

## Results

Hypothesis 1 (H1) projected an increase in organizational credibility with disclosure. Research Question 1 (RQ1) projected a continual increase in organizational credibility as disclosure levels increase (from full disclosure to full disclosure with apology). An organizational credibility random survey was conducted across three different groups of respondents. The survey sample size was 178. The surveys were randomized between the treatments and graphic results of the survey demographics are depicted in Appendix C.

To access the hypothesis about the impact of disclosure on public perceptions about the military, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used. Sociodemographic variables, which served as controls, were entered in the first block. Then the influence of increasing levels of disclosure (from no disclosure, to some disclosure, to full disclosure, to full disclosure plus apology) comprise block 2. A multiple regression analysis performed on the dependent variables yielded the following results (Table 2).

The data indicated that greater transparency results in more positive perceptions of the military. On the dependent measure of attitude, none of the control variables emerged as significant. However, increasing disclosure was significantly associated with more positive attitudes about the military ( $\beta =$

.18,  $p < .05$ ). On the dependent measure of organizational trust, none of the variables emerged as significant. Increasing disclosure was noted as significantly associated with more positive organizational trust about the military ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In the dependent measure of expertness, as a part of the credibility dimension, none of the variables emerged as significant. Increasing disclosure was noted as significantly associated with more positive expertness about the military ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In the dependent measure of character, as a part of the credibility dimension, none of the variables emerged as significant. Increasing disclosure was noted as significantly associated with more positive character about the military ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In the dependent measure of sociability, as the final component of the credibility dimension, none of the variables emerged as significant. Increasing disclosure again was noted as significantly associated with more positive sociability about the military ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

The regression results suggest that full disclosure plus apology elicits a more positive response to the military than simple full disclosure. However, to analyze Research Question 1 more specifically, a one way ANOVA was computed comparing full disclosure and full disclosure plus apology on all dependent measures. The results indicated a significant difference on the dependent variable of character ( $F_{1,67} = 4.50$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and near

significant results on the dependent variable of organizational trust ( $F_{1,67} = 2.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In both cases, the addition of an apology enhanced public perceptions of the military. Although differences were not significant on other dependent measures, as Table 3 indicates, the pattern was in the same direction as the results noted above and, with greater power, may have attained statistical significance.

The control condition failed in this experiment. The control scenario was based on a scenario that was not linked to negative environmental news but was based upon military uniform changes. Table 3 depicts the overall relationships as derived through an ANOVA analysis of each of the dimensions as a function of experimental conditions. The analysis supports RQ1 with empirical data that demonstrates the military's image is enhanced when full disclosure contains an apology. The data results indicate organizational credibility is affected positively and thus supports H1 as more information is disclosed in crisis situations.