha for each individual item consistently ranged from .963 to .975 (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009).

Table 8

*Military and Civilian SCI-2 Cronbach's Alphas*

| Sense of Community | Cronbach's Alpha | N of items |
|---|---|---|
| Military | .974 | 24 |
| Civilian | .966 | 24 |

**SCI-2: Military**

Descriptive statistics for the military SCI-2 were calculated and presented in Table 9. The Military SCI-2 reported 165 cases with no missing data. Nine participants were excluded due to missing items on the military, referent, SCI-2. The individual ($n$=165) composite score mean for the military sense of community was 2.41 with the standard

deviation was .647 suggesting an average response for sense of community. The 24 item's composite scores ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of four with normal distribution. The individual mean for individual items ranged from 1.61 the lowest ("I have influence over what this community is like.") to 3.16 the highest("This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize.")

Table 9

*Item Analysis for Military Sense of Community Index-2*

| Item | M | SD | Skew | Kurtosis |
|------|---|----|------|----------|
| 1. I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community. | 2.44 | .868 | -.182 | -.709 |
| 2. Community members and I value the same things. | 2.47 | .821 | -.412 | -.571 |
| 3. This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met. | 2.46 | .753 | -.329 | -.382 |
| 4. Being a member of this community makes me feel good. | 2.43 | .847 | -.239 | -.685 |
| 5. When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community. | 2.35 | .844 | -.195 | -.804 |
| 6. People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals. | 2.49 | .763 | -.303 | -.345 |
| 7. I can trust people in this community. | 2.50 | .822 | -.396 | -.498 |
| 8. I can recognize most of the members of this community. | 2.98 | .863 | -.792 | .233 |
| 9. Most community members know me. | 1.74 | .773 | .730 | -.219 |
| 10. This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize. | 3.16 | .942 | -.963 | .028 |
| 11. I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community. | 2.13 | .833 | .175 | -.736 |
| 12. Being a member of this community is a part of my identity | 2.16 | .857 | .201 | -.735 |
| 13. Fitting into this community is important to me. | 2.12 | .839 | .199 | -.755 |
| 14. This community can influence other communities. | 2.49 | .931 | -.010 | -.847 |
| 15. I care about what other community members think of me. | 2.13 | .847 | .164 | -.821 |
| 16. I have influence over what this community is like. | 1.61 | .731 | .854 | -.293 |
| 17. If there is a problem in this community members can get it solved. | 2.55 | .722 | -.500 | -.114 |
| 18. This community has good leaders. | 2.54 | .761 | -.616 | -.208 |
| 19. It is very important to me to be a part of this community. | 2.22 | .886 | .061 | -.924 |
| 20. I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them. | 2.49 | .870 | -.162 | -.663 |
| 21. I expect to be a part of this community for a long time. | 2.39 | .821 | -.177 | -.647 |
| 22. Members of this community have shared important events together, such a holidays, celebrations, or disasters. | 2.53 | .722 | -.330 | -.195 |
| 23. I feel hopeful about the future of this community. | 2.71 | .787 | -.455 | -.055 |
| 24. Members of this community care about each other. | 2.63 | .735 | -.645 | .160 |

*N*=165

**SCI-2: Civilian.**

Descriptive statistics for the civilian SCI-2 were calculated and presented in Table 10. The Civilian SCI-2 reported 164 cases with no missing data. Ten participants were excluded due to missing items on the civilian, referent, SCI-2. The individual ($n$=164) composite score mean for the civilian sense of community was 2.08 with the standard deviation was .563 suggesting an average response for sense of community. The 24 item's composite scores ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of four with normal distribution. The individual mean for individual items ranged from 1.66 the lowest ("I have influence over what this community is like.") to 2.62 the highest ("I can recognize most of the members of this community.")

Table 10

*Item Analysis for Civilian Sense of Community Index-2*

| Item | M | SD | Skew | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community. | 2.16 | .772 | .265 | -.279 |
| 2. Community members and I value the same things. | 2.23 | .722 | .292 | .015 |
| 3. This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met. | 2.32 | .710 | -.058 | -.350 |
| 4. Being a member of this community makes me feel good. | 2.24 | .758 | .060 | -.448 |
| 5. When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community. | 2.04 | .789 | .220 | -.689 |
| 6. People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals. | 2.38 | .713 | .197 | -.121 |
| 7. I can trust people in this community. | 2.17 | .769 | .249 | -.282 |
| 8. I can recognize most of the members of this community. | 2.62 | .844 | -.148 | -.540 |
| 9. Most community members know me. | 1.75 | .770 | .784 | .095 |
| 10. This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize. | 2.55 | .923 | .020 | -.835 |
| 11. I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community. | 2.01 | .850 | .388 | -.653 |
| 12. Being a member of this community is a part of my identity | 1.97 | .832 | .430 | -.576 |
| 13. Fitting into this community is important to me. | 2.03 | .839 | .432 | -.458 |
| 14. This community can influence other communities. | 2.27 | .798 | .039 | -.568 |
| 15. I care about what other community members think of me. | 2.02 | .827 | .350 | -.624 |
| 16. I have influence over what this community is like. | 1.66 | .722 | .715 | -.409 |
| 17. If there is a problem in this community members can get it solved. | 2.39 | .724 | -.286 | -.445 |
| 18. This community has good leaders. | 2.34 | .795 | -.121 | -.603 |
| 19. It is very important to me to be a part of this community. | 2.07 | .859 | .379 | -.578 |
| 20. I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them. | 2.09 | .916 | .526 | -.501 |
| 21. I expect to be a part of this community for a long time. | 1.90 | .888 | .762 | -.150 |
| 22. Members of this community have shared important events together, such a holidays, celebrations, or disasters. | 2.51 | .724 | -.089 | -.240 |
| 23. I feel hopeful about the future of this community. | 2.54 | .785 | -.175 | -.363 |
| 24. Members of this community care about each other. | 2.56 | .705 | -.160 | -.167 |

*N=164*

**SCI-2: Military & Civilian Composite.**

A paired samples *t*-test was conducted presented in Table 11 to determine if Army

spouses significantly differed in their opinions toward their military community versus

their civilian community.  The results, mean difference (*MD*=.338, with 95% confidence

interval (*CI*) of 5.226 to 11.013) between the military SCI-2 and the civilianSCI-2 was

statistically significant, *t* (158) = 5.542, *p*=.000), documenting that Army spouses do

significantly differ in their opinions toward their military community versus their civilian

community.  In fact, the military SCI-2 M=2.411 (*SD*=.647) had a higher mean and

standard deviation than the civilian SCI-2 *M*=2.081 (*SD*=.563) meaning the spouses'

opinions and responses regarding the military community on the SCI-2 were more

dispersed and spread out than the civilian SCI-2. The military community opinion

skewness value was -.397, which indicated the scores on the military SCI-2 were

negatively distributed.   The civilian community opinion skewness value was .291, which

indicated the scores on the civilian SCI-2 were positively distributed.

Table 11

*Composite Statistics: Military and Civilian SCI-2*

| Referent | M | SD | Range | | Skew | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Potential | Actual | | |
| Military[a] | 2.411 | .647 | 1-4 | 1-4 | -.397 | -.069 |
| Civilian[b] | 2.081 | .563 | 1-4 | 1-4 | .291 | .249 |

*Note.* [a]*N* = 165. [b]*N* = 164.

**ASPS.**

The Cronbach's alpha for the ASPS was *α*=.89, which also indicated excellent inter-

item reliability (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009).

Table 12

*ASPS Cronbach's Alphas*

| Army spouses' perception survey | Cronbach's alpha | N of items |
|---|---|---|
| Demographics & Support Resources | .89 | 25 |

**The ASPS reported 174 cases**

With 4 excluded due to missing data. Eight variables on the ASPS, accessing Army

spouses' military and civilian awareness, access, communication and utilization of

support resources available to assist during multiple deployments, were measured using a

5-point Likert scale. The higher the score of each response the more positive opinions

concerning military and civilian support resources during multiple deployments. The

ASPS also gathered data on military and civilian support resource services accessed by

Army spouses' in the past 3 months.

