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Experiences, Reflections, and Applications of Service-Learning Among Rookie Police Officers

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Saint Leo University, 2008

MS, Georgia State University, 2004

BA, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 1994

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Public safety is put at risk when police officers do not positively engage with community members. Though police officers learn how to deescalate volatile situations in police training, some officers still rely on use of force (UOF) and are not fully incorporating positive engagement to deescalate volatile situations. Service-learning provides one way to learn positive modes of engagement. The problem addressed in this project study was that service learning has not been adopted as a widespread teaching practice in criminal justice professional development in a Southeastern local setting. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. Kolb's experiential learning theory was used conceptually frame the purpose and the study's research question about the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service-learning in college criminal justice courses. A basic qualitative design was the method of study. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 8 purposefully selected rookie police officers. Emergent themes were identified through open and axial coding. Findings revealed that rookie police officers with prior service-learning experiences continued to engage with youth and community organizations and develop altruistic behaviors after their college service-learning experiences. A 12-week curriculum plan was created to embed service-learning in field officer training. Implementing the curriculum may better prepare officers to positively engage with community members rather than using force when responding to volatile situations. A reduction in the UOF by police officers would result in positive social change.

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Dedication

I lovingly dedicate this project to three souls who have always loved, encouraged, supported, and demonstrated compassion. Although no longer physically here, they are rooted in my heart and memory: the strength of my father, Clarence Smith; the love of my mother, Euradelle Smith; and the tenacity of my sister, Delores Lewis. You have always believed in me and I love you.

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Table of Contents

iii

iv

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: The Problem

Section 1 of this project study establishes the local problem that exemplifies a national problem. The section also provides a rationale for the study topic, defines terms, and presents the significance of the study. The one overarching research question is also offered to address the problem, which is followed by a review of the literature related to the topic and explanation of the conceptual framework. Section 1 ends with a summary of the section.

The Local Problem

The problem addressed in this study was that service learning has not been adopted as a widespread teaching practice in criminal justice professional development in a Southeastern local setting. Southeast Metropolitan Police Department (SMPD, a pseudonym) has had an increase in the number of police-involved use-of-force (UOF) complaints filed against newly trained law enforcement officers over the past 3 years. In 2015, the Office of Professional Standards Department's administrator reported SMPD had 37 UOF complaints filed. In 2016, there were 40 complaints filed, and in 2017 there were 42 complaints filed, a 14% increase between 2015 and 2017, which averages to a 6.75% increase each year. At the local level, SMPD's problem is greater than the national phenomenon of controversy over police UOF incidents. Between 2002 and 2011, UOF complaints increased to 4% or 4.8% a year on average on a national level (Hylan, Langton, & Davis, 2015). In 2017, UOF was ranked the top critical issue in policing (U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Services, 2017). Critical to reducing UOF is police preparedness to deescalate situations.

Because some police officers are not positively engaging with the people and situations they encounter, members of the community have expressed distrust regarding law enforcement. But some officers do not learn deescalation techniques while in police academy training. Therefore, a potential avenue for police officers to learn about how to deescalate situations is through service learning.

Rationale

Service learning has the potential to foster positive engagement skills and dispositions that may be useful as police officers encounter people in crisis and respond to problem situations. Service learning "is an educational approach that combines learning objectives with community service in order to provide a pragmatic, progressive learning experience while meeting societal needs" (Knapp & Fisher, 2010, p. 209). Service learning has been recognized as having a positive impact on learners' approach to diversity (Keen & Hall, 2008, p. 60). Service learning is also significant in increasing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, two factors that have been found to be associated with deescalation of situations (Freeman & Kobia, 2016). Further, service learning has resulted in the U.S. college student's growth of empathy (Wilson, 2011). Empathy is important in its inhibitive function in relation to aggression, which is a key factor in deescalating situations (Carreras et al., 2014, p. 936).

Because abilities such as critical thinking, problem solving, and empathy may be learned through service-learning experiences (Freeman & Kobia, 2016; Wilson, 2011), may develop positive attributes through service learning. Positive attributes of police officers include communication skills to build trust and resolve conflict, empathy,

compassion, and problem solving (Roufa, 2018). Learning these positive attributes in police training might help officers deescalate situations by engaging positively with people and within the situations they encounter.

Despite the potential of service learning to develop positive engagement skills and dispositions (Freeman & Kobia, 2016; Hall & Keen, 2018; Wilson, 2011), according to the collegiate university board, service learning has not been adopted as a widespread teaching practice in criminal justice college courses in the Southeastern local setting. An associated faculty member concluded that examining service-learning experiences for their potential to prepare police officers to engage positively in their policing practices may help fill this gap in practice. Other research has shown that only some officers have had access to training about deescalating problem situations (Weaver, Joseph, Dongon, Fairweather, & Ruzek, 2013). A lack of deescalation training may contribute to an increase in UOF by rookies and subsequent filing of UOF complaints against newly trained law enforcement officers in the Southeast United States. The issue is that officers may not be prepared to relate to people they encounter as they engage with communities in their practice (Schatmeier, 2013). Thus, this qualitative study was conducted to explore the gap in practice between police officers' service-learning experiences in college criminal justice courses and preparedness to deescalate volatile situations.

Further, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office, 2015) is a section within the Department of Justice that has recommended that law enforcement agencies implement training and education that includes community engagement. Community engagement is the heart of service learning, which involves engaging in activities that

help the community or human needs (Jacoby, 2014, p. 1). However, executive personnel from SMPD stated that community engagement is not a required element of police officer training even though it has adopted a guardian-like approach to policing. Though not required, some Southeast Metropolitan police officers have engaged with the community through service-learning experiences in college criminal justice courses. Therefore, in addition to addressing a gap in practice, this study was conducted to understand if and how service learning in college transformed rookie police officers as they engaged with the community and related to the people that they encounter in the first 2 years of practice. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers.

Definition of Terms

Community: A set of individuals who are diverse yet share a common geographical setting and each are interconnected by social ties, share common perspectives, and are involved in joint action for that group (MacQueen et al., 2001).

Police officer: For the purpose of this study, an individual employed by a local or state law enforcement agency who is responsible for administering the statues, investigation, apprehension, or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of criminal laws governed by the state (Law Enforcement Handbook, 2018).

Police officer training academy: For the purpose of this study, a training academy is a facility in which individuals attend to receive basic mandated learning, research and enhance abilities to protect and serve the public, and improve knowledge about laws,

statutes, and procedures governing the state (Law Enforcement Handbook, 2018).

Service learning: Service learning is a pedagogical strategy that engages community service to support a students' academic learning goals, which are often supported through community engagement (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Locklin, 2012).

Use-of-force (UOF): For the purpose of this study, use-of-force is a level of strength or energy legally applied by police to control, subdue, and apprehend a suspect.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because it is an original contribution to the field of education practice among police academy instructors and curriculum developers, communities, police departments, and the field of research in police training. The study has the potential to contribute to positive social change in police training reform. This study contributed to positive social change through exploration of the experiences, reflections, and applications of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers.

Based on the results related to service-learning influencing rookie police officer practice, police academy instructors might be able to strengthen policing curriculum, student engagement, and assessment of learning skills for effectual policing and positive engagement in the community. Changes in policing curriculum can affect future officers' learning about positive engagement, perhaps better enabling rookie police officers to positively engage within their practice. Communities may then benefit from officers who are trained to positively engage with their communities as they protect them.

The assessment of service learning is also important in the local setting because in 2015, the SMPD mirrored the national setting to "adopt a guardian-like mindset to build trust through community policing programs" (COPS Office, p. 13). Service learning may impact police officer skills and dispositions to respond positively without the inappropriate UOF, which causes complaints against police officers. The UOF is also the top critical policing issue in the nation (COPS Office, 2015). Additionally, based on the literature review to date, no research has linked service learning with police officer practice, so this study has begun to fill this lack of research.

Research Question

One over-arching research question guided the study: What are the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers (officers with fewer than 3 years of experience)?

Review of the Literature

The review of literature starts with a description of the search process, followed by an emphasis on the gap in literature. Next Kolb's experiential learning theory as the conceptual framework for the study. Then literature related to the broader problem is presented. This includes the history of police, police training and recruitment, and how service learning may be used to expand police training.

Search Process

A search of literature was conducted to include literature published between 2013 and 2018. Databases searched were ERIC, EBSCO Host, ProQuest Central, SAGE, Meta-

search engines. Thoreau and Education Source meta-search engines were also conducted. I searched terms individually and in combination with each other. Terms included *service-learning, benefits of service-learning, experiential learning, transformative education, history of policing, training police, law enforcement training, police academy, police skills, police traits, UOF, criminal justice, criminal justice initiatives,* and *effective police training.*

Limited Literature on Service learning and Policing

The search for current literature revealed limited literature relating service learning in college used beyond and into professional practice. The search revealed one article about service learning and police officers, which described the enhancement of the service-mind among Thai police officers (Chatthong, Kovitaya, & Kongjaroen, 2014). However, the search showed are no previous studies linking service learning to police training, preparedness, or practice. Because of the limited literature about service learning in relation to police officer training or practice, the review of the literature is presented to contextualize police officer preparedness and service learning starting with a brief history of American Policing and ending with how service learning can be a positive impact in police preparedness.

Conceptual Framework

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory was the conceptual framework that guided this study. Experiential learning outlines four stages through which learners are influenced by life experiences that translate into learning, which refers to a process where knowledge is created from experience (Kolb, 1984). The four stages flow from concrete

experience (CE), to reflective observation (RO), then to abstract conceptualizing (AC), and end with active experimentation (AE; Kolb, 1984). These four stages comprise the experiential learning cycle, which Kolb and Kolb (1999) explained as the process by which information is gained by centering on experiences a person has in life. Information from these experiences is then transformed based on the learners' interpretation of them and is acted upon. Learning occurs through the learning process of experiencing (CE), reflecting (RO), thinking (AC), and acting (AE). Figure 1 illustrates Kolb's experiential learning cycle. Each of Kolb's four stages of experiential learning is discussed in detail in the following sections.
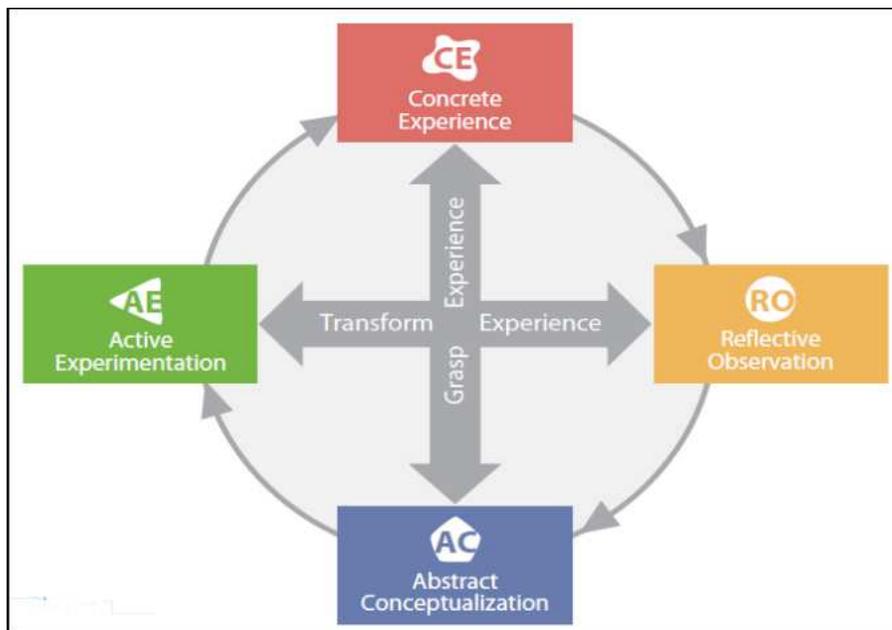
Figure 1. Kolb's experiential learning cycle.

Concrete experience (CE). CE is an activity or series of events in which an individual actively engages that makes up the experience (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's CE stage was applied to the present study by asking rookie police officers if they had a service-

learning experience within a criminal justice college level course. If they had an experience, they were asked to describe it. Adding additional closed-ended survey questions allowed an easier and quicker understanding so respondents to answer with no ambiguity, which makes responses easily documented (Mason, 2010).

Reflective observation (RO). With, RO individuals learn through thought and contemplation of their experiences. Reflection is an ongoing process that occurs throughout the experience and beyond (Kolb, 1984). The RO stage was applied in this study by allowing the participants to explore what they may remember about any service-learning activities they may have experienced. While reflecting, the rookie officer considered and gave thought to any successes or failures within the service-learning activity. Some individuals may be able to remember events quicker than others, but the process of remembering the experience and to move forward toward the next phase is what is most important.

Abstract conceptualization (AC). The ability of learners to create a concept that integrates their observation of the experience into a logical model is AC (Kolb, 1984). The AC stage is when learners make sense of the experience, comparing what they did to what they already know (Kolb, Kolb, Passarelli, & Sharma, 2014). Learners make sense of the experience by drawing from previous experiences, speaking to others in the learning space, and researching and exploring the topic further. It is the stage where learners own their knowledge. With AC, the rookie police officer would review the current experience and compare it to some form of past feeling or behavior. The officer would tend to rely primarily on the feelings instead of a systematic approach to the

problems in which they encounter and consider an open-minded approach to resolving any issues that may derive from their knowledge.

Active experimentation (AE). The last phase described by Kolb is AE, which is the ability of the learner to utilize their new knowledge to make decisions and solve problems in future situations (Kolb et al., 2014). The AE stage happens when the learners decide in what situation or context their new learning (knowledge or skill) can be applied. Kolb explained that during the AE stage learners take their new knowledge and translate it into what actions needs to be taken or what revisions need to be made. In AE, the rookie police officer would recognize the feelings considered and formulate a practical approach to resolving the issue. The formulation of practical approaches involves an objective view that is profitable for the officer and the public's safety and best practices.

