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Billy L. Moffett, Jr.

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

Influence of Implicit Racial Bias on Police Officers' Decision to Use Force

by

Billy L. Moffett Jr.

MPA, Troy University, 2000

BS, Alabama State University, 1996

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2020

Abstract

U.S. police administrators have embraced the implicit racial bias model to minimize the racial bias in their officers' use-of-force decisions amid a public outcry on excessive police force and racism against African Americans. Although researchers have investigated whether officers have an implicit racial bias, they have not analyzed implicit bias from a police officer's naturalistic perspective. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man. The implicit racial bias model and street-level bureaucratic model served as the study's conceptual framework. Semi-structured interviews, Implicit Association Tests, and Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations practicums were administered to 7 experienced police officers who worked at a local police department. The data from each technique were coded using directed content analysis and triangulated among the other techniques for an independent outcome. The findings revealed that although some participants had an implicit racial bias, perceptions from these biases did not emerge when the officers faced a simulated encounter with an uncooperative African American man. These findings demonstrate to researchers and police administrators that implicit racial bias might not be a plausible explanation for modern-day police brutality and that more naturalistic academic approaches should be used when examining this phenomenon. Incorporating these approaches may identify amenable solutions that may lead to reductions in racially motivated force and a strengthening of the relationship between the police and the public.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this dissertation to my late grandparents whom I spent a significant amount of time with while growing up when my mother worked. They made me believe, as they believed, that I could accomplish any endeavor if I put my mind to it. My grandparents encouraged me to follow my dreams and work hard to achieve them. They never allowed me to settle for anything less then what God had planned for me. I miss them dearly, and I will continue to strive to be the best person they helped raised me to be.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The ongoing turbulent relationship between the police and the African American community is a diachronic phenomenon that has many Americans doubting the honesty of police officers and their decisions to use force. Research suggests that this unsettling relationship dates to slavery times when laws made it acceptable for police officers to use torture and violence to control the behaviors of African Americans (Roberts, 2007; Turner, Giacopassi, & Vandiver, 2006). As a result of African Americans' fight to gain equitable treatment from society, explicit racial behaviors have decreased in the United States (Zestcott, Blair, & Stone, 2016). However, unconscious racial behaviors have not decreased among the general public (Sternadori, 2017; Whalen, 2017) or among police officers (Spencer, Charbonneau, & Glaser, 2016).

Due to changes in modern technology, namely social media and personal recording devices, the long-standing outcry of police brutality by African American communities has become a salient phenomenon witnessed and empathized by many Americans (Nix, Campbell, Byers, & Alpert, 2017; Onyemaobim, 2016). Police administrators and public leaders have faced challenges in creating policies that prevent police use-of-force decisions that are racially motivated.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of social scientists' research suggesting that police officers' decisions to use excessive force against African Americans might be linked to implicit racial bias. Some researchers have explained that police officers are like most human beings in that they possess unknown and unconscious racial beliefs and these beliefs might be influencing their decisions to use more force than necessary when

confronting an African American who appears less cooperative during an investigative encounter (Nix et al., 2017). In contrast to this ideology, there are other researchers who have explained that an implicit racial bias might not influence these police officers' decisions to use excessive force and that some of the research attempts have failed to include the lack of cooperation from the African American individuals as an independent variables when investigating these encounters (Fridell, 2017a).

Because of the contradictions, it was necessary to examine whether implicit racial bias affects the thinking process of officers when they lawfully engage in an investigative encounter with an African American individual. A more lucent understanding of this phenomenon can assist police administrators and public leaders in creating appropriate policies that can minimize racially motivated force. Furthermore, this understanding can help stakeholders decipher between use-of-force acts that are malignly committed as opposed to those that are truly a mistake. Clarification of this matter may help stakeholders to eliminate bad police officers from employment in law enforcement and improve the performance of marginal officers. These efforts in return will help align officers' use-of-force decisions within the boundaries of the U.S. Constitution. As a result, the relationship between the police and the African American community may improve because police actions would be tailored to the force that officers are confronted with and free of disparities. In this chapter, I will provide a contextual understanding of the study phenomenon. This chapter is arranged in the following manner: background information; problem statement; the purpose of the study; research questions; conceptual

framework; the nature of the study; definitions; the assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study; and a summary.

Background

Although police administrators have continuously tried to create appropriate policies that support the U.S. Constitution, they are beginning to acknowledge that these policies cannot stand alone in their efforts to counter the amalgamation of police officers' autonomy and discretions when officers make use-of-force decisions (Vieira & Graser, 2015). More specifically, there are legislative rules and relevant policies that extrinsically protect African Americans from disparate treatment by the police (U. S. Department of Justice, n.d.). However, police administrators recognize that their ability to protect the civil liberties of African Americans is limited by the biases of their officers who are given autonomy and discretion as tools to perform their duties (Vieira & Graser, 2015). For instance, most--if not all--U.S. law enforcement agencies have policies that prohibit officers from using deadly force to prevent the escape of fleeing suspects who do not present an immediate danger to the officers or citizens (Mazza, 2017). An example is if several police officers are dispatched to a house burglary in progress, and upon arrival, the officers see an African American male running from the scene. The police officers must quickly decipher between their knowledge of the law and their department's use-of-force policy and the actions of the African American male as the event hastily unfolds in front of them. In this hypothetical scenario, these officers' decisions on how to resolve this incident might vary and be free of their supervisor's guidance. In other words, the officers' decisions would be strictly driven by their experiences and perceptions.

The context for this hypothetical example is a common phenomenon that has challenged researchers and administrators as they attempt to gain an understanding of how the encounters between police officers and African Americans end in the public's outcry of racism. More pointedly, some researchers have postulated that racism affects officers' decisions to use force (DuBois, 2014; Fridell & Lim, 2016), while others have asserted that racism within police actions has decreased over the past decade (Chapman, 2012; Rapping, 2013). Although both sides have presented empirical evidence, some members of the African American community doubt the proclamation of police actions as being free of prejudice intentions.

As a result, members of the African American community and others have protested in solidarity to bring awareness of this issue to force change. For instance, in the Trayvon Martin case that occurred in 2012, Martin was a young African American teenager who was shot and killed by George Zimmerman, a White man who was a part of a neighborhood watch program (Gutman & Tienabeso, 2012). Zimmerman negatively profiled Martin as a thief as Martin walked to his father's house, which was located in Zimmerman's neighborhood. Although Zimmerman was not a police officer, the delay in his arrest and the inadequate investigation by the police gained the attention of the African American community that demanded justice for Trayvon (Gutman & Tienabeso, 2012).

In the 2014 Michael Brown case, 2014 Ezell Ford case, and the 2016 Philando Castile case, White police officers fatally injured these unarmed African American men, which resulted in members of the African American community publicly protesting the

inequity in the officers' decisions to use force. Seabrook and Wyatt-Nichol (2016) explained that between 2014 and 2015, U.S. police fatally injured approximately 45 unarmed African American males. Some of these cases caused tectonic feelings of oppression to resurface within the African American communities where community leaders and members of the public began protesting their lack of trust in police officers' decisions to use force (Menifield, Shin, & Strother, 2019).

In contrast to these cases, other police shootings have occurred that countered the narrative of a White police officer implicated in the racial killing of an unarmed African American. For example, in the 2014 Freddie Gray case, three African American police officers along with three White police officers fatally injured Gray who was a young African American male (Rector, 2017). As a result of Gray's death, these officers were arrested and charged. Three officers were acquitted by jurors, and the other three officers' cases were dismissed (Rector, 2017). In 2016, Officer Betty Shelby fatally shot Terence Crutcher (Capelouto, 2016). Officer Shelby was a White woman and Crutcher was an unarmed African American man (Capelouto, 2016). Additionally, in 2017, Justine Damond, a White woman, was fatally shot by Officer Mohamed Noor, a Black Somali-American male (Fieldshtadt, 2019). In spite of these cases, the U.S. public continued promulgating racism as the underlined influence for the deaths of unarmed African American males (Onyemaobim, 2016). Current researchers postulate that these incidents might be the results of implicit racial bias.

Researchers have explained that implicit racial bias is a racial bias embedded in the subconscious realm that idiopathically grows over a human-life span (Sternadori,

2017; Whalen, 2017). These biases are shaped and molded by micro and macro environments (Marvel, 2016; Sternadori, 2017). With these thoughts in mind, researchers have postulated that society unconsciously label African Americans as violent, dangerous, and thuggish (Banks & Hicks, 2016; Rapping, 2013). Furthermore, people's implicit racial biases remain dormant until they encounter a contentious situation with the recipients of their biases (Banks & Hicks, 2016; Marvel, 2016; Rapping, 2013; Sternadori, 2017). These unconscious beliefs are also true for police officers. Therefore, police administrators face challenges in creating policies that will minimize the emergence of these attitudes from their officers in their encounters with the public.

Researchers have asserted that the difficulty in reducing implicit racial biases among officers is nestled in the autonomy and discretion that all officers inherently receive when becoming police officers (Spencer et al., 2016; Vieira & Graser, 2015; Weir, 2016; Whalen, 2017). If implicit racial bias is the root cause for police using excessive force against African Americans, police administrators can work toward minimizing this historical phenomenon that has caused an inequitable feeling within many African Americans. However, if it is not the root cause, excessive police force inflicted upon African Americans--whether real or not--will continue to appear racially motivated thereby causing the relationship between the police and the public to exacerbate.

Problem Statement

As Bass (2001) and Grabiner (2016) explained, current perceptions of police-related activities involving African Americans have been compared to modern day

slavery. Police officers have shown apparent bias in excessive force decisions against African Americans. Moreover, the police physical abuse and unjust killing of African Americans during police encounters are oppressive for the involved African American persons and their communities. Despite these oppressive feelings, researchers have predicted that police officers might not intend to use excessive force. Instead, implicit racial bias might account for the police officers' decisions to use extreme force (DuBois, 2014; Fridell & Lim, 2016; Rapping, 2013; Weir, 2016).

With research suggesting that implicit racial bias might be a motive (DuBois, 2014; Fridell & Lim, 2016; Rapping, 2013; Weir, 2016), police administrators have begun to focus on the implicit racial bias model as an amenable solution to minimize the racial bias in their officers' use-of-force decisions. Nevertheless, there is emerging research that contradicts whether officers' implicit racial bias influences their decisions to use force (Worrall, Bishopp, Zinser, Wheeler, & Phillips, 2018). Although researchers have conducted scenario-based experiments, document analyses, and surveys to investigate whether officers have an implicit racial bias (Hollis, 2018), they have not analyzed implicit bias from a police officer's naturalistic perspective. With more insight on police use of force, behavioral scientists and police administrators can determine whether implicit racial bias is an amenable solution, or they can continue to explore other possible solutions. In other words, the findings from this study may help stakeholders to determine whether implicit racial bias is the reason why officers decide to use excessive force when confronting African Americans during investigative encounters.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man. By law, to restore order, police officers are authorized to use a reasonable amount of force needed to overcome a person's resistance (Grabiner, 2016; Worrall et al.,2018). Landmark cases, such as Terry vs. Ohio, Tennessee vs. Garner, Graham vs. Conner, and other similar cases, have set statutory guidelines for controlling police behaviors when officers engage the public. Despite the establishment of these laws, the abilibility to operate wtuse-of-force decisions to operate within the boundaries of these laws is up to the individual officer (Vieira & Graser, 2015). The result is that an officer's ability to carry out a lawful duty within the confinements of these laws might be challenged by the officer's implicit racial bias when conducting an investigative encounter with an African American individual. I explored whether there was a connection between officers' perceptions, feelings, and actions as they engaged in a simulated use-of-force situation that involved an African American individual. The analysis of each participating officer's responses provided an in-depth understanding of the officer's perceptions and associated emotions.

Research Questions

I sought to answer one central research question (RQ) and two subquestions. The questions were as follows:

RQ: What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man?

Subquestion A: Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias?

Subquestion B: What implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man?

The focus of Subquestion A was on determining whether the police officers in the study had an implicit racial bias. As I discuss in the following "Scope and Delimitations" section, any participant who harbored explicit racial bias fell out of the scope of this project. There were two key pieces of refuting evidence that supported Subquestion A. First, Spencer et al. (2016) and Petersen (2018) postulated that not all police officers are free from explicit racial bias against African Americans. Second, Grabiner (2016) and Spencer et al. asserted that most police officers think of themselves as egalitarians and free of explicit racial bias. This means that the majority of police officers do not think they harbor bias against African Americans; however, there are some who know they have these attitudes. Therefore, identifying if police participants have an implicit racial bias was an imperative step in this investigation. More information for answering Subquestion A is provided in the "Nature of the Study" section of this chapter.

Subquestion B was the crux of the central RQ, and it bore the empirical burden of the underlined investigation. I drew from several schools of thought in devising this question. The first school of thought emerged from researchers Banaji and Greenwald

(2016), Roberts (2007), and Scott (2015), who purported that individuals implicitly view African Americans as dangerous and thuggish. Next, researchers Greenwald and Krieger (2006) and Sternadori (2017) asserted that these types of bias innately and subconsciously exist and do not emerge before an individual is challenged by a compromising situation. In other words, implicit racial bias is compelled by an outward force that overcomes a person's conscious intentions. If these intentions are pushed hard enough by an individual of the opposite group, unknown and uncontrolled stereotypes will manifest. To answer Subquestion B, I implemented epistemological strategies in an attempt to stimulate the unknown racial biases. These strategies are also described in greater details in the "Nature of the Study" section.

Conceptual Framework

For this research project, I used the implicit racial bias model as a conceptual framework and the street-level bureaucratic theory as a supporting framework. Police have used excessive force against African Americans for over a century (Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichol, 2016). This phenomenon has led researchers to investigate from various angles the reasons why police officers decide to use force and the effects thereof (Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichol, 2016). Current researchers have postulated that explicit racism has decreased (Kang, 2005), thereby hypothesizing that police officers' decisions to use excessive force might be influenced by an implicit racial bias (Nix et al., 2017; Spencer et al., 2016). Specifically, officers might know they harvest these biases until they encounter use-of-force situations involving African Americans (Hutchinson, 2014; Means & Thompson, 2016). According to this ideology, by the time officers are

cognizant of why they used excessive force, the force has already been applied. With that said, the officers will either acknowledge racism as the reason they escalated force, or they will deny it.

Because police administrators continue to seek policies that attempt to prevent their officers from using racially-motivated force (Markman, 2015), my research was necessary to explore officers' perceptions and emotions as they encountered an African American citizen during an investigative stop. Accordingly, I used the street-level bureaucratic model to align this investigation within the academic constructs of public policy. This model was created to explore why civil service employees or street-level bureaucrats (i.e. police officers) make negative decisions when working with the public (Buvik, 2016; Mazza, 2017). Moreover, the street-level model explains that bureaucrats' behaviors are governed by a set of laws; however, the bureaucrats' autonomous working environments and discretionary powers might overpower their willingness to work within the parameters of these laws (Buvik, 2016). Therefore, in this research, I analyzed participants' statements for emerging implicit racial bias perceptions as they interacted with an African American man during an investigative encounter.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative phenomenological design to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions surfaced from the officers when they encountered a use-of-force decision involving an African American man. The phenomenological design originated from the constructivism paradigm (Anthony, 2018). It offers researchers the ability to examine a current phenomenon through participants' "words, emotions, and experiences" (Anthony,

2018, p. 15). More specifically, the phenomenological design is used to study the emergence of sensitive topics (Donalek, 2004) by allowing investigators to gain an understanding of participants' lived experiences (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Square-Smith (2017) asserted that the phenomenological approach requires researchers to complete four administrative steps. These steps included the following: Eliminating epoche or personal biases, maintaining an objective point of views, presenting the most accurate account of participants' lived experiences, exploring and minimizing other possible predictions of the lived experiences, and synthesizing the participants' data according to researchers' perspectives.

Considering the constructs of the phenomenology design, I determined that it was appropriate for the underlined research. Accordingly, I used this design to identify if participants showed racial perceptions in a use-of-force situation. Starks and Trinidad (2007) explained that perceptions emerged from people's upbringings and these perceptions help them make sense of their lived experiences. In this study, I examined and translated these perceptions and experiences based on my interpretations and understandings of the subject matter. Because I bore intimate connections with the African American race and the field of police work, I had to continuously eliminate epoche by bracketing my thoughts when working with the data. Adams (2018) and Campion (2016) explained that bracketing is a method that researchers use to eliminate epoche throughout their research process. Therefore, at certain stages of the underlined study, I identified and recorded my biases to minimize them as they emerged.

Additionally, I used empirical information, conferred with colleagues, and used my knowledge of police work to accurately synthesize the participants' data.

Epistemological Overview

To further support the use of the phenomenological design, the underlined research was administered in the following manner. I gave a three-phase process that included semi-structured interviews, Implicit Association Tests (IATs), and Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations (ATSS) practicums to 7 police officers that worked at a medium-sized police department in California. After collecting the data, I triangulated them for development, accuracy, and conclusions. Creswell and Miller (2000) explained that triangulation is a method for analysis that establishes themes by using the research's cognitions as a lens. They also defined triangulation as, "…a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). Creswell and Miller (2000) further explained that a standard procedure for triangulation among qualitative researchers is to use multiple strategies like interviews, document analyses, and observations to corroborate data to establish themes (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Although the semi-structured interviews, IATs, and ATSS practicums were selected for this study, each of these strategies had preexisting challenges of validity that I considered at the onset of this research. For example, the interview questions for the semi-structured interviews were created based on demonstrable findings provided by seminal theorists of the implicit racial bias model and the street-level bureaucracy model. To my knowledge, no researcher had established questions that identified police officers'

implicit racial bias perceptions. The IAT, although used extensively in prior research (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016), has faced challenges of validity (Dasgupta, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2003), and therefore, researchers have recommended using it with other strategies (Monteith, Voils, & Ashburn-Nardo, 2001). The ATSS is a newer approach that has not been used to the extent of the IAT, but it has been used in rigorous studies. Despite the above challenges, I believed triangulating the data from the semi-structured interviews, IATs, and ATSS practicums would answer the research questions.

Description of Phase 1. During Phase 1, I used semi-structured interviews to obtain snapshots of the participants' implicit racial bias perceptions that seminal theorists identified through diachronic investigations. Moreover, these theorists postulated that implicit racial bias is innate (Chekroud, Everett, Bridge, & Hewstone, 2014), found in young children (Gonzalez, Baron, & Steele, 2017), and cultivated by parents (Sternadori, 2017) and environments (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). Other researchers have asserted that implicit racial bias is developed from experiences (Rivers, Rees, Calanchini, & Sherman, 2017). As a result of these findings, I attempted to identify whether my participants possessed any of these traits by asking them personal questions about their upbringing, selections of friends, cohabitant environments, current beliefs, and police styles. A question from the semi-structured interview was, "Growing up, how was racism viewed in your household?" The creation of this question was rooted in Sternadori's (2017) doctrine that explained biases are innate and enhanced by parental guidance. I placed a list of the Phase 1 interview questions in Appendix A.

Because the semi-structured interviews could not independently identify if the participants had implicit racial bias perceptions, the semi-structured interviews were used to triangulate with the other sources of data to give contextual explanations (Maxwell, 2017) for the raw data. The semi-structured interviews were also used to confirm or reject the ideology (McIntosh & Morse, 2015) that officers might have an implicit racial that affects their decisions to use force. Furthermore, these interviews were used to establish the participants' profiles to ensure they met the phenomenology research design criteria. A primary step for using this design involved obtaining participants that produced the most accurate evidence supported by their lived experiences. With that said, the underlined study participants had extended employment with the police department, and so they had repeated experiences handling use-of-force situations. Another step for conducting the phenomenology research design included eliminating other possible descriptions of the data. Hutchinson (2014) asserted that all police officers were not free of explicit racial attitudes. Consequently, the semi-structured interviews were used to help look for signs of explicit racial biases. Explicit racial attitudes fell out of the scope of this research.

Description of Phase 2. Immediately following Phase One, the participants participated in Phase 2, which included taking the IAT. Banaji and Greenwald (2016) and Kang (2005) explained that the IAT is a speed test that is based on categorizing and assorting images according to perceptions. The IAT results indicated whether participants of the underlined study had a slight, moderate, strong, or no preference for European

Americans over African Americans. A combination of the analyzed data from Phase 1 and Phase 2 gave salient information that answered Subquestion A.

Description of Phase 3. Phase 3 involved the administration of the ATSSs, which was the primary instrument for answering Subquestion B. The ATSS is a think-aloud method that Gerald Davison, Sandra Navarre, and Ralph Vogel created to obtain an understanding of individuals' unconscious thoughts regarding complicated experiences or interpersonal problems (Davison, Navarre, & Vogel, 1995). Moreover, it is a method that allows a researcher to obtain people's behavioral intentions that are associated with their thoughts, emotions, and biases as the people speak freely and aloud in response to a stimulating and segmented scenario (Zanov & Davison, 2010). Accordingly, Davison, Navarre, and Vogel (1995) and Zanov and Davison (2010) provided the following general guidelines for conducting the ATSS. First, the participant must contain a certain amount of knowledge about the phenomenon being studied. The pool of participants can include patients, caregivers, victims, managers, or whoever has the information that can provide it from a lived experience. ATSS requires participants to become observers or expert witnesses to an unfolding situation created to stimulate the unconscious cognitive processes of the participants.

Davison et al. (1995) and Zanov and Davison (2010) also explained that researchers could give scenarios to participants in either an audio, video, or a vignette format. Each scenario should be approximately two or three minutes long and is divided into multiple segments that are 20 or 30 seconds long. Within each 20 or 30 second-segment, the participants are required to articulate their thoughts uninterruptedly about

whatever they perceived, thought, or felt about the previous scenario. A caveat to the participants' responses is that they should be instructed not to provide a statement about who they believe is right or wrong. However, they should imagine themselves in the scenarios and give their thoughts about what they perceived. After the ATSS exercises have been completed, researchers code the data according to the themes listed in their theoretical or conceptual frameworks.

Description of ATSS video. The video for this research was carefully selected because it portrayed an encounter that was familiar to most police officers. For example, in the video, an officer was dispatched to a location to investigate a complaint, which was alleged by a third party. In a typical setting, officers dispatched to a complaint means that the officers must respond to the location and decide how to resolve the situation. I surmised that the officer's department in the video, just like most police departments, required the officer to follow specific steps when investigating a complaint. These steps might have included the following: Reporting to the scene and locating the cause of the complaint; informing the dispatcher that he arrived on the scene; giving the dispatcher an update on whether the subject on the scene; giving the subject's identification information to the dispatcher; and giving the dispatcher a final disposition of the investigation. This disposition could vary among officers responding to the scene.

Referring back to the ATSS video for the underlined study, upon the officer's arrival at the scene, the officer finds the person of interest who is an African American man. The officer attempts to conduct an investigation; however, the African American man becomes less corporative. He begins and continues throughout the video to

challenge the officer in an agitative manner. As a stimulus, I believed the African American man's demeanor and behavior solicited various participants' responses that reflected the participants' lived experiences and perceptions. Furthermore, this video was selected because of non-threatening variables that prior researchers identified as causes of police use of force. These variables included the time of day, geographical area, crime rates, and the neighborhood's socioeconomic status (Gabaldón, 2009). By removing these variables, I attempted to place the participants' focus on the African American man's physical features, mannerisms, and behavior. As the participants participated in the ATSS practicums, I recorded and documented their responses and coded the data according to implicit racial bias themes.

Research that supports the epistemology. The amalgamation of research designs and outcomes from recent research supported the epistemological constructs of this study. In the first study, Fridell and Lim (2016) conducted a quantitative study using 1846 use-of-force reports from a larger urban police department in Texas. This study took place between 2004 and 2007. These researchers wanted to investigate whether police officers' decisions to use less-lethal force (i.e., pepper spray, hand control, and a taser) showed implicit racial bias by comparing their actions within the encounters with African American male suspects and White male suspects. These researchers explained that if they focused on the less-lethal activities, it would give them a better analytical view of whether implicit racial bias affected the officers' decisions to use force.

Fridell and Lim's (2016) reasoning for the above assertion was that new research purported that police officers, due to the fear of communal backlash, used less force

against African Americans than other races, and that the environments where encounters occurred affected officers' use-of-force decisions. Fridell and Lim also extended the scope of their research by seeking whether the acknowledgment of officers' implicit racial biases would reduce tensions between the police and members of high crime areas. More pointedly, Fridell and Lim acknowledged that implicit racial bias research had become a dominant theory in explaining why police officers were using excessive force against African Americans; however, these findings were flawed. As a result, Fridell and Lim wanted to know if police actions in the field mirrored the outcomes produced in prior experiments conducted by the implicit bias theorists.