**ASPS: Military.**

Descriptive statistics for the ASPS military support resources responses were

calculated and presented in Table 13.  The response percentage and frequency for each

military support resource was (1) awareness: completely 45.9%(*n*=79), very 26.7%

(*n*=46), somewhat 23.3% (*n*=40), and vaguely 4.1% (*n*=7), (2) access: always

56.7%(*n*=97), often 23.4%  (*n*=40), sometimes 15.8% (*n*=27), and rarely 4.1% (*n*=7), (3)

communication: always 36.6%(*n*=63), often 20.9%  (*n*=36), sometimes 25.6% (*n*=44),

rarely 16.3% (*n*=28), and never .6% (*n*=1), and (4) utilization: always 30.2%(*n*=52), often

39.5% (*n*=68), sometimes 27.3% (*n*=47), and rarely 2.9% (*n*=5).

Table 13

*Military Support Resources Response Distribution*

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Awareness of resource services available in the military community | | |
| Vaguely | 7 | 4.1 |
| Somewhat | 40 | 23.3 |
| Very | 46 | 26.7 |
| Completely | 79 | 45.9 |
| Are resource services easily accessible in the military community | | |
| Rarely | 7 | 4.1 |
| Sometimes | 27 | 15.8 |
| Often | 40 | 23.4 |
| Always | 97 | 56.7 |
| Constantly receiving communication from military resource services | | |
| Never | 1 | .6 |
| Rarely | 28 | 16.3 |
| Sometimes | 44 | 25.6 |
| Often | 36 | 20.9 |
| Always | 63 | 36.6 |
| Utilization of military resource services | | |
| Rarely | 5 | 2.9 |
| Sometimes | 47 | 27.3 |
| Often | 68 | 39.5 |
| Always | 52 | 30.2 |

*Note. N* = 174 unless indicated otherwise.

**ASPS: Civilian.**

Descriptive statistics for the ASPS civilian support resources responses were calculated and presented in Table 14.  The response percentage and frequency for each civilian support resource was (1) awareness: completely 29.7%($n=51$), very 33.7% ($n=58$), somewhat 25.0% ($n=43$), vaguely 9.9% ($n=17$), and not at all 1.7% ($n=3$), (2) access: always 49.1%($n=84$), often 26.9%  ($n=46$), sometimes 17.5% ($n=30$), rarely 4.1% ($n=7$), and never 2.3% ($n=4$), (3)  communication: always 27.3% ($n=47$), often 19.2% ($n=33$), sometimes 25.6% ($n=44$), rarely 22.1% ($n=38$), and never 5.8% ($n=10$), and (4) utilization: always 29.7%($n=51$), often 44.2%  ($n=76$), sometimes 18.0 % ($n=31$), and rarely 8.1% ($n=14$).

Table 14

*Civilian Support Resources Response Distribution*

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Awareness of resource services available in the civilian community | | |
| Not at all | 3 | 1.7 |
| Vaguely | 17 | 9.9 |
| Somewhat | 43 | 25.0 |
| Very | 58 | 33.7 |
| Completely | 51 | 29.7 |
| Are resource services easily accessible in the civilian community[a] | | |
| Never | 4 | 2.3 |
| Rarely | 7 | 4.1 |
| Sometimes | 30 | 17.5 |
| Often | 46 | 26.9 |
| Always | 84 | 49.1 |
| Constantly receiving communication from civilian resource services | | |
| Never | 10 | 5.8 |
| Rarely | 38 | 22.1 |
| Sometimes | 44 | 25.6 |
| Often | 33 | 19.2 |
| Always | 47 | 27.3 |
| Utilization of civilian resource services | | |
| Rarely | 14 | 8.1 |
| Sometimes | 31 | 18.0 |
| Often | 76 | 44.2 |
| Always | 51 | 29.7 |

*Note. N* = 174 unless indicated otherwise.

**ASPS: Support Resource Data.**

Descriptive statistics for the responses to the ASPS military and civilian questions

regarding available support resources to assist during multiple deployments were

calculated and presented in Table 15. The ASPS reported 174 cases with 2 missing data.

The individual ($n$=172) composite score means for the military questions regarding

available support resources to assist during multiple deployments were: awareness 4.15

($SD$=.916), access 4.33 ($SD$=.887), communication 3.77($SD$=1.131), and utilization

3.97($SD$=.834).  The individual ($n$=172) composite score means for the civilian questions

regarding available support resources to assist during multiple deployments were:

awareness 3.80 ($SD$=1.031), access 4.16 ($SD$=1.010), communication 3.40($SD$=1.260),

and utilization 3.96($SD$=.897).

Table 15

*Descriptive Statistics for Military and Civilian Support Resources Data*

| Variable | M | SD | Range | | Skew | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Potential | Actual | | |
| Military Support Resources | | | | | | |
| Awareness | 4.15 | .916 | 1-5 | 2-5 | -.617 | -.819 |
| Access | 4.33 | .887 | 1-5 | 2-5 | -1.053 | -.002 |
| Communication | 3.77 | 1.131 | 1-5 | 1-5 | -.316 | -1.229 |
| Utilization | 3.97 | .834 | 1-5 | 2-5 | -.251 | -.853 |
| Civilian Support Resources | | | | | | |
| Awareness | 3.80 | 1.031 | 1-5 | 1-5 | -.521 | -.457 |
| Access[a] | 4.16 | 1.010 | 1-5 | 1-5 | -1.132 | .755 |
| Communication | 3.40 | 1.260 | 1-5 | 1-5 | -.138 | -1.149 |
| Utilization[a] | 3.95 | .897 | 1-5 | 2-5 | -.596 | -.336 |

*Note.* $N$ = 172 unless indicated otherwise. [a]$n$ = 171

**ASPS: Military Support Resources Accessed.**

Spouses (*n* = 174) reported which types of military support resources they had access to in the last 3 months. Table 16 presents the summary of the types of military support resources participants accessed.  Participants 97.7% (*n* = 170) identified having most access to TriCare over the last 3 months with a percentage. The Commissary (DECA) had the next highest percentage with 93.1% accessibility (*n* = 162). The Post Exchange (Exchange or PX) had 91.4% accessibility (*n* = 159). Army Community Services (ACS) was accessible by 88.5% of the participants (*n* = 154).  Family Readiness Groups (FRG) was accessible by 71.3% of the participants (*n* = 124). Both chaplain services/programs and children/youth services were accessible by 64.9% of the participants (*n* = 113). Morale, Welfare, and Recreation was accessible by 62.1 % of the participant (*n* = 108). Military OneSource was least accessible with a percentage of 49.4 % (*n* = 86).

Table 16

*Military Support Resource Services Accessed in the Past 3 Months*

| Type of Support Resource | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Army Community Services (ACS) | 154 | 88.5 |
| Chaplain Services and Programs | 113 | 64.9 |
| Children and Youth Services (CYS) | 113 | 64.9 |
| Commissary (DECA) | 162 | 93.1 |
| Family Readiness Group (FRG) | 124 | 71.3 |
| Military OneSource | 86 | 49.4 |
| Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) | 108 | 62.1 |
| Post Exchange (Exchange or PX) | 159 | 91.4 |
| TriCare | 170 | 97.7 |

*N* = 174

**ASPS: Civilian Support Resources Accessed.**

Spouses (*n* = 174) also reported which types of civilian support resources they had access to in the last 3 months. Table 17 presents the summary of the types of civilian support resources participants accessed. Participants identified having most access to Grocery stores over the last 3 months with a percentage of 95.4% (*n*=166). Malls had the next highest percentage with 93.1% accessibility (*n*=162). Church/faith based programs was accessible by 77.6% of the participants (*n*= 135). Doctors/Hospitals were accessible by 72.4% of the participants (*n*= 126). Parks and Recreations was accessible by 60.3% of the participants (*n*=105). Red Cross was accessible by 29.3 % of the participant (*n*=51). Both USO and Human/Health services were least accessible with a percentage of 25.3% of the participants (n=44).