Literature Related to the Broader Problem

Brief history of American policing. The American police system is modeled after the British system (Cole, Smith, & DeJong, 2016). British policing started as a system of neighborhood "watchmen" founded by Henry Fielding (Gibbs, 2017, p. 108). A watchman was a person from the community responsible for patrolling neighborhood parishes, catching criminals, and bringing criminals to court (Cole, et al., 2016). British watchmen were servants of the court working under a pledge system until the mid-1700s when Fielding died (Sims, 2017). Crime was rampant in Britain between when Fielding died in 1754 and 1829 when Sir Robert Peel professionalized the British police system by getting the Metropolitan Policing Act passed through parliament in 1829 (Lewis, 2011).

After the system of watchmen, the Metropolitan Policing Act encompassed *The Peeler Principals*, which addressed the concerns of citizens. Citizens were not only concerned about being protected from crime but having their democratic rights undermined such as rights to protest and privacy to avoid unreasonable search and seizure (Adegbile, 2017). The British's *Peeler Principals*, to serve and protect, were adopted by the American policing system (Adegbile, 2017; Sims, 2017). Service and protection remain as principles within the American police system. Police officers are prepared not only to deal with criminals but are also prepared to serve the community. The following sections consist of the making of police as a profession, the candidacy and the recruitment process, and lastly the preparation to serve and protect.

The police officer profession. In 1929, President Herbert Hoover professionalized the concept of a police officer beginning with the Wickersham Commission, which was a shared name for the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. Professional police procedures were part of the findings and recommendations of the 14-volume research report published by the Commission in 1931-1932 (Coleman, 2019; Piaget, 1929). August Vollmer (1932), a California police chief in the 1930s, abstracted the commission's police professional standards: "Executive capacity of the highest degree should be demanded and universities should vie with each other in turning out from their institutions men adequately trained to serve their country as efficient police leaders" (p. 716). The commission in its report *Lawlessness in Law Enforcement* noted hostility toward police and police misconduct and corruption. Thus, the last volume of the report, volume 14, titled *The Police*, called for professionalism of

police departments staffed with police officers who were highly qualified and shielded from political pressures (Vollmer, 1932).

Through the Wickersham Commission, policing was defined as a profession to serve the community. Standards for policing were raised and standards for becoming a police officer were implemented by states through what is known as a state-guided council named POST (Peace Officer Standard Training). Candidates are now screened for intelligence, health, and moral character (Fuller, 2014).

Police officer recruitment. The recruitment of police officers has changed over the past 50 years. Before the 1970s mostly White men in the United States were recruited to become police officers (Schuck, 2017). Similar to service in the military, policing was perceived as just a male occupation. But the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Equal Opportunity Act of 1969 resulted in an increase in the number of women and minorities being recruited to work, including in police departments (Yu, 2018). Over the past two decades, several factors have resulted in an increased need to recruit a diverse pool of police officers: the advent of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in response to what has become known as the 9/11 incident in 2001, high attrition due to retirements of police officers in the baby boomer generation, and the Ferguson case in 2014 that brought national attention to the reality that mostly White men were policing minority neighborhoods, also known as the "Ferguson Effect" (Nix & Wolfe, 2016, p. 13).

In 2015 President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommended best practices for effective policing. Task force recommendations included police officers improve their trust-building skills and become fairer and more impartial in their policing

(COPS Office, 2015). Education and training were recommended to improve skills and dispositions of police officers. Current recruitment efforts target police officer recruits who would be adept at effective policing—persons who have the intellect, discernment, maturity, previous work experience, and who are physically and psychologically fit (Inankul, 2016). More stringent recruitment has made it even more difficult to recruit police officers to fill growing and unmet needs in the policing profession (Peak & Sousa, 2018). According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 52,000 full-time officers were sworn in as sheriffs, constables, and municipal officers between 1997–2016, an increase of 8% over that time period. Another 48,000 officers were sworn into local police departments as full-time officers, an increase of 11% between 1997 and 2016. However, the need for police officers is unfilled, with greater than 80% of the nation's 17,000 law enforcement agencies having unfilled vacancies in 2014 (Hyland, Langton, & Davis, 2018).

In response to vacancies and President Obama's Task Force recommendations, agencies started recruiting persons who reflected the cultures and attitudes of the communities that the recruits would serve as officers. Departments included more recruiting in local community organizations such as churches and service organizations, places where persons who reflected community cultures could be found (Schlosser, Cha-Jua, Valgoi, & Neville, 2015). Thus, the philosophy of police departments could change to improve community trust and reduce bias and racism in policing (Schlosser et al., 2015).

For the SMPD recruiting process, there is no upper age requirement. However, the applicant must be physically and mentally fit to endure the training and working

assignments. According to the human resources entry, the requirements to become a police officer must be a standardized entry testing, an age minimum of 20, physical fitness and agility, psychological exam, criminal record restriction, and the ability to successfully pass given tests throughout the academy process. Ultimately, most agencies value the more mature and experienced candidate that will endure and present the least liability.

Police officer candidacy. Any person can apply to become a police officer if they meet age, educational, and other requirements to enter police academy training. Military or prior professional experience is common among police officer applicants. Police officers who have worked in another agency or as first responders, such as fire or emergency medical services professionals, commonly apply to become police officers (Peak & Sousa, 2018).

Applicants can enter the academy before age 21 but must be 21 by the time they finish police academy training (Peak & Sousa, 2018). Police officer applicants may be required to have earned minimum education requirements, depending on the agency. In 2010, 82% of police agencies in the U.S. required a high school diploma, 16% had some type of higher educational requirement, and 1% required a 4-year degree (Hyland et al., 2018). All applicants are required to pass a criminal record check, physical fitness, vision, and psychological assessments. If applicants meet age and education requirements, do not have a criminal record, and pass required assessments, they enter the police academy to become prepared for state licensed policing practice. State licensing reflects that policing is not just a job but also a profession (Fuller, 2014).

Police academy preparation. Traditionally, police officers have been trained to serve with "Honor, duty, resolve, and a willingness to engage in righteous violence" (Stoughton, 2016, p. 611). However, a history of citizen complaints, officer misbehaviors, and multiple efforts of police reform have left communities with less trust, compassion, and transparency for policing (Rosenbaum, Lawrence, Hartnett, McDevitt, & Posick, 2015). Within the past decade, police preparation in police academies has progressed from a warrior ethos to a more collegiate atmosphere with training in guardian-like policing. Problem-based scenarios and opportunities for community policing have replaced the para-military tenets (McBride, 2016).

Police academy preparation is robust and arduous. Preparation lasts between 6 and 12 months. Mandated training courses are taken by all police candidates and generally last about 6 months. The state POST Council directives have mandated courses include tactical defense, criminal procedure, state law, departmental procedures, emergency response vehicle pursuit driving, and firearms training. After mandated courses are completed, trainees enter field training with a field-training officer. Field training lasts for another 2-6 months and entails riding with a senior officer who exposes the candidate trainee to real-life policing situations. The field-training officer is responsible for teaching and evaluating the candidate. Candidates are evaluated for their ability to respond to situations. Radio and other communication, personal interactions, discernment, reaction and response time, and reporting, both verbal and written, are evaluated.

Academy instructors and subject-matter experts provide a traditional learning environment that is primarily teacher-centered (Reingle-Gonzalez, Bishopp, & Jetelina, 2016). Instructors and experts strive to enhance their methods of teaching curriculum needed for their occupation, engagement in learning, and to identify habits of safety (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). The police officer candidates are students who are normally passive learners and may oftentimes lack stimulation self-learning and evaluation. However, the police officer training is tough and extensive with a wide range of knowledge, skills, and abilities given by the instructors and used to prepare the rookie officer to act on their own while in the field (Scantlebury et al., 2017). Raj & Rajkonwar (2017) noted that police training is one of the most effective and challenging infrastructures to a department or agency and calls for continuous improvement of police training.

With the change to a more guardian mindset of policing, many police departments are redefining how to train and teach police. The paramilitary mindset is being replaced with the offering of a more college-like atmosphere using models from andragogical learning such as those proposed by Knowles (Harrop, Casey, & Shelton, 2018). The progression to a more collegiate, guardian-like, and problem- and community-based training is a foundation for the addition of service-learning experiences being studied. Though experiences in college are the topic of this study, service learning might be well-suited for adoption in police academy training if study results reveal service-learning experiences as transformative to guardian-like rookie police practice.

Police practices. In recent years, the terminology of law enforcement and policing has been used interchangeably. However, law enforcement is just that, enforcing the laws. Modern day policing and its practices consist of more than just enforcing laws. Rather, the U.S. criminal justice system continuously strives to maintain a balance between controlling crime and respecting the rights of citizens (Ferdico, Fradella, & Totten, 2016). In the adoption of the U.S. Constitution in 1788, the Bill of Rights section, was designed as a standard to govern the states and individual rights and liberties, in particularly the 4th amendment: unreasonable search and seizures (Ferdico et al., 2016). The 4th amendment bears the consideration of three levels of police-citizen encounters that gradually progress from consent to arrest.

The first level of police-citizen encounters is "consensual encounters" (Yudu, Ling, & Fei, 2016, p. 111). Consensual encounters are not covered under 4th amendment scrutiny. After a citizen and police officer interact, either party is free to leave after the encounter if there is no suspicion of criminal activity involved on the part of the police officer.

The second level is a stop. A stop is guided by reasonable articulable suspicion and is derived from Terry v. Ohio, 392 US 1 (1968). The Terry v. Ohio case resulted in giving law enforcement the investigatory permission to detain or stop a person to either confirm or dispel if a crime has happened, is happening, or is about to happen; and, to detain or stop a person if they are armed or dangerous. The police may pat down or frisk the detained or stopped person to identify if a dangerous weapon may be carried on the person. At the stop level, the investigation confirms or dispels the person's involvement

in a crime. An investigatory stop should last a reasonable amount of time given the situation.

The third level is an arrest. An arrest involves probable cause. Probable cause is defined as "as being a fair probability, under all of the reliable facts and circumstances known at the time that a crime has been or is being committed and the person in question committed it" (Ferdico et al., 2016, p. 47). Probable cause falls on the pendulum between suspicion and certainty that a crime has, is, or will occur. With these levels of police-citizen encounters as understood in modern policing, how police interact and act in response to levels has been a subject of modern police training and practice. Police practice has come under scrutiny (Lee & Ames, 2018).

Ideally, police officers respond appropriately in all encounters—consensual, stop, and arrest. Such is not the case. Police officers make mistakes. Mistakes of police officers are reflected by lives lost and complaints and lawsuits filed against the police department and the officer. Police officers' inappropriate responses to encounters with citizens result from a lack of preparedness to appropriately and positively respond to all encounters.

Positive response requires a balance between maintaining order and protecting citizens' rights. Positive attributes of police officers include communication skills to build trust and resolve conflict, empathy, compassion, and problem solving (Roufa, 2018). Police officers are expected to behave positively, but modern policing is plagued with negative issues that have tarnished the reputation of police officers and their practice and disheartened professionals in police practice.

Discriminatory and UOF are the paramount issues discussed in police reform. Police officers have been noted by and reprimanded in high-profile national news stories for negatively responding to police-citizen encounters inappropriately. The public has challenged, chastised, and criticized police practices and police preparedness (COPS Office, 2015). The next section presents a critical analysis of police preparedness and practice.

Critical Analysis of Police Preparedness and Practice Literature

Candidates have and are still entering from various paths in life into the policing profession. Candidates may come with additional experiences and that may become vital to the learning process within the police academy training. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Hyland et al., 2018) the basic training model of an entry level academy training program were primarily stress-based training. Stress-based training programs are designed to train on a continuum with primarily physical and psychological demands. Academy training consisted of mock scenario training for recruits to sharpen critical thinking skills.

Hostility toward police officers was an issue when the police profession was standardized and remains an issue as UOF and profiling as top problems facing policing. Police academies have responded moving from the traditional of para-military training to a more collegiate, guardian-like, problem- and community-based training, a foundation for the addition of service-learning experiences being studied in police preparedness. Because of the guardian-like and more collegiate pedagogy forward thinking in the

policing profession; the following section presents a critical review of positive impact of service learning.

College and university education among police officer recruits and candidates. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Hyland et al., 2018), 1% of police officer candidates attend college prior to, concurrently, or after police academy training. Recruits or candidates can be enrolled in any degree program. Many persons who desire to become a police officer study criminal justice. Criminal justice curriculum typically includes criminal procedure, criminal investigations, and introduction to criminal justice, criminal theory, and criminology.

Colleges and universities enhance educational programs by adding service-learning experiences to introductory and other criminal justice classes (faculty member, personal communications, 2018). While service learning is not used widespread in police training academies, research does credit service learning as having a positive impact in the transformation of student learning while in college and beyond.

Impact of service learning in college. Five current authors described the positive outcomes of service learning in college: Davis (2015), Everhart (2016), Jamplis (2015) and Sedden and Clark (2016). Three articles address service learning in college course settings and the impact of service learning on motivation and empathy. One article describes an instructional approach to service learning.

Service learning in college courses. Service learning in college courses has the potential to motivate students consistently (Straus & Eckenrode, 2014). Several current

authors have explored service learning and its positive impacts in college courses, including one meta-analysis.

Sedden and Clark (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of literature to examine students' motivation in the classroom in relation to teaching strategies implemented. The authors found that students' classroom engagement—connection, interaction, guiding and reminding—impact students' motivation to learn. Service-learning experiences contains all of these elements. Sedden and Clark recommended educators be conscience of how instructional design affects students in the classroom and beyond.

Davis (2015) conducted an exploratory, cross-sectional survey of faculty teaching criminal justice courses to study if implementing service-learning motivated students to meet course objectives. Davis's results concluded that service learning did have a positive impact on student motivation. Davis suggested that practice models replace teacher-centered lectures to enhance positive learning experiences in criminal justice courses.

Everhart (2016) initiated a teaching tool that involved self-assessment and reflective writing with 12 undergraduate students who participated in service learning during an undergraduate college course. Everhart reported that self-assessment and reflective writing in response students' service-learning experiences both challenged and enhanced empathy development and created an emotional experience for students (Everhart, 2016). Findings from Everhart's research suggested that individual service experiences impacted "cognitive development, personal growth, and civic engagement" (pg. 129).