Fridell and Lim (2016) used less-lethal force as a dependent variable and the profiles of the police officers (i.e., race, education, time in service, etc.) and male suspects (i.e., race, age, levels of resistance) as independent and control variables. After using a multinomial logistic regression analysis for the use-of-force reports, Fridell and Lim's findings revealed that the officers' actions involved implicit racial bias against African American males. They then compared their findings with the city's crime rates and found that the police officers' implicit racial bias did not negatively impact the neighborhoods. In other words, the field reports regarding use-of-force indicated that officers' use-of-force actions were influenced by their implicit racial biases, but the acknowledgment of these biases did not reduce the racial tensions between the police and the community.

Despite Fridell and Lim using a quantitative method, there were several reasons their findings were significant for the underlined study. First, they highlighted the notion

that quantitative methods--including the use of laboratory settings--did not capture a real-world atmosphere where police officers make use-of-force decisions. They also acknowledged that the prior quantitative methods produced contradictory findings regarding whether implicit racial bias influenced police officers' decisions to use excessive force. Therefore, I used a naturalistic approach to identify if an implicit racial bias affected participants' decisions to use force. To this extent, I used a real police body camera video for the ATSS, which depicted a realistic encounter that was familiar to most police officers working in the United States.

Secondly, Fridell and Lim (2016) thought that less-lethal force could provide a better analysis of whether officers' implicit racial bias impacted their decisions to use force. As a result, I ensured that the context of the ATSS video focused on the less-lethal force, which widened the participation pool and helped with the data transferability. In other words, by concentrating on less-lethal force, the participants of this study provided more insight into their lived experiences that I believed could mirror the perceptions of other officers given the same circumstances.

Finally, Fridell and Lim's (2016) explained that implicit racial bias existed in all human beings and that these biases influenced reactions and behaviors. They also explained that implicit racial biases occurred in nonprejudiced people. Given these facts, I questioned if implicit racial bias played a role in officers' use-of-force decisions. If so, why do some officers with implicit racial biases decide to use force and others do not? The answer to these questions lingered, which influenced me to seek validation in the

current research regarding the connection between police use of force and implicit racial bias.

In the next study, Gabaldón (2009) was also concerned with the various contradictions in the findings regarding police use-of-force and racism. Gabaldón research was not solely based on racism; however, Gabaldón explained that racism and other variables such as police officers' characteristics and geographical locations had been studied as predictors of police use-of-force, which have resulted in the contradictions. Gabaldón explained that no theoretical approach unified these findings, and therefore, he wanted to conduct a qualitative study to examine police-citizen encounters to obtain officers' perceptions. Gabaldón used four focus groups that contained police officers from several Venezuelan police departments. The participants' respective departments served different socioeconomic areas ranging from poverty-strickened to wealthy communities.

Gabaldón (2009) gave each group written-hypothetical use-of-force situations that involved non-compliant and adversarial individuals. The officers discussed their perceptions as they dealt with these individuals. Gabaldón's research focused on obtaining the police officers' perceptions as they answered interview questions. These questions were based on use-of-force decisions. Two scenarios were given to the groups in a chronological manner. In the first incident, the officers approached a car that was parked and occupied by two young adult men that were poorly dressed and smoking a "joint." The officers asked the men to get out of the car. This request ended the first scenario. To solicit the police officers' perceptions, Gabaldón asked the group open-

ended questions about what they witnessed. The primary theme that emerged from the groups focused on the dangers of the initial approach. Despite the men's appearances and the notion that they might be armed, which was a stigma of the neighborhood, the officers did not perceive the approach as a threatening situation. However, they supported the officers' actions to remove the men from the car. Gabaldón explained that the main perceptions regarding the use-of-force decisions emerged from preventing a continuation of a criminal act and gaining compliance from the uncooperative men.

Gabaldón (2009) offered that following the first scenario, the second scenario involved the men jumping in a car and running away from the officers. The central theme that emerged from the groups was that the officers perceived the men as a threat. The officer pulled their weapons from their holsters as the men fled from the scene. Despite this show of force, there was a consensus among the group about not firing their weapons because they did not know for sure if the men were armed. The chase ended, and the scenario concluded with the men--one armed with a gun--running away on foot while the officers chased them. The officers saw the gun and ordered the male to drop it. The armed man fired the gun at the officer, and the officers fired back. The members of the group supported the officers' decisions to use deadly force.

The significance of Gabaldón's study was two-fold. First, this researcher showed that a scenario-based experiment coupled with open-ended interview questions were an effective means to obtain officers' perceptions as they discussed use-of-force decisions. Moreover, Gabaldón combined hypothetical situations, use-of-force decisions, and perceptions. This combination supported my epistemological effort to use a qualitative

paradigm that consisted of a hypothetical situation, open-ended questions, and freely-spoken dialogues to solicit police officers' perceptions. Second, Gabaldon's study identified that despite the ambiguity and suspicious circumstances in police-contact with citizens, police officers could quickly decipher between threats and choose the appropriate force necessary to gain compliance from non-compliant individuals.

Study of implicit racial bias from a qualitative perspective. Trachok (2015) conducted a qualitative study to determine if a qualitative method using interviewing and observation strategies could identify whether teachers had an implicit racial bias toward African American students. Trachok postulated that thus far, most of the epistemological attempts to analyze implicit racial biases have involved quantitative strategies. Consequently, this researcher wanted to know if the interviewing and observation strategies were amenable approaches to identify implicit bias perceptions and what type of themes would emerge. Trachok located 13 white and 3 African American teachers from four different urban and suburban middle schools. The researcher purposefully selected these teachers after they were recommended by their respective principals for the number times, either more or less, they referred African American students to the administrative office for disciplinary reasons.

After obtaining the pool of participants, Trachok (2015) administered semi-structured interviews in two separate sessions. In the first session, the researcher sought to build rapport with each teacher and establish an informational profile by asking questions that solicited information about the teacher's background, teaching philosophy, disciplinary role, and types of behaviors experienced in the classroom. Examples of

background and teaching philosophy questions that Trachok (2015) asked were, “What brought you to teaching?” and “How do you decide when and which types of behaviors to respond to?” (p. 143). In the second interview session, Trachok asked each teacher more direct questions that aligned the responses with conceptual constructs of implicit racial biases. In other words, the questions were bias-related, and they requested information about stereotypes, racism, ethnicity, and cultures of the students in the classroom. Examples of these type questions were, “Have you noticed that specific groups of students demand more of your time around issues of discipline?” and “Why do you think that X students are sent to the office more?” (Trachok, 2015, p. 145). Following the second interview sessions, Trachok conducted a narrative observation strategy on each teacher within his respective classroom. For approximately 45 minutes, the researcher monitored and documented the teacher’s interactions with their students. After the completion of the observations, Trachok used computer software to code the raw data from the interviews and observations.

The data were coded according to predetermined and overarching codes that came from previous implicit bias quantitative strategies that focused on teachers. Trachok (2015) identified the implicit racial bias themes that emerged, which consisted of: The complexity of explicit versus implicit bias, perceptions about African American students and accommodating teaching techniques, low expectations, and perceptions about African American families. To provide clarity about these themes, Trachok explained that the complexity of explicit versus implicit was dissonance because the data received during the interview contradicted that data collected during the observation. Moreover,

the information that was obtained during the interviews did not match what was observed in the classrooms. The data from the teachers' interview painted an egalitarian picture of them, but their behaviors in their classrooms reflected disparity toward the African American students. Trachok continued to explained that the perceptions of the African American students were traditional stereotypes that included the notion of boys being lazy, disrespectful, and apathetic. The girls were perceived as loud, dramatic, and aggressive. Both gender groups expected a handout. Finally, the central theme regarding the African American family was that African American students came from a single parent household led by a mother. This lack of family structure left the students less educated and socially and behaviorally challenged.

Trachok's research project had several essential attributes that influenced the underlined study. First, this researcher wanted to explore implicit racial bias using a qualitative design. As such, Trachok's research served as a sounding platform for the underlined research. Unlike Gabaldon's study, which also involved using a qualitative method to analyze perceptions, Trachok examined implicit racial bias. Moreover, Trachok challenged the repetitiveness of the quantitative strategies that had been used to identify if people's behaviors were affected by their unknown biases. Trachok's unusual approach to this phenomenon opened the possibility for me to use a similar method to examine police perceptions and whether implicit racial biases influenced these perceptions.

Trachok's project provided an essential foundation for the underlined research study. Trachok's ontological and epistemological views seemed to mirror my views. That

is, Trachok and I wanted to get the most accurate data regarding racial perceptions, and therefore, we wanted to get it from public servants. This meant that Trachok believed that the truth about whether teachers had implicit bias perceptions toward their students rested within the teachers and their individual environments. Furthermore, teachers and police officers have similar working environments that are filled with complicated and fast-changing circumstances where their decisions have a lasting impact on the recipients and their communities. To this extent, I used semi-structured interviews to establish profiles, and I used ATSS practicums, which were similar to an observation strategy.

Another essential attribute of Trachok's case pendulated on Trachok's explanation of the dissonance among the data received from the teacher interviews and observations. In other words, Trachok identified that some of the participants provided false answers during their interviews to make themselves appear unbiased. According to Berger (2018), most people do not want to appear biased. To circumvent false statements, I incorporated the IATs and triangulated the results with other sources of data.

In a similar study, Buckles (2018) wanted to explore if secondary teachers had biases toward marginalized students, and if these biases influenced how the teachers treated their students. He created the following research questions:

RQ1. What, if any, are secondary teachers' implicit and explicit biases towards marginalized students?

RQ2. How do secondary teachers' biases toward marginalized students affect their expectations and interactions with students?

RQ3. What changes occur in secondary teachers' instructional practices when they teach different marginalized groups of students?

RQ4. To what extent do secondary teachers understand their own biased behavior and how that behavior affects their teaching performance? (Buckles, 2018, p. 8)

To answer these research questions, Buckles used Trachok's 2015 qualitative study as a guide. Buckles conducted a qualitative case study that involved the use of the IAT (not included in Trachok's research), semi-structured interviews, and observation with 6 teachers from various racial background. These teachers were from a large school district in Virginia that serviced a large group of marginalized students.

Buckles (2018) treated each teacher as a case because each teacher taught a different subject in a different climate and had a different set of students. First, Buckles gave the teachers semi-structured interviews that were used to establish the teachers' profile. Buckles wanted to know the teachers' "expectations [of their students], classroom behavior, and instructional practices" (Buckles, 2018, p. 64). Following the semi-structured interviews, Buckles gave each teacher an IAT to establish a baseline for their biases. Specifically, this researcher wanted to know if the teachers had biases toward a student's "race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and disability" (Buckles, 2018, p. 64). Buckles then administered an observation strategy of each teacher in their respective classrooms.

After each strategy was concluded with the teachers, Buckles (2018) coded and triangulated the data. This researcher's findings identified eight themes that included several of the following; Teachers' explicit and implicit biases that included race, gender,

socio-economic statue, influenced their expectations of students; teachers explicit and implicit bias involving race and gender; and gender and racial bias were not implicitly stated, but they emerged from the design.

The significance of Buckles' study to the underlined study was Buckles ability to use the IATs in a qualitative design. Therefore, Buckles' methodology using semi-structured interviews, IATs, and observations set the precedence for the underlined study.

Using stimulating videos in qualitative designs. Researchers StGeorge, Goodwin, and Fletcher (2018) conducted a qualitative study to explore parents' perceptions of father-child rough-and-tumble-play. This play was defined as a father swinging, bouncing, chasing, catching, and wrestling his child. Prior research showed this type of activity from a father to the child had significant value to the child's social development. The authors established three research questions that pertained to the following. In the first question, they wanted to determine how parents characterized the rough-and-tumble play. Next, they wanted to identify parents' perceptions of the rough-and-tumble play, and finally, they wanted to identify how the parents viewed gender roles in the rough-and-tumble play.

In answering their research questions, StGeorge et al. (2018) used a two-phase process where they examined 52 parents of adolescent children that were approximately four years old. In the first phase, these authors gave the parents questionnaires that sought to obtain the parents' characteristics, social demographics, and family structures. In the second phase, StGeorge et al presented each parent with a 50-second stimulus video clip of a father wrestling with his four-year-old son. Following the video clip, these authors

interviewed each parent, transcribed the recorded data, and used the qualitative thematic analysis to code. This coding strategy allowed the researchers to use categories based on theoretical concepts established by seminal theorists and code across all participants.

StGeorge et al. (2018) findings indicated the following. The first two themes emerged from non-categorized concepts and postulated that the rough-and-tumble play produced a feeling in the child that made the child feel big and strong. Secondly, the rough play enhanced the bond between the father and child because bouts of affection flowed between the two. These two themes answered the first and second research questions. The third theme emphasized that that rough-and-tumble play should have caveats based on the context of the play. This theme answered research question three.

The importance of this study was that StGeorge et al. (2018) showed how a stimulating video could be used to draw out perceptions and the context of the design could remain under the guises of the qualitative paradigm. These authors referred to the use of the video as video interviewing and wrote the following:

> Photo-interviewing methods have been used successfully in health and community studies (Gong et al. 2012; Hurworth 2004), and although there appear to be few examples of video-interviewing methods, sharing and communicating through video clips is now an established cultural habit (Meikle 2016). (StGeorge, Goodwin, Fletcher, 2018, p. 1505)

In a similar study, Rolando, Beccaria, Petrilli, and Prina (2014) used the video method in a qualitative design to explore parents' and teachers' perceptions of underage drinking. Moreover, they wanted to understand how the teachers and parents felt about

youth's alcohol consumption, and if their views corresponded with the views of the youths. Also, they wanted to know how these individuals thought parental practices influenced underage drinking. To fulfill this purpose, these authors used 62 parents and teachers to form ten groups and showed each focus group six 30-second video segments of youths consuming alcohol. These video segments were archives from the University of Helsinki Addiction Clip Collection movie and edited for this study.

After displaying each video segment, the groups were asked theory-based questions. Rolanda et al. (2014), then used the Reception Analytical Group Interview strategy to openly discuss the questions These authors recorded the participants' responses and coded it according to specific theoretical themes. During the sessions, the authors also observed the participants and took notes on their behaviors and mannerisms.

The importance of this study mirrored that of StGeorge, Goodwin, and Fletcher's research. That is, Rolando, Beccaria, Petrilli, and Prina's study showed how the context of a video could be effectively used in a qualitative paradigm. Also, these researchers incorporated video segments in which they edited to fit the needs of their study. This author used a similar constructed video to obtain the natural reactions from his participants.

To conclude with a final study, Ruhrig and Höttecke (2015) conducted a qualitative design to explore teachers' professional competence when students participated scientific experiments that produced uncertain evidence. Ruhrig and Höttecke wanted to understand the teachers' reactions and decision-making processes as their students were given true-false scientific exercises. These researchers discovered that

the teachers' interactions with their students had an overall effect on the students' academic progress. To conduct this investigation, Ruhrig and Höttecke used a think-aloud approach and obtained 26 science teachers and showed them several fictitious video clips of students conducting the same experiments but arriving at different conclusions.

Each video ended at the moment the students arrived at the contradictory findings without the teacher in the video resolving the matter. Subsequently, each teacher-participant was asked how he or she would handle the students' various outcomes. Ruhrig and Höttecke (2015) wanted to draw off of the teachers' perceptions and experiences in an attempt to understand how they made decisions regarding the various findings. These authors thought the best way to do this was to use videos that produced a real environment that was familiar to most teachers to stimulate their imaginations. These researchers wrote the following:

> The video vignettes as well as the interview guideline were designed in order to make a wide range of responses possible on the part of the teacher interviewees. Teachers in this study, for instance, could ignore the uncertainty of evidence shown in the vignette completely. Or, they could watch the vignette and remain undecided about the uncertain evidence. The vignette could also elicit a strong opinion for or against any instructional strategy. According to the think-aloud method (von Someren, Barnard, & Sandberg, 1994), each interviewee was prompted to explicate her/his thoughts and emotions right after having watched the vignette. (Ruhrig & Höttecke, 2015, p. 453)

Like other qualitative studies discussed in this section, Ruhrig and Höttecke (2015) recorded the interview sessions, transcribed the participants' responses, and coded the data for thematic concepts. Despite the similarities to the previous studies, Ruhrig and Höttecke conducted a think-aloud approach using a video stimulus to study how experiences and perceptions could influence the decision-making process. They also highlighted the importance of using a stimulus that would invite a myriad of adversarial responses from participants. They explained these types of stimulus would require participants to have experience and a keen sense of the subject matter.

Definitions

Articulated thoughts in simulated situations paradigm: A think-aloud method that was created to identify and understand an individual's unconscious thoughts about an experience or perception (Davison et al., 1995).

Autonomy: A situation in which employees perform their work-related duties with minimum supervisory oversight from management (Hupe & Hill, 2007).

Deadly force: Force that is applied to an individual that results in serious physical injury or death (Mazza, 2017).

Discretion: The ability of employees to interpret policies and directives as they make decisions while delivering services and goods (Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Warren, 2010; Lipsky, 2010).

Categorizing: An individual's ability to separate and group alike things (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016).

Code of silence: A sense of loyalty that police officers might have that compels them to protect their peers' corruptive actions (Smith, 2009).

Excessive force: Force that is applied to an individual that is greater than the force needed to gain compliance from a noncompliant individual (Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichol, 2016).

Explicit racism: Racism that is outwardly expressed (Orrey, 2010).

Force continuum: Levels of force that move from the least amount of force such as the officer's presence to the extreme, which is deadly force. These levels are used according to the level of resistance given by a person the officer encounters (Fridell, 2017a).

High-profile cases: Cases that have made the national news.

Implicit Association Test: A test that requires an individual to categorize and sort images in an expedited manner in which the speed reduces conscious efforts thereby triggering unconscious responses (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Kang, 2005).

Implicit racial bias: Bias that is an unconscious stereotype where individuals respond negatively toward individuals of the outer group (Hutchinson, 2014).

Implicit racial bias perceptions: Unknown stereotypes that suggest African Americans are criminals, violent, and thuggish (Hall, Hall, & Perry, 2016).

Investigative encounter: A lawful police contact with a citizen or group of citizens that is performed to investigate a criminal complaint or suspicious event.

Less cooperative behavior: A behavior that occurs when an individual is lackadaisical about following instructions given to them (Adler's, 2012).

Less lethal force: Weapons that can be used that will likely not cause death or serious bodily harm. These weapons could be a deployment of a taser or pepper spray, a baton strike against a nonlethal body part, or empty-handed strikes and kicks.

New science of unconscious mental process: A process that occurred during the latter part of 20th century and first half the of the 21st century where psychologists began, through a plethora of empirical studies, to conduct and support Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of unconsciousness (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006).

Police culture: A familial atmosphere where individuals display loyalty to one another and have similar beliefs and perceptions (Feilding, Hobbs, & Wright, 2011).

Split second decision: A situation that occurs when police officers are involved in a highly stressful situation that continues to escalate, and they feel force is necessary to control the situation (Orrey, 2010).

Street-level bureaucrats: Employees who work directly with the public to provide them with a service or benefit (Bosma et al., 2018; Lipsky, 2018). For this study, police officers are considered street-level bureaucrats.

Think-aloud session: The 30-second segment following a stimulating video clip where the participants express their thoughts aloud and uninterrupted for 30 seconds.

Assumptions

There were several assumptions in this study I believed were true but could not demonstrate. One assumption was that all officers were equally trained in the application of force. Although, use-of-force training is mandatory for police officers nationwide (Fridell, 2017a; Worrall et al., 2018), I could not demonstrate the quality of the use-of-

force training my participants received. The quality of training was important because the participants were expected to know and understand use-of-force laws and department policies when performing their duties. Officers who do not have a genuine understanding of these rules and engage in excessive force situations with African American citizens could be perceived as racists when the mistake they made was propelled by a misunderstanding of the rules.

The next assumption was the belief that most police officers had experience handling use-of-force situations involving African Americans. However, in some police jurisdictions and areas of the U.S., the ethnicities and cultures are homogenized. If police officers are not accustomed to patrolling in African American communities or dealing with African Americans, they might not be accustomed to certain mannerisms and behaviors that could be mislabeled as aggressive or noncompliance. The incorrect diagnoses by the officers could result in force that is not needed.

Scope and Delimitations

Because the research topic for the underlined study focused on racially perceived excessive, which is a sensitive topic, many details were considered when establishing the scope of this study. Racism has been embedded in law enforcement since African Americans were enslaved in the 1800s (Bass, 2001). This historical phenomenon has caused long-standing strife in the relationship between the police and the African American community (Bass, 2001). Researchers asserted that most individuals that join the law enforcement profession think of themselves as egalitarians (Grabiner, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016). However, the notion that all police officers were free of explicit

racial attitudes is a credulous belief (Spencer et al., 2016; Petersen, 2018). With that said, this study did not seek to include these police officers' feelings and beliefs. Moreover, this study focused on the perceptions of police officers who operated from a good disposition and considered themselves egalitarians. Furthermore, the constructs of this research were not created to support, condone, or minimize maligned police behaviors.

I also considered the legality of police investigative encounters. To stave off the ideology that police officers had a history of illegally stopping and frisking African Americans (Rapping, 2013), the investigative contact in the ATSS was arguably a legal stop. A legal stop would involve an officer summoned to a location to investigate a possible crime that is afoot, or while patrolling a beat, the officer witnesses a crime that is afoot. The investigative encounter in the ATSS happened because a third party called and reported a criminal complaint. By using a legal stop, the notion of police racial profiling was removed from this study.

Another issue that I considered was the type of force I wanted to include in the underlined study. I focused on less-lethal force. Fridell (2017a) offered that current studies involve officers using deadly force instead less-lethal force. She also advised that future researchers should consider analyzing less-lethal force because most current use-of-force studies focused on deadly force and negated lesser force thereby skewing the outcomes of these projects. Less-lethal force involved lawful instructions, empty hand and knee strikes, pepper spray, taser, and baton strikes to non-life-threatening body parts. Because of the force continuum taught to all police officers nationwide (Fridell, 2017a),

most of the excessive force cases start at a lower form of force and escalate because of some unusual behavior either by the officer or citizen.

The final issue pertained to the epistemological strategy for this study. The strategy involved a desire to investigate the encounter between police officers and African American citizens. Despite the findings, the participants' involvement allowed me to focus on their personal perceptions and emotions. I believe this strategy set this research apart from past studies that focused on police use-of-force and implicit biases. Specifically, researchers have postulated that laboratory-type studies do not provide a life-like environment to properly analyze police decisions to use force (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Fridell, 2017a). However, the simulated situation I used provided a closer examination of the participants' lived experiences.

Limitations

This study had several major limitations. The first limitation dealt the research methodology. A qualitative phenomenology was used, which meant that I was the instrument for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data (Maxwell, 2017). Moreover, these procedures were inherently subjective, and they exposed the data to certain biases. To prevent these biases, I constructed open-ended questions and clarifying questions for the semi-structured interviews that did not alter the participants' responses. After I created the questions, I consulted with colleagues, family members, and dissertation committee members to ensure the questions were not misleading. Also, during interview phase, I paraphrased some of the participants' responses to ensure I captured the true meaning of what they conveyed.

Another limitation focused on the trustworthiness of the information the participants provided during the interview phases. This issue was reduced by my experience as an interviewer and the implementation of proper research strategies. For example, during the semi-structured interviews and ATSSs, some participants might not have given information that made them appear biased. With this in mind, I paid close attention to the participants' responses. I took field notes regarding tones of voices, moments of silence, and willingness to answer questions or continue thinking aloud. I also asked follow-up questions to clarify anomalies

The results of the IATs presented another limitation. Researchers have challenged the credibility of the IAT results and whether they indicated a person's behavioral action (James, 2018; Trachok, 2015). Considering this information, I did not use the IATs as stand-alone measures. They were used to triangulate the data from the semi-structured interviews and the ATSS practicums. For example, pieces of evidence from the semi-structured interviews were compared to the IAT results, and comprehensive analysis of the connection between the two pieces of evidence was given. Researcher Trachok (2015) took similar steps in her research project. She used semi-structured interviews and observations to study implicit racial bias in teachers. While conducting data analysis, Trachok noticed that there was dissonance between what some teachers said during their interviews and what they portrayed in their classrooms. Trachok provided her findings by referring to the literature of past researchers who have studied the connection between teachers and implicit racial bias. In the underlined study, this author took a similar approach.