Table 17

*Civilian Support Resource Services Accessed in the Past 3 Months*

| *Type of Support Resource* | *Frequency* | *Percentage* |
|---|---|---|
| Church/Faith Based Programs | 135 | 77.6 |
| Doctors/Hospitals | 126 | 72.4 |
| Grocery Stores | 166 | 95.4 |
| Human and Health Services | 44 | 25.3 |
| Malls | 162 | 93.1 |
| Parks and Recreations | 105 | 60.3 |
| Red Cross | 51 | 29.3 |
| USO | 44 | 25.3 |

$N = 174$

**ASPS: Military & Civilian Composite.**

The composite data for the ASPS indicated 174 cases with 4 excluded due to missing

data. The individual composite score mean for the ASPS was 3.83 with the standard

deviation was .809 suggesting an average response. The 19 item's composite scores

ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of seven with normal distribution. The

individual mean for individual items ranged from 1.03 the lowest ("Proximity to a

military installation) to 4.33 the highest ("Military resource services easy accessibility")

Table 18 presents composite detailed statistical analysis for the ASPS.

Table 18

*Composite Statistics: ASPS*

| Survey | M | SD | Range | | Skew | Kurtosis |
| | | | Potential | Actual | | |
| ASPS | 3.824 | .809 | 1-7 | 1.0-4.3 | .149 | -.788 |

*Note. N=170.*

## Results

This study was guided by one research question, which was addressed (a) by using descriptive statistics to explain the participant's demographics and support resource variables as described and explained in the analysis, recruitment and response rates section on pages 75 thru 95, and (b) by using Hierarchical Multiple Regression to measure the relationship of Army *spouses'* perception of available support resources and the combined effect of spouses' sense of community opinions (including military and civilian) and support resources(demographics, military awareness, military access, military communication, military utilization, civilian awareness, civilian access, civilian, communication, and civilian utilization) applicable to assist during multiple deployments, which is explained in the result section, pages 95 thru 110.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis Testing: Research Question.**

What is the combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services,

communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources?

$H_0$: There is no combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the SCI-2 (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by Soldier demographics and support attribute questions(including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993).

$H_1$: There is a combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the SCI-2 (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by Soldier demographics and support attribute questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services,

communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources (Burrell et al., 2003; Castaneda et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2008; Frankel et al., 1993).

**Hypothesis Testing: Pearson's Correlational Analysis.**

Table 19 presents the correlation findings among key demographics. To determine relationships among key demographic variables correlations between spouses' ages, length of marriage to Soldier, the amount of time Soldier has been in the Army, proximity to military installation, Soldier's pay grade/rank, utilization of military support resources, and utilization of civilian support resources were completed. Army spouses' age was positively correlated with Army spouses' length of marriage to Soldier ($r = .841$, $p < .01$), length of Soldier's military service ($r = .829$, $p < .01$), Soldier's pay grade/rank ($r = .520$, p $< .01$), and utilization of military support resources ($r = .285$, $p < .01$). This correlation suggests that as the age of the Spouse increases the length of marriage to the Soldier increases, the length of time the Soldier has been in the Army increases, the Soldier's pay grade/rank is higher, and the utilization of military support resources increased. Proximity to installation was negatively correlated with use of military support resources ($r = -.327$, p $< .01$) suggesting utilization of military support resources decreased the further spouses lived from the nearest installation. Pay grade/rank was positively correlated with utilization of military support resources ($r = .198$, $p < .01$) suggesting that as a Soldier's pay grade/rank gets higher, the utilization of military

support resources increase. Utilization of military support resources was positively

correlated with utilization of civilian support resources ($r = .256$, $p < .01$) suggesting that

as utilization of military support resources increases, the utilization of civilian support

resources will also increase.

Table 19

*Key Demographic Correlations*

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | - | | | | | | |
| Length of marriage | .841** | - | | | | | |
| Length time in Army | .829** | .893** | - | | | | |
| Proximity to installation | -.082 | -.091 | -.119 | - | | | |
| Pay grade/rank | .520** | .582** | .567** | -.126 | - | | |
| Utilization of military support resources | .285** | .263** | .212** | -.327** | .198** | - | |
| Utilization of civilian support resources | .091 | .029 | -.032 | .048 | .129 | .256** | - |

*Note*. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed $p < .01$).

   Military SCI-2 and civilian SCI-2 was correlated with variables from the ASPS

(utilization of military support resources, utilization of civilian support resources and key

demographic variables) (see Table 20). Spouses' age was positively correlated with

length of marriage ($r = .841$, $p < .01$), number of children ($r = .635$, $p < .01$), number of

deployments ($r = .811$, $p < .01$), pay grade/rank ($r = .520$, $p < .01$), time in Army ($r = .829$, $p < .01$), utilization of military support resources($r = .285$, $p < .01$), military SCI-2

($r = .442$, $p < .01$), and civilian SCI-2 ($r = .344$, $p < .01$) suggesting as spouses' age

increases the amount of time married to Soldier, the number of children, the number of

deployments, Soldier's pay/rank and time in Army, utilization of military support resources, and military and civilian sense of community also increase. Deployments experienced as a Spouse was positively correlated with pay grade/rank ($r = .598, p < .01$), time in Army ($r = .804, p < .01$), utilization of military support resources($r = .274, p < .01$), military SCI-2 ($r = .463, p < .01$), and civilian SCI-2 ($r = .256, p < .01$). This implies as the number of deployments experienced by the Army Spouse increases the Soldier's pay/rank and time in Army, utilization of military support resources, military and civilian sense of community will also increase. Proximity to military installation was negatively correlated with utilization of military support resources($r = -.327, p < .01$) and was positively correlated with civilian SCI-2 ($r = .180, p < .05$) suggesting the further away a Spouse lives from a military installation, there will be a decrease in utilization of military support resources and an increase in the spouses' civilian sense of community.

Table 20

*Military and Civilian SCI-2 & ASPS Support Resource/Key Demographic Correlations*

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | - | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Length of marriage | .841** | - | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Children | .635** | .620** | - | | | | | | | | | |
| Deployment Experienced While Married to Soldier | .811** | .802** | .547** | - | | | | | | | | |
| Pay grade/rank | .520** | .582** | .349** | .598** | - | | | | | | | |
| Length time in Army | .829** | .893** | .626** | .804** | .567** | - | | | | | | |
| | | a | | | | | | | | | | |
| Army Component | .136 | .043 | .136 | .085 | .001 | .077 | - | | | | | |
| | | a | | | | a | | | | | | |
| Proximity to installation | -.082 | -.091 | -.090 | -.136 | -.126 | -.119 | .329** | - | | | | |
| | | a | | | | a | A | | | | | |
| Utilization of military support resources | .285** | .263** | .238** | .274** | .198** | .212** | -.146 | -.327** | - | | | |
| Utilization of civilian support resources | .091 | .029 | .009 | .093 | .129 | -.032 | .063 | .048 | .256* | - | | |
| Military SCI-2 | .442** | .486** | .380** | .463** | .393** | .469** | -.087 | -.083 | .253** | -.170* | - | |
| | B | b | b | b | b | b | B | b | b | b | | |
| Civilian SCI-2 | .344** | .276** | .259** | .256** | .254** | .308** | .261** | .180* | -.073 | .291** | .196* | - |
| | C | c | c | c | c | c | c | c | c | c | D | |

*Note.* * p < .05. ** *p* < .01. *N* = 172 unless indicated otherwise. [a]*N* = 173. [b]*N* = 165. [c]*N* = 164. [d]*N* = 159.

Pearson correlations were completed with the 2 sense of community opinions variables, and 10 support resource variables. The variables found in Table 21 are as follows: (a) military SCI-2 (n = 165), (b) civilian SCI-2 (n = 164), (c) military support resource awareness, (d) military support resource accessibility, (e) communication from military support resources, (f) utilization of military support resources; (g) civilian support resource awareness, (h) civilian support resource accessibility, (i) communication from civilian support resources, (j) utilization of civilian support resources, (k) proximity to military installation, and (l) deployments experienced while married to Soldier (n = 172). The military SCI-2 had moderately positive correlations with deployments experienced while married to Soldier (r = .463, p < .01). The military SCI-2 had weaker positive correlations with the civilian SCI-2 (r = .196, p < .05), military support resource awareness (r = .337, p < .01), military support resource accessibility (r = .323, p < .01), communication from military resources supports (r = .395, p < .01) and utilization of military support resources (r = .253, p < .01). The military SCI-2 had weaker negative correlation with the utilization of civilian support resources (r = -.170, p < .05). This suggests that military sense of community increased as communication to spouses from military resources supports, deployments experienced while married to Soldier, civilian SCI-2, military support resource awareness, military support resource accessibility, and utilization of military support resources increased, while utilization of civilian support resources decreased.