From another academic perspective on service learning, author Jamplis (2015) conducted a qualitative research that identified service-learning processes as transformative in terms of leadership traits, qualities, and competencies; skills that would assist students during their careers and in future social settings. By practicing in the real word, service-learning impacted students in tangible, meaningful ways (Jamplis, 2015). Jamplis' study contributes to the current literature about the promise of service learning in college to impact students not only the short-run, but also across their lifetimes.

Having concrete real-life experiences through service learning in college engages and motivates students to learn in the classroom, develops empathy among students, and leads to growth in leadership traits. Improved learning, empathy, and leadership are attributes that are valued beyond the college experience. The literature of the impact of service-learning post-college is limited, but current literature is presented next.

Impact of service-learning post-college. Kessinger (2015) traced how any form of service learning promotes citizenship among participants and benefits society. Kessinger starts with John Dewey's philosophy of service learning and traces how service learning has been implemented not only in educational institutions but also in other settings over the past 25 years.

Hall and Keen (2018) studied post-college outcomes of persons who participated in service learning. Program participants ($n = 689$) entered their service-learning experiences with a focus on selfish, individual motivations; and ended their service-learning experience with a focus on social justice advocacy. The yearlong post-college service-learning experience studied by Hall and Keen transformed participants from

being focused on self to being focused on serving others. Serving others is at the heart of police practice. With police academies in the midst of adapting police training from being paramilitary to more guardian-like, the time is ripe to understand if service-learning experiences impact policing practice, the topic of this study.

Service learning and adult or professional education. Literature about the impact of service learning and adult or professional education is scant. Experiential learning is the term used synonymously with service learning in adult education forums. Past and shared experiences are critical and valuable to life experiences most generally (Kuk & Holst, 2018). Yet, research about the impact of experiential learning post-college among adults and their careers is lacking (Dhital et al., 2015). Molly, Lim, Lucas, and Meadows (2015) proposed four reasons to implement service-learning: (a) to link academic learning outcomes to meaning through service; (b) to enhance student engagement through experiential education; (c) to improve social and personal development; and, (d) to strengthen communities. Strengthening and serving communities is one facet of policing. Police preparation might benefit from incorporating service learning into college or academy training. This study was to examine if and how service experiences in college impact police rookies as adult practitioners.

Service learning in college has been studied and revealed as having effects not only on students' immediate learning outcomes, but also on students' long-term learning (Whitley & Walsh, 2014). Eyler (2011) recommended service learning as a means to excite learners. He suggested using a framework and addressing a trend to make service

learning engaging. Service learning provides realistic situations for educators to promote deep meaning by meeting community needs (Eyler et al., 1997).

Professionals interviewed 3-16 years after college reported positive outcomes, attitudes, experiences, and behaviors from their reflections about their service-learning experiences in college (Fullerton, Reitenauer, & Kerrigan, 2015). Fullerton et al.'s (2015) findings are consistent with Gredley's (2015) opinion, that service learning in higher education offers an opportunity for students to examine empathy, power, knowledge, and skills. Gredley (2015) reported good outcomes of his own teaching by framing student reflections about their service learning within theories postulated by Dewey, Freire, and Mezirow. The potential for service learning in and post-college is established. The impact of service learning in college among police officer rookies has not yet been established and is the topic of this study.

Implications

Service learning has not been adopted as a widespread teaching practice in criminal justice college courses in the local setting nor have service-learning experiences in college been examined for their potential to fill the gap in practice preparing police officers to engage positively in their policing practices. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers.

Findings have revealed if and how the rookie police officers have applied their knowledge of service learning immediately upon graduation of police officer training and within the field. Findings may encourage instructors and subject-matter experts with

additional opportunities for teaching. Findings also implicated a curriculum plan to embed a service-learning component in the 12-week mandated field training program. The other three project genres suggested were an evaluation report, policy recommendation or a professional development training. An evaluation report only addresses the local need. The study results did not produce a policy paper recommendation because policies are made to the Accreditation Unit to assist in SMPD yearly certification standards. A professional development training would not reach all stakeholders like a training module filled with engagement and practice. Ultimately, results from this study is designed to create a stronger connection between all police officers and communities in which they serve.

Therefore, the implication in this study suggested may provide policing agencies, academy instructors and rookie officers' concepts to explore possibilities of college criminal justice courses of service-learning experiences, reflections, and applications in a setting where comprehensive learning and long-term retention of the subject matter may be further infused into the learning.

Summary

For the study, Section 1 described a local problem within the national context, gave a brief introduction and rationale. Next, an overarching research question, a review of the literature, and implications concerning the service-learning experiences, observations, and applications among rookie police officers were also introduced. The terms such as adult learners, community, police officers, training academy, and service learning were also defined. The significance of this study describes rookie police officers,

police instructors, and departmental administrators with additional learning tools that may result in critical thinking skills, comprehensive learning and lasting retention for community involvement. The framework that guided this study was Kolb's experiential learning cycle because this theory emulates what a rookie officer learning experiences will spiral through in the four stages of learning. The research question was presented and parallels each of Kolb's four stages. Section 2, I described the methodology and findings from data analysis. Section 3, I introduced and explained the project deliverable contained in Appendix A. Section 4 contains my reflections and conclusions about the research and resultant project, a curriculum plan.

Section 2: The Methodology

Despite the potential of service learning to develop positive engagement skills and dispositions, service learning has not been adopted as a widespread teaching practice in criminal justice college courses in the local setting. Examining service-learning experiences for their potential to prepare police officers to engage positively in their policing practices may help fill this gap in practice. Therefore, the purpose of this project study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. The following sections contain a description of the qualitative research design and approach, participants of the study, and explanations of how data were collected and analyzed.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

A basic qualitative design was employed to study the problem (Merriam, 2009). Interviews were used to gather data. A basic qualitative design was appropriate because the purpose of the study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. Exploration is a reason to conduct qualitative research (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013).

Rationale for Research Design

A qualitative basic design using interviews was chosen as the approach for this study. Interviews allow for an open-ended approach to seeking participants' perceptions of their experiences. An open-ended approach does not limit participants and offers a

detailed, contextualized, and rich description (Creswell, 2012; Levitt et al., 2018). Thus, I attained rich data about the experiences, applications, and reflections of service learning in college from police rookie officers.

Quantitative research was not used because it (a) interprets primarily with numbers, (b) mainly tests hypotheses and theories, and (c) does not offer in-depth perceptions that qualitative research yields (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, prior instrumentation is used in quantitative research, and it involves many participants and minimized researcher impact (Saldaña, 2011). I was involved with participants, interviewed a limited number of participants, did not test hypotheses, and interpreted text, not numbers. Therefore, a qualitative approach was appropriate.

Qualitative research design is often presented as being in five traditions: (a) narrative, (b) phenomenology, (c) grounded theory, (d) ethnography, and (e) case study (Creswell, 2009). Narrative research design consists of inquiry from the lives of one or two individuals to reveal events and stories about their lives at an attempt to understand their experiences (Creswell, 2009). Narrative method was not chosen for my research because I had more than two participants. Phenomenological qualitative design is used when a researcher seeks to understand the lived experiences of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). Individuals in phenomenological interpret their experiences and places based on human emotions (Merriam, 2009). Phenomenology was not the approach taken because information I obtained "transcends individual experience" and applied to gather information about "social structures" and "cultural processes" related to rookies' service-learning experiences based on Kolb's model (Guest et al., 2013, p. 11).

Additionally, an existing conceptual framework was used for this study, and the objective was not to create theory as is in the grounded theory qualitative research approach (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, & Morales, 2007). The purpose of my research also did not suit an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is a means to study an ethnic group to study shared meanings and practices of the ethnic group (Guest et al., 2013), which was not the purpose of this study.

A qualitative basic design using interviews was used in this study because interviews yielded data to explore the experiences, applications, and reflections of service learning in college among police rookie officers. Basic qualitative designs employing open-ended interviews help gather data that does not constrain participants' conversations about their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I was able to explore participants' depth of experiences, how experiences are applied, and their reflective learning. A basic qualitative interview design yielded insight into service-learning post-college to stakeholders, provided a foundational for future studies, and offered insight into the way police officers are prepared in training academies. Among stakeholders is the SMPD, the setting of this study.

Setting: Southeast Metropolitan Police Department

In the SMPD where this study was focused, formal training for police began in 1918. Having been trained by and having served as a training officer, I can attest that training in the SMPD is para-military-like, which was a popular training style in 1947 when the Chief of SMPD Training Academy implemented this style of training. Since 1947, the SMPD Training Academy has rigorously conditioned all police recruits with at

least 20 weeks of basic mandated hours which consists of physical fitness, defensive

tactics, firearms training, emergency vehicle training, and classroom instruction before

graduating. After graduation, police rookies demonstrate what they have learned in

training with the guidance of a field-training officer for at least 6 weeks throughout the

city in different districts. From my observation, the police rookie is conditioned to think

robotically and oftentimes without any compassion and empathy. The concept of police

training introduces and strengthens are hardcore skills such as physical conditioning,

defensive tactics, and fighting with criminals.

Participants

Population and Sample

The population for this study included all rookie police officers in a metropolitan

police department in the southeastern United States. To represent other police

departments, all police rookies in the SMPD were selected because SMPD's UOF

complaint problem over the last 3 years is greater than the national average over the 11-

year period ending in 2011. Interviews with rookie officers who joined the SMPD within

the years of 2013–2017 were requested for their insight about rookies' perceptions of

service learning in college courses.

A comprehensive sample of a total of 359 police rookies who joined the SMPD

between 2015 and 2017 comprised of the sampling frame. The Human Resources and

Personnel Section of the SMPD compiled the sampling frame, the list of rookie police

officers. The list is publicly available because rookies are certified officers by that state.

As a retired frontline supervisor in the SMPD, I understand the process of how to obtain

the list. An open records request for public information was sent to the Open Records

Section of the SMPD requesting all persons who applied for a police officer position;

passed all physical, psychological, and criminal background requirements for

employment; graduated from the training academy; and who are currently working in the

field as a probationary officer or have graduated to full sworn officer within the previous

12 months. Table 1 provides a profile of the number in each recruit class by gender and

race. I used profile percentages to compare my participants with the population of rookies

in the SMPD to establish representativeness.

Table 1

Recruitment Class 2014–2017

	Gender		Race			
Recruit class #	Male	Female	Black	Other*	White	Total
238	32 (80%)	8 (20%)	22 (55%)	5 (13%)	13 (33%)	40
239	19 75%)	6 (24%)	16 (64%)	1 (4%)	8 (32%)	25
240	31 (82%)	7 (18%)	18 (47%)	13 (35%)	7 (18%)	38
241	16 (100%)	0 (0%)	9 (56%)	2 (13%)	5 (31%)	16
242	24 (83%)	5 (17%)	17 (57%)	3 (10%)	9 (31%)	29
243	27 (69%)	12 (31%)	23 (59%)	6 (15%)	10 (26%)	39
244	29 (76%)	9 (24%)	27 (71%)	8 (21%)	3 (8%)	38
245	19 (90%)	2 (10%)	11 (52%)	0 (0%)	10 (48%)	21
246	23 (92%)	2 (8%)	16 (64%)	5 (20%)	4 16%)	25
247	17 (81%)	4 (19%)	15 (71%)	2 (10%)	4 (19%)	21
248	24 (92%)	2 (8%)	11 (42%)	5 (19%)	10 (39%)	26
249	17 (89%)	2 (11%)	12 (63%)	2 (11%)	5 (26%)	19
250	14 (65%)	8 (35%)	12 (55%)	3 (14%)	7 (31%)	22
Total	292 (81%)	67 (19%)	209 (58%)	55 (15%)	95 (27%)	359

Note. *Other includes Hispanic, Asian, African, Pacific Islander, and Jamaican.

Eligibility and Recruitment

The list of rookie officers from Background and Recruitment/Personnel Unit who have recently graduated from the police academy have been sworn in as an official law enforcement officer for the SMPD. Initially an eligibility questionnaire was e-mailed to the rookie officers listed in the sampling frame. The questionnaire asked rookie officers to indicate if they have had a college-based service-learning experience. If they have had an experience, they were eligible to voluntarily participate in the study and asked if they would like to participate. Eligibility questions include:

- Were you hired as a police officer after January 2015?

- Did you attend college at any time?

- Did you take criminal justice courses while in college?

- Did you have a service-learning experience in any criminal justice course? A service-learning experience many be like one of the following examples: Examples of service-learning experiences are listed (see Appendix C).

- Are you willing to be interviewed for up to an hour about your service-learning experience?

If participants affirmed all eligibility questions and were willing to be interviewed, then the participant was contacted by me to inform them of the consent, establish a time and place for the interview, and give them their choice of $25 gift card. I also informed potential participants of my previous work history as holding key positions within the department. My previous position affirmed my integrity and confidentiality to further establish trust in me and established a participant-researcher relationship. Because

I am a retired sergeant, I was sensitive to the knowledge rookie officers might have felt coerced or compelled to participate in my study. With this sensitivity, I took the following measures that protected potential participants described in the next section.

Ethical Protection for Participants Rights

Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved all data collection procedures and measures of ethical protection before any data collection began. The IRB approval number is 07-12-19-0614664. After IRB approval, I forwarded an e-mail to a high-ranking officer/gatekeeper to forward the eligibility questionnaire to participants. Gatekeepers are defined as the authoritarians for the access of the participants to "mitigate trust, study the integrity, and respect the process recruitment of participants" (Rattani & Johns, 2017, p. 27). Additionally, the eligibility questionnaire had my contact information for further correspondence with participants, and I was the only one who collected data and participants' answers.

Qualitative studies are designed to give specific and detailed descriptions of participants (Johnston, 2015). As the researcher, I advised each participant of the risks and warranted that any traits, identity, or comments are not tracked back to the exact participant. Potential harms of participation in my study include reputational and employment risks. Thus, I took the following steps to protect participants, which may have mitigated potential feelings of coercion, reputational, and employment risks.