Significance

The significance of this study lies within the past methods researchers used to study if implicit racial bias affected police officers' decisions to use more force than needed. These researchers have used document analysis, scenario-based experiments, and surveys to obtain officers' negative perceptions toward African Americans during investigative stops. Although these findings produced tangible evidence that addressed the phenomenon, current researchers have begun to challenge these findings (Cesario, Johnson, & Terrill, W., 2019; Fridell, 2017a; James, L., James, S., & Vila, B., 2018). More pointedly, some of the challenges were pursuant to past researchers not including variables such as noncompliant behaviors of African Americans (Fridell, 2017a) or considering other research that showed officers using racially motivated force (Cesario, Johnson, & Terrill, 2019; Fridell, 2017a). To this extent, some researchers thought that it would be necessary to delve deeper into the actual encounter between police officers and African American citizens to get a more truthful picture of the officers' perceptions as they decide to escalate force (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Mears, Craig, Stewart, & Warren, 2017; Nix et al., 2017; Spencer et al., 2016).

Considering these thoughts and the notion that officers are ultimately responsible for operating within the confinements of the U.S. Constitution, it is necessary to understand the thought process of officers as they encounter African American individuals who might be boisterous and lackadaisical in following their instructions. The gap that this research filled came from the knowledge of the participants superimposing themselves into a use-of-force scenario that gave them an uninterrupted and safe platform

to say whatever came to their minds. By providing this missing literature, behavioral scientists and police administrators can continue to investigate whether implicit racial bias is a viable option for implementing it in training modalities and policies. Reducing racially motivated force will strengthen the relationship between the police and the public and begin to establish a relationship between the police and the African American community. If these relationships are improved and these groups of citizens believe that police officers use force aligned with the United States Constitution, citizens might not negatively challenge officers' use-of-force decisions as they currently do.

Summary

Currently, there is a contentious relationship between the police and the public that steams from the long history of police brutality against African Americans. Because of an unsettled relationship, the African American community and other ethnic groups have publicly challenged whether police use of force against African Americans are free form racism. As a result, public leaders and police administrators have attempted to create effective policies that would stave off these disparate treatments against African Americans. To this extent, researchers have asserted through an assortment of empirical studies including document analysis, surveys, and experimental studies that police officers' decisions to use force might be influenced by their implicit racial bias. However, there are contradicting findings from researchers purporting that implicit racial bias might not be a factor in officers' decisions to use force. These contradictions further complicate the ability of police officials to establish the appropriate policies needed to prevent this treatment. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to

describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man. I used a phenomenological design to address the research purpose by conducting a three-phase methodological process to answer the research question and subquestions. The research question was: What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man? The two Subquestions, A and B, were: Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias; and what implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man?

In Phase 1, I used semi-structured interviews to obtain a glimpse of the officers' implicit racial bias perceptions from their backgrounds. The interview questions were related to the attributes that seminal theorists explained cultivates implicit racial bias perceptions. Following Phase 1, Phase 2, was conducted, which consisted of IATs. The IATs were speed tests that indicated whether the participants had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. The analysis of the data from Phase 1 and 2 answered Subquestion A. Phase 3, which involved the ATSS practicums, provided data that was triangulated with the other data sources to answer Subquestion B. The ATSS was a think-aloud method that I used as a stimulus to trigger the participants' implicit racial bias perceptions. The outcomes from the subquestions answered the RQ.

In the next sections, Chapter 2, I provide an in-depth analysis of seminal research that shows how the genesis of the excessive police force has evolved into the current ideology that implicit racial bias might influence police officers' decisions to use excessive force against African Americans. I also discuss the development of the street-level bureaucratic model and how it fits into this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Researchers have suggested that implicit racial bias might be a motive in police officers showing apparent bias in excessive force decisions against African Americans (DuBois, 2014). With the advent of this research, police administrators in the United States have begun to focus on the implicit racial bias model as an amenable solution to minimize the racial bias in their officers' use-of-force decisions (Li, 2016). Nevertheless, there is emerging research that contradicts whether officers' implicit racial bias influence their decisions to use force (Berger, 2018; James et al., 2018). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man. I chose implicit racial bias as the conceptual framework and the street-level bureaucracy model as an accompanying theory. In this chapter, I will synthesize original literature from each ideology that relates to the research problem and strategies to answer the central RQ. I begin by discussing the literature review strategies used to gain information related to the current phenomenon and providing an overview of the implicit racial bias as a conceptual framework and the street-level bureaucracy model as the accompanying theory. In the literature review that follows, I provide a chronological analysis of the current phenomenon from its historical inception. The chapter ends with a concluding summary and transition to Chapter 3.

Literature Search Strategy

I used an assortment of databases within the Walden University Web-based library that included the Dissertations & Theses @ Walden University, ProQuest Dissertations @ Theses Global, Political Science Complete, Political Science Complete & Business Source Complete Combined Search, Criminal Justice Database, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. In each of these databases, I entered a combination of words and phrases to locate relevant research literature. Words and combinations included police officers or law enforcement officers and implicit bias or unconscious bias, origins or implicit bias, police officers or law enforcement officers and use-of-force or excessive force, police officers or law enforcement officers and history of brutality or use of force, history of police brutality, history of police brutality or excessive force, police and decisions to use excessive force or brutality, history of police in America, slave patrol and police, history of slave patrol, origins of street-level bureaucracy, street-level bureaucracy and implicit bias, street-level bureaucracy and police, street-level bureaucracy and Jim Crow laws, street-level bureaucracy and Civil Rights Movement, history of Jim Crow Laws, Jim Crow Laws and police brutality or excessive force, Civil Rights Movement and police brutality or excessive force, and contradictions in implicit racial bias or implicit bias. I also obtained literature using the Google Scholar and books written by the creators of the applicable theorists.

I separated the works into two sections, which included the current phenomenon and its historical connection to implicit racial bias and the origins of the street-level bureaucracy model and how it provides an empirical lens that identifies the relationship

between police officers' decisions to use excessive force against African Americans, implicit racial bias, and the implementation of policy. Moreover, I located current and past literature about the current phenomenon that gives a historical perspective, which includes important shifts in societal beliefs I also reviewed vital literature that included discussion of the origins, assumptions, and practicalities of implicit racial bias and the street-level bureaucratic model.

Conceptual Framework

Implicit Racial Bias

I used implicit racial bias as a conceptual framework. Researchers have postulated that police officers are human beings and therefore, some of them automatically perceive African Americans as violent criminals (Banks et al., 2006). Other researchers have purported that police officers have an implicit racial bias that might affect their decisions to use force (Orrey, 2010). Consequent to this information, these police officers make unconscious and automatic excessive force decisions when encountering African Americans. As an example, Rapping (2013) explained that officers use implicit racial bias in selecting individuals whom they will stop and frisk. They will also use it to interpret behaviors that will lead to determining the type and amount of force they will use to gain compliance (Rapping, 2013). In other words, these police officers' implicit racial bias is connected to their ability to use proper discretion that ultimately affects their judgment when they are dealing with African Americans whom they perceive as less cooperative or threatening.

Origins of implicit racial bias. In recent history, seminal theorists and other behavioral scientists have postulated that implicit racial bias might be causing police officers to use excessive force when encountering African Americans during investigative stops (DuBois, 2014; Fridell & Lim, 2016; Rapping, 2013; Weir, 2016). Implicit racial bias is a relatively new theory that explains racism remains dormant in the subconscious realm and does not manifest until an individual is placed in a contentious situation with an outer group member (Golbeck et al., 2016; Hutchinson, 2014; Means & Thompson, 2016; Monteith et al., 2001). It is a part of the implicit bias paradigm that was created in 1998 by Mahzarin Banaji, Anthony Greenwald, and Brian Nosek (Cameron et al.,2010; Golbeck et al., 2016; Orrey, 2010), who explained that implicit biases are mental processes that are germane to unconscious stereotypes and attitudes (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Greenwald and Krieger (2006) purported that unconscious stereotypes denote individuals categorizing outer group members based on certain traits, characteristics, or behaviors, whereas unconscious attitudes denote individuals making evaluative conclusions about whether or not they like outer group members. For example, in an unconscious stereotype situation, officers might subconsciously think that all African American men are athletic. When the officers encounter an African American man during a traffic stop, they automatically handcuff him without an unexplainable reason. An example of an unconscious attitude would involve the officers approaching an African American man and a White man arguing. Both men are equally displaying aggression, but the officer automatically chooses to preemptively subdue the African American man and discuss with the White man the circumstances that led up to the

argument between the two men. Despite the difference between the implicit attitude and stereotype, both seem to interchange during a police investigative stop.

Banaji and Greenwald (2016) asserted that the implicit bias paradigm was created from Sigmund Freud's research that focused on the connection between the unconscious state of mind and behaviors that emerge from it. Greenwald and Krieger (2006) explained that the implicit bias paradigm was created from "the new science of unconscious mental process" (p. 246) to support and improve discrimination laws. To clarify, these authors meant that the period following the Freudian era, many researchers in psychology did not continue Freud's theory until recent years (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Greenwald and Krieger went on to explain that implicit bias denotes that individuals "do not always have conscious, intentional control over the processes of social perception, impression formation, and judgment that motivate their actions" (p. 246). In other words, people's actions might be subconsciously influenced by their perceptions of an outer person's race, age, obesity, religion, gender or other social marker.

Although the implicit bias paradigm has had a significant impact on the research of discriminatory behavior, it has had some challenges. Supporters of the naïve realism philosophy have postulated that people's judgments and actions were not motivated by their subconscious thoughts, but they were controlled by their conscious and explicit beliefs (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Specifically, naïve thought individuals performed certain behavioral acts according to their thoughts and understandings. Pronin, Lin, and Ross (2002) asserted that biases were a part of the human nature and are used for daily survival; therefore, individuals have some knowledge that these biases exist. Similar to

the supporters of the implicit bias theory, advocates of naïve realism believe that implicit racial biases began in adolescents (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006) and shaped by their micro and macro environments (Strenardori, 2015). However, when considering police use-of-force against a less cooperative African American, the difference between the implicit racial bias and naïve realism would be as follows. A proponent of the implicit racial bias philosophy would postulate that the officers' excessive force actions would be influenced by their unconscious attitudes or stereotypes. On the other hand, a supporter of the nativism philosophy would assert that the officers knew they had a dislike for African Americans. When the officers confront the African American, the officers use-of-force actions exacerbate because of their dislikes for African Americans.

Street-Level Bureaucracy Model as an accompanying Theory

Because the implicit racial bias model was developed within the field of psychology, the street-level bureaucratic theory was used as an accompanying theoretical lens to ground the underlined research in the public policy curriculum. The street-level bureaucracy model has several requirements. These requirements include the following: An employee must perform public services, the public service must involve personal interaction between the employee and the public, the employee must have a tremendous amount of discretion when providing the service, the employee must have autonomy when using discretion in performing the service, and there must be a belief that frontline employees are considered the most significant influence on policy-making decisions (Bosma et al., 2018; Hupe & Hill, 2007). This model also states that despite the existence of policies, street-level bureaucrats--teachers, judges, social workers, police officers, or

any worker providing a benefit to the public--can cause policy-change by working in complicated environments (Bourns, 1994; Buvik, 2016; Lipsky, 2010; Mazza, 2017; Taylor & Kelly, 2006). Furthermore, institutions implemented these policies to control the bureaucrats' behaviors as they deliver services to the public. However, the manner in which they provide services might be negatively impacted by the bureaucrats' autonomous work environments and discretionary powers (Hupe & Hill, 2007). Accordingly, administrators can use results of the encounter between the bureaucrats and beneficiaries to change or form policies that foster amenable services (Hupe & Hill, 2007; Taylor & Kelly, 2006).

Ambiguity, autonomy, and discretionary power. Ambiguity (Evans, 2016), autonomy (Lipsky, 2010), and discretionary powers (Hupe & Hill, 2007; Taylor & Kelly, 2006) were identified as critical components of street-level bureaucrats' decision-making process (Bosma, Kunst, Dirkzwagner, & Nieuwbeerta, 2018). Hupe and Hill (2007) asserted that administrators' knowledge of how their subordinates use their autonomy and discretion when performing their duties is an essential step for making policies that prevent inadequate social services.

Researchers defined ambiguity in two forms. First, some researchers explained that ambiguity focuses on officers' knowledge and understanding of laws and reflective policies as officers attempt to apply them in complicated situations (Evans, 2016 Mazza, 2017). For example, at a minimum, police officers are taught legal statutes from landmark cases such as Terry vs. Ohio, Tennessee vs. Garner, and Graham vs. Conner. Terry vs. Ohio established rules for stopping and temporarily detaining individuals for

investigative purposes (Morrow, White, & Fradella, 2017); Tennessee vs. Garner prohibited officers from shooting a fleeing suspect to prevent escape unless exigent circumstances exist (Mazza, 2017); and Graham vs. Conner defined use-of-force according to the reasonableness of an officer (Mazza, 2017). Although the officers have an understanding of these laws, ambiguity might arise when officers are required by assignment to administer proactive techniques in a known gang area that has a high murder rate, respond to a bank robbery in progress, and the armed suspect is fleeing the scene, or deal with a combative individual during a traffic stop (Mears et al., 2017).

Other researchers have defined ambiguity in terms of the situations that street-level bureaucrats might be subjected. In other words, bureaucrats--by the nature of their jobs--work in environments that produce complexity because of limited and unknown information (Evans, 2016; Lipsky, 2010). More pointedly, police officers operate in unknown circumstances. For example, when they conduct a traffic stop, respond to a burglary or robbery in progress complaint, or respond to public nuisance complaints, they have limited information (Mears et al., 2017). At the time they are dispatched, they receive very little information about the circumstances and individuals involved.

Autonomy was another significant component of the street-level bureaucrat's decision-making process. Bourns (1994) and Lipsky (2010) defined autonomy as the bureaucrats' ability to make on-the-spot decisions without adequate information and guidance from their first-line supervisors (Bourns, 1994; Lipsky, 2010).To this extent, police officers operate in autonomous environments when sudden changes occur that might cause them to make individual law enforcement decisions, including split-second

decisions. Lipsky (2010) explained that street-level police officers mostly decide--without oversite--who they arrest, and these decisions are often supported by the officers' experiences and personal beliefs. In a nutshell, police officers' actions are not supervised as they engage in adversarial and physical situations where they make decisions based on their perceptions of the event and involved parties and how they have resolved past events that were similar.

Discretionary power is a primary working condition of the street-level bureaucrats because bureaucrats often work under limited restraints, with minimum and uncertain information, in environments filled with complicated and evolving situations that the bureaucrats must quickly resolve (Lipsky, 2010). This statement is synonymous with the working conditions of police officers (Loyens & Maesschalck, 2010). With that said, officers use a considerable amount of discretion filled with human judgment as they make on-the-spot decisions during pugnacious encounters with individuals (Buvik, 2016). For example, police officers might respond to a domestic altercation between a husband and wife and both had an equal amount of physical abuse on their bodies. Because the husband was arguing with the wife when the officers arrived on the, based on their judgments, they decided to arrest the husband and not the wife. Although the investigations of these situations are not as simple as portrayed in this scenario, the context within it shows that the responding officers had discretion in interpreting the circumstances and how they would conclude the situation.

Origins of the Street-Level Bureaucratic Theory. The street-level bureaucratic theory was created in 1980 by a political scientist, Michael Lipsky, who became

concerned with the issues regarding the inequitable welfare services that Americans received during the 1960s and 1970s (Bourns, 1994; Lipsky, 2010). He created this model from Max Weber's bureaucratic model (Bourn, 1994) and although Weber focused on macro environments, Lipsky focused on microenvironments (Bourn, 1994). Moreover, Lipsky thought the decisions the street-level bureaucrats made while interacting with the public generated information that administrators could use to support, reject, or establish policy. For example, former Los Angeles Police Chief Parker (1956) discussed in a published essay how police/community relations during his administration advanced based on the detailed information his organization received from the civilian encounters that his officers had with members of the African American community. Parker believed that the most effective policies that he and his administration established were based on the enhancement of training and human relations. He also attributed the success of policy changes to the applications of appropriate disciplinary actions for his officers who violated these policies. Parker wrote the following scenario to encapsulate his ideology:

> Those who question whether that degree of discipline is possible-consider the following example: A certain Los Angeles Police Officer who walks a foot beat in the old section of the city. The street is a racial melting pot. The officer is one of the "old school," recruited long before psychiatric examinations were instituted. If there is a maximum number of racial and religious prejudices, one mind can hold, he certainly represents it. This officer has been exposed to the complete range of police human relations training. He has memorized every maxim, every scientific fact, every theory relating to human equality. He knows all the accepted answers.

> He does not believe a word of it. Understanding this, it is surprising the officer's eight-hour duty tour is characterized by tolerance, applied human relations, and equitable treatment of all persons. His superiors have watched his work closely, a little wary that his deep-seated convictions might win out over discipline in moments of stress. This has not happened during the five years he has patrolled this highly critical district. It can now safely be assumed his intolerance has become a victim of enforced order-habit has won out over belief. (Parker, 1956, pp. 374-375)

Chief Parker's underlined message expressed that policies were developed and enforced at the street-level. His approach for creating policy was a classic example of Lipsky's bottom-up method. Chief Parker and his administration developed policies that were generated from the police encounters with citizens, and they established disciplinary actions for officers who did not want to conform to them.

Historical epistemological methods used. Because the street-level bureaucracy model embodies microanalysis, scholars in this academic field have favored research methods that involved the relativist epistemological perspective. In other words, they have used methods that seek to gain an in-depth understanding of how and why street-level bureaucrats make certain decisions while working with the public. In the works of Bosma et al. (2018), they explained that traditional researchers of Lipsky's model had conducted empirical studies that have focused on how frontline employees have influenced legislative changes. Additionally, modern researchers within this field have begun to focus on the lack of ability of frontline employees to conform with legislation

and agency directives that result in disparity treatment. In other words, the underlined focal point of the street-level bureaucracy model is to identify how and why bureaucrats make certain decisions (Loyens & Maesschalk, 2010).

Within the historical context of the traditional approach and the modern approach to studying street-level bureaucrats, scholars have asserted that the case study methodology has been the preferred method for exploring the experiences between the street-level bureaucrats and their clients (Evans, 2016; Loyens & Maesschalk, 2010; Oberfield, 2012; Warren, 2010). Nonetheless, I selected to use the phenomenology methodology to explore whether police officers had an implicit racial bias that influenced their decisions to use excessive force during an investigative stop with an African American. Because prior researchers surmised that implicit racial bias is rooted in the history of racism in America and that Lipsky created the street-level model during the enlightening period of the 1960s, this theoretical model seemed appropriate to accompany the implicit racial bias model. To further support my choice, Bourns (1994) asserted that Lipsky's research showed that during the 1960s, the street-level bureaucrats generated the most tumultuous community-conflict. Seabrook and Wyatt-Nichol (2016) purported that during the 1960s, there were official reports that asserted that police violence against African Americans caused civil unrest. The changes in racial attitudes of many individuals did not occur until various ethnic groups witnessed through media outlets the violence the police inflicted against African Americans. More specifically, the witnessing of this violence pressured the federal government to make legislative changes.

Despite the changes in legislation, police officers are responsible for performing their duties within the boundaries of the legislation. In the1960s, the police attacks on African Americans were polarized, which caused changes in the moral beliefs of many individuals (Johnson, 2007; Nimtz, 2016). Scholars explained that the current justice system in America resembles the justice system before the Civil Rights Movement (Roberts, 2007; Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichol, 2016). In both eras, police departments are at the helm of the process. Therefore, it is essential to study and obtain a better understanding of what attributes affect officers' decisions as they work in complex environments that require them to make split-second decisions with minimum information about the individuals that they encounter (Godsil & Richardson, 2017). These two attributes along with the officers' discretion and autonomy force them to rely on past experiences and self-efficacies to respond to these rapidly emerging situations (Lipsky, 2010). In Lipsky's (2010) book Street-Level Bureaucracy, he pointed out that bias is a major part of human nature that impedes on officers' decisions when they are required to control the actions of others. Precisely, police officers, through their lawful authority, work in environments that are filled with adversarial and dangerous situations in which they are required resolve. Some of these resolutions might incorporate split-second decisions that might be influenced by negative biases that will ultimately diminish equitable services the public receives.

Figure 1 demonstrates how the implicit bias model and the street-level bureaucracy model functioned together to assist in determining if officers' use-of-force decisions are influenced by implicit racial bias. In the first group of circles to the left of

the figure, there are three circles labeled as Public Leaders, Community, and Police Administrators. The two smaller unlabeled circles symbolize other groups such as the media and violent vigilante-type individuals. The public leader circle and community circle overlap to show that they are connected in solidarity and want police reform to occur. Reform usually occurs after a controversial event (Lipskey, 2010), such police inflicting violence on an unarmed African American. Additionally, in this group of circles, there is a muted arrow that points from the public leader and community circles to the police administrators. The muted arrow symbolizes the protest, either publicly or nonpublic, against the police chief to make changes.

In the second set of circles or the middle section, the circles are labeled as the Police Officer's Decision, Police Implicit Racial Bias, and African American Citizen. These circles symbolize the encounter between the police and the citizen, and they display the connection between the implicit racial bias model and street-level bureaucratic model. The street-level model encloses the three circles, which indicated this author used this model to analyze the investigative encounter between the officer and the African American. Within this enclosure, all three of the circles, police officer's decision, police implicit racial bias, and African American citizen, overlap to show that there is a possible connection according to the past research studies. However, I put the variable, police implicit racial bias, in its circle to symbolize that it might not be connected to the police officer's decision to escalate force against the African American citizen. In the last group of circles located to the right of the figure, there is only one circle labeled New Policy. This circle symbolizes the outcomes that are based on the findings from the

analysis of the investigative encounter. Whatever the conclusions might be, the police administrators and public leaders can create new policies that will prevent future police from disparities toward African American citizens. The gray arrows at the bottom of the figure depicts the direction the process flows from the inception of unwanted police action to a result, which is a policy change or reform.

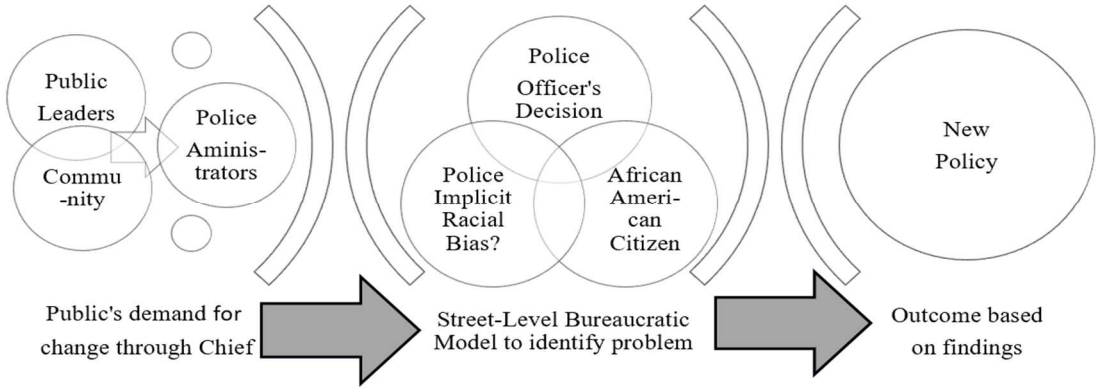

Figure 1. Implicit racial bias and street-level bureaucracy. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt.

Literature Review

Seminal theorists have explained that many individuals, including police officers, have implicit racial bias, and these biases are innate (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Kang, 2005; Li, 2016; Pedersen, 2010; & Spencer et al., 2016). In other words, police officers might have an unconscious racial bias that they are not aware they have. Because these racial biases exist in the unconscious realm, these biases might not emerge until officers encounter adverse situations with African American individuals (Lee, Lindquist, & Payne, 2017; Monteith, 2001; Pedersen, 2010). Consequently, some researchers believe targeting implicit racial bias might be an amenable step in reducing officers' decisions to

use excessive force against African Americans (DuBois, 2014). However, because a triggering event is needed and these biases are espoused to officers' autonomy and discretion, researchers postulated that police administrators face challenges in minimizing these biases (Pedersen, 2010; Vieira & Graser, 2015). Therefore, my focus for the underline research was to investigate excessive force from police officers' perspectives. Seminal theorists have asserted that police officers' current inequitable use-of-force decisions can be traced back to the era before the legalization of slavery (Bass, 2001; Whalen, 2017). In the following sections, I will provide seminal literature that shows how researchers concluded that implicit racial bias might be influencing officers to use excessive force toward African Americans.

