

Utilizing a sense of community  
theory in order to optimize  
interagency response to  
complex contingencies



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# Problem Statement

- The efficacy of the United States during complex contingency operations depends on a “whole of nation” approach. However, there has been evidence to suggest that cultural chasms among “whole of nation” components detracts from the efficacy of effort. This study seeks to identify facets of those cultural chasms and offer potential ways to minimize them.

# Sense of Community

- Identification/belonging, interdependence (Sarason, 1974)
- Membership or belonging, member's needs would be met (McMillan, 1976)
- Membership, Influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, shared connection (McMillan and Chavis, 1986)
- Spirit, trust, trade, art (McMillan, 1996)

# Sense of Community

A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision-making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it  
(Bellah et al., 1985)

# Research Questions

- Is there a difference in sense of community felt among military members towards the joint, interagency, or own Service communities based on Service, combat deployments, rank, or whether one has worked with the subject community?
- Is there a difference in perceived importance of the joint, interagency, or Service communities to US national interests abroad and at home, or the perceived efficacy of those communities in solving problems based on Service, combat deployments, rank, or whether one has worked with the subject community?

# Research Questions

- What is the relationship between sense of community felt toward the joint, interagency, or own Service communities and the perceived importance and efficacy of those communities in addressing complex problems abroad and in the United States based on Service, combat deployments, rank, or whether one has worked with the subject community?

# Design and Instrument

- Causal-comparative (no manipulation of groups)
- Quantitative only
- Research population (ALU, CGSC, JFSC)  
N=208 (163 Army, 16 Navy, 20 Air Force, 9 Marine) 0-3 thru 0-4 76 %, 0-4 thru 0-5 22%
- Sense of Community Index II (25 questions) – alpha .94, subscales alpha scores .79 - .86
- Researcher administered and tabulated all surveys
  - How important is the \_\_\_ to addressing U.S. interests abroad?
  - How important is the \_\_\_ to addressing U.S. interests domestically?
  - How effective do you perceive \_\_\_ to be in addressing complex problems?

# Limitations

- Instrument not validated with military community
- Causal-comparative design
- Self-report nature of data
- Research population predominantly Army

# RQ1 Results and Analysis

• Variable	Joint Mean	Service Mean	Interagency Mean
• Overall	37.10 (12.19)	36.55 (10.98)	33.14 (12.68)
• Spirit	9.53 (3.37)	9.23 (2.72)	8.67 (3.72)
• Trust	8.89 (3.95)	9.58 (3.48)	8.10 (3.59)
• Trade	9.33 (3.70)	8.62 (3.23)	8.04 (3.47)
• Art	9.41 (3.64)	9.98 (3.93)	8.26 (3.96)

Significant difference is highlighted in red

*Also, significant difference between 0-3s and 0-4s (JSI and rank)*

# RQ2 Results and Analysis

• Variable	Joint Mean	Service Mean	Interagency Mean
• Interest Abroad	4.37 (.66)	4.18 (.89)	3.80 (1.00)
• Interest Domestic	3.93 (1.03)	3.85 (1.01)	3.56 (.99)
• Address Problems	3.76 (.71)	3.67 (.77)	3.14 (.99)

(Likert scale: Not at all important/effective, not very important/effective, somewhat important/effective, i/e, very i/e)

- MANOVA – no statistical difference
- ANOVA- difference between Joint and Interagency (address problems, interests abroad)

# RQ3 Results and Analysis

	Interest Abroad	Interest Domestically	Address Problem
PSOC	.3167 p=.000	.2039 p=.003	.3613 p=.000

Correlation moderate to low (high among the variables (.5493 -.4561))

# Findings and Implications

- Minimal correlation between PSOC and perceived importance/efficacy of addressing problems May bode well for ad hoc crisis response.
- PSOC is affected by interaction, maturity, and experience. Perceived prejudices are negated by interaction (JPME II model)

# Questions?