To maintain voluntariness, I ensured the participant was aware they could decline to be in the study at any stage and that no one at the SMPD or Walden University would treat them differently if they decided not to be in the study or stop being in the study at

any time. Participants were advised that if they were uncomfortable with the face-to-face interview, they could withdraw at any time without any obligation to continue.

Minimal reputational risks were also mitigated by ensuring anonymity by recording interview responses without any use of names or identifiers, so no personal identifications are present in interview records such as transcripts, recordings, and my researcher's journal. To further protect participant's identities, I did not make notes about area of working responsibility, working shift, or family life. The information provided by participants has been kept private and will only be used for research purposes. However, if I had become aware of any sexual or criminal misconduct during the interviews, I would have reported to the Office of Professional Standards. A locked drawer in my home office has been established to protect the physical information before its destruction in 5 years as required by Walden University guidelines. All electronic files are password protected and documents, other than research, are redacted to ensure anonymity.

Additionally, consent was obtained after completing the eligibility questions and prior to being interviewed. For the one interview in person, a consent form was signed. For the interviews conducted through digital means (FaceTime, Skype, or cellular conversations), I had the participant verbalize, "I consent" and recorded prior to my commencing to interview. As with data protection guidelines, consent forms and digital recordings are kept in a locked drawer of my home office and password protected accessible only by me.

Right to Fair Treatment and No Harm

There was no anticipation of any unfair treatment to any status or discrimination to any participants within this study. I became methodical in my speech and practice when speaking and interacting in conversation with each participant. This study was in no way discriminatory of any age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, political party or religious affiliation. No one was harmed or cause for harm during this study. There was also no identifiable trauma from the participants' reflections that caused a referral to Personnel, Medical, and Psychological Services and stopping the interview.

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Data Collection

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The primary focus of this project study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. After IRB approval, I embarked on the following procedures to collect data. Participants were asked open-ended questions designed to understand if and how service-learning experiences transform police officer learning and practices. Eligibility questionnaires were sent to filter participants and invited them to participate in an interview. Individual face-to-face interviews were the method by which data are collected for the study (Merriam, 2009; Rostami, Ashcroft, & Tully, 2018). In the following paragraphs I explain, in order, the steps I took to collect data.

The data collection was a scheduled interview that took place at a mutual location or designated time during a recorded telephone call. Once I contacted each rookie officer at the scheduled time, I obtained either a signed consent form or verbalized, "I consent."

Before asking interview questions, I reviewed the summary of the study and reminded the rookie officer that participation was voluntary, information shared was summarized and that the officer could decline to continue at any time without any risk or retribution. I also informed the officer that the interview was recorded for accuracy of statements given. Using a prepared list of questions, I asked the participants about service-learning experiences with the guidance of Kolb's experiential learning theory.

Face-to-Face Interview Protocol

For the interview protocol, the following was a list of open-ended questions that were paralleled with Kolb's experiential learning cycle to gather an in-depth understanding for their service-learning experiences. For CE, the interview question asked for a description of the service-learning experience. The next question asked about AE, as the participant was asked to describe what that service-learning experience meant to them. The next question indicated if the officer had applied any part of the service-learning activity or project objectives within the policing profession. If the participant did, then the participant was to describe how they applied their learning from the service-learning experience to the police practices. In the process, participants likely revealed particulars about their RO and AC, which was recorded and analyzed. I was cognizant to use prompting questions if necessary.

The next step was RO and the interview question included "Reflecting back on that experience, how did you make sense of it? What did it mean to you? What did you learn from it?" Questions helped trigger any "ah-hah moments" or revelations about the experiences while the participant was at work, on the beat, or shortly after a working an

incident. If the participant connected the service-learning experience to the application of work experience; then did the participant keep a journal or write any notes? If the participant wrote anything, did the process of writing continue to help them make sense of what they learned from the situation? Were there any other prompting, which might reveal officers' learning process in relation to reflection and comprehension about self. The final interview question was from AO. What programs have you found to introduce in the community? Have you discussed any progressive programs to initiate in the community? Any other prompting questions which might reveal officers "owning their knowledge" by seeking additional resources to move from learning to application. Can you think of a time since you been on the police force that you have used a service-learning experience? Lastly, I asked the participant if there were any additional thoughts they would like to add to their statement about the service-learning experience.

The data collection and coding process was used to analyze each of the responses from participants. The following sections were provided methods for any managing, postulations, limitations, delineations and differences among each analysis in the data analysis procedures. The procedure consisted of trustworthiness, validity, and expectant results.

I recorded the interview and simultaneously tool interview notes that related to expressions, tones, and infliction of voice given from the participant. A continued questioning and probing were conducted until it was determined that a thorough understanding and description of service-learning experiences was achieved. In the final

interview phase, I thanked the officer for participating and gave an incentive $25.00 gift card of their choice in exchange for their time.

Once I received the information from the interviewed participants, the interview was transcribed from audio to text. During transcription, I got a sense of categories that were to be coded and the extent to which saturation was being reached. As mentioned in the population and sample section, I interviewed eight rookies and reached saturation of data. Saturation is when there are no further themes or evidence has been met or mentioned by the participants (Charmaz, 2005).

The role of the researcher and the professional relationship with participants is described in the following paragraph. Also, I present the data analysis that described the coding procedures.

Role of the Researcher

I served as a supervisor and instructor in law enforcement. I have collaborated closely with training academy instructors, recruits and police rookies, and administrators who write and implement policies for the department. While serving as a sworn law enforcement supervisor, I also worked closely with the State Level Public Safety Training Academy Directors on teaching strategies to identify strengths and weaknesses. I believe the administrators have the utmost confidence in me to be professional in the data collection and analysis. I have been transparent and honest in my findings. As the researcher, I refrained from personal biases to produce the most beneficial and objective results in this study.

Data Analysis

The research question for this study was: What are the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers? Open-ended questions were used to elicit responses for qualitative data collection through face-to-face interviews. Open-ended questions are used "to generate depth data or 'stories' from purposively defined groups of respondents for qualitative analysis" (O'Cathain & Thomas, 2004, p. 2). "Open ended items exert the least amount of control over the respondent and can capture idiosyncratic differences" about respondents (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 198).

I was the sole collector and analyst of data. The following is a five-step process I took to analyze data (Creswell, 2012; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

1. I transcribed the audio-recordings and sent it to participants via email for review and accuracy.

2. I organized transcribed data into four matrices, each one representing a stage of Kolb's experiential cycle and related research question.

3. I organized data by reading transcribed and analyzing sentence segments for meaning and create categorical labels to reflect meaning placing actual transcribed text within labeled cells of the matrix. I repeated this process for each research question adding categories as necessary. My interview and journal notes serve to illuminate any bias or clarifications that might be needed during rounds of coding.

4. During and after the process of open coding, I compared responses to identify patterns of labels and meaning to possibly combine or expand categories to reflect meaning in second and subsequent rounds of coding. As themes emerged, I developed them.

5. As appropriate, I devised tables and diagrams to interpret and relay meaning in writing. Individual narratives were used to illustrate patterns.

Trustworthiness and Validity

According to Shenton (2004), qualitative research is often questioned with trustworthiness by positivists. In order to ensure the data was accurate and truthful; the trustworthiness of this study was evaluated by four criteria: creditability, dependability, transferability, and conformability. Each criterion is explained according to relationship in this study.

Credibility. Guba (1981) identified the first of the four components as credibility. Credibility defines the study findings to the reality in truth in the research (Shenton, 2004). Credibility is the essential paradigms that links to the other aspects of trustworthiness in the paradigm. I maintained an audit trail equipped with notes from interviews and an audio recording of my discussion with additional notes at the end of each interview for review. As the researcher, I ensured objectivity and impartiality was kept throughout the study within a reflective journal. Guba (1981) recommended member checking as best way to determine validity. I sent my themes for members to check after I analyzed the data.

Transferability. Transferability is the application of study results and procedures in another or broader context (Merriam, 1998; Shenton, 2004). To enhance transferability, I provided detailed processes of research procedures so it can be replicated elsewhere. I also provided detailed attributes of the research setting so readers of the research can judge if the study can be applied in another setting.

Dependability. An audit trail was maintained. The audit trail was kept by my journal about procedural and contextual details so I could reflect on them during the data collection and analysis process and with my research advisor.

Confirmability. Confirmability is the degree to which the findings of the research study could be confirmed by any other researcher conducting the same process (Guba, 1981). I acknowledged my bias about the topic and maintained a researcher's journal to reflect on and record any bias that could affect interpretation of results during data collection and analysis. I reported any decisions that may be affected by my bias in the reporting of my results as suggested by Shenton (2004).

Data Collection Results

Data collected focused on the overarching research question by identifying rookie police officers who have had a college-level service-learning experience. Interviews were the main source of data collection to examine the participants' opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints about their service-learning experiences while in college.

The purpose of the data analysis was to thoroughly explore eight participant responses to each of four interview questions and discern how responses inform the one over-arching research question of the study: What are the experiences, observations,

conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college among rookie police officers with fewer than 3 years of work experiences?

Following the procedures outlined in the Data Analysis Plan section above, data were transcribed from the audio-recordings. Transcripts were read multiple times and manually coded for categories. Categories were combined as patterns emerged. Tables were created to present findings. Four tables corresponding to interview questions and Kolb's experiential model are presented in this chapter. Any themes which emerged were also presented. First, a participant profile is presented.

Participants

Participants were eager and willing to share their service-learning experiences and answered questions honestly. I did not sway them by asking additional questions or any prompting. Several participants initially refused the gift card incentive I offered stating the opportunity to help with my research was enough compensation for their time. Despite their initial refusal, I gave each participant a gift card as described in my invitation letter. A couple of participants said they would, in turn, gift the card to a charity. A narrative description of participants is first provided to contextualize analysis. Participant profiles are masked with a pseudonym for a fuller description.

Eight rookie police officers were interviewed. As Table 2 illustrates, participant demographics interviewed consisted of six males and two females: four Black, one Hispanic and, one White male; and one Black and one Hispanic female. No White females were interviewed. To note the demographics have underrepresented males,

Caucasian and Asians, compared to the population of officers of SMPD based on public records not cited to maintain anonymity of the department.

Table 2

Demographics of Participants Compared to Population

Attribute	SMPD (%)	Sample (%)	Difference between population SMPD and sample (%)
Male	82	75	- 7
Female	18	25	+ 7
African American/Black	58	63	+ 5
European American/White	13	37	- 24
Hispanic/Latina	25 +	21	+4
Asian	0	1	-1

Note. SMPD = Southeast Metropolitan Police Department

Participant 1 (Roger). Roger is a White male in his mid-40's who started another career from business to law enforcement after going back to school. Roger travelled to a third-world country on a service-learning trip to provide several services to the community. Roger credited his service-learning trip for his exposure to abject poverty and importance of identifying simple needs within specific surroundings.

Participant 2 (Tim). Tim is a Black male in his mid-20's who moved from another state. He mentioned two service-learning activities while in college, working with a local middle school to mentor children and as a sports manager for the college team. Tim admitted his lack of time management had been an issue for him personally; but, after becoming the sports manager, he became addicted to time management and attentive to detail. Tim is quoted as saying, "…the worst thing you can rob an individual of is their time by wasting it."

Participant 3 (Sam). Sam is a Black male in his mid-20's. He entered policing as a means to "find his why" for a living. Sam grew up in a disorganized neighborhood as an at-risk youth and was "saved" by a local police officer. Sam discussed how the officer started a mentoring program outside the police department in which he was a member, then started mentoring once in college. Now on the police department, Sam emulates the same positive skills and behaviors taught to him. Sam has started mentoring programs in local neighborhoods to give back.

Participant 4 (Carl). Carl is a Black male in his mid-20's. He listed several service-learning projects he partook while attending college. However, what stuck out most for him was his coaching younger males of a basketball team in an at-risk youth community. Carl compared the basketball lessons to life lessons in mentoring the children he was coaching.

Participant 5 (Ricardo). Ricardo is a Hispanic male in his mid-40's. He remembered three service-learning activities while attending college and while attending the police academy in another country. Ricardo identified the most with teaching middle school children the English language as a second language. Ricardo acknowledged that he gained self-confidence and self-awareness through teaching and mentoring others.

Participant 6 (Paty). Paty is a Hispanic female in her mid-20's who mentioned several opportunities for service throughout her life. Paty connected with local churches to give back. Paty gives at any opportunity she can because she says she understands anyone can be a paycheck away from being in a bad situation.

Participant 7 (Jahi). Jahi is a Black female in her mid-20's who listed several opportunities for service learning throughout college. Jahi specifically remembered a service-learning experience of teaching and mentoring at-risk youth about the law so they would not be a statistic. Jahi was passionate about giving back and educating youth.

Participant 8 (Joe). Joe was a Black male in his mid-20's who recalled having a busy schedule during college by filling it with several service learning and volunteering experiences. Joe identified the most with reading to children on specific days at a local elementary school. Joe connected with those he read to and mentored. He was emboldened when students, teachers, and staff at the school attended his graduation and celebrated him before leaving to attend the police academy.

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Data Analysis Results

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Interview Question 1: Concrete Experiences

The first interview question asked participants to identify their service-learning experience, the CE of Kolb's learning cycle. Most participants identified several service-learning experiences for this question. To delimit the conversation, I asked participants to focus on the one service-learning experience which was most meaningful during their college experiences. Each participant articulated their experience vividly and with rich descriptions. Categories which emerged about police rookies' service-learning experiences are listed below in Table 3. Categories included who benefitted from the service, the volunteer service role of the rookie, and the organization served.

As can be noted in Table 3, five of eight (62.5%) of police rookies interviewed served at-risk youth or young adults, two of eight (25%) served in impoverished countries, one of eight (12.5%) served families in need.