Historical Overview of Police Brutality and Resistance to It

Although implicit racial bias is a new theory, police brutality and disparities inflicted upon African Americans are not a new phenomenon. Seminal theorists have produced a myriad of literature addressing this issue that spans throughout U.S. history (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Hutchinson, 2014). These studies involved researchers exploring police brutality from multiple angles including police department cultures; the profiles of officers versus that of the individuals they encounter; and the environment in which the officers worked (Fridell, 2017a; Nix et al., 2017). As an extension of these previous works, this project pendulates on use-of-force decisions from the officers' perspectives. Therefore, it is essential to provide a historical overview of police brutality and acts of successions to thwarts these activities.

Slave patrols during the slavery era. The first African American slave ship arrived in Virginia in 1619, and soon after that, owning African American slaves became legal (Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichol, 2016). Researchers asserted that after this legalization, the government created slave patrols that used violence and terror to control African American slaves (Bass, 200; Grabiner, 2016; Turner et al., 2006). More specifically, African American slaves were purchased and sold, thereby making them the legal property of slave owners. The government created slave laws and paid members of slave patrol to enforce the laws, which prevented slaves from escaping the ownership of their slave masters and committing crimes against White individuals (Bass; 2001; Turner et al., 2006). For example, if slaves escaped, a slave patrol would apprehend, torture, and returned the slaves to their owners who might have also tortured them to discourage future violations. Grabiner (2016) explained that although seminal theorists involved in the diachronic study of law enforcement and racial brutality might have excluded slave patrols as functional police agencies. However, scholars such as Bass (2001), Grabiner (2016), and Turner et al. (2006) argued the opposite. They explained that because members of slave patrols duties were mandated by various laws, and they were paid by the government to fulfill these duties, these groups were police agencies.

Social inception of racial bias. During the 1700s and 1800s, the inhumane treatment of African Americans was a customary practice. Researchers explained that the inception of a bias begins with a belief espoused by a leader, and if the leader is trusted, the belief is cultivated within the other members of the group (Rivers et al., 2017). More to the point, during the 1700s and 1800s, White individuals --the intergroup members--

obtained from a smaller convincing group, namely the government, beliefs that African Americans slaves were inferior and needed to be treated like animals (Bass, 2001; Magnis, 1999). Accordingly, researchers Lujan and DiCario (2018) and Magnis (1999) discussed in their works the inferior biases that the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, promoted in legal documentation and scholarly edifications. They purported that although Jefferson considered himself an egalitarian, he believed that African Americans were genetically created from an animal-like specimen, which they lacked the mental capacity for the arts and sciences. He also thought that these abnormalities made African Americans suitable for slavery. Jefferson argued that if the government freed the African American slaves, the government needed to extricate them from North America to prevent their blood from mixing with the blood of White individuals (Magnis, 1999). Jefferson thought that freed slaves would act in a feral manner, which set precedence for the following century (Lujan & DiCario, 2018). That is, past and current researchers reported that individuals perceived African Americans as dangerous and violent criminals (Adler, 2012; Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Hutchinson, 2014; Rapping, 2013; Spencer et al., 2016).

Police actions during the Jim Crow Era. After African American slaves were emancipated, governments in the southern states of the United States implemented laws that promoted White supremacy that involved the segregation of schools, churches, communities, and various other public places (Bass, 2001). Moreover, these laws told African Americans what public entrances to use, where they could sit down, and these laws prevented them from voting (Bass, 2001; Roberts, 2007). Police officers that

worked in these geographical areas were mandated by law to enforce these segregated laws. In doing so, they use tactics the terrorized African Americans, which included lynching, beating, burning, shooting, and dog attacks (Roberts, 2007). These methods were similar to the methods the slave patrols used.

Members of African American communities surreptitiously unified and began to organize an attempt to fight the injustice and inhumane treatment they received from the police and White community (Schmidt, 2015). The inequitable treatment was elevated by the Jim Crow laws, and the African Americans' rebellious efforts to eradicate the unfair treatment became known as the Civil Rights Movement (Morris, 1999; Schmidt, 2015). Following the commencement of the Civil Rights Movement, a plethora research that has provided insight regarding the explicit racial practices that police officers used during their contact with African Americans. For example, in Adler's (2012) historical review of police killings in New Orleans, he discussed how local police officers during the 20th century racially profiled African Americans for loitering type offenses that ended in police brutality against African Americans for laggardly responding to their commands. Adler provided descriptions of how police officers waited for African Americans to commit petty offenses, so they could make lawful stops to carry out their racially motivated abuse.

Adler (2012) also provided a story that occurred during the 1940s where several White police officers responded to a domestic dispute between an African American husband and wife. The husband had mental issues, and a neighbor called the police because the two were engaged in a loud argument. The police officers arrived and settled

the dispute. Upon leaving the residence, one of the officers warned the husband to settle down. The husband then countered the officer's command with a statement of defiance. The officer confronted the husband about the comment, and they began to tussle. During the tussle, the partnering officer told the tussling officer to shoot the "n----r" [nigger] (Adler, 2012, p. 496). The officer shot and killed the husband.

Police actions during the Civil Rights Movement era. Researchers explained the 1960s were a pivotal moment in American history where explicit racial bias began to shift toward a more elusive perception (Lumb, 1995; Nimtz, 2016; Schmidt, 2015). To support this ideology, Jenkins and Peck (2013) postulated that this shift was due to two key legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These two legislations gave African Americans the freedom to advance socially and politically. More specifically, the federal government, under the John F. Kennedy's administration, facilitated the passage of the Civil Rights Act that outlawed the Jim Crow laws (U.S. National, n.d.). The Voting Rights Act ended century-old laws that prohibited African Americans from voting in any election (Voting Rights Act, n.d.), which ultimately prevented them from having a democratic voice and being selected jurors. The passage of both laws meant that a police officer could not lawfully beat and arrest African Americans for occupying and participating in public and private venues. If the officer violated these laws, African Americans would have platforms to fight back.

A shift in police actions. Researchers explained that in the 1950s and 1960s, members of the African American community used the media coverage of demonstrations, sit-ins, and rallies to influence the enactment of laws (Nimtz, 2016).

Moreover, as the media showed African Americans peacefully participating in the various protests, the public witnessed firsthand the brutality that the African Americans suffered at the hands of the police (Markman, 2015; Morris, 1999). To further explain how the media was used to shift police actions, scholars Johnson (2007) and Nimtz (2016) discussed in their peer-reviewed journal how Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used event imaging during the 1963 Birmingham Campaign to gain support from White moderates who only had a subliminal understanding of the violence in which police officers inflicted upon African Americans. The media publicly produced live video, still images, and photographs of police officers' physical beatings of African Americans with batons; spraying them with high-pressure water hoses; and allowing their dogs to attack them. Johnson (2007) wrote the following:

> The dramatic images of uniformed police officers wielding fire hoses and snarling dogs against young black protestors constitute a powerful scene in the nation's collective memory of the civil rights movement. The images of the savage attack "struck like lightning in the American mind," shaking white moderates from their complacent assurance of the inevitability of racial progress in a nation deemed the world's foremost exemplar of democracy. (Johnson, 2007, pp. 5-6)

Nimtz (2016) asserted that it was not until John F. Kennedy saw the vicious attacks on African Americans that he pressured his administration to sign the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Moreover, Nimtz (2016) wrote, "The images of Conner's [Birmingham Police Chief] dogs attacking the civil rights protestors and especially their international repercussions forced the president to consider whether he had done enough to resolve the

crisis" (p. 9). Again, the media played a role in changing the president's mind about how African Americans were treated by the police, which resulted in him pressuring many southern leaders to make changes within their police departments.

Police actions after the Civil Rights Movement era. After the Civil Rights Movement, the United States began to overcome some of the racially influenced police violence that had plagued America since the first African American slave ship arrived in American. Although federal laws forced police administrators and their departments to make changes, some resisted because of the homogeneity of the departments (Lumb, 1995; Whalen, 2017). Moreover, during the 1970s and 1980s, police officers were predominantly white, and they maintained their traditional and conservative values (Lumb, 1995). For the White officers that resisted to change, their superior beliefs continued to reflect in their equitable actions toward African Americans (Lumb, 1995). Consequently, researchers identified the police officers during this period were more likely to stop and search African Americans than White individuals (Banks et al., 2006; Rapping, 2013). They were also more likely to shoot (Fridell & Lim, 2016; James, Klinger, & Vila, 2014), or use more physical force against African Americans than White Americans (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Nix et al., 2017).

The 1991 Rodney King case was an example of the unjust force police used against African Americans. The King case was a symbolic case in American history because the African American community had historically proclaimed police brutality; however, its outcry was not believable by other cultures until they witnessed through media outlets the police officers' actions in King's case (Beutin, 2017; Hollowell, 2008).

To elaborate further, scholars Rapping (2013), Beutin (2017), Hollowell (2008) and Sigelman, Welch, Bedsole, and Combs (1997) presented the following facts about the King's case. Officers Stacy Koon, Lawrence Powell, Theodore Briseno, and Timothy Wind, repeatedly beat King as he attempted to stand up from the ground. Viewers were able to see each strike and kick that the police officers delivered to King. Some sympathized with King, and others empathized as they felt his pain by watching his body convulse from each strike. Officers Koon, Powell, Briseno, and Wind were indicted for assaulting King. In the following year, a jury acquitted these officers on the charges. As a result, in 1992, members from the African American community began rioting in Los Angeles and other cities across the country. Like the polarization of police brutality that led to national policy changes in 1963, the media coverage in King's case captured the attention of many individuals of all races that led to police reform (Beutin, 2017; Rapping 2013).

Police actions in the modern-day era. In the aftermath of the King's case, not only did the sight of the beating and the unjust jury verdict cause police administrators to take a closer look at their officers' use-of-force actions, but it also caused the public to examine racism within themselves (Sigelman, Welch, Bedsole, & Combs, 1997). This reflective response was similar to how individuals reacted to the police beatings of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. More to the point, the enlightenment of the explicit racism that influenced the officers' aggression in the King's case compelled individuals to internally reflect on their racial attitudes and perceptions and make personal changes. As a result of these personal changes, the governments

created and implemented new anti-discrimination laws that challenged police administrators (Markman, 2015: Schoenle, 2017). Racial epithets and racially driven violence became socially unacceptable (Monteith et al., 2001; Whalen, 2017; Zestcott et al., 2016), especially by police officers. The anti-discrimination laws made explicit behaviors become socially unacceptable, which led to the crux of the implicit racial bias theory (Hutchinson, 2014; Kang, 2005). That is, the smallest and deepest negative perception of African Americans might not surface until it causes an officer to overestimate the amount of force that is needed to obtain compliance.

To expand on the above statements, scholars Vieira and Graser (2015) discussed in their peer-reviewed journal the difficulties of individuals to work within the parameters of certain anti-discrimination policies when they have implicit racial bias. These authors hypothesized that despite the implementation of anti-discrimination policies and the individual's desire to make decisions within the confinements of these policies might be difficult for him not to violate them if he harbors hidden racial biases. Vieira and Graser (2015) further wrote, “Unfortunately, a growing body of evidence suggests that people do make significant social decisions and behave according to their implicit stereotypes and prejudice, without intending to or even being aware of doing so” (p. 134).

Epistemological Approaches to Implicit Racial Bias

Within the seminal review of the implicit bias literature, researchers have attempted to determine whether police officers have an implicit racial bias and if the bias swayed the officers’ decisions to apply excessive force when they encounter African Americans. These research attempts have shown that that explicit racism has declined

over the past years (Kang, 2005; Quattlebaum, 2018), and that implicit racial bias was the next logical conclusion for this phenomenon. Furthermore, scholars have concluded that implicit racial bias is a form of racism; police officers have an implicit racial bias; and implicit racial bias impact their decisions to use force.

The above conclusions were developed from a myriad of research data that was obtained using scenario-based experiments, surveys, and document analysis. Kang (2005), in a descriptive research project, provided several noteworthy research endeavors that he explained were the tip of the iceberg research projects concerning implicit bias. For example, he noted that John Bargh used a video recorder to capture the reactions of computer malfunctions that were preceded by the images of White individuals and African American individuals. The images were strategically placed after the malfunctions, which implied the individuals were responsible for inflicting them. The findings of the experiment revealed that the participants were not as vexed by the malfunctions induced by the White individuals as they were by the African American individuals.

In another study, Kang (2005) purported that Frank Gilliam and Santo Iyengar used the news media to show mugshots that contained photographs of White and African American suspects and short stories of the crimes they committed. The findings of the experiments indicated that the criminal behaviors presented by the African American suspects were less forgiven than the criminal behaviors exhibited by the White suspects. Moreover, the White participants requested that the African American suspects be held to more stringent punishments than the white suspects. Kang also identified the constructs

of another experimental study that was conducted by Joshua Correll. Correll administered a shoot or don't shoot video game where photographic images displayed either White or African American individuals holding various objects. These objects were either a wallet, cellular telephone, or a weapon. Participants were, then, asked to decide whether they would shoot or not shoot the individuals as the photographs appeared in rapid succession. The findings revealed that participants identified unarmed African Americans as armed individuals and armed White individuals as unarmed individuals. These studies proceeded Banaji, Greenwald, and Nosek's creation of the implicit bias model.

Researcher Fridell (2017a) provided a literature review of police use-of-force studies from past projects to the current times. This researcher reported that J. D. Robin conducted the first police use of force study in the early 1960s in Philadelphia. Robin's findings explained that African Americans were more likely subjected to deadly force despite the composition of the population. Fridell (2017a) also asserted that after Robin published his study, other researchers began to focus on racial disparities in an attempt to deduce variables that might influence police bias from the variables that have legitimate connections to criminal behaviors. Fridell (2017a) went on to explain that researchers then branched off from attempting to decipher between illegitimate and legitimate behaviors to attempting to analyze the connection between African Americans and the number of violent crimes they have committed as predictors of whether officers would use excessive force.

Presently, researchers are attempting to determine if racism influence police officers' decisions to use force. Nevertheless, Fridell (2017a) asserted that the current

data from these studies swing on a pendulum. That is, the findings of these projects contradict each other. Some indicate that racism is a factor that influenced officers' decisions to use excessive force whereas others indicate the opposite. To support this dogmatic statement, Fridell (2017a) analyzed the findings from four renowned research projects where the authors investigated police use-of-force against African Americans. These researchers were Nix et al., who used data from a national approach; Fryer, who used data from the national approach, Houston area, and 10 U.S. states; Miller, who used data from a national approach; and Goff et al., who used data from 12 U.S. states. Fridell (2017a) challenged their findings because they used extrinsic evidence such as documents and databases to obtain raw data from deadly force encounters. Nix et al., Fryer, Miller and Goff et al. excluded encounters that involved less lethal force. Fridell (2017a) explained that because these researchers used extrinsic evidence and concentrated only on deadly force encounters, their findings were skewed and contradicting. Fridell (2017a) concluded the study by asserted that researchers must continue to study police bias, but they should include less lethal force and attempt to get an in-depth understanding of officers' lived experiences. More literature about research that contradicts implicit racial bias will be discussed in a later section of this manuscript.

Despite Fridell's contradictions mentioned, researchers Spencer et al. (2016) conducted a noteworthy descriptive implicit racial bias study. It focused on determining whether police bias was unconscious and unintentional. During the study, Spencer et al. analyzed other authors' research methods and findings. They concluded that police officers have an implicit racial bias and their decisions were stimulated by a perception

that African Americans were dangerous. Spencer et al. also discovered that as the officers engaged in capricious encounters, their decisions became more negatively affected by implicit racial bias. Just like Fridell, Spencer et al. thought that future researchers should conduct more comprehensive investigations into the officers' encounters with African Americans to obtain the officers' lived experiences.

Bolgar (2015) was another renowned researcher in the study of police use-of-force where he conducted a quantitative meta-analysis that produced the most relevant data regarding police decisions to use excessive force against African Americans. Bolgar attempted to research and analyze all peer-reviewed journal about this issue. Consequently, he narrowed down the list of journals that only included patrol officers using less lethal force between 1995 and 2013. Bolgar concluded that police officers would most likely use force against an African American if the African American acted aggressively, or if the individual--despite ethnicity--is intoxicated.

Although Bolgar's study found that African American race might be indicative of police using force, James, Klinger, and Vila (2014) conducted a "shoot or don't shoot" study. Despite these researchers not being the first to administer this type of study, their efforts were inaugural because their lavatory experiments included high definition videos of actual police situations and full-size nonfunctional Glock pistols that synchronized with the actions portrayed on the video screens. The Glock pistols are widely used in law enforcement across the country. James, Klinger, and Vila wanted to test if police officers used implicit racial bias when confronting unarmed African Americans. In doing so, they used white and African non-police officers as participants in scenarios that involved

white and African American subjects that were either armed or unarmed. The authors' study supported the ideology that implicit racial bias affected police officers' decisions to use deadly force against African Americans. Moreover, their results indicated that the white participants were reluctant to shoot African Americans suspects that were armed, and the African American participants were more inclined to shoot unarmed African American individuals.

Implicit racial bias entering the police department. Thus far, I have discussed literature from key researchers that purported police officers have an implicit racial bias and that these biases might influence their decisions to use excessive force against African Americans. Based on these beliefs, it is necessary to show how researchers surmised an implicit racial bias enters the police workforce. The school of thought regarding these beliefs began with a combined approach from neuroscientists and cognitive researchers explaining that implicit bias is an innate attribute that is shaped and molded by an individual's environment (Banaji & Greenwald; 2016; Banks & Hick, 2016; Golbeck et al., 2016; Kang, 2005; Marvel, 2016; Nix et al., 2017; Rapping, 2013; Rivers et al., 2017; Sternadori, 2017). In other words, implicit bias is a human instinct that develops as an individual grows. Scientists and researchers have purported that they have found the presence of implicit racial bias in the amygdala (Chekroud et al. 2014; Kang, 2005; Sternadori, 2017; Banks & Hick, 2016), which is a small almond-shaped organ that is responsible for an assortment of emotional responses (Chekroud et al. 2014; Goldman, 2005). Chekroud, Everett, Bridge, and Hewstone (2014) explained that the amygdala is responsible for expressing natural or conditioned emotions such as fear and

avoidance, and it also assists individuals with attaching these emotions with facial identity.

Goldman (2005) explained that when the function of the amygdala is triggered, it becomes temporarily disconnected from the overall function of the brain. As a result of the disconnection, it produces blindness or the inability to identify key emotions involved in a confrontational event. In other words, if an individual is engaged in an emotional event and does not maintain control of his emotions, he might behave irrationally or spontaneously. Other researchers have shown in quantitative data that implicit racial bias correlates with spontaneous behavior (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2017). Goldman (2005) further noted that the amygdala is triggered when a person is confronted with something he hates; something he feels will hurt him, or something he fears. Lee, Lindquist, & Payne (2017), in their study, asserted that when emotions such as anger, fear, and resentment become unknowingly discrete, they contribute to implicit racial bias. That is, individuals unknowingly manifest these emotions in the subconscious realm.

In addition to researchers providing scientific data regarding the biological inception of implicit racial bias, researchers have studied it from a metastasis perspective. Moreover, they have concluded that implicit racial bias has been found in children as young as six years old (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2017; Gonzalez et al., 2017). Relevant to this ideology, other researchers had espoused that racial bias began in children at an early age when they began to sort and categorize people and things (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Li, 2016). Specifically, as toddlers, individuals learn how to

distinguish among things that are different and began to associate with the things that are similar.

Banaji and Greenwald (2016) explained that categorization is a natural organizational tool that is needed for daily survival. They also asserted that research has shown that biases start in infants and these biases were simply preferences that were obtained through familiarity. They went on to explain that when children mature, they began to develop and identify who they are regarding gender, race, and culture. These developments occur throughout a lifespan, and it is manipulated by parental and family influences, the norms of the community, education, social and professional associations, and religions. Researchers Rivers et al. (2017) and Lujan and DiCario (2018) referred to these developments as social learning experiences. More to the point, individuals initially establish their identities, beliefs, morals, and values through their microenvironments, and these attributes are further enhanced through their macro environments.

Banaji and Greenwald (2016) asserted that within individuals' social learning experiences, they - by default - began to either negatively or positively stereotype others. These labeling mechanisms allow individuals to accept or reject others in a social or business environment. Pedersen (2010) explained that individuals use these stereotypes to make decisions. However, the problem emerges when individuals allow their negative stereotypes to control their decisions (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). For example, because of the historical beliefs that African Americans are violent and thuggish, a loss prevention employee follows a group of young African American males around a department store. As stated earlier in this manuscript, these beliefs have been ingrained in the fabric of

American culture, and the normal acts of treating African Americans inhumane did not begin to change until approximately 50 years ago. To this extent, researchers have explained that these perceptions have not gone away; they have become deeply embedded in the subconscious realm of individuals who profess to be egalitarians (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Fridell & Lim, 2016; Golbeck et al., 2016; Monteith et al., 2001).

Police officers are human beings, and therefore, these findings apply to them (Fridell & Lim, 2016Spencer et al., 2016). That is, while growing up, they might have been naturally subjected to associating with similar individuals and disassociating with individuals that were different from them. They might have been naturally subjected to categorizing individuals based on liked characteristics and forming negative and positive opinions or stereotypes about them. Police officers might have become socially conditioned to the negative beliefs about African Americans and are probably unaware that they implicitly harbor these feelings, which are not manifested until the officers engage in conflicting encounters (Nix et al., 2017). If these conjectures are valid, then they support researchers' ideologies that most police officers do not believe their excessive force actions toward African Americans are not racially motivated (Spencer et al., 2016).

Contradicting Implicit Racial Bias

Although many researchers have supported the ideology that implicit racial bias influence police officers' decisions to use excessive, there is a growing number of scholars that oppose the validity and reliability of the research findings. Moreover, researchers have asserted that past findings from research projects that focused on this

phenomenon have resulted in contradicting outcomes (Petersen, 2018; Smith, Rojek, Petrocelli, 2017). That is, some studies have explained that police offers' excessive force decisions are swayed by their implicit racial bias, and other studies have explained the officer's decisions are not affected by it. In the previous sections, I provided literature where the findings support the constructs of implicit racial bias. However, in this section, I will discuss literature that argues against these constructs.

Researcher Fridell challenged the validity of some implicit racial bias research findings and explained that the findings were skewed. Moreover, Fridell (2017a) explained that the findings contradicted each other because the variables and research methods switched among the projects without amenable bridges between the gaps in the studies. Similarly, L. James, S. James, and Vila (2018) asserted that the contradicting findings of these types of studies resulted from a myriad of research approaches that failed to include certain mitigating factors. Specifically, these authors challenged the existence of the raw data from these studies by asserting that the researchers excluded essential variables that might have altered the outcomes. To support this tenet, James et al. (2018) conducted an experimental study where they used 50 trained police officers to examine whether a citizens' race contributed to the officers' decisions to escalate force.

The experiment involved scenarios that contained either a negative track or positive track in which either option was contingent upon the office's attitude he displayed throughout the scenario. Each track ran according to the citizen's compliance level. Additionally, the citizens in these scenarios were from different racial and ethnic groups, and they were dressed in an assortment of styles ranging from street attire to

business attire. For example, there might have been a white male dressed in street clothing and acting in a hostile manner, or there might have been an African American male dressed in a suit and behaving in a compliant manner. James et al. (2018) findings indicated that the police officers did not use force based on the citizens' race or appearances. However, the officers' decisions to use force were indicative of the hostile demeanors and lack of compliance the citizens displayed during the encounters.

In another study that aligns with Fridell and L. James, S. James, and Vila's plight to show inconsistencies in the findings of recent implicit racial bias studies, Ross (2018) discussed in his work several comparisons in the findings regarding whether implicit racial bias influence officers' decisions to use excessive force against African Americans. For instance, he explained that in James et al. (2018) study, James et al. asserted that police officers' implicit racial bias influences their decisions whereas, in Jetelina, Jennings, Bishopp, Piquero, and Gonzalez's 2017 study, they explained that implicit racial bias did not contribute to officers' decisions to use force. Ross postulated that the difference between both outcomes rested with the indifferences in variables. That is, the inclusion of certain factors such as the African American's willingness to follow the officer's commands or aggressive demeanor differentiated the outcomes.

Menifield, Shin, and Strother (2019) explained that modern-day studies concerning whether disparity influences an officer's decision to use deadly force have produced contradicting results that have kept steadfast the conforming flow of answerable data. These authors asserted that majority of the studies had central research questions whereby the results would either support the notions of activists postulating

that white police officers' racial biases are influencing their decisions to kill African Americans or a growing trend of studies that assert the opposite. That is, racial biases might not be a factor. Menified et al. postulated that these prior research efforts might have excluded certain meso and micro external factors such demographics and the number of white officers working in these area and certain national policies (i.e., the war on drugs), which might have produced disproportionate undertone in their results.