The civilian SCI-2 had a moderately positive correlation with communication from civilian support resources (r = .422, p < .01). The civilian SCI-2 had weaker positive correlations with military support resource awareness (r = .153, p < .05), communication

from military support resources (r = .197, p < .05), civilian support resource awareness (

r= .336, p <.01), civilian support resource accessibility(r = .292, p < .01), utilization of

civilian support resources (r = .291, p < .01),proximity to military installations (r = .180,

p < .05), and deployments experienced while married to Soldier (r = .256, p <. 01). This

indicates that as the civilian SCI-2 increased, communication from civilian support

resources, military support resource awareness, communication from military support

resources, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource accessibility,

and utilization of civilian support resources increased. Proximity to military installations

were further away, and deployments experienced while married to Soldier increased.

Military support resource awareness had a strong positive correlation with military

support resource accessibility (r = .675, p < .01). Military support resource awareness had

a moderately positive correlation with communication from military support resources (r

= .507, p < .01), utilization of military support resources (r = .435, p < .01), and

deployments experienced while married to Soldier (r = .607, p < .01). Military support

resource awareness had weaker positive correlations with civilian support resource

awareness (r = .391, p < .01), and communication from civilian support resources (r =

.213, p < .01). Military support resource awareness also had a weak negative correlation

with proximity to military installation (r = -.293, p < .01). This finding suggests that as

military support resource awareness increased, military support resource accessibility,

communication from military support resources, utilization of military support resources,

civilian support resource awareness, deployments experienced while married to Soldier,

and communication from civilian support resources increased. This finding also suggests

as military support resource awareness increased, spouses' lived closer to a military installation.

Military support resource accessibility had moderately positive correlations with communication from military support resources ($r = .425$, $p < .01$), and utilization of military support resources ($r = .433$, $p < .01$). Military support resource accessibility had weaker positive correlation with civilian support resource awareness ($r = .218$, $p < .01$), civilian support resource accessibility ($r = .190$, $p < .05$), and deployments experienced while married to Soldier ($r = .353$, $p < .01$). Military support resource accessibility also had a weak negative correlation with proximity to military installation ($r = -.339$, $p < .01$). This suggests that as military support resource accessibility increased, communication from military support resources, utilization of military support, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource accessibility, and deployments experienced while married to the Soldier also increased. Findings also indicated as military support resource accessibility increased, spouses' lived closer to military installation.

Communication from military support resources had moderately positive correlations with utilization of military support resources ($r=.526$, $p<.01$), civilian support resource awareness ($r=.405$, $p<.01$), and deployments experienced while married to Soldier($r=.453$, $p<.01$). Communication from military support resources had weaker positive correlations with communication from civilian support resources ($r=.255$, $p<.01$), and utilization of civilian support resources ($r=.156$, $p<.05$). Communication from military support resources had a weak negative correlation with proximity to military installation ($r=-.210$, $p<.01$). Indicating that when communication from military support

resources increased, so did utilization of military support resources, deployments experienced while married to Soldier, civilian support resource awareness, communication from civilian support resources, and utilization of civilian support resources. Increased communication from military support resources also indicted decreased proximity to military installation, meaning proximity to a military installation was closer.

Utilization of military support resources had weak positive correlations with civilian support resource awareness (r=.245, p<.01), civilian support resource accessibility (r=.217, p<.01), communication from civilian support resources (r=.184, p<.05), utilization of civilian support resources (r=.256, p<.01), and deployment experienced while married to Soldier (r=.274, p<.01). Utilization of military support resources had a weak negative correlation with proximity to military installation (r=-.327, p<.01). Suggesting, higher utilization of military support resources reflected higher civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource accessibility, communication from civilian support resources, utilization of civilian support resources, and deployments experienced while married to Soldier.  Higher utilization of military support resources also reflected spouses living closer to a military installation.

Civilian support resource awareness had strong positive correlations with communication from civilian support resources (r=.707, p<.01. Civilian support resource awareness had moderately positive correlations with civilian support resource accessibility (r= .593, p<.01), and utilization of civilian support resources (r=.596, p<.01). Civilian support resource awareness had a weak positive correlation with deployments experienced while married to Soldier (r=.358, p<.01). This finding suggests

increased civilian support resource awareness indicates increased communication from civilian support resources, utilization of civilian support resources, civilian support resource accessibility, and deployments experienced while married to Soldier.

Civilian support resource accessibility had strong positive correlations with utilization of civilian support resources ($r=.672$, $p<.01$). Civilian support resource accessibility had moderately positive correlations with communications from civilian support resources ($r=.547$, $p<.01$). This finding implies that as civilian support resource accessibility was increased, so was utilization of civilian support resources, and communications from civilian support resources.

Communication from civilian support resources had a strong positive correlation with utilization of civilian support resources ($r=.658$, $p<.01$). Communication from civilian support resources had a weaker positive correlation with deployment experienced while married to Soldier ($r=.193$, $p<.05$). Increased communication from civilian support resources suggested increased utilization of civilian support resources, and deployments experienced while married to Soldier.

Table 21

*Pearson Correlations for Military and Civilian SCI-2 & ASPS Support Resource Variables*

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Military SCI-2 | - | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civilian SCI-2 | .196* | - | | | | | | | | | | |
| | a | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Military Support Resource Awareness | .337** | .153* | - | | | | | | | | | |
| | D | c | | | | | | | | | | |
| Military Support Resource Accessibility | .323** | .029 | .675** | - | | | | | | | | |
| | C | b | f | | | | | | | | | |
| Communication from Military Support Resources | .395** | .197* | .507** | .425** | - | | | | | | | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | | | | | |
| Utilization of Military Support Resources | .253** | -.073 | .435** | .433** | .526** | - | | | | | | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | | | | | |
| Civilian Support Resource Awareness | -.026 | .336** | .391** | .218** | .405** | .245** | - | | | | | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | | | | | |
| Civilian Support Resource Accessibility | -.126 | .292** | .115 | .190* | .127 | .217** | .593** | - | | | | |
| | C | b | f | e | f | F | f | | | | | |
| Communication from Civilian Support Resources | -.076 | .422** | .213** | .114 | .255** | .184* | .707** | .547** | - | | | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | f | | | | |
| Utilization of Civilian Support Resources | -.170* | .291** | .115 | .089 | .156* | .256** | .596** | .672** | .658** | - | | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | f | | | | |
| Proximity to Military Installation | -.083 | .180* | -.293** | -.339** | -.210** | -.327* | .034 | .075 | .000 | .048 | - | |
| | D | c | | f | | | | f | | | | |
| Deployments Experienced while Married to Soldier | .463** | .256** | .607** | .353** | .453** | .274** | .358** | .142 | .193* | .093 | -.136 | - |
| | D | c | | f | | | | f | | | | |

*Note.* * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. $N = 172$ unless indicated otherwise. [a]$N = 159$. [b]$N = 163$. [c]$N = 164$. [d]$N = 165$. [e]$N = 170$. [f]$N = 171$

**Hypothesis Testing: Hierarchical Multiple Regression.**

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to determine the influence of predictor domains of the spouses' sense of community opinions during multiple deployments followed by the analysis of the domain of support resources available during multiple deployments. The variables included in the spouses' sense of community opinions during multiple deployments domain included the following: military sense of community and civilian sense of community. The variables included in the support resources available during multiple deployments included: military support resource awareness, military support resource access, communication from military support resources, utilization of military support resources, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource access, communication from civilian support resources, utilization of civilian support resources, proximity to military installation, deployment experienced while married to a Soldier, and pay grade/rank.