Table 3

Interview Question 1: What was Your Service-Learning Experience

Participant	Beneficiary	Volunteer role	Local organization
1	Impoverished country	General	National Habitat for Humanity
2	Young adult male sports team	Managing	College basketball team
3	At-risk youth	Mentoring	National Fraternal Neighborhood Boys and Girls Club
4	Co-ed youth basketball team	Coaching	Church
5	Impoverished country	Tutoring	Regional academy college
6	Families in need	General	Churches
7	At-risk youth school	Tutoring	Law office
8	Elementary students	General	Elementary school

The police rookie' service time as a volunteer included general volunteering (n = 3 or 37.5%), mentoring/coaching (n = 2 or 25.0%), being a teacher/trainer (n = 2 or 25.0%) and managing (n = 1 or 12.5%) roles. Police rookies who had a service-learning experience served youth and young adults in five roles: as coach, manager, mentor, tutor, and general volunteer. All organizations served were local and closely connected with the community (n= 5 or 62.5%); three represented local chapters of the national organization (n = 3 or 37.5%) or regional organization (1 or 12.5%). In summary, the police rookies primarily serve local youth and community organizations in various service-learning roles in which the beneficiaries were children, young adults, and families in need of a service.

Interview Question 2: Reflective Observations

Three categories were coded in response to interview question 2, w*hat did that service-learning experience mean to you*? The question was asked to get a sense of the learner's reflection on a personal basis which is Kolb's second phase of the experiential learning cycle. Table 4 below presents categories of responses to interview question two about what the service-learning experience meant to participants. For example, Roger's service-learning experience was in an impoverished country and in reflection he stated, "…I did not know what poverty could look like on a global scale when there is no readily access to education, health, or a decent livelihood long term and to see if any solutions might be in sight." Paty recalls times working in the community when she saw people who appeared too prideful to ask for a handout. Paty stated, "in any given situation we could all be just a paycheck or a mistake away. Hopefully, you will do the same thing when you see someone else who maybe struggling."

Participants' reflections revealed their making individual personal and professional meaning from their service-learning experiences. As can be noted by patterns of words participants used to express personal meaning-making, words related to wisdom and encouragement emerged. Professionally, participants gained individual meaning in various ways. No patterns emerged from professional meaning-making among rookie police officers' service-learning reflections.

In summary, all participants reflected on their experiences by becoming more self-aware and identified the actual service experience as meaningful. All participants expressed a rewarding experience and were grateful to have been afforded the

experience. Participants valued the structure and collaboration of the service-learning programs and university – organization partnerships which exposed them to the service-learning opportunity.

Table 4

Interview Question 2: What did that Service-Learning Experience Mean to You?

Participant	Reflection	Personal meaning	Professional meaning
1	Development of community	Exposed to abject poverty	Connected to community
2	Managing people	Learned to team build	Sensitized to workload
3	Giving back	Uplifted manhood & discipline	Developed networking opportunities
4	Managing youth	Realized strengths as a mentor	Supoorted youth
5	Tutor children	Became self-aware	Instilled self-esteem
6	Giving back	Strengthened propensity for charity to help less fortunate	Cultivated diversity
7	Tutor children	Engaged by helping younger people	Socialized students
8	Read to youth	Felt needed	Showed appreciation

Interview Question 3: Abstract Conceptualization

Participants revealed how they grasped their learning when they explained how they apply their service-learning experiences in response to interview question 3, *how have you applied the service-learning experiences*? Abstract conceptualization is the third part of Kolb's experiential learning cycle, the "ah-ha" moment of learning and immediate application of that learning: the new knowledge gained and added to the knowledge already known. Table 5 presented the grasping concept voiced by participants and the way they have applied their service-learning experience.

Table 5

Interview Question 3: How Have you Applied the Service-Learning Experiences?

Participant	Application of service learning experience	Grasping concept
1	Is more aware of community needs	Realized positive influnce
2	Considers value to time in all actions	Structured management of time
3	Educates young men about staying straight	Presented give-back programs
4	Coaches young men	Counseled and gave advice to others
5	Recognizes cultural diversity on the beat	Connected with youth
6	Develops "confidential sources" (i.e., street people who help police)	Worked with less fortunate
7	Educates youth on law	Realized the value of law
8	Encourages young people to be positive	Related to others

As can be noted, rookie participants grasped various concepts individually; but all applications aligned with the new knowledge they gained from their service-learning experiences. Participants were able to easily identify what they learned and how they applied their learning during interviews. I did not have to repeat the question or explain what I meant. For example, Tim and Sam each think about service to others in their work every day. Tim described his work schedule in detail from the time of the calls, getting to the location, and investigating the scene down to the minutes. Tim stated, "…my game plan has to be on point because people have stuff to do and places to go. They cannot be waiting on me." Sam felt the need to help at-risk youth in the neighborhood because a police officer helped him. Sam stated, "…with all this negativity out here. You got to be the difference-maker at some point. Why not make it early? I found my 'why' and that is why I'm here'".

Interview Question 4: Active Experimentation

Based on Kolb's cycle, active experimentation deals with how new knowledge is applied and tested to make decisions and solve problems: the transformation from one way of thinking and being to another. I asked police rookies, *how have you made sense of the service-learning experience?* While closely akin to AC, AE is the transformation which has taken place as a result of an experience. In this case, a service-learning experience.

Three categories emerged from responses to this question: the mode of experimentation with their new knowledge, the related purpose of their experimentation, and the transformation participants voiced. Table 6 presents these categories and individual responses.

Table 6

Interview Question 4: How Have you Made Sense of the Service-Learning Experience?

Participant	Mode of experimenting with service-learning	Related purpose	AE transformation
1	Community policing	Helping people	Joined PD to help others through community
2	Awareness of persons waiting	Prioritizing	Conscious of time in response to policing action
3	Provision of guidance	Learning	Continuously seeks way to guide at-risk youth
4	In-the-moment mentoring	Inspiring	Motivates at-risk youth
5	Self-confidence building through teaching	Stimulating	Models confidence in youth language acquisition
6	Serving others	Gift-giving	Pay it forward in every circumstance
7	Self-recognition of valuable knowledge	Training	Teach others about self-regulation in relation to law
8	Encouraging others	Motivating	Inspiring others

Note. AE = Active Experimentation (Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle)

To illustrate, Carl experimented with in-the-moment mentoring on the beat. Carl recalls educating youth by saying to them: "the main goal was how not to behave on the court but off the court in high intensity environments, so you don't get into trouble." Inspired by the way he felt and responses he witnessed; he continues to motivate at-risk youth by mentoring at-risk youth in-the-moment whenever he has a chance.

In sum, police rookie officers interviewed were transformed by their service learning experiences. A common theme among transformation from police rookies' service learning is focus on others. All of them continue to serve in roles to voluntarily serve to impact both the present and the future of individuals and communities.

Summary of Results

The one over-arching research question was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college among rookie police officers with fewer than 3 years of work experience. Rookie police officers readily reflected on their service-learning experiences and identified influences which were all positive. The five themes derived from analyses were (a) police rookies focus on volunteering for youth and community organizations; (b) altruism and enjoyment results from their experiences; (c) rookie officers connect with and grasp the ideals of service; (c) rookies are grateful for their transformative experiences and; (e) rookies continue to serve in capacities to which they were introduced during their college-based service-learning experiences.

Summary

Section 2 discussed the methodology, data collection, and data analysis. According to the basic qualitative design, the methodology was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. The collection of data was first through an eligibility questionnaire to gain individuals who have had a service-learning experience and then have a face-to-face interview. The analysis of data consists of member checking to ensure validity, creditability, and reliability of the research. I maintained integrity and confidentiality throughout and after the study process. Section 3 introduces and explains the actual project presented in Appendix A.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. I analyzed interviews with eight rookie police offices and found five central themes. I found that police rookies who had a service-learning experience in a college criminal justice course continued to serve in the roles to which they were introduced to in college. The rookies served as volunteers for youth and community organizations with altruistic feelings that are connected to the ideals of service and are grateful for the transformative service-learning experiences they had while in college.

A 12-week curriculum plan (Appendix A) to include service learning in existing field officer training was developed from the findings of this study. The curriculum plan serves as the first step in encouraging social change at the SMPD police training academy and could become a model curriculum for police training in other locales. Section 3 describes the rationale for the selection of a curriculum plan, a review of the literature regarding curriculum planning in relation to study findings, a project description, project evaluation plan, and project implications.

Rationale

I took a basic qualitative design approach using interviews to examine the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of rookie police officers about service learning in college criminal justice courses. I chose a curriculum

plan to address the problem based on the results of the study. At the local level, SMPD's problem was greater than the national phenomenon of controversy over police UOF incidents. The number of complaints was evidence that some SMPD officers did not deescalate situations and positively engage with the people they serve. Based on my previous police training and academic teachings, I believe service learning has the potential to foster more positive engagement skills and dispositions that may be useful as police officers encounter people in crisis and respond to problem situations.

I considered various deliverable options for the project such as an evaluation report, policy recommendation, and professional development training. A curriculum plan best aligned with the results of the study and the problem. An evaluation is an all-inclusive assessment system to collect, analyze, and use information about the programs, policies, and procedures of an organization (Hilton & Jonas, 2017), but this was not appropriate because no service-learning programs currently exists within the SMPD. Further, a policy paper includes critical analyses of an issue or problem to develop a defensible proposal to formulate strategies for a workable resolution (Herman, 2018). However, policies do not exist regarding service learning within the police training academy, making a policy position paper inappropriate. Finally, professional training materials were considered for development, but curriculum had not yet been designed. Hence, a curriculum plan was the project genre I chose.

A curriculum plan is the most relevant project to add a service-learning component to an existing 12-week field training program for rookie officers. A curriculum plan is "a sequence of goals with increasing complexity, new useful skills

which are incrementally made available to learn" (Morere, Ott, & Ramos, 2019, p. 2815).

The curriculum for field training of rookies is led and monitored by field training officers (FTOs) who mentor and evaluate newly sworn-in officers as they enter the field of policing and protecting citizens. Field training is the best time for rookie officers to be exposed to the concept of service in their police practice. Adding a service component to existing field training holds the most promise for service learning to become embedded in rookie training at the SMPD police academy.

The curriculum plan in Appendix A includes its purpose, level, learners, scope, and sequence. The curriculum plan describes materials, units, and lesson details such as objectives, activities, assessments, and teacher notes. These elements are additions to the existing 12-week field training plan of the SMPD. With additions, police rookies are expected to actively engage with each other, senior officers, and the community to seek out opportunities of service learning during field training. The curriculum plan is designed to guide FTOs who teach and grade police rookies. Added to existing training are details about service-learning activities and assessment criteria within the 12-week field training period. Field trainers are teachers of rookie officers as they learn and become aware of and apply the actual practice of policing and protecting (Baş & Şentürk, 2019). Field training is the best time for rookies to be introduced to the concept of service. The curriculum plan would be implemented after basic mandate school but before graduation from the training academy.

Introducing rookies to service during field training may result in police at the SMPD and in other districts becoming more effective in a "protect and serve" mindset

called for by policing in the 21st century. Rookies exposed to embedded service-learning within field training may be better equipped with enhanced policing skills to overcome challenges of volatile situations. Various techniques of positively managing the challenges might yield a decrease in the UOF which is a problem in policing.

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Review of the Literature

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A literature review for the project deliverable, a curriculum plan resulting from my exploration of service-learning experiences of rookie police officers, is presented in the following sections. I searched ERIC, ProQuest Central, SAGE, and Education Research Complete online databases between October 2019 and February 2020. I used the following search terms: *curriculum plan + development +21st century policing, instructional methods, service-learning + programs, police field training + 21st century policing,* and *adult learning.* Themes of the literature review for the project include an overview of curriculum planning, police field training curriculum history, community-oriented policing and service-learning curriculum, police field training in the 21st century, service-learning curriculum for 21st century policing, mental health training, and police field training within SMPD.

Curriculum Planning

Curriculum planning and curriculum development have been used in literature interchangeably. But Richards (2001) defined *curriculum planning* as a term that inputs systematic and purposeful elements to support an existing system resulting in a greater output. Curriculum plans are designed to collect views on the established course and provide active and mutual methods of training and learning (O'Neill, 2015). According to

Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) the development of a curriculum consists of three vital elements: planning, implementation, and evaluation. As a powerful strategy for adult learners, most educators link theory to practice through curriculum planning for professional development (Cranton & King, 2003). For instance, "transformative learning can use integrative curriculum planning as a capstone activity for sessions that introduce new teaching styles or methods" (Cranton & King, 2003, p. 36). Thus, I chose to use a curriculum plan that merge weekly service-learning activities within a 12-week field training program for rookie police officers.

Although police rookie officers may have participated in service-learning activities before entering the police program, the 12-week evaluation period for the police rookie officer is the most significant because service learning may be introduced so rookie police officers can apply service-learning concepts in a real-world setting. Service-learning transforms both the participant and the community when the service is combined with learning and adds value (Koldewyn, Brain, & Stephens, 2017). Field training application provides a setting in which meaningful relationships within communities are developed where police rookie serves (PR Newswire, 2019). The 12-week curriculum plan for rookie police officer includes both in- and out-of-class opportunities for learning as both learning opportunities contribute to the rookie police officer's service-learning engagement and experiences. Ultimately, the rookie police officer, the image of the department, and community-relations improve if service learning is applied.

Police Field Training Curriculum History

In the mid-19th century, nearly most police agencies did not offer police training to officers (Metchik, 2019). Any training assumed for police was dictated as a paramilitary style format. Historically, general police training requirements consisted of a simple application and completed background check. Then, the newly sworn officers were handed a gun and badge for patrol. Training in the field consisted primarily by working in the field every day. As the concept of police officer evolved from a blue-collar job to a professional career, each state implemented a standard called the POST Council.

The POST is the minimal certification needed for recruits to complete to become a police officer. Each state is POST certified and demands different minimal qualifications. However, most POST entry requirements consist of some academic credential and knowledge of legal and departmental procedures, and all require a certain number of training hours within a program. Training hours are comprised of learning weapons control, defense tactics, defensive driving, UOF, and arrest procedures. These areas of training address liability issues and not community issues.