Based on the above-stated contradictions Menifield et al. conducted a study that attempted to decipher between the current findings, which would sway the pendulum in either direction. Therefore, these authors hypothesized that if the killings of African Americans are equally distributed among various ethnicities of police officers, then racism might not be the culprit, and subsequently, there might be some other looming issues. To support or reject their hypothesis, Menifield et al. used the database, Killed By Police (KBP)--which is a non-government database that is updated daily with news stories of police fatal shootings--to create their own database to collect and analyze police deadly force cases against African American men that occurred between 2014-15. These authors also cross-checked the information in KBP to other similar datasets to validate the data in KBP. Once validated, Menifield et al. focused on attributes such as the victims' race, age, and name; demographic areas where the incidents occurred; the type of weapons--if any--that the victim possessed at the time of the incidents, and the time of day the incidents occurred. Based on the analysis of this information, Menifield et al. concluded that the current historical perception of the "white cop" intentionally killing African Americans because of their race was not supported, and subsequently, these

findings supported the growing trend in current laboratory experiments that show no evidence in officers racially targeting African Americans because of their race.

Current cases as examples. In today's climate, the police excessive force actions against African Americans seem malign, and some researchers attribute implicit racial bias as the contributing factor. That is, police officers' use excessive force against African Americans and their actions are compelled by racial bias that exists in the subconscious sphere. However, there are contradicting findings in research that explain implicit racial bias is not a factor when independent variables such as noncompliant behavior or an aggressive demeanor are added to the equation. To this extent, there are ongoing excessive force cases that continue to produce an amalgam of uncertain feelings that challenge the efforts of researchers and police administrators as they engage in policy reform to reduce this phenomenon. In the following sections, recent use-of-force cases will be presented to show how complicated and contradicting some of these cases can be when attempting to understand whether race, explicit or implicit, played a role in the force used.

Demetrius Hollins. In the first case, authors, Holley and Bever (2017), reported that during a traffic stop, two white Georgia police officers used unnecessary force against an unarmed African American male. The facts of the incident were as following. In April 2017, Gwinnett County Police Sergeant Michael Bongiovanni conducted a traffic stop on Demetrius Hollins for a broken taillight. During the stop and while sitting in his car, Hollins attempted to record the incident with his cellular telephone, but the sergeant told him not to as he instructed Hollins to get out of Hollins' car. While

following the officer's directions, Hollins began to exit his car with both hands raised in a surrendering manner. As Hollins got out of the car, Sergeant Bongiovanni struck Hollins in the face with his elbow, which caused Hollins to fall to the ground. Sergeant Bongiovanni then handcuffed Hollins. As Hollins remained in a prone position on the ground, Officer Robert McDonald arrived at their location and jumped out of his patrol car. He ran over to Hollins and kicked him in the face. These circumstances were recorded by two different witnesses from two different angles.

Stephon Clark. In another case, authors Tchekmedyian, Richard Winton, and Hailey Branson-Potts (2018) reported that in March 2018, 22-year old African American male, Stephon Clark, was killed in his grandmother's backyard after the police were dispatched to investigate an African American man possibly breaking into cars. Sacramento police officers and the county sheriff's helicopter responded to the neighborhood to investigate the complaint. Clark was later identified as that African American man. Upon arrival of the officers' arrival on the scene, the helicopter pilots informed the police officers that Clark was in a backyard adjacent to the area where the car burglaries occurred. The pilots also reported to the officers that they also saw Clark break the exterior window of the home of the backyard that he occupied. The officers responded to Clark's location and found him near the side of the residence. They immediately instructed Clark to stop moving and show them his hands. Instead of Clark complying to the officers' instructions, he ran toward the back of the residence, and the officers chased him. Clark immediately stopped and turned toward the officers. He began

to move in the officers' direction with a cellular telephone in his hand. The officers thought he was armed with a weapon, and they fatally shot him.

Robert Johnson. In another article, Garcia (2018) reported that on May 23, 2018, Mesa police officers responded to investigate a domestic violence complaint that resulted in them repeatedly punching and kneeing an African American man who was not the subject of the complaint. The facts of the case were as following. An unknown person called 911 and explained that 20-year-old Eric Reyes was trying to break into his ex-girlfriend's apartment to get his belongings. 35-year old Robert Johnson went with Reyes to help get his belongings. Mesa police officers, who were made up of multiple ethnic groups included African American individuals, responded to the scene to investigate the complaint. The officers were identified as Jhonte Jones, Rudy Monarrez, Ernesto Calderon, Robert Gambee, and William Abbiatti.

Upon arrival, the officers asked Reyes and Johnson to sit down while they attempted to investigate the complaint. Reyes compiled, but Johnson was slow to comply with their instructions. The officers then kneed Johnson several times in the stomach and punched him approximately six times in his face and head, which caused him to become temporarily unconscious. After the officers handcuffed Johnson and began escorting him to a patrol car, an officer shoved his head against an elevator door to prevent him from spitting on them.

A comparison of the three cases. In comparing the three above cases, they each contained different circumstances but the same outcomes. In the Hollins case, the profiles of the individuals and circumstances appeared to fit the historical narrative known by

many individuals in the African American community. That is, this incident involved white police officers legitimately using the minimum amount of probable cause to initiate a traffic stop (8th Circuit, 2004) on a young African American man and inflicting unnecessary force upon him (Morrow et al., 2017). Although the vehicle violation presented a lawful stop, the conduct of the officers seemed to have been connected to some ulterior motive. For example, after the stop, the sergeant immediately struck Hollins and handcuffed him. When Hollins was handcuffed on the ground, the second officer drove up, jumped out of the car, ran over, and kicked him. From an external examination, the officers' actions appear deliberate and influenced by a personal vendetta. Therefore, with the historical perception and the deliberateness of the officers' actions, this incident was publicly labeled as racial.

Despite the historical perceptions in the Hollins case, the tentacles in the Clark case and the Johnson case provided a different insight that raises questions whether racial perceptions influenced these officers' decisions to use force. As previously mentioned, in both cases, the officers' profiles were made up of various ethnic groups, which also included the African American officers. This change in the profiles presented a faux pas because they did not align with the traditional crux of this phenomenon. However, the members of the public labeled these cases as racially motivated and here, I extrapolate why. In the Clark case, the officers--despite some being African Americans--responded to the scene and located Clark. They gave him lawful instructions that he did not follow. At some point and for whatever reason, the officers perceived Clark as an imminent threat and made a split-second decision to use deadly force before clearly identifying the

cellular telephone he had in his hand. In other words, these officers misidentified Clark's cellular telephone as a handgun. This misidentification is synonymous with what has happened for years in American. It is possible that a combination of Clark not following the officers' directions, his description initially given to the officers when dispatched, the feloniousness of the complaint, and the officers' biases might have caused them to misconstrue the situation.

In the Johnson case, although involving African American officers, he did not appear to present an immediate threat to the officers. However, just as in the Clark case, Johnson was slow to follow the instructions of the officers, which resulted in them using unnecessary force as the officers did it the Hollins case. More specifically, it seemed that the officers in the Clark case became agitated and allowed their frustrations to escalate the force to the point where it became excessive.

Polarization and effects of police actions perceived to be biased. Despite the different circumstances involved in the Hollins, Clark, and Johnson cases, the outcomes have reflected themes that the public has espoused. That is, the officers' decisions to use excessive force were compelled by racism, and that their behaviors were polarized by various forms of the media (Mazza, 2017; Nix et al., 2017; Onyemaobim, 2016). Subsequently, the inappropriateness of the officers' behaviors has caused the public to question the police departments' legitimacy, truthfulness, and ability to provide equitable and fair treatment in future investigatory encounters with African Americans (Schoenle, 2017; Nix et al., 2017; Quattlebaum, 2018).

Based on these themes, police administrators just like in the Hollins case, Clark case, and Johnson case were called upon to explain why their officers committed the acts of brutality (Holley & Bever, 2017; Tchekmedyian, Winton, & Branson-Potts, 2018; Garcia, 2018), and how they plan to prevent members of their police forces from committing similar acts in the future (Holley & Bever, 2017; Garcia, 2018; DuBois, 2014). For instance, in the Hollins case, Holley and Bever (2017) asserted that the Gwinnett County Police Chief apologized for Sergeant Bongiovanni and Officer McDonald's actions and explained that their actions did not represent the honesty of his other officers. To this end, police administrators are not challenged by cases where their officers use excessive force that is intentional and explicitly racially motivated (Golbeck et al., 2016). However, cases involving officers and victims of various of ethnic groups and genders as in the Clark, Johnson, Freddie Gray, Justine Damond cases present a new dilemma for these administrators to resolve (Nix et al., 2017; Golbeck et al., 2016; Monteith et al., 2001). Current researchers have concluded that implicit racial bias might be a viable cause for police officers using excessive force (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Banks et al., 2006; Rapping, 2013; Spencer, et al., 2016). That is, police officers' decisions to use excessive force at varying degrees might be compelled by unknown racial bias that officers are unaware they had until they use it when confronting an African American.

Additionally, Grabiner (2016) and Bass (2001) asserted that current police use of force against African Americans resembled modern day slavery. They meant that the current unjustified abuse and killings of African Americans by police officers were an attempt to mentally and physically keep them under control. In other word, they were

comparing this mental and physical incapacitation with the tactics that slave patrols and slave masters used to deter others from committing similar acts. The actions of the police officers in the Hollins case provides an example of why Grabiner and Bass made the assertion. The officers either used excessive force in a vindictive manner for Hollins committing some illegal act that he got possibly got away with, or they used it to teach him and others a lesson.

Summary and Conclusions

Police excessive force actions continue to transpire, and the public's perception of these actions continues to remain affixed to racism. Research has shown that current-day police excessive force, despite the ethnicity of the involved officers, might be influenced by implicit racial bias. Moreover, officers might have an unknown negative perception of African Americans that subconsciously compels them to escalate force when engaged in an investigative stop with African Americans. To this extent, police administrators are tasked with creating policies and procedures that will minimize or eliminate their officers' implicit racial bias, but they are faced with difficulty because acknowledgment of these biases emerge after the excessive behavior occurs. This problem is exacerbated by the contradictions in the implicit racial bias research findings. More pointedly, some current researchers have asserted that implicit racial bias might not affect officers' decisions to use excessive force. Furthermore, these researchers based their findings on past implicit racial bias researchers who did not include independent variables such as African Americans showing noncompliant or aggressive behavior during the police encounters.

Subsequently, the problem is police officers have shown apparent bias in excessive force decisions against African Americans; however, researchers suggest that implicit racial bias might be a motive. To this extent, police administrators have begun to focus on the implicit racial bias model as an amenable solution to minimize the racial bias in their officers' use-of-force decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers are confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male. By understanding this missing data, scholars and police administrators would obtain a deeper understanding of implicit racial bias and if they should continue analyzing it as an amenable solution for racially perceived excessive force, or work toward identifying other possible solutions. Moreover, this author demonstrated that implicit racial might not be a contributing factor in police use-of-force. The outcomes of this underlined study can help researchers and police administrators determine if they should continue to invest their time and resources in analyzing the connection between the implicit racial bias model and police use-of-force. This information can also clarify if they need to continue to delve deeper into police encounters with African Americans to gain additional insights of other potential causes of excessive force and solutions.

Once the scope of information is narrowed down, police administrators can develop the appropriate policies and procedures that will guide their officers' behaviors as they make on-the-spot decisions when confronting less cooperative African Americans. Officers making good use-of-force decisions can foster a good relationship

with the general public. As stated in the above chapter, for the general public, it was not until high profile cases were presented through media outlets that it began to sympathize with the African American communities. As such, this information helps deduce that the general public before the emergence of the disparate treatment thought that the police officer was of good character and nature. Nonetheless, the right policies and procedures will help the general public regain its trust for police officers. Regarding the African American communities, this change will establish a foundation for incremental steps needed to form a trusting relationship between them and the police.

To support the argument presented in Chapter 2, I provided a list of research strategies that I used to identify and discuss the works of seminal theorists. I discussed the genesis of the implicit racial model and using it as the conceptual framework. I also discussed, in the same manner, the development of the street-level bureaucracy model and using it as the accompanying theory. I also provided a literature review that explained how the crux of the implicit racial bias model is connected to the historical analyses of police brutality and why seminal theorists of the implicit racial bias model hypothesize that an implicit racial bias is influencing police officers' decisions to use excessive force. I concluded the literature review by presenting current studies that are challenging the findings of implicit racial bias research and the notion that racism plays a role in officers' decisions to use force. In Chapter 3, a comprehensive breakdown of the research design and method will be presented to support further the argument provided in this literature review.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Although implicit racial bias is an unconscious bias, it is a form of racism (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). In recent research, researchers have begun to analyze how the history of police brutality against African Americans affects current police officers' decisions to use excessive force against African Americans (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Markman, 2015; Nix et al., 2017). The examination of implicit racial bias emerged from historical disquisitions of police brutality against African Americans (Hutchinson, 2014; Fridell, 2017). As a result of researchers' past attempts to identify why police officers might use excessive force against African Americans (Ross, 2018), the examinations of the encounters between police officers and African Americans are still arduous and ambiguous. Current researchers have produced contradicting findings regarding whether an implicit racial bias influences an officer's decision to use excessive force (Rojek, Petrocelli, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man. I begin Chapter 3 by first describing the research design and the rationale for using this design. Next, I describe my role within the context of this study. This discussion is followed by a comprehensive overview of the chosen methodology and strategies for ensuring the findings are trustworthy. Chapter 3 will end with a summary.

Research Design and Rationale

To date, there are contradictory research findings from implicit racial bias theorists who have often used the quantitative paradigm to study whether a police officer's decision to use excessive force is influenced by implicit racial bias (Fridell, 2017a; James et al., 2018). To address these contradictions, I used a phenomenological design to analyze officers' perceptions as they participated in a three-phase process that included a semi-structured interview, an IAT, and an ATSS. Because this was an unorthodox design that was counter to the traditional epistemological approaches for this topic, there was a possibility that these strategies might not have collectively answered the study's RQs, which were as follows:

RQ: What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male?

Subquestion A: Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias?

Subquestion B: What implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man?

However, I believed that if each strategy produced an accurate account of its intended purpose (i.e., established a profile and gave an indication of implicit racial bias, present perceptions, and their connection to making decisions), I could triangulate the conceptual meanings from these strategies. I believe that, once done, the convergence of these shared meanings across all participants would answer the central RQ.

Qualitative Paradigm

The overarching research design for this study was the qualitative paradigm. Seminal qualitative researchers such as Dilthey (1894), Allport (1962), Reason and Rowan (1981), and Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that behavioral sciences could advance academically if a phenomenon is studied past an accurate measure, or statistical means (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1994). Furthermore, the study of phenomena associated with behavioral sciences could benefit from a naturalistic perspective when individuals provide a unique account of their experiences (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1994). Accordingly, I believed that the academic research to identify whether racism influences police excessive force has become stagnate; however, some researchers believe that the implicit racial bias might be a solution.

Key researchers such as James originally challenged the reliability of research that indicated police officers have implicit bias but, in a subsequent quantitative study, determined that officers do have implicit racial biases (James, 2018). James stated the following:

> However, it is possible that even a small number of interactions with African Americans that counter an o□cer's implicit stereotyping could change their beliefs (Dasgupta, 2004, 2009, 2013). Thus, implicit bias is perhaps not as stable among police o□cers as public rhetoric implies. (James, 2018, p. 34)

James made the above statement about various experiences officers might have that perhaps sway their beliefs in a negative or positive direction. Curious about whether officers have an implicit racial bias, James gave IATs to 80 police officers at four

different times with a six-week lapse between each test. He concluded that his findings supported past research endeavors that showed police officers do have implicit racial biases.

James' findings, did not indicate whether implicit racial bias was linked to the officers' decisions to use excessive force. However, James' skepticism of this notion reflects the same doubt of other key researchers. In other words, researchers are still questioning why police officers are using excessive force against African Americans, and the implicit racial bias model is at the helm of this investigation. To this extent, researchers--supporters and non-supporters--continuously engage in back-and-forth exchanges about this phenomenon. I surmise that this lack of progression or gap in knowledge is indicative of Henwood and Pidgeon's doctrine about how a naturalistic approach can give research more in-depth data regarding behavioral issues. That is, studies and advancements of a complicated issue, such as racially invoked police use-of-force, cannot reach social fermentation without in-depth understandings from the officers' perspectives, which would be espoused by the qualitative paradigm.

Phenomenology Design

I used the phenomenology design as the methodological framework for the study. Petty, Thomson, and Stew (2012) explained that although this design has been around since the early 20th century, its hermeneutical modality has made it become an essential modern-day research tool for investigating complicated and ambiguous issues. These authors' assertion echoed Donalek's (2004) explanation about the underpinning epistemological constructs of the phenomenology approach centering upon a researcher

having minimum knowledge about a problem of interest. Because of the skepticism produced by leading researchers compared with the lack of an in-depth understanding of officers' perceptions, this phenomenon is stagnant. Therefore, new knowledge is needed for the academic advancement of this subject matter.

Patton (2015) offered that when research investigations include the qualitative paradigm, researchers want to obtain the lived experiences of the population they are studying. The phenomenology design is an instrument that seeks to capture the true meaning of individuals' point-of-view regarding a particular problem. Petty, Thomson, and Stew (2012) related in a similar discourse, "A phenomenologist assumes a commonality in those human experiences [participants] and must use rigorously the method of bracketing to search for those commonalities" (p. 117). Specifically, a researcher who uses the phenomenology design to gather and compare the experiences of his participants and use his unbiased knowledge of the phenomenon to develop the essences of what the participants convey. Based on these conditions, the phenomenology design seemed to align with the research purpose of the underlined study. The purpose was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male.

I selected to use the phenomenology design for several reasons. First, I wanted to understand police officers' perceptions, that I believed would show signs of implicit racial biases. Specifically, I wanted to identify the participants' beliefs and meanings of these beliefs. However, instruments such as interviews and observations were the only

natural ways to accomplish this task (Starks &Trinidad, 2007). Anthony (2018) postulated that the phenomenology approach focuses on perceptions and how individuals' experiences and understandings influence these perceptions. Secondly, I sought to determine if unconscious bias perceptions emerged from the participants when they were placed in an adversarial situation. Campbell (2017) explained that the phenomenology design, by nature, can help identify a person's underpinned perceptions. To this extent, I surmised that by providing officers with a safe platform and giving them one-on-one attention, they would feel free to reveal their personal thoughts about racism and use of force. Lastly, I wanted to draw out the participants' perceptions using a stimulating event or encounter. This encounter served as a natural setting that would require the participants to react from past living experiences. According to Starks and Trinidad (2007), a lived experience will garner participants' raw emotions and decisions.

Other methods that were considered. There were several research designs from the postpositivism paradigm that compared to the phenomenological model but were eliminated because of specific strategies I needed to obtain the purpose of the underlined research. The first method was the case study method. Although the case study method and the phenomenology design assert that reality is constructed by a participant's perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008), a case study requires a researcher to investigate a case using boundaries that establish a unit of analysis from which data emerges from participants (Yin, 2014). In a case study, the emphasis is placed on the unit of analysis, and the bounding process is an essential strategy that a researcher uses to exclude other individuals from the case, thereby creating a unique source of data (Yin, 2014).

On the contrary, the phenomenology design allows each participant and the participant's contributions to be treated as an individualized source, thereby illuminating the participant's lived experiences (Simon & Francis, 2001). Because of the case study's strict bounding process, I did not select it for this study. Although the participants of this study worked in specialized units and had personal accolades, these attributes were not enough to isolate them from other officers that had the same number of years at the department. However, their membership, accolades, and experiences made them suitable for the phenomenology design.

The next design was the historical research method. With the exception of few nuances, it paralleled the case study method (Yin, 2014). The historical research method allows researchers to study a modern issue by focusing on historical events (Simon & Francis, 2001). Researchers of this model seek to analyze past events and determine how these events relate to current issues. Because the analyses of past events are the focus of the historical research method, I did not select it for the underlined study. Although I provided descriptions of historical events that were related to police brutality, these events were not the focus of this study. The events were only given to show how the implicit racial bias model evolved.

The third design I considered was the ethnography design. Ravitch and Carl (2016) postulated that this method is driven by researchers who are interested in specific cultures and how these cultures define phenomenon. Researchers embed themselves in the lifestyles for extended periods to gain in-depth understandings of how the members of the cultures view phenomena (Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). Ravitch and Carl

explained that the ethnography is not guided by a theory, and therefore, its data collection analysis is strictly inductive. Given these conditions, I did not choose the ethnography design.

Role of the Researcher

Given that I selected qualitative design, I was responsible for building, collecting, measuring, and analyzing the data. This paradigm required that I use sagacious judgment to obtain and measure data from participants' internal realities (Maxwell, 2017; Patton, 2015). Although I served in a student capacity for this research, I used my past work and educational experiences to develop this project and obtain the outcomes. In this section, I will discuss my role as the researcher for the underlined research.

Potential Researcher Bias

To align the underlined research with the constructs of the phenomenology design, I identified two types of biases that I had to keep at bay. These two biases were my internal bias and external bias. My internal biases were innate and associated with my inner being, which makes me who I am today. The external biases involved my relationship and connection with the field of police work.

Internal bias. The geneses of the tumultuous relationship between the police and the African American community began over a century ago. Although I did not exist during this period, I am an African American man who was born during the early 1970s. As a result, I witnessed several significant shifts in the relationship between the police and the African American race. The Civil Rights Movement ended in the late 1960s, but the 1970s was still a contentious time where police officers--like many White Americans-

- harbored explicit feelings toward African Americans (Bass, 2001). As such, police brutality continued to be a regular activity within African American communities. During this time, the mainstream of non-African Americans was oblivious to these activities until they witnessed through various media outlets the unjustifiable excessive force police officers used against Rodney King (Beutin, 2017). When this enlightenment occurred, I was a teenager in high school. Through the media, I witnessed the brutal attack the officers inflicted upon King and felt from an empathetic manner that the police had also victimized me. I started questioning my past personal experiences of racial injustice by the police. Although my previous experiences with the police did not amount to the mental and physical abuse that King suffered, I believe that my and other African Americans' feelings of disparities reached a breaking point after watching the police violence against King. I surmised that King's fight for justice became the fight for the entire African American community.

Despite growing up south during the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement, I pursued a life-long dream of becoming a police officer. After years of studying for an undergraduate and master's degree, I joined a local police department with the hopes of making a difference in the African American community. I wanted to help establish a relationship between the police and African American community. However, when I began patrolling the neighborhoods I grew up, I soon found out that there might have been some anomalies in the acclamation of police brutality that plagued African American communities. Although I was an African American police officer, I experienced a minor assault and many disdainful acts from several members of the

African American community, which I had had vowed to uplift and protect. These acts, unlike the ones the police committed against him earlier in life, affected me the most.

External biases. Because I have worked in law enforcement for many years, I have adopted the police culture where there is often a sense brotherhood (Fielding, 2011). There is a familial atmosphere that extends globally to all police organizations. This atmosphere is a professional bond among police officers no matter what agencies or departments they are assigned. To this extent, I had a familial bound with the participants of the underlined research. Despite this bond, I was not personally acquainted with these officers, and my relationship with them was strictly based on their roles as police officers.

Managing biases. Given that I am closely connected to the field of police work and the African American community, and had bad experiences with both, I had biases related to both that I had to manage. To accomplish this, I communicated with colleagues and family members about my opinions that were continuously challenged as tumultuous events between both groups emerged as I conducted this research. Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that using other individuals to challenge a researcher's thoughts and ideas will reduce the researcher's biases. I also wrote reflective journals to express my opinions regarding the emerging events to help reduce my biases. Ortlipp (2008) postulated that qualitative researchers have started using reflective journaling as a de-bias tool because it allows them to express their feelings transparently.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

A main strategy for conducting a phenomenological design was to ensure that researchers select the most knowledgeable and experienced participants that can produce an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Fields, 2019). Researchers Broomé and Russell (2018) posited that identifying and selecting participants with paramount information is a first step in performing a phenomenology design. From a policymaking perspective, I explored police officers' use-of-force decisions to see if an implicit racial bias affect their decisions to escalate force. Therefore, the unit of analysis for the underlined study contained officers from several specialized units from a police department located in California. There were approximately 40 officers assigned to the specialized units. These officers were of the most experienced, well-trained, and well-informed. I surmised that these officers had been exposed to many complicated use-of-force decisions and had to rely on training, past experiences, and knowledge of laws and department policies to conclude these situations. Adams (2018), explained that police officers were the ideal population for a phenomenology approach when the research involved a difficult topic such as use-of-force and racial perception.