The eleven variables in the domain of support resources during multiple deployments were entered into the regression analysis. ANOVA was used to assess the overall significance of the models. Model 1consisting of 8 domain support resources services variables and 2 domain support resources demographic variables was found statistically significant, $R^2 = .346$, $R^2_{adj} = .301$, $F(10,146) = 7.719$, $p = .000$, $p < .01$. Model 2 consisting of 8 domain support resources services variables and 3domain support resources demographic variable were found statistically significant $\Delta R^2 = .357$, $F(11,145) = 7.330$, $p = .000$, $p < .01$. This suggests that the domains of opinion of support resources did have an effect on spouses' perception of available support resources during multiple deployments. Table 22 presents a summary of the models as entered into the

regression. Table 23 presents a summary of the ANOVA data. Review of the Beta

weights of Model 1 specified three of the 10 variables were statistically significant. Table

24 presents the findings for the regression coefficients. Model 2 also specified three of

the 11 variables indicated statistically significant effect on spouses' perception of

available support during multiple deployment.

Table 22

*Model Summary*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .588[a] | .346 | .301 | 18.906 |
| 2 | .598[b] | .357 | .309 | 18.804 |

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Table 23

*ANOVA[a]*

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Regression | 27590.006 | 10 | 2759.001 | 7.719 | .000[b] |
| Residual | 52187.115 | 146 | 357.446 | | |
| Total | 79777.121 | 156 | | | |
| 2 Regression | 28509.213 | 11 | 2591.747 | 7.330 | .000[c] |
| Residual | 51267.908 | 145 | 353.572 | | |
| Total | 79777.121 | 156 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: SCI2 b. Predictors: (Constant)

Table 24

*Regression Model Coefficients*

| Predictor | B | Std. Error | Beta | T | Sig. | 95% C.I. for B Lower | Upper |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Military and Civilian SCI-2 | 62.320 | 16.822 | | 3.705 | .000 | 29.071 | 95.568 |
| I am aware of military resource services available in the military community | 1.130 | 2.886 | .045 | .392 | .696 | -4.574 | 6.835 |
| Are military resource services in the military community easily accessible to you? | 1.514 | 2.554 | .059 | .593 | .554 | -3.534 | 6.561 |
| I am constantly receiving some form of communication from military support resources | 5.560 | 1.893 | .273 | 2.938 | .004 | 1.820 | 9.301 |
| I utilize military support resources made available to me | -2.506 | 2.354 | -.092 | -1.065 | .289 | -7.158 | 2.146 |
| I am aware of civilian support resources available in my community | -4.558 | 2.624 | -.209 | -1.737 | .085 | -9.745 | .629 |
| Are civilian support resources in your community easily accessible to you? | .503 | 2.295 | .023 | .219 | .827 | -4.033 | 5.040 |
| I am constantly receiving some form of communication from civilian support resources | 4.038 | 1.938 | .227 | 2.084 | .039 | .209 | 7.868 |
| I utilize civilian support resources made available to me | -2.313 | 2.824 | -.092 | -.819 | .414 | -7.895 | 3.268 |
| How many trainings and/or deployments ranging in duration of 3 months or more have you experienced as an Army Spouse? | 4.157 | 1.541 | .279 | 2.697 | .008 | 1.111 | 7.204 |
| Do you live on or near a military installation? | 16.791 | 10.414 | .117 | 1.612 | .109 | -3.792 | 37.374 |
| What is your Soldier's current rank/pay grade status? | 1.748 | .845 | .185 | 2.069 | .040 | .078 | 3.418 |

**Statistical Hypothesis.**

The statistical analysis for this research study was significant at the .01 level, which is below the cut-off value 0.05 that was set by the researcher. Therefore, the statistical (null) hypothesis for this research study was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was supported. Meaning, there was sufficient evidence at the 0.01 alpha level of significance to reject the claim that  spouses' opinions of domains of sense of community during multiple deployments(as measured by the variables military sense of community, and civilian sense of community) and domains of support  resources during multiple deployments( as measured by military support resource awareness, military support resource access, communication from military support resources, utilization of military support resources, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource access, communication from civilian support resources, utilization of civilian support resources, proximity to military installation, deployment experienced while married to a Soldier, and Soldier's pay grade/rank) will have no combined effect(influence and potency) on a spouses' perception of available support resources.

There was also sufficient evidence at the 0.01 alpha level of significance to support the claim that there is a combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the SCI-2   (including variables of sense of community within the military, and sense of community within the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by Soldier demographics and support attribute questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, military resource services skills, utilization

of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services, communication of civilian resource services, civilian resource services skills, and utilization of civilian resource services) on a spouses' perception of available support resources.

### Summary

One hundred seventy-four Army Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve spouses representing 38 military duty stations, primarily females consisting of African American/Black, Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaska Native, and other/Multi-Racial ethnicities participated in this web-based survey of perception of support resources during multiple deployments. Demographic variables such as age, ethnicity, length of marriage, level of education, number of children, and gender were analyzed for descriptive statistics. Various military information was collected including number of deployments, Soldier's pay grade/rank, Soldier's assigned duty station, and the Army component the Soldier is a member of. Support resource information such as spouses' awareness, access, communication, and utilization of military and civilian services available during multiple deployments was also collected. Frequency distribution and percentages were reported on these variables. Relationships between demographic data and other variables in the study were measured with Pearson's correlation. The combined effects of Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments on spouses' perception of available support resources was tested using multiple hierarchical regression resulting in significant findings.

Participants were found to have similar opinions regarding military and civilian sense of community. Participants who had been Army spouses for longer lengths of time tended to have experienced more deployments and utilized more military support resources based on correlational data. Participants also reported average ratings for military and civilian sense of communities. Increased civilian sense of community resulted in increased utilization of civilian support services, and further distance from a military installation. Participants reported it was easy to access military support resources, while civilian support resources were not as easily accessible.

The utilization frequency of support resources was higher for military services than civilian, but the frequency numbers for both military and civilian services were close in range. Participants reported that the closer in proximity they were to a military installation, awareness, access, communication, and utilization of military support services all increased. The higher the frequency of deployments experienced by participants the overall type of civilian and military support resources increased. Participants also reported decreased civilian support services with higher usage of military support resources.

The null hypothesis was rejected for this study. Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments does have statistically significant effect (influence and potency) on a spouses' perception of available support resources. Chapter 5 presents discussion of the significance of the findings in this analysis and the implications for social change along with recommendations for action and the need for further study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation

**Introduction**

The focus of this study was the perception of Army spouses toward available support resources during multiple deployments. A summary of the study findings and interpretation of results are presented in this chapter with comparisons to previous literature. Research studies by nature have limitations. Limitations found in this study are discussed in this chapter. This chapter also offers recommendations for future studies, implications for social change, and dissertation conclusion.

**Summary of Findings**

The research question this study set out to determine was "What is the combined effect (influence and potency) of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments on a spouses' perception of available support resources?

The statistical hypothesis was stated as follows: There is no combined effect (influence and potency)at the .05 level of significance for an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community as measured by the composite scores of the SCI-2(including variables of sense of community with in the military, and sense of community with in the civilian community) and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments as measured by the composite scores of the ASPS using Soldier demographics and support resource questions (including variables concerning awareness of military resource services, access to military resource services, communication of military resource services, utilization of military resource services, awareness of civilian resource services, access to civilian resource services,

communication of civilian resource services, and utilization of civilian resource services)on a spouses' perception of available support resources.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed a significant relationship between individual variables on the military and civilian sense of community index and the domain support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments on a spouses' perception of available support resources. The combined effects of an Army spouses' opinion regarding sense of community during multiple deployment and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments were statistically significant. The null hypothesis of this study was rejected.

The significant correlations among demographic variables identified included positive correlations between age, length of marriage, Soldier's years of service, and Soldier's pay grade/rank. Proximity to military installation was negatively correlated with military support services utilized and had a positive correlation with civilian support services utilized.

Significant correlations among the spouses' sense of community opinions during multiple deployment with key demographic variables were also found. Civilian sense of community during multiple deployments was negatively correlated with utilization of military support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments. There was also a positive correlation between spouses' age, number of children, deployments experienced while married to Soldier, Soldier's length of time in Army, utilization military support resources, military sense of community, and civilian sense of community.