Community-Oriented Policing and Service-Learning Curriculum

Research has estimated that the United States has had formal policing for about two centuries (Palmiotto, 2019). However, in the last 50 years, the latest philosophical concept of policing has become community-oriented policing, which can be defined as an organizational strategy that involves the commitment to help communities and local neighborhoods solve crime problems (Horne & Chriss, 2012). But there has still been no

concerted effort to cooperate with the local neighborhood on safety. The actions the police have used for safety have primarily been an "'us-vs-them' mentality with police on one side and citizens on the other" (Posick & Hatfield, 2017, p. 128). But community-oriented policing softens the gap between police and the public. Police on foot patrol and assigned into neighborhoods provide more closeness to the public and the problems faced within neighborhoods.

Community-oriented policing has yielded several successes for the police and the community. Some examples of success include police officers trained to understand and appreciate cultural diversity, policing as decentralized within communities to eliminate fear and disconnect with citizens, and police who served on community boards to help serve as legitimacy of partnerships for decision-making actions (Goldberg & Christopher, 2019). However, UOF continues to be a problem and police training continues to focus on defensive tactics. Hence, there is still room for improvement of the community-oriented model. Because service learning has yielded successful empathy and engagement skills as outcomes in academia, using some of the same activities may provide even more success in 21st century police training.

Police Field Training in 21st Century

The landscape of police field training has developed over the last 25 years. Citizen groups, media, and President Obama's 21st Century policing have demanded the need to reform police training as it relates to police-community relations (COPS Office, 2015; Moll, 2016). Police scholars have long questioned some of the tactics of police training traditions. As mention, most of the core training is spent on addressing liability

factors such as firearms, driving, and defense tactics. Although such skills are necessary and hold great value to the officer and the department, the "disproportionate focus on technical skills such as deescalation, cultural awareness, and dealing with the mentally ill usually get the short shrift in police officer training" (Shjarback & White, 2016, p. 2). In contrast, effective training may include socialization to help officers connect with the community better (Getty, Worrall, & Morris, 2016, p. 822). Police field training is not standard from district to district but may serve well at the beginning of the police career (Papazoglou & Andersen, 2014).

Service-Learning Curriculum for Policing in the 21st Century

There is much discussion regarding the need to transform and reform policing in the 21st century (Martin, Rogers, Samuel, & Rowling, 2017). Within COPS Office (2015) final report of President's Obama Task Force on 21st Century Policing, six pillars are introduced and mandated for better trust and more stability between police and the public. Service learning has the potential to resolve all the six pillars in a positive way and address the policies and practices already in place. Pillar 1 is building trust and legitimacy. Trust can be increased by positive influences or reduced to negative opinions between communities by police actions (Miles-Johnson, Mazerolle, Pickering, & Smith, 2016). Trust is critical between police and community and to safeguard validity (Miles-Johnson & Pickering, 2018). Implementing service learning can allow the police culture to embrace a guardianship mindset instead of warrior mindset which builds trust.

Pillar 2 is policy and oversite in which the police carry out the polices that reflect community values. Service learning adds opportunity to enrich the lives they encounter

specifically to those who are significantly disproportionate to crime. Pillar 3 is technology and social media. Service learning and positive interactions with police create a culture of trust through every medium possible including technology. Pillar 4 is community policing and crime reduction. Community policing involves working with the community for the management of public safety.

Pillar 5 is training and education. Service learning implemented in a field training form allows policing to effectively engage with community members from the beginning of a career and create a standard of preparedness with compassion and empathy. Finally, Pillar 6 is officer wellness and safety. Though the physicality of a police officer is often an immediate thought, mental wellness is also vital. Having a multifaceted police officer who is physically and mentally fit is needed for community-oriented policing in the 21st century. Service learning during field training holds promise for developing a readily conscience individual who meets the needs called for by President Obama's Task Force.

Field Training and Mental Health

Police officers are most often the first responders to interact with persons who have a psychiatric episode or who have suffered a public mental breakdown (Krameddine & Silverstone, 2015). Customarily, the police officer's response to the mentally ill is to use force or threat of force for the individual to comply (Campbell, Ahalt, Hagar, & Arroyo, 2017). There are few training programs for police to interact with individuals with mental illness and interacting with the mentally ill has resulted in serious injury and fatality (Rich & Saks, 2017).

Most police departments, including SMPD, have determined three main resolutions in dealing with the mentally ill. The first is "for police departments to team with hospitals and mental health clinicians to respond with officers dispatched with calls involving the mentally ill" (Stuart & Watson, 2017, p. 94). The second resolve is to incorporate a few hours of training for officers while in basic mandate and throughout in-service training. The third resolve is to create teams on the police department, known as crisis intervention team programs. The crisis intervention team is comprised of representatives from the police, mental health professionals, advocacy groups, and educational specialists. Their purpose is to advocate for, collaborate with, and educate the community at large (Wood & Watson, 2017). However, too often the concepts of such programs are implemented and supported for a limited time but are not thoroughly evaluated for permanent cognition. Therefore, it is imperative to have first responders understand and use considerable discretion when interacting with the mentally ill (Livingston et al., 2014).

The SMPD has constructed policies and programs that train police on how to interact with persons who are mentally ill. In fact, the SMPD training unit is responsible for training all employees on recognizing individuals with mental illness and providing some immediate resources. However, the training is part of the yearly in-service programs and not upon the initial entry into the workforce. Service-learning activities involving the mentally ill during field training creates the opportunity for rookie police to be exposed to, learn about, and experience situations involving the mentally ill and other volatile people and situations. With exposure, learning, and experience, police might be

better equipped to deal with situations of all stakeholders and to shift the paradigm of response from a UOF event to effective social change.

Field Training in Southeast Metropolitan Police Department

The current field training in SMPD consists of a 12-week program in which the rookie police officer is partnered with an FTO in each of the six districts on any watch immediately upon graduating from the police academy. The FTO and the rookie police officer spend 2 weeks together on the watch in the district. The rookie police officer experiences learning, in action. The information learned in the classroom from the previous 6 to 7 months is applied in the field. The FTO observes and evaluates the actions of the rookie police officer. The scope of FTO consists of the 12-week program which includes daily activities to identify, implement, evaluate, and reflect upon experiences of service to the community.

According to the SMPD's 2019 standardized evaluation guidelines, the rookie police officer is evaluated on attitude toward police work, general appearance, problem-solving abilities, driving skills, investigative skills, self-initiative, control of conflict, radio communication, department policies and procedures, and criminal procedures. Problem-solving, self-initiative, and control of conflict are elements of service, but standardized evaluation guidelines do not reflect any direct evaluation of service.

Service learning could be added as a component to evaluate and enhance stronger connections between police officers and communities in which they serve. Therefore, "shadowing a sample of service learning might provide a more nuanced picture of how service-learning is being used as well as those factors believe to contribute to successful

implementation" (Davis, Cronley, Madden, & Kim, 2014, p. 171). Having to add service learning within the SMPD field training program may allow rookie officers to be exposed to and engaged with all persons before being dispatched to calls which usually escalate to serious injury, death, negative exposure, and lawsuits against the department.

Summary of Project Genre Literature Review

Literature about curriculum planning for police FTOs was limited. The literature review focused on the integration of service-learning experiences and reflections within the current FTO training for the SMPD. VanMeter (2018) discussed how law enforcement agencies excel at basic training topics that include liabilities for the department such as firearms, arrests (search and physical), and defensive tactics. The current scope of SMPD's FTO is 12-weeks and focuses on the topics VanMeter lists.

Proposed is embedding daily activities to identify, implement, evaluate, and reflect upon experiences of service to the community. Embedding a service component to the already constructed field training program may further enhance the skill level of police rookie officers to be more effective and compassionate while serving the community. Literature about strategies for instructing adults that enhance 21st policing expectations were found and are used to inform project activities.

Curriculum planning for adult learning involves the cultivating of transformative learning in which there is a new perspective in thinking about our goals, reflecting on practices, and opening new possibilities in professional development (Cranton & King, 2003). Service learning is aligned with 21st century policing of criminal justice reform and the creation of social change.

Project Description

Adult learning varies with motivation and reflection. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, observations, conceptualizations, and experimentations of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police officers. The motivation to learn, in particularly for adults, is internal and may be linked to becoming more of a self-actualized person. Reflective learning is at the heart of any professional practice. Reflective learning encourages and develops learning strategies that are motivational. Reflective thinking has been adopted in many professional-based professions.

Findings from my study resulted in creating a curriculum to introduce service learning as an instructional strategy to enhance officers while on their first patrol during field training. The creation of service-learning components includes four phases that are merged within several parts of the police training academy curricula. The project is titled *Curriculum Plan for Embedding Service learning into Basic Mandated Field Training Program for Rookie Officers* and is presented in Appendix A. Needed resources, existing support, potential barriers, and solutions to the potential barriers to project implementation are presented for each of the four phases.

Resources, Supports, and Barriers

Resources, supports, and barriers are presented for four phases of project implementation.

Phase 1. The first phase is a one-hour block of instruction on service learning given to rookie police officers during basic mandate. During this 1-hour session, the

rookie police officer will define, understand the purpose, and identify service-learning concepts. Resources for the first phase include a PowerPoint presentation to give to the police training instructors and FTOs a basic understanding of the service-learning purposes and goals. Rookie police officers will learn of the advantages and any possible obstacles to having the knowledge of what service is in action. Support will be needed from key stakeholders such as police executives, training instructors from police and medical fields, and community advocacy. The barriers that will exist include a lack of teaching preparation time, learning objectives misaligned with terminal goals, and unfamiliarity with the communities being served.

Phase 2. The second phase occurs in the field training phase. During field training with a senior police officer, the police rookie will be able to pick an issue designated within the given district, make a plan, and take action during the course of 12-week field training. The training coordinator and FTO collaborate to develop service-learning projects for the police rookie within the communities. Gina (2019) concluded to train people to practice empathy, successful collaboration allows learners who are different to gain a valuable perspective from their own. The main resources needed for the second phase include service-learning program within the jurisdiction or community the officer patrols. Strong support will be needed from the community and FTOs. I imagine barriers will exist including being unfamiliar with the communities being served, logistic in unfeasibility, and institutional barriers within the SMPD and other agencies.

Phase 3. The third phase is reflection. At the end of field training, the police rookie is to reflect upon the service-learning actions by writing about the activity, any

achievements and triumphs gained as well as any challenges and barriers. The main resource needed for the third phase is the documentation. Support will be needed from the agency to provide the forms for the rookie police officer to express the commitment to serve and personal development. I imagine barriers will exist including the rookie police officers' abilities to reflect upon how they have applied what they have learned from the classroom and during the weeks of field training. Reflection is an internal process. Therefore, rookie police officers may need to be instructed about how to reflect by being prompted with direct questions which may yield reflective events for the documentation.

 Phase 4. The last phase is the evaluation. The FTO is to evaluate the police rookie by (1) ensuring the police rookie has demonstrated the learning objectives (2) assess the impact, and (3) brainstorm creative and diverse ways to take the project further. Having the police rookie to identify the root causes of service is the learning element of service learning that provides the police rookie with the opportunity to become innovative and learn qualities about oneself (Iyer, Carrington, Mercer, & Selva, 2018). Support will be needed from the community served and the FTO observance. Barriers will exist including no community involvement, the rookie police officer not serving within any community, and no officer field trainer.

 Additional resources for presenting the service-learning embedded curriculum plan would include a conference room, projector, and copies of the lesson plan. Support for all phases include representatives from the communities that will be served to gain input and insight for effective teaching and learning. Barriers for all phases include

competency and knowledge on the topic, time, workload, and personal commitment. Overall, the department has existing resources and support in place to achieve the success of the curriculum plan. However, the potential solution to the barriers would include the complete buy-in from all stakeholders with evidence of the positive impact in the community.

Implementation Timetable

Once the study and resultant project are approved, I will meet with the chief of police (or designee) to explain and present to police training staff the purpose and goals of the curriculum plan. The chief's office and SMPD police training staff will be given a copy of the project for review and consideration. The meeting should take no more than 1 hour. Once approved by the chief of police, curricular changes must be taken to the state POST Council by the chief. If approved by the state POST Council, training materials will be enacted. The implementation of service learning for police officers field training may begin in spring 2021 in-service classes, the first rookie class of 2021 and annually thereafter. Table 7 summarizes the implementation timetable.

Table 7

Timetable for Service-Learning Implementation with Field Training Program

Tasks	Weeks											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Meeting with Chief of Police (or designee) and SMPD training staff	X											
POST approval and publish Manual	X	X										
Training enacted among rookies in field training		X	X									
Field Training for Officers (train-the-trainer)			X	X								
Field training for 2021 rookies occurs								X				
Conduct evaluation 2021 Field Training Class								X				
Distribute summative evaluation results of 2021 implementation												X

Project Evaluation Plan

The goal of the project in Appendix A is to integrate service-learning activities

within a rookie police officer field training program. The curriculum plan would be

implemented after basic mandate school but before graduation from the training

academy. Therefore, the project is titled *Curriculum Plan for Embedding Service*

learning into Basic Mandated Field Training Program for Rookie Officers. I will

evaluate the project based on several evaluation goals for various stakeholders, be guided

by summative evaluation questions, and processes. Creswell (2012) defined an evaluation

as a systematic process of analyzing data, methods, and procedures. My project

evaluation plan is guided by evaluation goals and questions and will end with the benefits

to the stakeholders.

Evaluation Goals and Questions

Police executives, academy instructors, and senior FTOs will inform the evaluation and provide any recommendations. There are five evaluation questions that are suggested to address the professional development of the rookie police officer when he/she makes a professional leap between field training to becoming a certified "real world" police officer. The evaluation plan is goal-based in-so-much that I have articulated evaluation goals with target criteria. The evaluation will result in both formative and summative results. Formative results will be used to improve on-going project implementation. Summative results will be used to judge if the curriculum plan yielded its intended results at the end of the initial implementation cycle as reflected in the implementation timetable in Table 7.

Evaluation question 1. Was support garnered to implement the project? To monitor how support will be measured, I will seek out the opportunity to meet with chief of police and training academy personnel. Supporting will include curriculum plan presentation, PowerPoint, objectives and goals of the service learning embedded in the field training program. If the task is met, then the goal will be judged as having been met. If the meeting does not occur, then the evaluation goal will be judged as not met.