Because the phenomenology design mandates the use of participants with subject knowledge, I created several criteria that ensured I selected the officers with the most lived-experiences. Typical officers were excluded. The focus of this research was based on the most experienced participants, which included their past mistakes. Newly trained or typical officers might not have the same exposures to use-of-force situations as

officers with more years of working on the force. For this reason, typical police officers' lived experiences were not as valuable as the officers from the targeted group.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the differences between a typical officer and an officer from the targeted group. The figure shows the image of a scale that has a typical officer's characteristics on the left side and a targeted officer's characteristics on the right side. The symbolization of this picture implies the more attributes an officer has, the more he weighs. As shown, the targeted officer has more attributes or weight that causes the gray bar to shift to the right, which is in the direction of the targeted officer.

Typical officers possessed the following characteristics. They were sworn peace officers by the State of California to enforce laws within the state. These officers received training at an accredited police academy where they learned police tactics and the constitutional law, including use of force. This type of officer also, at a minimum, graduated from the police academy, worked in patrol for a short period, and attended yearly use-of-force training.

Targeted population. In contrast to typical officers, targeted officers had the same attributes as the typical officers but these attributes were enhanced by their time in service. For example, this group had more use-of-force training because of these members been of the force longer. As a result, the members of target group had more experiences applying use-of-force within the confinements of the U. S. Constitution. These officers also had more specialized training in handling difficult people and complex situations. Additionally, the targeted officers went through rigorous selection processes and were hand-selected by their administrators to join the specialized police

units. These officers had to have at least five or more years of experience in patrol duties, and most of them served as field training officers where they trained new officers on patrol procedures and departmental policies.

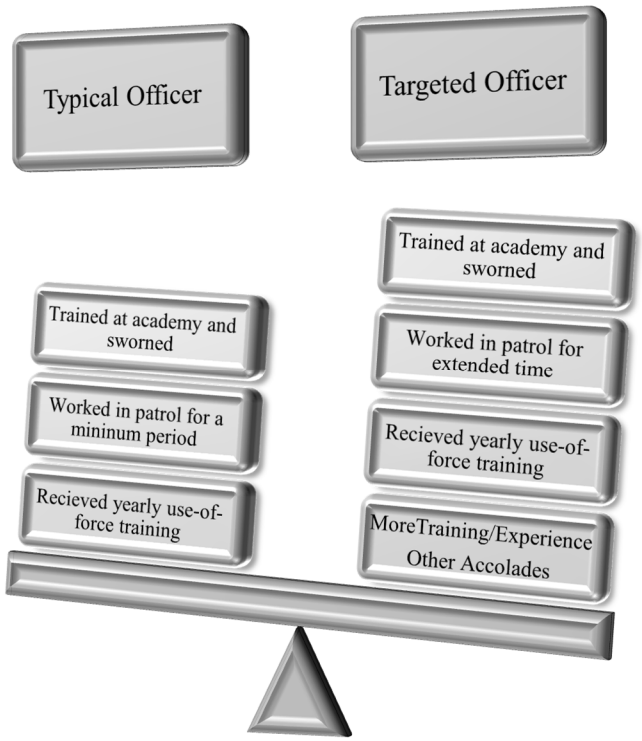

Figure 2. A typical officer versus a targeted officer. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt.

With the targeted officers' tenure, they have received continuous use-of-force training throughout the year, which was more than the California Peace Officer's Standards required. The use-of-force training venues involved academic and scenario-based training. Because these officers are assigned to these specialized units, they have been accustomed to conducting investigative encounters with individuals from various ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, they have a tremendous amount of experience in

identifying individuals' actions and determining if and how much force is needed during these encounters. Also, because of these officers' tenure, they have been able to merge their use-of-force training with actual application in the field. And finally, the officers from these units had to go through a panel interview and a thorough administrative review of their personnel files to ensure they did not have any ethical violations or use-of-force complaints.

Although this research project focused on racial disparity against African Americans, recent high-profile excessive force cases involved officers and victims from various ethnic groups. Past research has shown that the ethnicity among officers has not reduced disparity in these types of encounters (Menifield et al., 2019). These factors suggested that there might be other variables, other than implicit racial bias, that researchers need to consider when investigating the encounter between police officers and African American citizens. For this reason, the gender and ethnicity of the participants were not demonstrable criteria for this study. However, the police officers from these units were from both gender groups and multiple ethnic groups.

Sampling strategy. I obtained participants with the most lived experiences. This effort supported the foundation for the qualitative research paradigm (Patton, 2015). In other words, the phenomenology method is intrusive, and it pendulates on the experiences and viewpoints of participants. I provided the participants with a video that showed a semi-contentious police encounter between a police officer and an African American man and the participants provided spontaneous statements about what they saw, felt, and might do. These opened self-driven dialogues were used to solicit racial

perceptions, which was a difficult discussion. However, this attempt was necessary to garner an understanding of this phenomenon.

Because of the sensitive nature of this research top, I experienced challenges in obtaining approval from a myriad of departments to allow its officers to participant in this study. Once I found a department, I used the convenience sampling strategy to obtain my participants. Patton (2015) defined convenience sampling as a non-probability sampling method in which a researcher obtains participants that are readily available. The membership of the specialized units made collecting them for this study convenient.

Instrumentation

Semi-structured interviews. Phase 1of the underlined study was comprised of semi-structured interviews. Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, and Kangasniemi (2016) offered that semi-structured interviews are the most common data-collecting strategies used in the qualitative paradigm. These strategies allow researchers to gain in-depth understandings of phenomena where the information is scarce, and the topics are sensitive (Adams, 2010). Furthermore, Adams (2010) and Dearnley (2005) asserted that if semi-structured interviews are constructed in an open-ended format, they will offer researchers insight into participants lived experiences and how they make sense of these experiences. In an echoing statement, Patton (2015) postulated that semi-structured interviews that consist of open-ended questions are *elementary* in qualitative data collection.

Patton (2015) also explained that if open-ended questions focus on emotions, participants are liable to provide raw data that shows how their feelings such as anger, fear, and intimidation are associated with their lived experiences. An example of an open-

ended question would be, “How do you feel about that?” (Patton, 2015, p. 444). A question like this cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no” response. Therefore, participants would have to think about the phenomenon, how they feel about the tenets of the phenomenon, and attempt to form a conclusive answer. Additionally, semi-structured interviews are versatile strategies that researchers can pair with other qualitative strategies, such as surveys, document analyses, and observations (Rudestam & Newton, 2015), to obtain an individual’s true perspective (Patton, 2015). For example, in a 2018 study, Jolley conducted a qualitative study to explore the impact of a life skills program on reduction in prison recidivism. The argument was focused on the notion that without life skills taught to prisons, the prisoners would not complete training programs, thereby resulting in insufficient ways to support themselves. This would possibly cause them to re-offend, which negatively affected the country’s reform efforts.

Jolley (2018) supported this argument. Jolley wanted to evaluate whether the goals of the life skills program were successful in changing prisoners’ lives. To accomplish this feat, Jolley used an assortment of methods including semi-structured interviews, observations, focus groups, and questionnaires to examine a varying number of prison participants ranging from 5 to 50. The raw data from these strategies were thematically coded and analyzed. Jolley determined that prisoners felt that the program provided them with life skills such as time management, self-management, leadership, and problem-solving. Jolley explained that this gap in the literature was needed to evaluate the program; however, because the research efforts were on a mini-scale, determining whether these skills would reduce recidivism would be difficult to postulate.

Appropriateness of semi-structured interviews for the underlined study. The ability of semi-structured interviews to provide in-depth information about lived experiences coincided with the underpinning of the phenomenological design. More specifically, scholars have identified semi-structured interviews as essential tools for extracting data that might contain genuine responses that emerge from negative and positive experiences. These experiences were essential data needed to conduct the phenomenological design, which primary focus was to push past information that researchers already knew (Finlay, 2014). To this extent, researchers have studied police officers' implicit racial bias from a quantitative perspective and have postulated that these officers cause them to use unnecessary force against African Americans. However, due to the growing number of research findings that contradict the implicit racial bias model, the thought of conducting a qualitative perspective from the naturalistic approach became evident. There are very few research attempts, if any, from this angle which meant that the semi-structured interview method was an instrument that would garner use-of-force data that goes beyond what researchers knew about police officers.

The questions that made up the semi-structured interviews for the underlined research were opened-ended and focused on implicit racial bias perceptions. These perceptions that have been identified by seminal theorists who have analyzed implicit racial bias from its inception. These researchers explained that implicit racial bias is a natural belief that human beings obtain as children (Chekroud et al. 2014). More specifically, implicit beliefs begin when toddlers learn how to categorize and sort objects that are familiar and not familiar to them (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). They start

associating with similar objects and disassociating with different objects (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). These forms of categorizing develop into biases (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016) that are cultivated by parents (Sternadori, 2017), environments (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016), and experiences (Rivers et al., 2017). I created interview questions that highlighted this information. For example, an interview questions was, "Growing up, how was racism viewed in your household?" This open-ended question was grounded in Sternadori's (2017) doctrine, which explained that parents influenced biases. Another question was, "What were your friends like?" and as a follow-up question, "How did you choose your friends?" These open-ended questions were rooted in Banaji and Greenwald's (2016) doctrine, which explained that individuals associate objects after categorizing them. categorize objects things and associations are established. A full list of the interview questions is located in Appendix A of this manuscript.

Implicit Association Test (IAT). The IAT was the primary tool used to indicate if a participant had an implicit racial bias (Monteith et al., 2001; Trachok, 2015). It was created in 1998 by Greenwald, McGee, and Schwartz (Trachok, 2015) and works on the premise that an individual has stored information that is connected to past experiences whether good or bad (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). Considering this, the IAT operates by an individual categorizing and assorting pictures or words by pressing specific keys on a computer keyboard at a rapid pace (Pedersen, n.d., James, 2018). In other words, a person is shown a picture of a white male followed by a positive stimulus that is assigned to the "D" key on a keyboard and a negative stimulus assigned to the "J" key on a keyboard. The person is then asked to select the key that is associated with the picture. Afterwards,

the person is shown a picture of an African American male with the same key assignments and asked to select the appropriate key. The IAT continues in this manner for several cycles of pictures at a rapid pace. The IAT is scored in the following manner:

> Participants are asked to categorize information as quickly as possible and then the IAT calculates the participant's reaction time (in milliseconds) and accuracy in completing the categorization task (Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001). The test score is the difference in sorting time required for sorting attribute concepts into two response categories under two conditions (Greenwald, et al., 1998). A negative implicit bias towards Black individuals would be evident in a slower response time between Black faces and positive words and a faster response time between Black faces and negative words. (Trachok, 2015, p. 10)

Considering Trachok's example, examinees are shown a picture of a White man, and they immediately press the "D" key for a positive stimulus. The examinees are then shown a picture of an African American man, and they take several seconds to press the "D" key for a positive stimulus. The slower response while viewing the African American man's face will build toward an indication of implicit racial bias against African Americans. The examinees' overall scores are based on the differences in the response times between the pictures of the White faces, African American faces, pleasant words, and non-pleasant words (James, 2018).

Credibility of the IAT. The IAT is the most widely used online instrument for measuring implicit racial bias. Banaji and Greenwald (2016) asserted that by 2013, over 14 million IATs had been used in the U.S. Trachok (2015) purported that thus far, over

500 studies have used IAT as instruments and the implicit.harvard.edu has acquired more than six million results from tests. Despite these results, there are some researchers that challenge the validity of these findings. James (2018) postulated that researchers had expressed indifferences in whether the results of the IAT were innate biases that were obtained by microenvironments or if they were produced by a lack of familiarity with the outside group's culture. In other words, the inquisitional challenges focused on whether the individual's automatic responses were indicative of pure racial bias, or were they the results of the individual not accustomed to certain behaviors or characteristics within the culture of the person used for stimulation (i.e., outer group member).

Additionally, Trachok postulated that IAT results might show that an individual has an implicit racial bias; however, these results have not been linked to an individual's actions in a naturalistic setting. Even though these contradictions exist, seminal theorists and developers of the IAT addressed these anomalies at the genesis of IAT. Dasgupta, Greenwald, and Banaji (2003) explained that they met the aforementioned challenges at the onset of IAT and sought to extinguish them. In doing so, they conducted three experiments with IAT that potentially excluded familiarity as a limitation of its results. In the first experiment, they used a latency measure and asked participants to quickly decipher between fake names and names generally associated with White individuals, and they did the same for African American individuals.

In the second experiment, Dasgupta et al. drew off the same study, but instead of using the names, they used pictures. The results of both tests were obtained by a statistical regression technique that showed preferences of white individuals over African

American individuals. In the third experiment, these authors used a frequency-name counter over four different IATs. Again, they concentrated on names associated with White individuals versus those associated with African Americans. The results still showed a preference for the White names as opposed to the African American names.

Dasgupta, Greenwald, and Banaji's plight to ensure IATs measured implicit biases occurred in 2003. Trachok mentions that as of 2015, more than 500 studies have used IAT. Also, Banaji and Greenwald (2016) explained that in 2014, over 14 million IAT were used in the U.S. Based on the usage of the IAT, I believed it has established credibility.

Example of IATs used at police departments. There are very few studies that involved researchers using IATs to test if police officers had implicit racial bias. Many studies have used shoot/don't shoot scenarios and document analysis to learn if officers had an implicit racial bias (Smith et al., 2017). Researchers have also based their predictions on the premise that all human beings have biases and police officers are human beings (James, 2018). Grabiner (2016) suggested that future researchers should test police officers using IAT. Perhaps unrelated to Grabiner's suggestion or from at least a post-hoc stance, James (2018), a seminal theorist in this subject matter, conducted a recent study using the Weapons IAT to test 80 sworn police officers at various times throughout a six-week period. James wanted to verify the accuracy of the weapons IAT scores and determine if the scores were affected by factors such as sleep deprivation. To monitor sleep deprivation, James used a wrist actigraphy. The officers that participated were majority White men. James administered four Weapons IATs. In between each test

session, James decreased the officers' sleep time. After the four sessions, James determined that the IAT was an accurate and stable instrument. James also purported that 37% of the participants showed a strong bias toward Africans, 35% showed a moderate bias toward African Americans, and 12% showed a slight, moderate bias toward African Americans. James' percentages confirmed the notion that police officers had an implicit racial bias.

Appropriateness of IAT for the underlined study. A preemptive step in answering the research questions involved determining if the participants had an implicit racial bias. Theorists and researchers have asserted that all human beings have implicit racial biases, and police officers are human beings. Therefore, police officers have implicit racial biases, which might explain why some officers are unknowingly using excessive force against African Americans. Although these individuals have provided empirical findings that suggest this ideology, I believed that not assuming the participants have implicit racial bias and testing this notion would provide more academic evidence for this study and future studies. Furthermore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male. Broomé and Russell (2018) explained that identifying the persons that have the most lived-experiences of a phenomenon is the first responsibility of a researcher conducting a phenomenology design.

Accordingly, I used the IATs to help identify if the participants had an implicit racial bias. Seminal theorists asserted that the IAT is a credible instrument that indicates whether a person has an implicit racial bias. Moreover, the results of this test showed if police participants have a slight, moderate, strong, or no preference for whites over African Americans. I administered the online assessment using the Harvard Implicit Project website, which was located at https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit /takeatest.html. To obtain permission to use the IAT for the underlined study, I emailed the Harvard Implicit Project/IAT Question group and asked if special permission or licensures was needed to use the test. A representative from the group responded and explained that I did not need permission to use these tests as long as he gave the proper citation. A copy of the email is listed in Appendix C.

Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations (ATSS). The ATSS is a think-aloud method that was created to allow researchers to understand an individual's unconscious thoughts, emotions, and biases as he speaks freely about actions within a stimulating scenario (Aujla, Vedhara, Walker, & Sprigg, 2018). Furthermore, Zanov and Davison (2010) explained that this paradigm could also be used to identify irrational thoughts as they relate to the decision-making process. Based on these explanations, I wanted to analyze the spontaneous statements of the participants as they watched a video-based scenario of an officer dealing with a less cooperative African American man during an investigative encounter.

Examples of ATSS used. The ATSS operates by participants receiving a stimulated situation in either a written statement, audio clip, or video clip, where they

speak aloud their thoughts as the situation unfolds (Pringle & Sowden, 2017). Although these procedures appear rudimentary, researchers have taken advantage of its simple and flexible form to conduct multiple rigorous research studies that involved irrational thinking, aggressive and violent behavior, anger, and interpersonal biases (Ahmetzanov, 2006). These types of studies have shown that the constructs of ATSS are valid and reliable (Zanov & Davison, 2010). For example, in the first study, Rayburn and Davison (2002) researched to determine if an individual's perceptions differ for crimes committed against gay individuals as opposed to crimes committed against non-gay individuals. This study focused on a presumption that hate crimes are more detrimental to society than non-bias crimes. In doing so, Rayburn and Davison wanted to obtain this information by exploring participants' reactions after they received stimulation from unfolding scenarios that involved either a hate-related crime or an unbiased related crime. More specifically, the researchers hypothesized that an unknown negative attitude toward gay individuals would show less support and shun the victim of the hate crime, and show more support and tolerance for the perpetrator. They also surmised that individuals with these attitudes would be less apt to intervene and help victims and that antihate crimes against gay individuals would lead to a more volatile society.

Rayburn and Davison investigated the above hypotheses by conducting a mixed methods study where they used several questionnaires with ATSS. They obtained 92 students of multiple ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations from a student pool of participants at the University of Southern California. These participants were prescreened with the questionnaires, Attitudes Toward Gay Men Scale and State-Trait Anger

Expression Inventory. Rayburn and Davison used these questionnaires to determine the participant's attitudes toward gay individuals and their abilities to control their anger.

The researchers then used the ATSS where they randomly assigned the participants to either the hate crime scenario or the non-hate crime scenario. Both scenarios were audiotapes, which were divided into several 10-15 second segments. After each segment, there was a 30-second pause that required participants to state aloud whatever emerged from their minds while listening to audio versions of the simulated crimes. The hate crime scenario involved the participants listening to several students talk about writing a threatening letter to a gay student coerce him to move away from their apartment building. If this attempt did not work, they would beat him up. In the non-bias crime, participants listened to several students discuss committing a non-biased related criminal against a student neighbor because that did not like him because of non-biased reasons.

Following the collection of each participant's interview, Rayburn and Davison coded and transcribed the participant's 30-second segment. They then used multiple regression and other statistical equations to conclude that the majority of their participants showed more support for the gay individual than the perpetrators. Additionally, the participants would have decided to intervene quicker to assist victims of hate crimes versus those of non-hate crimes.

In the second study, Aujla, Vedhara, Walker, & Sprigg (2018) were concerned with the validity of the Illness Perception Questionnaire-Revised (IPQ-R), which was a medical questionnaire used to understand how ill patients internalize their illnesses as a

coping mechanism. Before administering IPQ-R to their constituents, the researchers wanted to ensure that the IPQ-R was a useful and accurate instrument that captured the essence of how the ill patients felt about their illness and medical care. Accordingly, Aujla et al. conducted a qualitative study to evaluate the contents of the medical questionnaire. They postulated that patients establish their own beliefs as a coping mechanism to help themselves face challenging and complicated medical treatment.

To accomplish this research endeavor, the researchers obtained six patients from an acute stroke and rehabilitation clinic. Aujla et al. (2018) stopped with the six patients because they reached data saturation; however, their original recruitment plan was to use the purposive sampling strategy to obtain six participants who were stroke survivors. These researchers met challenges that extended from the stroke patients' medical conditions such as difficulty speaking or cognitive impairment. Therefore, they used the convenience sampling strategy to administer the ATSS to acute patients.

After Aujla et al. (2018) revised the IPQ-R according to prior advice given by seminal theorists and receiving feedback from clinical experts regarding the revisions, they created a pro forma and gave it to their participants. They then gave each participant a warmup think-aloud exercise followed by the actual instrument. The think-aloud sessions focused on the questions in the IPQ-R as stimuli. During the secessions, Aujla et al. allowed each participant less than a minute to speak his or her thoughts about the questions listed in the IPQ-R. The participants' responses were recorded, transcribed, and coded according to certain themes that had been identified by seminal theorists. An example of several coding categories and explanations are as following:

> 1. No problems, indicating that participants demonstrated no problems with the item (i.e. thought out loud while responding to the question); 2. Missing or insufficient thinking aloud, where a response for a particular item was missing, because of inadequate thinking out loud (i.e. participant was silent while responding to the question); 3. Re-read or stumbled in reading (e.g. stammered, stuttered or repeated the question several times), indicating problems with people's understanding of the question; 4. Difficulty generating an answer, where participants expressed that they were not sure of the response that they would provide, which was either because of problems with how well people understood the question, or an item that was not applicable to their current circumstances. (Aujla et al., 2018, p. 6)

Aujla et al. (2018) had a total of eight categories, but I only provided four to show how the researchers made the following conclusions. Aujla et al. explained that findings, using the think-aloud approach, identified several problems or themes concerning IPQ-R. These problems were overarching and reduced to the patients experiencing difficulty in comprehending the meaning of particular questions because of wording complexity and negativity. Aujla et al. also highlighted problems they experienced with administering the think-aloud method. The first problem stemmed from some participants being silent for several seconds during the exercise. Aujla et al. felt that the silence was a lapse in relevant data they could have received. Secondly, some of the participants wanted to explain their response to the questions, but the think-aloud approach does not allow

participants to elaborate in that manner. Despite these problems, Aujla et al. purported that the think-aloud method helped accomplish their research purpose.

In a third study, Kaminski and Sporer (2017) were concerned with police investigations that used witness identifications as prime pieces of evidence and whether fact finders (i.e., jurors, judges, spectators) are accurately making judicial decisions based on these pieces of evidence. In other words, if a witness falsely identifies a suspect, can the fact finder--without biases and prejudices--analyze the witness' identification decision to ensure that an accurate judicial verdict is made? To this extent, these researchers created the following research questions:

> (a) Do cues as perceived by observers discriminate between correct and incorrect identification decisions (ecological validities)? (b) Are these relationships better visible in think-aloud protocols due to an increased cue saliency than in retrospective reasoning protocols? (c) How do observers use these cues to make their judgments (subjective utilities) and how do they weigh them? (Kaminski & Sporer, 2017, p. 65)

To address these questions, Kaminski and Sporer (2017) used the Brunswikian lens model to conduct a 2-phase experimental study to identify the correlation between cues that could predict specific outcomes. These cues included witness confidence, response latency, and the decision-making process. In the first phase, they created a scenario that involved witnesses observing a perpetrator stealing a bicycle and identifying the perpetrator. Moreover, these researchers used actors to witness the theft and file a report of the theft to the police that included a positive identification of the suspect. These

witnesses also participated in photograph lineups where they used the think-aloud approach while selecting the perpetrator. Kaminski and Sporer used the think-aloud approach to authenticate the lineups. Also, each of these investigative events were including the think-aloud sessions was videotaped. The researches created the first phase to mimic the police process where the witnesses report a crime and identify the perpetrator.

Once Kaminski and Sporer (2017) completed the first phase, they conducted the second phase where they used 96 participants to observe the video footage of the witnesses' actions that included the observation and reporting of the to the police and the photo lineup that was accompanied by the think-aloud sessions. The researchers created the second phase to mimic the fact finders' actions in a courtroom. That is, they viewed the videos as the jurors or judge would view the evidentiary testimony of the witnesses. The participants were then asked to rate their impression of the witnesses' conditions on a Likert Scale about whether the witness hesitated in identifying the perpetrator. They were also given a judgment questionnaire where they selected a dichotomous response whether they believed the witnesses appropriately identified the perpetrator. These researchers then used the Brunswikian Lens model to correlate the findings.

Kaminski and Sporer (2017) concluded that the think-aloud session produced more discriminating (e.i. witness confidence, response latency, and the decision-making process) clues than a reasoning type method. It allowed the fact finders to accurately view the steps of the witnesses and determine that they had poor memories. The think-aloud method also allowed the decision-making process to emerge and the researcher to

effectively code the raw data. The video in connection to the think-aloud approach proved to be a viable strategy because it produced more salient information than traditional written scenarios.

Although Kaminski and Sporer's study used a mixed method design, it was relevant to the underlined study because it showed that the think-aloud approach, such as ATSS, that includes a video technique is a valid strategy for analyzing perceptions and related decisions. I believed that if layman individuals such as the participants in Kaminski and Sporer's study identified attitudes and associated decisions using the think-aloud approach, I could do the same to answer the underlined study's research question.