Significant correlations among the support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments and key demographic variables were also found. There was a positive correlation between spouses' ages, number of children, deployments experienced while married to Soldier, and utilization of military support resources. A positive correlation between the number of deployments experienced by the Army Spouse, the Soldier's pay grade/rank, time in Army, utilization of military and civilian support resources, and military and civilian sense of community. A positive correlation was found between military support resource accessibility, communication from military support resources, utilization of military support, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource accessibility, and deployments experienced while married to Soldier. Findings also indicated a negative correlation between military access to support resource and proximity to military installation.

**Interpretation of Findings**

This study research question was posed in response to prior studies that explored demographic and support resources available to military families during a single deployment. The emphasis of this study focused on the importance of (a) identifying how Army spouses feel about the military and civilian communities in which they live, (b) the assistance of support resources during multiple deployments, and (c) whether these feelings have any influence and power over their perception of available support resources as results in previous studies had recommended.

A review of the literature revealed that subjective appraisals were needed to reflect Soldiers' and their spouses' sense of awareness, purpose, positive relationships, community, and family autonomy during deployments (Burrell et al., 2006; Castaneda et

al., 2008). This literature finding was supported in the findings of this study. This study rejected the statistical hypothesis that Army spouses' perception of available support services is not affected by their opinion of sense of community and support resources. The findings in this study indicated that Army spouses' perception of available support services is affected by their opinion of sense of community and support resources suggesting there is a need for more subjective appraisals as stated in previous literature findings (Burrell et al.,2006; Castaneda et al., 2008).

The results of this study help to support earlier suggestions from previous studies that spouses who had a more positive sense of military community tended to also have a more positive sense of civilian community. The results also indicated spouses reporting a more positive sense of military community also reported being aware of, receiving communication from, having access to, and utilizing military resource supports. They also report experiencing more deployments. This finding suggests that spouses who have a negative sense of military community were more likely to report not being aware of, receiving communication from, having access to, and utilizing military resource supports. While this finding was not reported in other literature, it was found that the lack of initiating access to support services was related to utilization of services (Gorman, Blow, Ames, & Reed, 2011).

This research found that increased communication from civilian support resources, military support resource awareness, communication from military support resources, civilian support resource awareness, civilian support resource accessibility, and utilization of civilian support resources resulted in a higher sense of civilian community. Spouses with a positive civilian sense of community also reported experiencing more

deployments while living longer distances from a military installations. This finding

supports previous research that implied that a sense of community is the key component

linking military and civilian support services (Bowen et al, 2003; Casta & Renshaw,

2011).

Spouses' claims to having a higher sense of military community than a sense of

civilian community was statistically significant. It should be noted that their reported

frequency was close in range. Previous research by Casta and Renshaw (2011) and Evers

et al. (2004) identified the importance of military families feeling a sense of belonging

and genuine care concerning their lifestyles and deployment challenges. Current findings

in this study suggest that Army spouses do not feel that neither military nor civilian

communities genuinely care about them. This is supported by spouses' responses to

questions on the SCI-2 regarding how members in the military and civilian community

cared about each other. The fact that a military sense of community had a significant

effect on a spouses' perception of support resource services available during multiple

deployments makes knowing how Army spouses feel about support resources made

available during multiple deployments even more crucial. Previous research has indicated

that a sense of community influences an individual's success in problem solving and the

availability of needed support (Bowen et al., 2003; Casta & Renshaw, 2011; Gorman et

al., 2011; Mancini et al., 2005).

The significance of support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments

was an important focus of this research. The literature review identified awareness and

access as significant resource variables (Burrell et al., 2006; Castaneda et al., 2008;

Gorman et al., 2001).  The findings revealed that only military awareness has significant

relationships with the majority of all the variables reported. The study found the more aware spouses were concerning military support resources, the more aware they were concerning civilian support resources. Increased military support resources awareness also has a positive relationship with access to support resources, and communication from support resources for both military and civilian support resources.

The findings indicated the longer the Soldier has been in the Army, the more deployments the Spouse has experienced. The Spouse will live closer to a military installation and will access and use military support resources more frequently than civilian support resources. Generally, there is more military support resources tailored specifically for deployed Soldiers and spouses on military installations. Research supports the fact that the longer the years of service of the military member, the greater the likelihood the military family will live off base, this generally an involuntary decision due to limited housing on the military installation (Evers et al., 2004).

The greater the distance between where the Spouse lives and a military installation decreased easy access to military support resources. Increased access to military support services was positively related to closer proximity to a military installation, higher frequency of utilized military support resources. This is a significant implication that should be explored when planning and coordinating military support resources made available to assist spouses during multiple deployments.  Because there is limited housing on military installations for Soldiers and spouses to live, it is important for military support resources to be accessible to spouses who live off of military installations. Previous research cited both military and civilian support services access and utilization

significant and important during the deployment process for military families (Pennington & Lipari, 2007).

The family stress theory was the theoretical basis of this research study. The family stress theory is founded on the assumption that stress is a normal eruption of family equilibrium (Hill, 1949; Klein & White, 1996; Malia, 2006). Back to back deployments serve as the stressor event (A). Sense of community support resources within military and civilian communities are provided to help Army spouses cope with the challenges of multiple deployments lasting 3 months or longer (B). Army spouse's perception of available support resources is what an Army Spouse thinks about an available support resources ability to actually help them during a multiple deployment.

Army spouses have a very important role in the usage of support resources during multiple deployments. Within the 38 military duty stations represented in the research, 174 Army spouses participated in this study concluding that their opinion of sense of community and support resources had significant effect on their perception of these services during multiple deployments.

## Limitations

The first general limitation of this research study was that the survey questions only explored the more basic and less complicated possible Army spouses' perceptions of available support services during multiple deployments. The substantiated facts and statistics of this study proved helpful in understanding the relationship between spousal perception and established support resources. The findings of this descriptive research established the need for more research (Huebner et al., 2007; Jumper et al., 2005).

The second limitation was complications of survey data collection due to the low response rate of online surveys. According to a recent study conducted at Kansas State University, survey participants are less likely to respond to online surveys (Miller, 2010). Another limitation of this survey was the answering of the sense of community survey. The sense of community survey is comprised of 2 components. One component covers the military community. The second component covers the civilian community. The possible limitation that may have occurred was due to the fact that the questions were the same for both communities. Answering the questions twice for two different communities could have impacted the participant's answers.

The third limitation was participant's not answering survey questions truthfully. There is an unwritten, but understood taboo in the military community concerning the possible negative effects on military personnel's careers if they or their family's seek support services or resources, especially in the mental health area. Seeking help for personal matters in the military is often seen as a sign of weakness or command embarrassment (Drummet et al., 2003).

## Recommendations for Further Study

One area for future research identified is the need for a formal study of the utilization of civilian support services and the challenges that confront military families concerning utilization of military support services (Castaneda et al., 2008; Gorman et al., 2011; Hoshmand & Hoshmand, 2007). Another area for future research identified throughout the discussion in this chapter is the need to understand the extent of the effects of proximity to a military installation during multiple deployments on spouses and its

impact on their ability to access and utilize needed resources in both the military and civilian community.

This study also identified the need for future research in the effectiveness of the present process of making Soldier's and their Spouse aware of available military and civilian support resources available during multiple deployments (Burrell et al., 2006; Castaneda et al., 2008; Gorman et al., 2011). This study identified one more need for future research in the area of coordinating military and civilian support services to insure less redundancy and more variety of support resource services available during multiple deployments (Bowen et al, 2003; Casta & Renshaw, 2011).

**Implications for Social Change**

As identified in chapter 3, the positive social change goal of this research was to allow Army spouses the opportunity to bring awareness to concerns and identify best practices which may: (a) alter the institutional nature and mindsets of those who make and implement Army support resources; (b)  lead to recommendations that influence positive change regarding Army support resources. These are crucial components in providing support resources that really make a difference in the lives of Army spouses and the resiliency needed to meet the challenges confronted with due to the downsizing of the Army and increased multiple deployments.