Evaluation question 2. Was the project implemented within the time period presented in the implementation timetable section? To monitor if the project was implemented within the timetable set, I will maintain a calendar and write when tasks listed in the timetable occurred. If tasks occurred within the time specified, then the goal will be judged as having been met. If up to one-half of tasks occurred within the time

scheduled, goal two will be deemed as partially met. If less than one-half of tasks occurred with the timeframe set, evaluation goal two will be judged as not met. If all goals are implemented within the time period, then evaluation goal two will be judged as having been met.

Evaluation question 3. Were materials (PowerPoint, projector, and assessment instruments) improved during the course? To monitor if the materials were improved during the course by interviewing the FTO using the instructional materials and following the schedule of activities outlined in the curriculum plan. If the tasks are followed without incident during the two-week timeframe with the FTO, then the goal will be judged as fully met and effective. If up to one-half of tasks occurred within the time, goal one will be deemed as partially met. If less than one-half of tasks occurred with the timeframe set, evaluation goal will be judged as not met.

Evaluation question 4. Did the rookie police officer learn about service? Throughout the police jurisdiction, the police officer will identify service-learning activities such as visiting homeless shelters in urbanely challenged areas; mentoring and reading programs in schools and youth programs; and getting acquainted with facilities who serve the mentally ill. The curriculum goals are to give guidance to the officer to investigate service, identify the police officer's role, and explore the root cause of social problems. For example, if the service experience is related to vagrancy or homelessness; then, the police officer role is to ensure the individual is aware of shelters, hospitals, and services. The police office roles are to provide resources to the individual. To monitor if the rookie police officer learned about service during the field training course, FTO

assessments which are part of the curriculum plan will be examined. The last is to offer a report on reflecting on the service-learning activity by providing challenges, barriers, and recommendations.

If the rookie officer identified, participated, and reflected on service-learning opportunities within each designated field training districts for at least 80% of the time, then the goal will be judged as fully met and effective. If rookie officers did not reach between 50 – 79% of the identification, participation, or reflection, within the time; then goal four would be partially met. If less than one-half of tasks occurred with the timeframe set (such as identified but not participated nor reflected on service-learning activity), evaluation goal four will be judged as not met. Findings will be reported along with challenges, barriers, and recommendations in the summative evaluation report.

Evaluation question 5. Was there a reduction in UOF complaints? From the original problem stated, the UOF complaints for SMPD showed an increase of 8% in the number of UOF complaints filed against rookie police officers over the past 3 years. SMPD's problem is greater than the national phenomenon of controversy over police UOF incidents because the increase of 8% at SMPD is double the 4% average increase at the national level between the same timeframe of 2002 – 2011 (Hylan, Langton, & Davis, 2015). To monitor if the SMPD UOF complaints decreased, a crime analysis report will be used to compare the rate of UOF complaints among rookies. Compared will be the rate of UOF among the rookie cohort prior to implementation of the service-learning curriculum and the rate of UOF complaints among the rookie cohort who took part of the service-learning curriculum. If the rate of UOF complaints stayed the same or increased,

then the goal would be judged as not met and recommendations for a revision would be made. However, if the rate was lower among rookies who were trained in service learning, then the goal will be judged as met. Service learning as a curriculum plan embedded within a field training program may be able to swing the pendulum from a negative perception of police to a more positive influence for police departments' public image, add to proactive policing in the 21st century of having a more empathic compassionate officer, and restore communities with reduction of crime.

Project Implications

Service-learning activities are opportunities that create avenues for promoting social change (Kahne & Westheimer, 2004; Lewis, 2011; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Mitchell, 2007). Embedding service learning into field training of rookie officers has several implications for social change for police reform advocates, police officers, police academy instructors, communities, the police profession, and professional training communities in and out of the academy.

Efforts to reform police training may benefit from understanding how service learning may positively influence policing. Advocates of police reform could use the project I present as a model to implement in other jurisdictions. Embedded service learning in field officer training has the potential to transform police training from being focused on defense-type tactics to being focused on community policing, the emphasis in the 21st century.

Police officers might benefit from transformational learning which service-learning experiences yield. Transformational learning is a "theory of adult learning which

the process of changing perspectives can be understood, experiential education's focus on challenge and experiences, followed by reflection that is leading to learning and growth" (Association for Experiential Education, n.d. p. 156). Police academy instructors might be able to strengthen policing curriculum, student engagement, and assessment of learning skills for more effective policing. Adding service learning in policing curriculum would affect future officers' learning about positive engagement, perhaps better enabling all police to positively engage within their practice communities.

Communities may benefit from having more compassionate officers that are trained to respond positively and engaged within their communities. The interaction between police and community profoundly influences the public's perception of the police (Nagin & Telep, 2017). Improving policing practices are critically important to promoting trust and should be the central priority of any policing agency (COPS Office, 2015; Friedman, 2017; Trinkner & Tyler, 2016). If so, communities may benefit from officers who are trained to positively engage as they work with communities to ensure safety.

As a result, the police profession may be influenced by a change in reputation from one which uses too much force to one reputed and publicized for its compassion, empathy, and positive response to volatile situations. With service learning as a valued component within police training, other professions may adopt service experiences. Professional training which occurs both in and out of academia may benefit from exposing learners to service learning. Service-learning practices are present in the academy but have not been widely implemented post-college in professional practice

training. Additionally, no research has linked service learning with police officer training or practices. This project may contribute to practice and build positive social change by adding a curriculum plan that could be easily implemented and expose rookie police officers to service-learning practices. Service-learning holds promise for reforming community policing to meet 21st century expectations.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

This final section includes my reflections and conclusions within five areas. I first

consider strengths and limitations of the curriculum plan. Second, I describe ways to

alternatively address solutions to the local problem based upon the study. Third, I explain

what I learned about being a scholar and developing a project as well as leadership and

change. Fourth, I reflect on the importance of the work within service-learning post-

college. Fifth, I describe the potential impact of the project study for positive social

change through implications, applications, and directions for future research.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Six strengths and three limitations of the curriculum plan project are described in

the following sections. Project strengths include its development based on data from the

research study. The limitations include discussions about the project's immediate practice

and feasibility. I briefly address each of these strengths and limitations in the context of

best practices for curriculum planning.

Project Strengths

Although the project was designed specifically for the local site, the curriculum

plan could be readapted by other police departments. Elements could be placed within

other departments' existing field training. Thus, the SMPD training academy could serve

as a testing ground and potentially become a model for nationwide police reform for

training officers. Adaption and adoption may be more convincing because the plan was

based on research; the project was a direct result of the study that addressed the problem

of UOF complaints. Therefore, the curriculum plan is viable to embed service learning within the field training program.

Another strength about the curriculum plan is its flexibility. The service-learning modules have a weekly opportunity to experience different environments that can easily be changed. The supervising FTO has room to tailor service experiences and reach diverse individuals, depending on the objectives of the department. Learning objectives are the same, though, and are another strength of the curriculum plan.

Further, clear objectives make the curriculum suitable for adult learners. Because adult learners have lived and experienced more than children, they base their knowledge on the readiness to learn, self-concept, and motivation (Knowles, 1988). Adult learners need to understand why and how they should learn something (Jennifer, 2019, p. 205). By following the curriculum plan, the rookie officer can identify the objectives of learning, actively engage in service learning, reflect on its effectiveness, and experience results. The curriculum plan maximizes the potential for becoming efficacious in civic engagement.

The fourth strength is the rookie officer is actively learning. Adult learners are more engaged within the learning process when options are given and some control of choices are allowed for self-direction (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). The rookie officer is in a position of proactiveness by merging the new knowledge with previous life experiences. Because of the connections, the rookie officer can immediately "see the value in real life situations and apply the new knowledge to meaningful circumstances"

(Knowles et al., 2011, p. 9). Thus, the curriculum plan is current and relevant to lives for immediate social change.

The last strength is that the curriculum plan has a reflective component. Reflection is applied to reach solutions and is based on processing knowledge (Moon, 2007, p. 192). Reflective practices "are associated with a deep commitment to civic and community action" (Mitchell et al., 2015, p. 59). The opportunity for officers to reflect on their service learning has the potential to transform police practice and yield social change. Police training is geared toward teaching police officers how to be autonomous. An officer who uses their head and heart in positive engagement with the community may be more self-reliant than an officer who immediately resorts to UOF.

Project Limitations

There are three points I consider as limitations of the curriculum plan: (a) time to learn about service learning, (b) implementation as a requirement, and (c) ability of rookie officers to engage in reflection. The first limitation to the curriculum plan is the time allotted to learn about service learning itself. It is essential for instructors, FTOs, and staff to be well-versed in-service learning and curriculum planning to ensure all of the objectives are met. Transformation takes place when students learn over time to grasp the subject matter and improve on the challenges that it brings (Barras et al., 2016), but 12 weeks may not be sufficient time for such a task. The curriculum plan could extend into a yearly plan of practice for police officers and ongoing training well beyond the field training phase to address this limitation.

Another limitation is that service learning is not a requirement within police training curriculum. If service learning is not required, then officers will not learn the value it can bring. But engaging with others can deepen a personal competence connecting with communities and aiding rookie police in critical thinking and empathy (Syahril, 2019, p. 38). These professional skills are attributes often sought out in public service. The limitation of not being a requirement could be reversed by making service learning a requirement among police rook field training.

The third limitation is the reflective component of the curriculum plan. Currently, rookie officers are trained to be responsive toward desired results and not proactively understanding an experience. Rookie officers may need to be coached on reflective thinking. Kolb's experiential theory requires RO, which would refer to rookie officers considering internal questions of successes and challenges. The process of remembering the experience, learning from the experience, and articulating through its successes and challenges presents a critical observation to improve upon self and surroundings. As with any learning, reflection can be taught. With practice, the limitation of rookies' abilities to reflect could be improved and benefits from learning about the benefits of reflection could go well-beyond the service-learning curriculum plan.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Several alternative approaches to address the problem of UOF by police departments may be effective and expand policing efforts more strategically rather than tactically. One alternative approach is a critical review of UOF policies. Police departments are monitoring how officers use force and proactively hold officers

criminally accountable for the excessive force used. Another alternative approach is to have police departments increase transparency in UOF cases. Having an independent authority to thoroughly investigate the UOF incidents may be better than the departmental internal affairs unit.

Another alternative approach is the use of body-worn cameras, which have the potential to vindicate officers' account of actions when UOF (Ariel, Farrar, & Sutherland, 2015). However, holding the officer accountability to turn on the body-worn camera during incidents have been an issue. Much of policing is focused on implicit biases and citizen contacts among marginalized low-end high-crime locals, which presents a risk to both officers and citizens.

Finally, an alternative definition of the problem could be centered not on the UOF but on the cognitive and behavioral skill sets of police academy recruits. The UOF is highly publicized, but perhaps the issue is not in the outcome but those who enter the police academy. Changing the problem to focus on the cognitive and noncognitive profiles and admittance requirements to the police academy is an alternative definition of the problem.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

My reflections about my journey as a scholar, project development, and leadership and change are presented in this section. My journey conducting research and creating a project started as intimidating and overwhelming. After the coursework of my doctoral program, I was apprehensive about the literature review and the design of the proposal. However, as I triumphed through each step, I absorbed new knowledge about

the history of policing, learned instructional strategies based on Kolb's (1984)

experiential learning theory; and, through reflection, realized growth in knowledge

through my own experiences. Merriam (1998) defined scholarship as the highest level of

learning or achievement. I believe I have achieved scholarship.

I also learned two challenges about scholarship and being a scholarly researcher.

The first challenge of returning to graduate school proved that my scholarly skills needed

to be revived, especially my writing. I learned that writing is critical. Writing is a form of

thinking, and it is a powerful skill to have in the toolbox. I learned the importance of

providing evidence for a problem. I learned how to remain passionate about my ideas and

iterate them it over and over until I could communicate my passion to other scholars.

Academic writing required an amalgamation of main ideas and conciseness. The

entire doctoral process transformed me from a student to a mature scholar with

understanding of academic writing and research. The process has given me confidence to

engage in scholarly conversations and rigorous debate. It has provided me with strength

of voice. I transformed from being a practitioner to a scholarly-practitioner and believe I

can make a valuable contribution to police reform and social change.

Project Development

Embedding acts of service-learning projects within a policing field training

program was a measurable and attainable goal. However, my struggle articulating a

probable project presented some challenges. Initially, I wanted to develop a 1-day

training program. However, the 1-day training program may have some impact, yet it is

unlikely to shift the underlying issue that have been identified. Something longer was

needed to teach and learn about incorporating service learning and the empathy and compassion it yields—soft skills desired in public servants. A well-planned instructional curriculum development normally encompasses five phases: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

The design and the developmental phases give the opportunity for sustainability and inclusivity to improve upon the curriculum as the dynamics change. During the project development phase, I was able to define clear objectives to promote quality learning among stakeholders which was balanced and suitable for community engagement. The service-learning experiences embedded within a field training program reflect the personal responsibility I take for social change within police reform. My hope is to make even a small contribution to the fields of education, policing, and scholarly research. My dream is to impact community policing and decrease UOF nationally.

The project evaluation required me to articulate how the curriculum plan project would be assessed. I approached project development through an evaluation lens beginning with the end in mind. The evaluation plan incorporates an assessment of learning objectives as well as implementation aspects and overall outcomes. A summative of the project components – problem, purpose, findings, plan and recommendations – came together for me. I was convinced that a curriculum plan was aligned with results and the best project choice to potentially impact my leadership in social change.

Leadership and Change

As a field supervisor of rookie police officers, I started this study and project with the hope of training and influencing officers to not just do their jobs but also to do their job with more compassion. The police culture has a perceived effect on citizens and environment when police respond to an incident. Conducting the study and developing the project has changed my perspective on individual growth within the police force. I have learned there is an individual effect on decision-making that officer can have on the community. I learned that I have demonstrated to officers how to discover methods of connecting with people through conversation, information, and engagement as an individual.