Appropriateness of ATSS for the underlined study. The underlined study was based on racism that is rooted in the U.S. police culture. This phenomenon has been studied from various angles, but very few from the officers' perceptions. This challenge became more evident as I attempted to locate a police department that would allow me to use its' officers to test them for an implicit racial bias and conclude if an implicit racial bias influenced their decisions to use force. Given that racism is a complicated and sensitive topic within police work, I believed gaining first-hand information from officers would help other researchers and police administrators create the appropriate policies and solutions that would address this phenomenon. To this extent, there are several reasons why ATSS was a suitable instrument for the underlined research. The first reason was that it was created to study difficult issues from the perceptions of individuals that have a connection to the issues (Davison et al., 1995). In other words, ATSS was designed to

capture the true essence of what individuals think and feel about a particular phenomenon.

Another reason ATSS was appropriate was that the constructs of it make it a versatile tool for any research project (Ahmetzanov, 2006), and its usage is only stagnated by the creativity of the research designer (Davison et al., 1995; Ahmetzanov, 2006). Its open-ended response mechanism provides an unstructured format that can solicit quick, uninterrupted responses. This tool gave my participants a safe and free platform to voice their opinions about a topic that has plagued their work environments for many years. Moreover, the ATSS' opened concept does not allow me to control the flow of information, thereby giving the participants total control over their expressions.

Protocols for the instruments in the underlined study. The three phases for this research--Phases 1, 2, and 3--were administered in tandem on the same day. Also, each phase had its set of instructions for application, and each phase had a defined ending that signified the conclusion of that phase and the beginning of the next phase. For example, after the conclusion of the semi-structured interview, I thanked the participant for participating in the interview and asked the participant if the participant wanted to continue with the process. If the participant indicated yes, I gave the instructions for the next phase, which was the IAT. I continued in the manner for three phases.

Before the administration of the phases, I gave a copy of the consent form to the participants and explain it in detail. Once I completed the explanation of the consent form, I asked the participants to sign it. The consents form served as the protocol for the three phases. It contained eight sections that included the following: The introduction,

background information, procedures for each phrase, a voluntary disclosure, description of risks and benefits, gratuity information, privacy rights, contact numbers for follow-up matters, and signature for consent. I gave the introduction statement to the participants when they arrived for the interview and a closing statement after they completed Phase 3. The closing statement followed Walden University's debriefing guide. That is, I thanked the participants for participating in the phases and explained that their participation would remain anonymous. I also them to not discuss their participation or context of the underlined study with anyone because it would jeopardize their anonymity or the anonymity of other participants and the department.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment. I contacted the chief of police for the department that housed the specialized units and explained the cruxes of the underlined research. I also explained the procedures for conducting the underlined study and that the officers' participation would be strictly voluntary. I explained the function and purpose of the Walden University Institutional Review Board (WUIRB) and that the WUIRB set and enforced strict guidelines regarding the use of the officers that volunteered. After hearing the information mentioned above, the police chief gave a written approval to conduct the underlined study using participants from the department.

Following the consent, I obtained a list of the officers assigned to the units and contacted them to solicit their participation. During the conversation with the officers, I explained the purpose of the research, how it would be ministered, and that their involvement was strictly voluntary. Once the officers agreed, I scheduled appointments

for their interviews. On the day of the interviews, I gave the participants the informed consent form and explained it in detail. I assigned the participants pseudonyms to produce anonymity. At the conclusion of the phases, I showed my appreciation by giving the participants a $25 Amazon gift card to use at their discretion.

Data saturation. Although there are approximately 40 officers assigned to the specialized police units, the topic of the underlined research was sensitive. Therefore, obtaining officers to participate might be difficult because of the close-knit working environment, fear of being identified as having a racial bias, and fear of reprisal. I initially wanted to obtain 11 to 13 police participants, but I felt optimistic about this recruitment despite the challenges I faced regarding the sensitivity of the topic. I understood these challenges and knew they were indicative of the qualitative paradigm. When a researcher has ontological and epistemological viewpoints that align with the qualitative paradigm, the researcher wants to understand a phenomenon at its core. This knowledge that produces an understanding comes directly from individuals and their environments. To this extent, I surmised that the more difficult a phenomenon might be, the more reluctant individuals want to participate.

Instead of obtaining 11 to 13 participants, I obtained 7 participants. Because of the naturalistic approach of the qualitative method, practitioners explained that there is no concrete evidence to show an exact number of participants a researcher needs for data saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). They explained that data saturation occurs when codes are repeated, and the repetition of the codes could happen with as few as two participants. Anthony (2018) and Campbell (2017) asserted that as few as two

participants and as many as 20 participants might be enough to produce data saturation in a phenomenological design. Given this information and that I began to see repeated information at the fourth participant, I believed I reached data saturation. Although the sample was small, the findings were not meant to be generalized or transferrable. However, they would be inaugural and intended to provide an empirical foundation from a qualitative perspective.

Semi-structured interview protocol. There were no instructions for the semi-structured interviews. However, there were certain criteria that were considered when creating them. As noted earlier, the questions were open-ended and arranged in such a manner that the first set of questions provided background information. These questions solicited information about the participant's micro and macro environments concerning his exposure to racism. The second set of questions solicited information about the officer's lived experiences. The questions in each section were also arranged according to their difficulty. The easier questions were positioned at the beginning of each section and gradually became more difficult toward the end. The instruction that I gave the participants during this phase was that they could discontinue participating at any time, and that they were not obligated to answer any question that made them feel uncomfortable. During this phase, the participants' responses were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded.

Implicit Association Test protocol. Before I gave participants the IATs, I had the IAT website opened on a computer screen and I gave participants an overview of the test, which was displayed on the Harvard Implicit Project website by Nosek et al. (2007).

The verbatim language I used for the overview is located in Appendix D. In summary, the overview explained the difference between a person knowing his true feelings and hiding them from others and the person not knowing his true feelings because they are unconsciously hidden. Next, the overview explained that IAT identifies unconscious feelings. And, lastly, it explained that no matter what the test-takers' results are, the creators hope the test-takers would obtain positive information from the website.

Following the overview, this author directed participants to the actual IAT. This was be done by selecting the "Take A Test" tab, which was located at the top of the website's screen. Once this tab was selected, a screen showing preliminary and disclaimer information appeared. This information explained that the participant could email the Harvard Implicit Project his results, and it would provide further interpretations of the results. This request was optional and not mandatory. My research did not include sending the participants' results to Harvard for additional analysis. The next screen requested that the participant select a type of IAT that he was interested in taking. I selected the Race IAT. Nosek et al. (2007) referred to this test as the "Black-White IAT" and stated, "This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of European and African origin. It indicates that most Americans have an automatic preference for white over black." In other words, the results might indicate that African Americans are associated with bad things.

Once the IAT was selected, there was a welcome screen followed by several screens that ask demographic questions and questions about beliefs. The participants had to complete these demographic questions to advance in the IAT. At this point, I gave the

participants privacy and allowed them time to complete this information. These demographic questions sought information about the participants' race, gender, birth year, ethnicity, political affiliation, and education. There were also questions that asked the participants about their feelings toward African Americans and other controversial topics. On a different note, at no time did these questions ask for the participant's identity.

Subsequent to completing the demographic questions, the participants began the IAT. The first screen of the test provided directions for taking the test. It explained that the participant would use the "E" key and "I" key to categorize four groups of items as quickly as possible. The four categories were "Good," which were words that were associated with things that were attractive and happy; "Bad," which were words that were associated with things that were ugly and painful; "African Americans," which included various faces of African Americans; and "European Americans," which included various faces of European Americans. This screen also explained that the IAT had seven parts, and the instructions for each part might be different from the prior part.

Part 1 followed the instructional screen. On Part 1 screen, it instructed the participant to place his left finger on the "E" and his right finger on the "I" key. At the top of this screen, in both corners, labels explained that the "E" key should be pressed for "European Americans" and the "I" key should be pressed for "African Americans." Once the participant read and understand the labels, he could select the space bar to move forward to the exercise. The exercise contained various faces of African Americans and European Americans. The participant must then quickly label the faces according to race

that they believed the faces belonged to by selecting the "E" key or "I" key. After completing this part, Part 2 was next. In Part 2, the instructions and tasks were similar, but the labels changed. A replication of Part 2's exercise is shown in Figure 3. This time, the "E" key was associated with the term "Bad" and the "I" key was associated with the word "Good." When the participant was ready to proceed to the exercise, he pressed the space bar. In the next exercise, the participant was shown words that reflected good and bad characteristics such as words like "attractive" or "annoy," and the participant must label the terms as bad or good by pressing the "E" or "I" key.

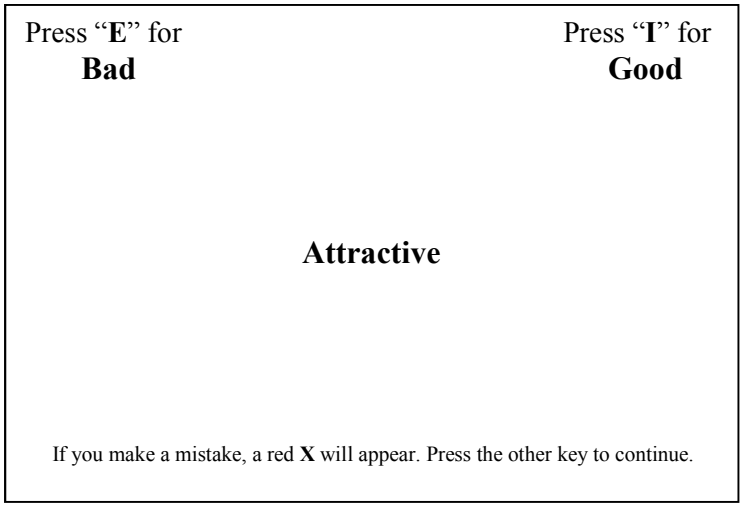

Figure 3. Replication of Part 2's exercise. Taken from: Nosek, B., Smyth, F., Hansen, J., Devos, T., Lindner, N., Ranganath, T., Olson, K., Chugh, D., Greenwald, A., & Banaji, M. (2007). Pervasiveness and correlates of implicit attitudes and stereotypes. *European Review of Social Pyschology, 18*. Copyright 2011.

I believed Parts 1 and 2 might pertain to familiarization exercises and speed calibration because the participant was only asked to sort between two categories. However, in Parts 3 through 7, the exercises became more dynamic where the participant faced more sorting groups. For example, in Parts 3 and 4, the assortment exercises and

the labels were the same. A replication of Part 3's instructions is shown in Figure 4. In the upper corners, the labels instructed the participant to press the "E" key for the terms "Bad or Black People" or the "I" key for "Good or White People." When the participant was ready to move forward to the exercise, he pressed the space bar. In this exercise, the participant was shown faces and words, and he had label them according to the categories these items belonged to by selecting the "E" key or "I" key.

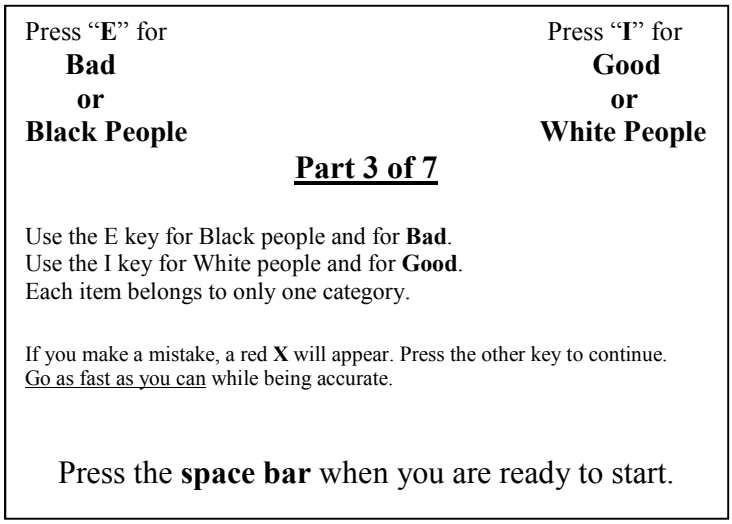

Figure 4.: Replication of Part 3's instructions. Taken from: Nosek, B., Smyth, F., Hansen, J., Devos, T., Lindner, N., Ranganath, T., Olson, K., Chugh, D., Greenwald, A., & Banaji, M. (2007). Pervasiveness and correlates of implicit attitudes and stereotypes. *European Review of Social Pyschology, 18*. Copyright 2011.

In Part 5, the labels in the upper corners changed. In the left corner were the words "African Americans," and they were associated with the "E" key. In the right corner were the words "European Americans," and they were associated with the "I" key. The participant pressed the space bar to move forward, and a serious of African American and European American faces appeared on the screen, and the participant

categorized the faces according to the ethnic groups they belonged to by pressing the “E” or “I” key. Parts 6 and 7 were similar in that the labels were the same. The upper left corners were labeled as “Bad or African Americans,” which were associated with the “E” key. The upper right corner was labeled as “Good or European Americans,” which was associated with the “I” key. Just as in Parts 3 and 4, the participant was shown faces and words, and he had to label them according to the categories these items belonged to by selecting the “E” key or “I” key.

When the police participant completed Part 7, Nosek et al. (2007) explained that there would be a black screen that stated, “Press space to continue to the next task.” At this point, I stopped the participant because the next screen gave the results. The results screen showed, “Here is your result: “Your data suggest a moderate [other responses were “no,” “slight,” or “strong”] automatic preference for Europeans over African Americans.”

Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations protocol. I did not deviate from the general instructions of ATSS, but he added operational instructions that supported the use of a video scenario. Therefore, a convergence of both instructions served as the ATSS instructions for the underlined research. A list of these instructions is in Appendix B. In terms of the general directions, they mirrored the directions Aujla et al. (2018) gave in their study that focused on making revisions to a medical questionnaire. These directions included informing each police participant that this author would be in the testing room to only answer questions about the ATSS and assist with the operations of the equipment. However, despite this author’s presence, the participant should act as if he was in the

room alone. When thinking aloud, the participant should not state which person in the video he felt was right or wrong. However, the participant should discuss in a loud and clear manner what he was thinking and feeling following each video segment, and that his words would be audio recorded and analyzed at a later time.

Concerning the operational instructions, each participant would be asked to observe a video scenario that involved a less cooperative African American individual during an investigative encounter. The video would be divided into three segments that were approximately two-minute long end with blank screens that contained a prompt that instructs the participant to begin thinking aloud. The prompt would state, "Begin thinking aloud when you hear the beep! Stop when you hear two beeps!" Each think-aloud session would last 30 seconds, and after the two beeps, there would be another blank screen that contained another prompt that instructs the participant to get ready to shift their attention and focus because the scenario was about to begin. This prompt would state, "Standby! The scenario is about to continue!" The scenario would automatically begin several seconds after this prompt. The prompts would also serve as a cue for me to start and stop the recorder. I decided to manually start and stop the recordings because the scenario involves a video that had an audio dialect between the officer and the African American citizen. As a result, I did not want this dialect included in the raw data and subsequent transcripts. By excluding this dialect, confusion about the identity of individual of the person speaking was eliminated.

Description of the scenario. The scenario was taken from the actual body camera footage of an investigative encounter between a white male police officer from the West

Des Moines Iowa Police Department and a young African American man. This encounter resulted in the African American man and some of his supporters explaining that the white police officer racially profiled and mistreated him. The contents of the scenario were as follows. The officer was dispatched to a suburban neighborhood to investigate a suspicious African American man who was going door-to-door on residential property, possibly for solicitation. As the officer located the African American man, the African American male was sitting underneath a tree next to a sidewalk between two houses. He was dressed in a black skull cap and a black jacket. As the officer approached the African American man, the officer introduced himself and attempted to explain why he was there to investigate a suspicious complaint that involved the African American man. The African American man immediately became upset and uncooperative. During the rest of the encounter, the African American man verbally challenged the officer, which resulted in the officer handcuffing the African American man.

Equipment. I used a Microsoft Surface Pro 4 that had the latest version of Windows 10 installed to display the video. The computer was protected by Trend Micro Internet Security, which offered virus and threat protection. The Windows 10 software had a firewall protection that provided a safe platform for internet use. Given these features, the scenario had video clarity and sound quality. The video was saved to a Google drive and accessible by a shared link. I only used the internet in short increments to allow each participant to complete the IAT and view the video. Other than demographical characteristics, the IATs did not request any personal identifications. The

internal records and results of the IAT in which the Harvard Implicit Project might keep or any historical internet traces on the website would return to my identity.

Because each participant's think-aloud sessions were audio recorded for analysis, this author used the Rev application that was an all-in-one recorder and transcription service. This application allowed me to record each participant and immediately upload the audio recording to the program where a transcriptionist transcribed the text. The transcriptionist then emailed it back to me for coding. The time lapse for obtaining the transcripts was usually less than a few hours. I have used the Rev application multiple times on several academic projects that have resulted in successful outcomes.

Venue for interviews. I used a small conference room that was secluded from the public and other colleagues of the police participants. It had a secure access, and at the time of each interview, it was only occupied by this author and participant. This conference room provided a comfortable, quiet, and safe atmosphere that allowed the volunteer to freely express his thoughts and emotions in an open and aloud manner (van Someren, Barnard, & Sandberg, 1994). It had a table for my computer and several chairs for the participant and this author. There was also adequate lighting for the reading instructions, consent form, and other related documents.

Data Analysis Plan

I used semi-structured interviews, IATs, and ATSSs to extract raw data from police participants. The filtration of these data and the processes of interpreting and analyzing them served as the data analysis plan for the underlined study. More

specifically, in this section, I give an overview of how each source produced data and how the data was conceptualized and triangulated to answer the research questions.

Extraction of data from semi-structured interviews. The questions of the semi-structured interviews were created by this author to give a bird's-eye view of officers' implicit racial bias perceptions. This view was governed by the past findings of seminal theorists who explained that implicit racial bias is initially obtained through human development and is further influenced by familial beliefs and past experiences. Also, some of the questions were created to align the study with the phenomenological design. That is, they were established to garner the essence of participants' lived experiences regarding racial perceptions and use-of-force. To highlight the significance of the semi-structured interviews, Galletta made the following statement about her experience with using them:

> However, the central core of the analytical framework would have remained constrained had I not pursued a means for understanding the individual experience of students, parents, and educators. This is where the semi-structured interview was crucial in addressing my research questions. This method offered insight into individual experience and views of racial equality within a desegregated school district. (Galletta, 2013, p. 23)

Given Galletta's plight to use semi-structured interviews, this author did the same. Although a brief discussion about the interview questions was given in the above section, a more thorough description is given in this section.

The first sample question was Question 1, which states, “What year were you born?” This question not only showed the officer’s age, but it indirectly showed how much racial occurrences the officer has experienced over the past years. For example, in Chapter 2, I gave an extensive history of racism in America and how it evolved into current times. If the officer was born in the late 60’s early 70’s, he probably witnessed a major shift in the racism in America. The spirit of the people during these times began to transform; however, the old feelings of white supremacy remained. The best way to describe this atmosphere is to compare it to the old television sitcoms like All in the Family, which aired in the 70's. This show was centered around Archie Bunker who was a white male who expressed bigotry and believed in white supremacy. However, his wife, daughter, and son-in-law had opposite point-of-views and feelings than Archie. These difference in opinions made the essence of the show. Therefore, this author believed that an officer born during this period or before would have more lived experiences dealing with racism than an officer born in the early 80’s.

Extraction of data from IATs. The participants’ results from the IATs would indicate whether they have a slight, moderate, strong, or no preference for European Americans over African Americans. Nosek et al. (2007) explained that these results pendulate on the differences in the quickness of the participants to reacts to the labels such as “Bad or European Americans” and “Good or African Americans.” To this extent, the responses were treated as such. Moreover, whatever each participant’s result was, it served as a stand-alone answer. There were no audio recordings or transcripts for these

results. However, the results were written on a word document and coded as a nominal result; meaning, the participant had an implicit racial bias, or he did not.

Extraction of data from ATSSs. The video for the ATSS practicum was not the most complicated or difficult police encounter available on the internet. Howbeit, Aujla et al. (2018) asserted that the more difficult a scenario is, the more it will challenge the viewer's thought process as he thinks aloud. I selected the video scenario because it highlighted the constructs of the street-level model, and it challenged some of the significant findings of past implicit bias studies. For instance, regarding the street-level model, there were several laws that the officer in the video announced and acted upon. These laws included a solicitation ordinance, stop and frisk, trespassing, disorderly conduct, and failure to comply with a lawful command. The officer attempted to explain these laws to the African American man, but the African American man rebuked the officer's attempts, which forced the officer to make quick decisions as the situation escalated.

Some of the significant research findings of implicit racial bias, researchers have asserted that implicit racial bias is innate and that officers might automatically associate African Americans with violent or criminal behavior (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Banks et al., 2006; Hutchinson, 2014). These unknown biases remain dormant until the officer is confronted with a contentious (Monteith et al., 2001; Hutchinson, 2014; Means & Thompson, 2016; Golbeck et al., 2016) and ambiguous situation (Fridell, 2017b), which causes an emotional reactions in the brain (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2017; Goldman, 2005) that forces an officer to make a split-second decision (Pedersen, 2010; Vieira &

Graser, 2015). Other studies produced findings that asserted that police officers' implicit racial bias causes them to subliminally stop and frisk African Americans (Rapping, 2013) and misinterpret their behaviors as violent and aggressive (Godsil & Richardson, 2017).

Video scenario's coding scheme. The video scenario was dissected into three segments for analysis purposes (van Someren, Barnard, & Sandberg, 1994). Each video segment was approximately two minutes long, and it was followed by a 30-second think-aloud session. Segment 1 was called the Approach. The Approach is synonymous with a dispatched call a police officer receives. During the time between the officer receiving the dispatched call and his initial approach on the scene, the officer begins to mentally prepare himself to respond to the situation for which he has limited information. In other words, this situation becomes ambiguous because of the vague information the officer has received at the time he is dispatched. Therefore, he relies on his past experiences, training, and perceptions to get him ready to handle the situation (Mears et al., 2017). With that said, the Approach Segment for the ATSS involved the officer responding to a dispatched call to investigate a complaint of an African American male knocking on residential doors possibly soliciting an item. In the video, snippets of the dispatched call are included; however, I verbally provided additional information to the volunteer before the video began.

Within the Approach segment, I looked for raw data from the participating officer's spontaneous remarks regarding the African American man's overall appearance that included his physical structure, his demeanor, his facial features, his speech, his clothing, the environment, and the like. I primarily looked for these statements as the

African American male quickly changed his position from seating to standing. My rationale for this segment drew upon the implicit racial bias that African American individuals are automatically perceived as dangerous and violent criminals. I specifically looked for spontaneously comments such as, “He looks dangerous,” or “He looks like he steals,” or “He looks suspicious,” or “He doesn’t belong in this neighborhood.” The Approach segment ended with the African American male changing from a sitting position to a standing position.

The video continued into Segment 2. Segment two was referred to as the Metastases Segment. This segment is synonymous with an investigative encounter when an officer knows or perceives the situation changing or escalating. In other words, the officer knows by the actions of the individual involved whether the situation is de-escalating or if he needs to increase the force to make the scene safe so that he can continue to investigate the complaint. The actions of the citizen might include him failing to follow the officer's instructions, or acknowledge the officer's presence. The individual might also become boisterous and unruly.

In the Metastases Segment, I looked for participants to make more spontaneous statements about African American becoming threatening or dangerous. Because of these types of spontaneous statements, he also looked for statements indicating force. The rationale behind these statements was because the African American man in the video makes several subtle moves as he begins to ignore the officer’s presence and authority. These subtle moves include him placing his hands in his waistband area, and constantly looking around at his surroundings. Police officers can construe these movements as

indications of a forthcoming attack; however, Spencer et al. (2016) and Godsil and Richardson (2017) asserted that these type behaviors from African Americans could be mislabeled or misinterpreted.

Segment 2 continues to intensify as the situation begins to escalate. The change in the video is synonymous with police officers acknowledging the situation is changing. This change might suggest to the officers that they have to make certain decisions immediately to prevent losing control of the situation. More specifically, the officers' perceptions of the unfolding event might put them in a position that they might need to make a split-second decision. Researchers have asserted that split-second decisions manifest a police officer's implicit racial bias (Mears et al., 2017; Orrey, 2010; Pedersen, n.d.). Another rationale for this thinking was that the African American man within this segment of the video becomes very noncompliant and walks away from the officer several times. He also places his hand in his waistband, and he turns and faces the officer several times. Additionally, the officer in the video gives the African American man a final instruction to stop walking away, but the African American male challenges the officer's authority by saying, "What are you going to do if I don't stop." The officer then tells the African American man that he is under arrest. Again, I looked for participant's spontaneous comments about the African American man becoming a threat or danger, and that he will use force. The Metastases Segment ended with the officer telling the African American man that he is under arrest.