The intent of this study was to provide data and information to military leaders, military support resources, civilian leaders, and civilian support resources regarding Army spouses' perception of available support resources during multiple deployments that would provoke changes that yield more consistent usage of support resources during multiple deployments. The importance of knowing and understanding Army spouses'

perception of military and civilian sense of community, and the support resources these communities make available to assist spouses during multiple deployments was established in this study.

A preliminary understanding of proximity to a military installation, and access to and utilization of military and civilian support resources was provided with this study and the concept that a spouses' opinion of sense of community and support resources applicable to assist during multiple deployments does have effect (influence and potency) on spouses' perception of available support resources was proven and confirmed.

More exploration of the gap between proximity to military installations and access to support resources in military and civilian communities is needed. Proximity to military installation does impact a spouses' ability to access and utilize military and civilian support services.

## Conclusion

The United States Global War on Terror has significantly increased the frequency of Army deployments experienced by Army spouses and the need for assistance from support services in both the military and civilian communities. As Soldiers are deploying back to back with multiple deployments, their spouses are encountering challenges or issues that they may need assistance with in some form or another (Castaneda et al., 2008). Military resource referral, information, and services have been created and modified to assist spouses during deployments. There are also many civilian (state, county, and local) resource referral, information and services available to assist spouses who have Soldiers that are deployed. The spouses' perception of these military and civilian support resources is an essential component to the utilization of these services

during deployments (Gorman et al., 2011). Despite the acknowledged importance of spouses' perceptions in substantiating and validating the effectiveness of support resources available to assist during deployments (Hoshmand & Hoshmand, 2007), few researchers have examined spouses' perceptions regarding support resources available during deployments.

The data suggested that Army spouses' perception of available support services is significantly affected by their opinion of sense of community and support resources. The findings in this study indicated a need for a better understanding of the relationships between (a) Army spouses Perceptions, (b) military and civilian support attributes including access, communication, and utilization, and (c) military and civilian sense of community (Burrell et al.,2006; Castaneda et al., 2008).

Insights gained through this study could also prove beneficial in developing points of discussion among Army spouses, military leaders, military and civilian support systems that may result in: (a) improved quality and effectiveness of support resources, (b) fostering a better quality of life for the military families of military multiple deployments, and (c) civilian support resources understanding military culture better.

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Appendix A: The Army Spouses' Perception Survey (ASPS)

1. What is your Soldier's assigned duty station?

2. How long has your Soldier been in the Army?

0-3 years
4-9 years
10-14 years
15-19 years
20 plus years

3. I am associated with following Army Component:

Army Active Component
Army National Guard Component
Army Reserves Component

4. Do you live on or near a military installation?

Yes
No

5. What is your current work status?

Not currently working
Work outside the home
Work from home
Part Time Volunteer
Full Time Volunteer

6. How long have you been married?

Less than 12months
2 to 5 years
5 to 9 years
10 to 14 years
15 to 19 year
20 plus years

7. Soldier's Education Level

12th grade or less
Graduated high school or equivalent
Some college, no degree
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Post-graduate degree

8. Army Spouses' Education Level

12th grade or less
Graduated high school or equivalent
Some college, no degree
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Post-graduate degree

9. Soldier's Age

Under 18
18-24
25-34
35-54
55+

10. Army Spouses' Age

Under 18
18-24
25-34
35-54
55+

11. Soldier's Gender

Male
Female

12.  Army Spouses' Gender

Male
Female


13. Soldier's Race

Asian/Pacific Islander
Black/African-American
Caucasian
Hispanic
Native American/Alaska Native
Other/Multi-Racial
Decline to Respond


14. Army Spouses' Race

Asian/Pacific Islander
Black/African-American
Caucasian
Hispanic
Native American/Alaska Native
Other/Multi-Racial
Decline to Respond


15. Number of children

None
1
2
3
4 or more

16. How many trainings and/or deployments ranging in duration of 3 months or more has your Soldier completed?

None
1
2
3
4 or more

17. How many trainings/deployments ranging in duration of 3 months or more have you experienced as an Army Spouse?

None
1
2
3
4 or more

18. Please select your Soldier's current Rank/Pay Grade Status

E1-E4
E5-E6
E7-E9
W1-W3
W4-W5
O1E-O3E
O1-O3
O4-O6
O7-O10
Not Sure/Don't Know

19. I am aware of military resource services available in the military community

Not At All Aware
Vaguely Aware
Somewhat Aware
Very Aware
Completely Aware

20. Are military resource services in the military community easily accessible to you?

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

21. Identify and select all military support resources you have had access to in the last 3

months

Family Readiness Group (FRG)
Army Community Services (ACS)
TRICARE
Chapel Services and Programs
Military OneSource
Commissary
Post Exchange (Exchange or PX)
Children and Youth Services (CYS)
Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)

22. I am constantly receiving some form of communication from military support

resources

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

23. I utilize military support resources made available to me

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

24. I am aware of civilian support resources available in my community

Not At All Aware
Vaguely Aware
Somewhat Aware
Very Aware
Completely Aware

25. Are civilian support resources in your community easily accessible to you?

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

26. Identify and select civilian support resources you have had access to in the last 3

months

Church/Faith Based Programs
Doctors/Hospitals
USO
Red Cross
Grocery Stores
Malls
Human and Health Services
Parks and Recreations

27. I am constantly receiving some form of communication from civilian support
resources
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

28. I utilize civilian support resources made available to me

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often

Appendix B: Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2) Usage Permission

Community Science
438 N. Frederick Avenue, Suite 315
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
301-519-0722 voice
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www.communityscience.com
www.senseofcommunity.com
Sense of Community Index
Community Science 1

The Sense of Community Index (SCI) is the most frequently used quantitative measure of sense of community in the social sciences. It has been used in numerous studies covering different cultures in North and South America, Asia, Middle East, as well as many contexts (e.g. urban, suburban, rural, tribal, workplaces, schools, universities, recreational clubs, internet communities, etc.). The SCI is based on a theory of sense of community presented by McMillan and Chavis (1986) that stated that a sense of community was a perception with four elements: membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection.

Results of prior studies have demonstrated that the SCI has been a strong predicator of behaviors (such as participation) and a valid measurement instrument. Nonetheless the SCI has also been subject to criticisms and limitations. The reliability of the overall 12 item scale has be adequate, however it consisted of four subscales whose reliability were inconsistent and generally very low. The SCI had a true-false response set that limited variability and concerned critics. Despite its use with different cultural groups, there were concerns about the adequacy of the SCI as a cross cultural measure. A study of immigrant integration in a western US state, provided the research team the opportunity to revise the SCI in order to address previous concerns. The research team created a 24 item Sense of Community Index version 2 (SCI-2). Unlike the earlier version, it was able to cover all the attributes of a sense of community described in the original theory. A Likert like scale was developed instead of the True-False format. The original draft was piloted with 36 culturally person in seven different setting s from Maryland to Hawaii. Strong reliability was found, but there were several suggestions for improvement which were incorporated (i.e., rewording of the statement to increase clarity)

The SCI-2 was revised and used within a larger survey of 1800 people. The analysis of the SCI-2 showed that it is a very reliable measure (coefficient alpha= .94). The subscales also proved to be reliable with coefficient alpha scores of .79 to .86.

Community Science is pleased to share this material with other organizations and individuals free of charge. No changes may be made to the SCI-2, for use in either print or electronic form, without the permission of David Chavis, Ph.D., Community Science,

438 N. Frederick Ave., Suite 315, Gaithersburg, MD 20877; 301-519-0722 (office) or 301-519-0724 (fax) or email dchavis@communityscience.com.