There are three ideas within education and police training practices that form leadership and change. First, my contribution to leadership and change is to create an awareness by bridging the gap between service learning and police practices. Officers are often faced with making immediate decisions that result in lifetime results. Next change would provide rookie police officers with another tool for police-citizen contacts that would change the paradigm from a tactical skill to a more strategic skill in deescalating situations. Lastly, but more specifically; in light of the past five years of hatred towards policing; there is potential for how greater compassion can be re-established for the policing community and the citizens they service. I am confident the results of this study add to the research fields of education, service learning, and provide stakeholders with beneficial training methods to police training.

As change becomes inevitable, effective policing requires transformational leadership (Ramchunder, & Martins, 2014). While conducting this study, I had two realizations. The first realization took me back to the time I was a lead investigator for many years. I did not realize that other officers were watching and modeling themselves in the same manner for their career trajectory. The second realization came at a time when I was teaching at a university. Being a leader in the classroom, I encouraged, engaged, and mentored students; which are common techniques in leadership (Lester & Kezar, 2017). These two realizations resulted in my true understanding of lifelong learning. The transforming many of my old ideas with the new concepts is the process of transformational leadership (Brown, Brown, & Nandedkar, 2019). Throughout the doctoral process, I reflected on many ideas to effect change. Soon, I realized my thinking modeled the same concepts guided by Kolb's (1984) experiential learning.

I chose to do a study on this police department because it is my home, it is where I was born and raised to be empathic and compassionate to everyone I encountered. I saw some effectual leadership and through those examples, I was able to model compassionate and effective leadership in the department. Despite some of the department's flaws, I chose this police department because some of its leadership is at the forefront of successful change. SMPD recognizes opportunities to investigate and examine needs to enhance programs and learning. While other police departments may follow in this department's footsteps, the SMPD investigating department tends to stand in the lead with new ideas and produce social change.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

My passion for policing, education, and service learning were the roots of this research and resultant project. According to Bonnan-White and Lanaras (2019), roles of leadership saturate characteristics of critical thinking, academic success, and connecting with the community. My study was important because the findings provided the evidence of how service learning might enhance rookie police officer training and practice. My own experiences with service learning were confirmed. Police rookies who had service-learning revealed responsiveness, empathy, and compassion. Police officers valued all the tools gained in police training academy as a means to connect with the community in a positive way.

I will continue to advocate for my curriculum plan to embed service-learning become procedural because compassion and empathy are both strategic and real responses to helping people. I saw positive effects as a supervisor and instructor. My study and project have potential for creating empathy and compassion within public service professions such as policing as professionals meets needs of communities in a positive way.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Implications, applications, and directions for future research are presented in this section. The primary aim of this study was to investigate explore the experiences of service learning in college criminal justice courses among rookie police. The implications of this study may positively impact rookie police officers and the communities in which they serve. Policing has always been a reactive position so, naturally, the impact may

serve as a proactive skill for police to de-escalate situations. Locally, immediate results will be recognized. Hopefully, my study can serve as a model for additional police departments to follow. Nationally, embedding service-learning programs may influence police executives, policymakers and education administrators to provide more funding and resources to service learning within police training as a staple of learning. Service learning has proven to be a benefit to education and through demonstration of the proposed curriculum plan within SMPD, service learning may serve the greater good by promotion within policing.

If SMPD adopts my curriculum plan based on my research, there is potential for social change not just within SMPD, but across the nation. I would be exultant if such change in police reform would actualize. My study demonstrated how service learning can be used in a police department training program. However, the service-learning applications can be used by any police department. All participants stated they benefitted from their service-learning experiences and continue to use methodologies from their experiences. If service learning has enhanced the few participants featured in this study, then with the use of service-learning application embedded throughout the police department may socially enhance community engagement. Having service learning as a sustainable training program among rookie police may decrease UOF incidents, bring police-citizen contacts to a more positive connection within the community.

Police officers should feel empowered and equipped to have as many tools as possible when encountering citizens. There are three directions for future research I recommend from this project study. The first recommendation is to conduct the study,

implement the curriculum, and evaluated the results in a smaller police department and compare results to the SMPD project study to understand if results are the same or different. Currently, no other research of service learning and policing; expanding the research to other types of communities, say rural and suburban. Second, service learning has been shown to work effectively in education and nursing professional training. However, an evaluation of service learning in other public service entities such as among firefighting and emergency management personnel sciences may provide empirical data to determine links between service learning and other emergency personnel. Last, cast the study from a quantitative perspective by compare and contrast those who know about service-learning benefits and barriers.

Conclusion

Service-learning opportunities for police officers holds promise for training rookie officers to handle and positively manage a volatile situation. I recommend service learning become procedurally part of rookie field training and future studies of how service learning affects positive policing be conducted to enhance educational opportunities for new officers. My research revealed that service-learning practices are a viable addition to SMPD field training curriculum, and service learning can be informative and rewarding within a police department. Continued research to investigate service learning, its impact in other jurisdictions, and among other emergency personnel is a wide-open field. My hope is the implications of my research and applications of my curriculum plan provide a more strategic tool that will produce meaningful and enriching engagement between police and communities.

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Appendix A: The Project

Curriculum Plan for Embedding Service-Learning into Basic Mandated Field

Training Program for Rookie Officers

Purpose. Integrate service-learning activities within a basic mandated rookie police

officer field training program.

Level. Newly sworn police officers (rookie police officers).

Learners. Rookie police officers in a basic mandated field training program

Scope. Weekly service-learning activities in a 12-week field training program at SMPD.

Sequence. Lesson plans will include a weekly sequence of learning, demonstrating, and

being assessed. Learning outcomes assessment will occur after 12-weeks of field training.

Materials. Power Point presentation for initial learning about service-learning project.

Lesson plans with suggested service-learning activities for demonstrations. Documents

for weekly assessments and evaluation.

Units. 12 units total with integrating service-learning in a 12-week established field

training program.

Lessons. Six lessons are included for the 12-week program; one lesson to introduce

service-learning and five lessons each with objectives, activities, with assessments in

each of the six districts.

SOUTHEAST METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (SMPD)

DAILY OBSERVATION FIELD TRAINING REPORT

Time	Objective	Activity	Assessment
Report Date: _____ District: _____ Watch: _____ Phase: _____	Knowledge and understanding of service-learning	Define, learn objectives, purpose, and terms of service-learning	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7
Report Date: _____ District: _____ Watch: _____ Phase: _____	Knowledge and understanding of service-learning	Define, learn objectives, purpose, and terms of service-learning	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7
Report Date: _____ District: _____ Watch: _____	Locating a service-learning program in assigned district	Identifying community needs in a given district Districts 1, 3, 4 = homelessness Districts 2, 6 = schools District 5 = hospitals/clinics/mental facilities	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7

Phase: _____ ____			
Report Date: _____ ____ District: _____ ____ Watch: _____ ____ Phase: _____ ____	Performance in demonstrating service-learning activity by districts Officers shall work in relation with schools and academia to support safety, counseling and guidance through recreational activity (Police Athletic League) and provide follow-up assistance in academia.	Officers shall visit schools within districts and beat areas to provide safety information to RSO (resource safety officer) and faculty; provide afterschool recreational activities, and any in-school activities.	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7
Report Date: _____ ____ District: _____ ____ Watch: _____ ____ Phase: _____ ____	Performance in demonstrating service-learning Officer shall proactively patrol and monitor homeless encampments; to ensure that no laws are violated; and to continue outreach services to establish a harmonious rapport with the homeless community.	Officers shall visit known homeless camps and issue weather advisory warnings whenever there is an 80% chance of it occurring. Individuals in need of desperate help will be transported to a safe shelter.	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7
Report Date: _____ ____ District: _____ ____ Watch: _____ ____	Performance in demonstrating service-learning Hospitals/clinics/mentally ill facilities Officers will acknowledge the federal law prohibits discrimination based on disability; officer shall not discriminate and assist any persons who are	Officers shall patrol for situations that require prompt and immediate attention of persons who appear to be a danger to himself/herself or others and refer the individual to an emergency mental health office	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7

Phase: _____ ____	victims of a crime, who have a disability; officers shall make modifications and accommodate crime victims with disabilities; and provide resources to persons who are mentally challenged with care by a family member, guardian or mental health service provider before leaving the scene.		
Report Date: _____ ____ District: _____ ____ Watch: _____ ____ Phase: _____ ____	Report writing on service learning	Officers shall write an informative report on the experiences that describe the service-learning activities conducted, positive influences received and any challenges the rookie officer encountered.	____ 1 Unacceptable ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 Acceptable ____ 5 ____ 6 ____ 7

Objectives: The curriculum's primary objective is to expose police officers to service-learning in practical settings within their community. Additional objectives include:

- The police rookie will be able to define service-learning, its purposes, and significance;

- The police rookie will be able to identify service-learning opportunities;

- The police rookie will be able to participate in meaningful service-learning activities;

- The police rookie will demonstrate learning from participating in service-learning activities.

Activities. Six districts in the Metropolitan area that consist of schools and recreational areas for youth, hospitals and clinics for mentally ill, and all districts have form of homelessness.

Assessment. Rookie police officers will be assessed for learning each of 5 weeks corresponding to six districts. Field Training Officer (FTO) notes will serve as the basis for rating observed behavior related to service-learning by the police rookie officer before graduation.

FTO Notes. The field training consists of standardized evaluation guidelines for how to rate observable behaviors. Every two weeks the police rookie will field train in a different district and different shift of the 12-week field training program. The police rookie will be evaluated on five lessons. The lessons are knowledge, attitude, relationship, performance, and report writing in regard to service-learning.

Individual Assessment Plan (formative). Rating of one through seven. A rating of four is the minimum acceptable score to meet the standard for solo patrol officers. Ratings of one through three and above seven require documentation with a detailed evaluation report. If there is no observable behavior, then a N/O (not observed) or NRT (not responding to training) should be reported. Enter a R/T (for remedial training) and the amount of time needed for R/T in minutes (e.g., 1 hour, 30 minutes = 90 minutes).

[**Overall Evaluation Plan**]**.** The FTO will write an assessment report (DS =

documented situations) only if there are extreme circumstances to explain unusual

behaviors rated below four and above seven.

Service-Learning for police officers

Curriculum for police training academy

1

Terminal Performance Objective

- The Goal of service-learning is to Engage Police Officers in settings to learn about community issues.

2

Enabling objectives (EO)

Officers will define service-learning

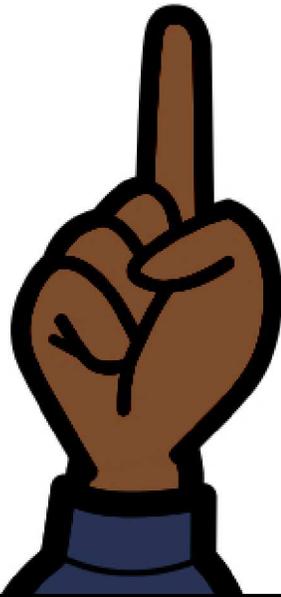Officers will identify service-learning opportunities

Officers will demonstrate service-learning activities

Officers will reflect on service-learning opportunities

3

EO #1: Definition

- Service-learning is a learning strategy that engages community service to support civic engagement and is grounded in experiential education. (Eyler & Giles, 1997; Locklin, 2012).
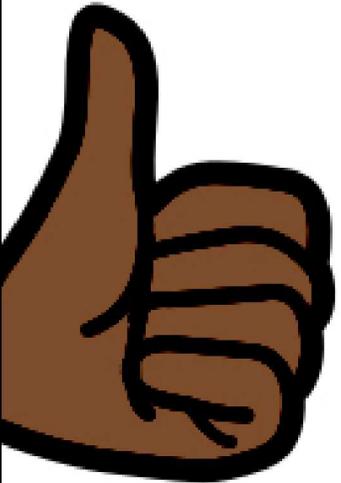
4

EO #2: Service-Learning Programs

- Throughout the Police jurisdiction, the police officer will identify service-learning programs. programs include
  - Homeless shelters, urbanely challenged
  - Schools for mentoring and reading programs to youth
  - Facilities for Mentally ill

5

Eo #3: demonstrate service-learning

- Guidance to the officer of community service
- Identify the **police role** for the service
- gain knowledge & understanding of the **root cause**
- *Example:*
  - Service = vagrancy/homelessness
  - Police role = ensure individuals are aware of shelters/hospitals
  - Root cause = provide resources to individuals

6

EO #4: reflect on service-learning

- Reflect and report on the service-learning activity by providing challenges, barriers, and recommendations.

7

Desired outcomes for class:

Training session
- Increase the police knowledge and awareness
- Identify opportunities and available resources
- Ensure training instructors are knowledgeable about service-learning for continued learning

8

Questions and reflections

Appendix B: Eligibility Questionnaire

- Were you hired as a police officer after January 2015?

- Did you attend college at any time?

- Did you take criminal justice courses while in college?

- Did you have a service-learning experience in any criminal justice course? A service-learning experience may be like one of the following examples listed below.

- Are you willing to be interviewed for up to 30 minutes to an hour about your service-learning experiences?

Examples of service-learning experiences but not limited to:
- Fundraise or partner with an Agency
- Provide a meal for needy individuals
- Participate in after school programs
- Book Drive for a shelter, library, or organization
- Collect items for soldiers overseas
- Reading to elementary schools
- Collect food for a food pantry and/or the EMCC Student Food Pantry
- Support at-risk children
- Set up a job fair for the unemployed in the community
- Fund raiser for cancer research
- Environmental sustainability programs
- Organize a free yard sale in a low-income neighborhood
- Partner with a homeless shelter
- Provide textbooks and children's literature for those who can't afford them
- Organize a community picnic to benefit low-income individuals
- Start community vegetable garden for poor/homeless
- Start a clothes closet
- Support elderly, veterans, and other needy populations

Appendix C: Interview Protocol and Questions

- Think back to your service-learning experience in a criminal justice course. Tell me about the experience: what it was, what you did, what was the activity or project? What do you remember about [service-learning experience]?

- How did you make sense of the [service-learning experience]? Did you talk about it with others, seek more information, or journal in class or elsewhere?

- What did you learn from [service-learning experience]?

- How, if at all, do you use what you learned from [service-learning experience] in your profession or practice as a police officer?