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Appendix C:  The Sense of Community Index (SCI-2) (Military)

**How well do each of the following statements represent how you *feel* about this community?**

| | | Not at All | Somewhat | Mostly | Completely |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 2. | Community members and I value the same things. | O | O | O | O |
| 3. | This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met. | O | O | O | O |
| 4. | Being a member of this community makes me feel good. | O | O | O | O |
| 5. | When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 6. | People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals. | O | O | O | O |
| 7. | I can trust people in this community. | O | O | O | O |

Community Science                                                                                          1

Sense of Community Index

| | | Not at All | Somewhat | Mostly | Completely |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. | I can recognize most of the members of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 9. | Most community members know me. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 10. | This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 11. | I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 12. | Being a member of this community is a part of my identity. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 13. | Fitting into this community is important to me. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 14. | This community can influence other communities. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 15. | I care about what other community members think of me. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 16. | I have influence over what this community is like. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 17. | If there is a problem in this community, members can get it solved. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 18. | This community has good leaders. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 19. | It is very important to me to be a part of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 20. | I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 21. | I expect to be a part of this community for a long time. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 22. | Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 23. | I feel hopeful about the future of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 24. | Members of this community care about each other. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Appendix D: The Sense of Community Index (SCI-2) (Civilian)

**How well do each of the following statements represent how you *feel* about this community?**

| | | Not at All | Somewhat | Mostly | Completely |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2. | Community members and I value the same things. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3. | This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4. | Being a member of this community makes me feel good. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 5. | When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 6. | People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 7. | I can trust people in this community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Community Science 1

Sense of Community Index

| | | Not at All | Somewhat | Mostly | Completely |
|---|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 8. | I can recognize most of the members of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 9. | Most community members know me. | O | O | O | O |
| 10. | This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize. | O | O | O | O |
| 11. | I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 12. | Being a member of this community is a part of my identity. | O | O | O | O |
| 13. | Fitting into this community is important to me. | O | O | O | O |
| 14. | This community can influence other communities. | O | O | O | O |
| 15. | I care about what other community members think of me. | O | O | O | O |
| 16. | I have influence over what this community is like. | O | O | O | O |
| 17. | If there is a problem in this community, members can get it solved. | O | O | O | O |
| 18. | This community has good leaders. | O | O | O | O |
| 19. | It is very important to me to be a part of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 20. | I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them. | O | O | O | O |
| 21. | I expect to be a part of this community for a long time. | O | O | O | O |
| 22. | Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters. | O | O | O | O |
| 23. | I feel hopeful about the future of this community. | O | O | O | O |
| 24. | Members of this community care about each other. | O | O | O | O |

**Thank You!**
Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

Appendix E: Instructions for Scoring the Revised Sense of Community Index


1. Identifying the Community Referent
The attached scale was developed to be used in many different types of communities. Be sure to specify the type of community the scale is referring to before administering the scale. Do not use "your community" as the referent.

2. Interpreting the Initial Question
The initial question "How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?" is a validating question that can be used to help you interpret the results. We have found that total sense of community is correlated with this question – but keep in mind this may not be true in every community.

3. Scoring the Scale
For the 24 questions that comprise the revised Sense of Community Index participants:
Not at All = 0, Somewhat = 1, Mostly = 2, Completely = 3
Total Sense of Community Index = Sum of Q1 to Q24
Subscales Reinforcement of Needs = Q1 + Q2 + Q3 + Q4 + Q5 + Q6
Membership = Q7 + Q8 + Q9 + Q10 + Q11 + Q12
Influence = Q13 + Q14 + Q15 + Q16 + Q17 + Q18
Shared Emotional Connection = Q19 + Q20 + Q21 + Q22 + Q23 + Q24

Appendix F: The National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research

Certification

**Certificate of Completion**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Sharon Brannon** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 08/14/2014

Certification Number: 1517064

Appendix G: Letter of Support

Subject: Research Questionnaire Link

Good Morning,

My name is Sharon Brannon.  I have had the pleasure of being an Army Spouse for over
23 years. My husband is now retired.  I am currently a doctoral Student at Walden
University.  I  would like to request permission to post an electronic survey  link,  on any
website, Facebook Page,  Twitter, Blog, Newsletter and/or Communication
Correspondence you may publish  in order to collect research data from Army Spouses
that may have experienced  multiple deployments for my research dissertation entitled
"Army Spouses' Perception of Support Resources During Multiple Deployments"?   This
electronic survey link will be hosted by an online survey company. All
participants/participation will be anonymous, even to the researcher.

 Initially, I was going to use the AKO Announcement toolkit and AKO Forums, but I am
now no longer able to do this with the closure of AKO.  The IRB for my dissertation
requires that I have written permission before posting on any site, newsletter, social
media board, or newsletter.  I have attached my dissertation proposal which includes the
survey questions in the appendix section.  Hopefully this will provide all the information
you will need to know pertaining to the purposes of the study and the nature of the
research procedures.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.  My name, number and email
address or below in the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Sharon Brannon
Walden PH.D Candidate
[Sharo HYPERLINK "mailto:Sharon.Brannon@usmc.mil"n.Brannon@usmc.mil](mailto:Sharon.Brannon@usmc.mil)
[Sharon.Brannon@waldenu.edu](mailto:Sharon.Brannon@waldenu.edu)

Appendix H: Email Invitation

Greetings,

My name is Sharon Brannon and I am a Ph.D. student at Walden University currently conducting a study to facilitate the completion of my dissertation. The name of my research study is "Army Spouses' Perception of Support Resources During Multiple Deployments".  I am asking Army Spouses who have experienced more than one geographical separation from their Soldier, ranging in duration of 3 months or longer, to complete an anonymous electronic survey pertaining to their perceptions of support resources available during multiple trainings/deployments.

The purpose of this study is to provide an opportunity for Army Spouses to bring awareness to their concerns and thoughts, while possibly identifying best practices which may lead to recommendations that influence positive change regarding Army support resources. There are no potential risks associated with participating in this survey. There will be no compensation associated with completion of this survey, nor will there be any incentives offered.

Below is a link to the online survey. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. The survey is web-based and conducted by a third party vendor. Your name will not be attached to any results. The survey is user-friendly and you should be able to complete it within 40-60 minutes or less. This is a time sensitive survey. It will open on_____ and it will close on_____.

I appreciate your willingness to participate and value your feedback.

If you have any questions, please contact BrannonResearchStudySu HYPERLINK "http:///h"rvey@gmail.com

To begin, please click the survey URL below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Armyspousespercepts.

Sharon E. Brannon
Researcher

Appendix I: Email Invitation Reminder

You may have already received an e-mail inviting you to participate in this survey. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaires, thank you. Please feel free to delete this e-mail as no further involvement is required. If you have not completed the questionnaires please take the time to consider helping me with this important research.

Greetings,

My name is Sharon Brannon and I am a Ph.D. student at Walden University currently conducting a study to facilitate the completion of my dissertation. The name of my research study is "Army Spouses' Perception of Support Resources During Multiple Deployments". I am asking Army spouses who have experienced more than one geographical separation from their Soldier, ranging in duration of 3 months or longer, to complete an anonymous electronic survey pertaining to their perceptions of support resources available during multiple trainings/deployments.

The purpose of this study is to provide an opportunity for Army spouses to bring awareness to their concerns and thoughts, while possibly identifying best practices which may lead to recommendations that influence positive change regarding Army support resources. There are no potential risks associated with participating in this survey. There will be no compensation associated with completion of this survey, nor will there be any incentives offered.

Below is a link to the online survey. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. The survey is web-based and conducted by a third party vendor. Your name will not be attached to any results. The survey is user-friendly and you should be able to complete it within 40-60 minutes or less. This is a time sensitive survey. It will open on_____ and it will close on_____.

I appreciate your willingness to participate and value your feedback.

If you have any questions, please contact BrannonResearchStudyS HYPERLINK "http:///h"urvey@gmail.com

To begin, please click the survey URL below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Armyspousespercepts.

Sharon E. Brannon
Researcher

Appendix J: Social Media Post

Are you 18 years old or older? Are you married to an Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard Soldier? Has your Soldier deployed more than one time? Or been to more than one 90 day training? Were the resources available to you while your Soldier was gone worth your while? My name is Sharon Brannon and I am a Ph.D. student at Walden University currently conducting a study research study concerning Army Spouses' Perception of Support Resources During Multiple Deployments. Would like your voice to be heard regarding Army support resources made available to help you deal with daily life issues while your Soldier has been away at trainings or deployments? If so… learn more about how to share your perceptions as an Army spouse by visiting https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Armyspousespercepts. (Man and Wife Clip Art Free Public Domain at http://www.clker.com/clipa HYPERLINK "http://www.clker.com/clipart-man-and-wife-war.html"rt-man-and-wife-war.html)