The final segment was segment three. It was referred to as the Climax Segment. After the officer in the video tells the African American man that he is under arrest, the

African American man ignores the officer's lawful command. This segment was synonymous with a police situation that has possibly exceeded the officer's control. Klukkert, Ohlemacher, and Feltes (2009) asserted that there are several perceptions that influence police officers' decisions to use force. These perceptions include the fear of the situation escalating, the fear of losing control of their emotions despite the existence of rules and regulations, the fear of allowing their physical attributes to affect their thought process, and the fear of misreading the situation. In the Climax segment, the African American man continues to challenge the officer's authority. He also shows explicit racism toward the officer, and he tells the officer that he has no grounds to arrest him. This situation continues to escalate throughout this segment and the officer decides to physically control the African American man by handcuffing him.

Generally, officers know at the point of handcuffing that the situation could end in a physical or deadly force situation. The above-mentioned perceptions and associated feeling could influence the amount of force an officer might apply in these types of situations. For example, if the officer perceives the individual as dangerous and fears what the individual might do to him, the officer might apply more force than necessary to handcuff the individual. Researchers have postulated that fear and hate embedded in the subconscious mind will emerge during a time of conflict (Lee et al., 2017). With this in mind, I searched for spontaneous comments from the participants that suggested the African American man lacked respect, was unruly, and was violent, aggressive, or dangerous. Additionally, I looked for statements of intended force. For example, based on the implicit beliefs that African American men are violent and aggressive, many officers

in the past have used the canned language “I feared for my life” when justifying use-of-force. In the Climax Segment, I looked for statements such as, “He [the African American man] is resisting” followed by, “More positive control is needed.” The Climax Segment ended after the officer handcuffs the African American male and walked him back to his patrol vehicle.

Figure 4 provides an overview of the model I used to answer Subqestion B. Each picture depicts the beginning of a segment, and the red arrows show the directional flow of the model. If looking at the model in this manner, the photographs from left to right paint a synopsis of the investigative encounter between the police officer and the African American man. The first photograph shows the officer receiving the dispatched call and responding to the scene. The second photograph shows the African American man returning to face the officer after he walked away from the officer one of several times. The third shows the officer handcuffing the African American man.

The larger gray text boxes below each photograph contain perceptions that this author searched for as he analyzed the police officers’ statements during the 30-second think-aloud sessions, which followed each segment. The think-aloud sessions are denoted in the small lighter gray text boxes above the photographs. Following the Climax segment, there is no 30-second think-aloud session denoted because of structural problems when creating the model. Nonetheless, there was a 30-second think-aloud session following this segment. The black lines attached the 30-second sessions to their respective videos.

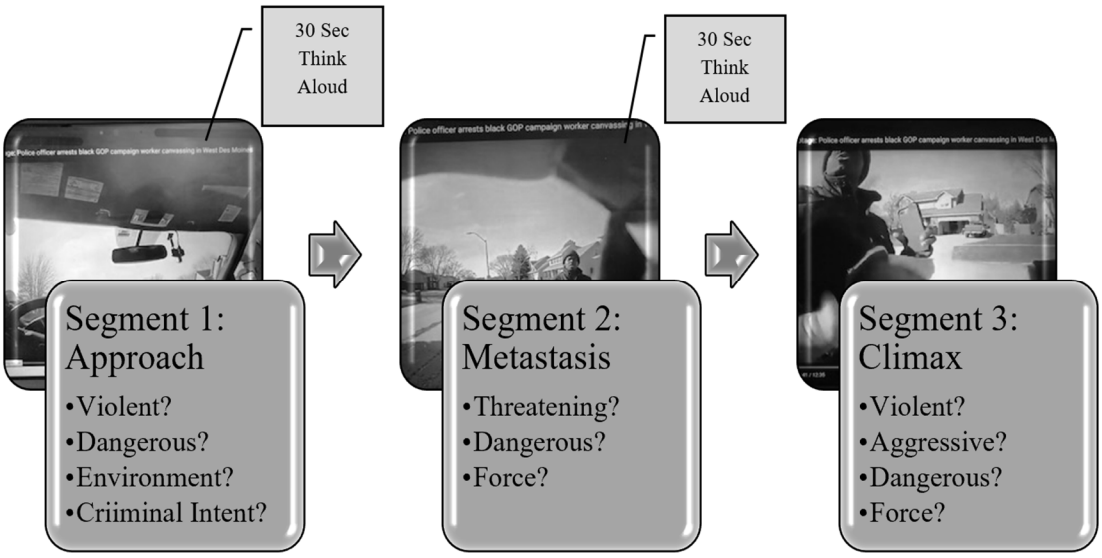

Figure 5. The epistemological breakdown for coding scheme. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. Photographs are still images from a police body camera. From Youtube (Producer) "Police officer arrests black GOP campaign worker canvassing in West Des Moines." 2018. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmYTGFp57Jc&t=463s).

Coding procedures. This author explained in prior sections that the semi-structured interviews from Phase 1 and ATSSs from Phase Three of the underlined project were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded. Jacob (2012) asserted that the best way to obtain raw data from interviews is by using recording devices to record them, which allows researchers to focus on guiding the interviews and listening to participants. Similarly, MacLean, Meyer, and Estable (2004) explained that audio recording interviews and transcribing them have become standard practices in the qualitative approach and that these transcripts are the vehicles for analysis. I used a recording application to record the interviews and had a transcriptionist transcribe the data. Once I obtained the transcripts, I coded the data according to established themes. A code is defined as follows:

> In qualitative data analysis, a code is a researcher-generated construct that symbolizes or 'translates' data (Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele, 2014, p. 13) and thus attributes interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, assertion or proposition development, theory building, and other analytic processes. (Saldana, 2016, p. 4)

To this extent, in the underlined project, the coding process involved pattern matching and categorization.

Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS). Before coding the data, I maintained and organized them by using the NVivo QDAS (NVivo). After the raw data was recorded and transcribed, the items were uploaded into NVivo and coded. Although there were other QDAS programs available on the market, this author believed the NVivo would be the most useful tool because of its user-friendly application and flexibility in accommodating multiple sources of data.

Coding method. Once the data from Phases 1 and 3 were transcribed, I used the directed content analysis method to code the data. This method is a deductive approach that allows a qualitative researcher to validate the existence of a conceptual framework by coding raw data in a categorical style using established themes (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Humble (2009) offered that although some qualitative researchers challenge the deductive approach within this paradigm, the directed content analysis is befitting when researchers want to validate an existing conceptual framework. Accordingly, the data from the semi-structured interviews and ATSS practicums were coded according to the characteristics or perceptions (Zanov &

Davison, 2010) that stemmed from the heuristic development of the implicit racial bias model. The results from the IAT were coded according to the participants IAT results.

Operational definitions. The goal of Phase 1, the semi-structured interviews, was to obtain a snapshot of officers' implicit racial bias perceptions, which seminal theorists have postulated from diachronic investigations. That is, these researchers have explained that police officers have unconscious racial biases like all human beings (Fridell & Lim, 2016; Kang, 2005; Li, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016) that are innately obtained (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Chekround et al., 2014; DuBois, 2014; Sternadori, 2017) and enhanced by life experiences (Banks & Hicks, 2016; Rapping, 2013; Rivers et al., 2017). Furthermore, other researchers have asserted that most police officers do not want to be prejudice (Golbeck, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016) and that they joined the police force to help others (Grabiner, 2016; Schlosser, Cha-Jua, Valgoi, & Neville, 2015). Therefore, I used the above attributes to create conceptual themes that have been associated with the genesis of the implicit racial bias model. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) asserted that when researchers select to use directed content analysis, they must establish operational definitions for the concepts they plan to use as categories for coding their data. Accordingly, I used the codes and descriptions listed in Table 1 to categorize the participants' responses from the questions listed in the semi-structured interview. For example, question eight of the interview asked, "How do you think racism personally affects you today?" The participant's response was placed under the Self-Awareness category. where I continued analyzing it to ensure it fit with this theme.

Table 1

Codes and Operational Definitions for Phase 1 Interview

Codes	Code abbrev.	Operational definitions
Influenced by Environments	IE	Individuals' biases are molded by their parents, religions, friends, education, and geographical area. This category will include responses regarding how the participant's beliefs were influenced by his family and community.
Exposures to Racism	ER	Individuals' biases are affected by their life experiences. This category will consist of stated experiences that are direct or indirect.
Self-Awareness	SA	Implicit racial biases occur in the subconscious. Any known bias is explicit. This category will consist of egalitarian responses.

Note. Abbrev. = abbreviation.

The data from the Phase Three, the ATSS practicum, was handled in the same fashion as the data from the semi-structured interviews. However, the raw data from the ATSS practicums came from the unscripted and uninterrupted responses of the think-aloud sessions. Because the video scenario challenged the officer's decision-making process, this author searched for statements that alluded to racial perceptions that seminal theorists have associated with the implicit racial bias model. These racial perceptions were beliefs that African Americans were criminals (Chekround et al., 2014; Rapping, 2013; Scott, 2015; Seabrook & Wyatt-Nichole, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016), or violent (Chekround et al., 2014; Hetey & Eberhardt, 2018; Rapping, 2013), or both.

Additionally, I looked for connective phrases or words that reveal the police participant's actions that may allude to the use-of-force. Researchers such as Banaji and Greenwald (2016), Keene (2017), Orrey (2010), and Ross (2018) purported that the above-stated perceptions can affect officers' decision-making process. Therefore, these perceptions were listed as conceptual themes that served as the coding categories for Phase Three. They are operationally defined in Table 2. For example, a police participant might have stated, "The subject looks like a bad guy!"

Table 2

Codes and Operational Definitions for Phase 3 ATSS

Codes	Code abbrev.	Operational definition
Bias Alluding to Criminality	BAC	This category will consist of statements that show the participant stereotypes the African American male as a criminal.
Bias Alluding to a Violent Persona	BAVP	This category will consist of statements that show the participant stereotypes the African American male as violent.
Action Alluding to Force	AAF	This category will consist of statements that show connective words that are attached directly or indirectly to the stereotypes and show force.
Non-Bias Related	NBR	This category will consist of unrelated codes that could potentially identify new themes.

Note. Abbrev. = Abbreviation.

Given that ATSS was designed to identify perception, this author would place this statement under the Bias Alluding to a Violent Persona category. If the participant stated,

"Positive control is needed," within the same context of stating, "The subject looks like a bad guy" this author would place the preceding statement under the Action Alluding to Force category. Although these examples appear simple, there were complicated responses that were moved to various codes unit they fitted properly. Many of these codes were not as straight forward as the examples given in this text.

Triangulation of the data. Once a participant completed all three phases, and this the data was properly to their respective categories, they were analyzed to answer the following research questions.

RQ: What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man?

Subquestion A: Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias?

Subquestion B: What implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man. I answered the research question by using triangulation techniques when answering Subquestions A and B. Humble (2009) explained that using multi-data sources to compare and contrast the same data within a study is a triangulation method. Newman (2014) offered a similar perspective by explaining that the triangulation, or inclusion, of data from multiple sources can provide a complete and comprehensive understanding of the targeted phenomenon.

Subquestion A was addressed by triangulating the information from the semi-structured interviews and IATs. There were no established interview instruments that

identifies whether officers have implicit racial bias perceptions. Furthermore, there was no interview instrument that has been combined with an implicit racial bias interview that was created to highlight the most lived experience of a police participant. Therefore, I compared and contrasted the findings from the interviews and the IATs to answer Subquestion A. An example of the flow of data is depicted in Figure 6.

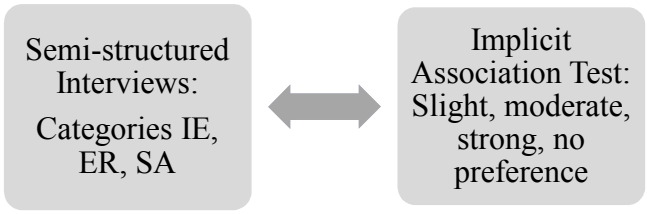

Figure 6. Triangulation for answering Subquestion A. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; SA = self-awareness.

In Figure 6, the coded data from the established categories of the semi-structured interview were compared to the outcome of the IAT for a concluding answer. For example, if the convergence of the data from the categories of the interview showed that the participant had attributes of implicit racial bias and his IAT result reflected he had a "strong preference" for European Americans over African Americans, I would postulate--based on this evidence--that the police participant has an implicit racial bias.

The answering of Subquestion B was approached in the same manner as above. However, the task of answering this question required the convergence of the data from all three phases. An example of the convergence of the data from the three phases is

shown in Figure 7. In this figure, the ATSS is at the top, and the semi-structure interview and IAT phase are at the bottom left and right.

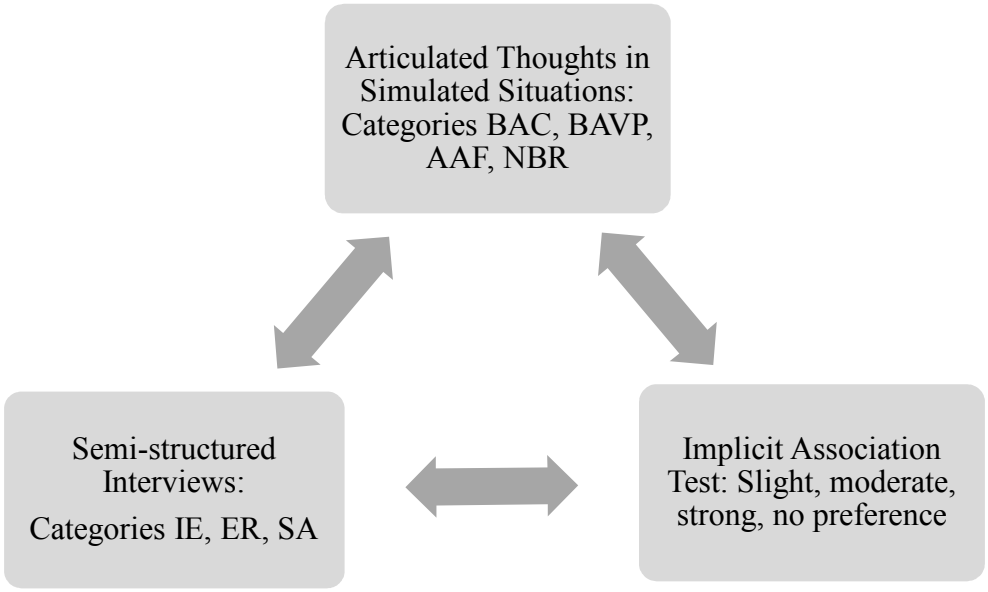

Figure 7. Triangulation for answering Subquestion B. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; SA = self-awareness; BAC = bias alluding to criminality; BAVP = Bias Alluding to a Violent Persona; AAF = Action Alluding to Force; NBR = Non-Bias Related.

Just as in Figure 7, there are directional arrows, which signifies the information from each source flowing back and forth among each other for a concluding answer for Subquestion B. Using the same examples from the "Operational Definitions" section where the participant might have hypothetically said close to each other, "The subject looks like a bad guy" and "Positive control is needed." As mentioned, I would place the first statement under the Bias Alluding to a Violent Persona category (BAVP), and the second statement would be placed under the Action Alluding to Force category (AAF). Both of these categories are shown in the ATSS text box in the above figure. Next, I

would look at the participant's IAT results, which in this case and hypothetically speaking, the test showed that the police participant had a "strong preference." The result "strong preference" is shown in the IAT text box in the figure. Again, the arrows symbolized the comparison of data from both sources. Based on the convergence of these pieces of evidence, this author would surmise that an officer's implicit racial bias perception emerged during his encounter with an African American man.

Analyses of the non-bias data. NVivo has a feature that can assist in identifying emerging data. I used this feature to analyze the non-biased statements that developed from the ATSS sessions. I also used the triangulation method to help identify these emerging themes.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The term trustworthiness has been implemented in the qualitative paradigm to replicate the term validity, which indicates that the findings of the research metastasized through a rigorous process and represent the most reliable information experienced by participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). More specifically, trustworthiness is the research findings that closely represent the lived experiences of participants that are at the core of the phenomenon being studied. Researchers acquire trustworthiness in the qualitative method by implementing several strategies that include credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, Trachok, 2015).

Credibility

I produced credibility within the underlined study by using several strategies. The first strategy was incorporating the proper alignment of the methodology and the

conceptual framework (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Specifically, a holistic approach was taken to homogenize the research problem, purpose, question, design, and data analysis. I took iterative steps to connect the qualitative phenomenology design, street-level bureaucratic model, and the implicit racial bias model to accomplish the purposes of this study. The alignment was associated with my ontological and epistemological point of view, which was guided by the constructive paradigm. In other words, I believed the solutions to this phenomenon would emerge from exploring the encounter between the police officer and African Americans. This investigation highlighted the constructs of the street-level bureaucracy model, which focuses on promoting policy change and implementation. Additionally, this investigation integrated with the phenomenology method because the encounter between both parties postulated on the participants' lived experiences. By selecting the phenomenology design as the research method, the credibility was established by strategies that have been used and tested by other researchers.

Transferability

Transferability means that the thematic concepts that emerge from research participants can represent other individuals of similar circumstances or characteristics (Saldana, 2016). The constructs of the underlined research were based on a historical connection of racism and police excessive force that has affected police departments in America. Therefore, the descriptive information within this manuscript was familiar to most officers who performed regular police duties. Moreover, many police officers have used some type of force in situations regardless of the amount. They have also received

use-of-force training, and their duties and functions are guided by laws and department policies. Additionally, the video used in the ATSS practicum involved a situation that many officers have faced or will face at some point in their careers.

Dependability

Research data that has metastasized through a rigorous and iterative process that involves empirical strategies to sustain the research data's existence is referred to as dependable (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Given the sensitive nature of the underlined research and the fact that many officers have not participated in this type of research, this author has kept all written notes and memo of the strategies and emerging ideas that supported the overall structure of this project. Additionally, I have also maintained copies of the raw data, notes that helped transform these data, and reflective notes that bracketed my biases. More specifically, an audit trail has been maintained to authenticate that steps taken to obtain the outcomes (Trachok, 2015).

Confirmability

I knew when he started this research that he had biases that needed to monitored. Ravitch & Carl (2016) explained confirmability is obtained by the research neutralizing his biases. Throughout this research, I wrote reflective notes to challenged my thoughts and perceptions. I also used the NVivo qualitative software to assist with coding the raw data, and I continuously consulted with peers when analyzing the data.

Ethical Procedures

I took measures to protect the participants from harm, which might arise from their participation. Because this project involved a sensitive topic that might have

negative consequences for the participants, I worked closely with the Walden University Institutional Review Board (WUIRB). Vayena and Tasioulas (2013) asserted that researchers working with an institution's review board will promote the well-being of their participants during and after the completion of the studies. The strategies that I employed in the underlined research allowed the participants to express their thoughts, which might have presented racial undertones. Nevertheless, genuine responses that reflected this data was the reason I chose to conduct a qualitative design. However, I used techniques that were approved by the WUIRB to conceal the identities of the research venue, participants, and their police agency.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I described the constructs of the qualitative phenomenology design and my rationale for choosing it for the underlined research. I also explained in details my role within the context of this research followed by a comprehensive overview of the methodology and strategies I implemented to answer the RQs with trustworthy and reliable data. I selected the qualitative phenomenology because of its ability to allow the analysis of racially perceived use of force from lived experiences of police participants. Within the confinements of the phenomenology design, I used convenience sampling strategy to obtain 7 participants from several specialized police units from a police department in California.

After I recruited these officers, I used a three-phase process that included semi-structured interviews, IATs, and ATSS practicums to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from the officers when they were confronted with a possible use-of-

force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man. The participants' phases were investigated as units of analysis that involved the triangulation of the phases to produce findings that ultimately answered the RQs. My primary role in this research was to serve as the instrument for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data.

To ensure that the research findings were trustworthy, I established creditability by implementing proper alignment among the research components. Transferability was established by making sure that the contents within this research were tailored to a specific group of officers but applicable to all officers when given the same set of circumstances. I established dependability by implementing rigorous strategies which included: conducting extensive research on the subject material, consulting with the research committee and peers about guidelines and other nuances, and making iterative adjustments with the methods throughout this project. I established confirmability by writing reflective notes and discussing biases with peers. In Chapter 4, I will provide details and interpretations of my research findings.

Chapter 4: Results

Seminal theorists have hypothesized that implicit racial bias might cause police officers to use more force than necessary when encountering African Americans (Scott, 2015). Conversely, other researchers have asserted that these findings might not be valid because the researchers used extrinsic data collection methods that failed to include variables such as noncompliance or aggressive behavior displayed by the African American citizens (Hollis, 2018). Although this debate continues to linger, police administrators have launched efforts to implement implicit racial bias in their policies (Whitfield, 2019); however, this theory might not be an amenable solution (Payne & Vuletich, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from a small sample of experienced officers when they were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male.

I sought to answer the following RQs:

RQ: What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male?

Subquestion A: Do police officers have an implicit racial bias?

Subquestion B: What implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American male? In this chapter, I will provide an in-depth discussion of the data I gathered to answer the RQs. Chapter 4 is organized in the following manner: setting,

demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary.

Setting

Racism, whether explicit or implicit, is a difficult subject to talk about (Prez, 2017), especially for police officers. Racially perceived use-of-force against African American males has received extensive coverage by U.S. news media outlets for several years (Nix et al., 2017). The desire to not be associated with racism might have affected the participants' responses. Moreover, they could have provided answers that deflected racially biased perceptions. At the onset of this research, I thought about the possibility of receiving these deflective responses and subsequently built in triangulating strategies that would provide more reliable data.

Demographics

I collected data from seven sworn police officers who were assigned to specialized units of a medium-size police department in California. The officers were given the following pseudonym names: Officer 7, Officer 14, Officer 23, Officer 25, Officer 31, Officer 35, and Officer 40. These police participants had between 13 and 27 years of police service. The mean years of police service was 19 years. Participants received use-of-force training in an informal setting at least quarterly, and they received it in a more formal setting every 2 years. Their use-of-force training consisted of instructions and hands-on application with firearms, handcuffing, and baton, and the educational background that governs the use of these tactics. More information about their training will be given in each participant's profile.

Data Collection

After I obtained permission from the department's chief of police to conduct the study within the department, I received a list of officers assigned to a specialized unit. I contacted each of the participants and asked if he or she would volunteer to participate in a three-phase process (referred to as the interview) that included a semi-structured interview, an IAT, and an ATSS practicum. After receiving only a few volunteers from this unit, I deviated from the data collection plan discussed in Chapter 3 and reached out to other specialized groups within the department to obtain an adequate sample size. The same achievements and accolades that were essential for the original specialized unit were applicable to the other specialized units. That is, these officers had time in service, numerous hours of use-of-force training, had gone through a vetting process to join the specialized groups, and served as field training officers. In other words, the only change was the name of the units and their duties. The officers had the same attributes. Despite this change, I believed it helped hide the participants' identities and provided a more diverse and comprehensive pool of participants.

During the proposal phase of this study, I hoped to obtain 11 to 13 police participants; however, seven participants volunteered. When each of the volunteers agreed to participate, I explained to them that the semi-structured interview, IAT, and ATSS would occur in tandem on the same day. I also scheduled a time for each volunteer to participate in the interview phases.

I conducted the interviews between January 14, 2020, and February 18, 2020. Each interview occurred in a secure and private location and took approximately 45

minutes to an hour to complete. The participants' responses from the semi-structured interviews and ATSSs were audio-recorded and later transcribed using the Rev Recording application. The results from the IAT were typed and saved in Microsoft Word documents. When data collection was complete, I uploaded the raw data into NVivo.

Data Analysis

I used the directed content analysis method to code the raw data. This method allowed me to use established themes to code the participants' responses. Moreover, before conducting the interviews with the police participants, I created and defined coding categories for the semi-structured interviews and the ATSS practicums. These categories were based on perceptional themes seminal researchers (Hetey & Eberhardt, 2018; Sternadori 2017) of the implicit bias model have identified through their research. The semi-structured interviews included the following thematic categories: Influenced by Environment (IE), Exposure to Racism (ER), and Self-Awareness (SA). The ATSS practicums included the following categories: Bias Alluding to Criminality (BAC), Bias Alluding to a Violent Persona (BAVP), Action alluding to Force (AAF), and Non-Bias-Related (NBR). The IAT provided the following responses: Strong Preference for European Americans over African Americans, Moderate Preference for European Americans over African Americans, Slight Preference for European Americans over African Americans, and No Preference for European Americans over African Americans. Each source of data (i.e., semi-structured interview, IAT, and ATSS practicum) was independently analyzed and triangulated against the other sources of data for an

individual outcome. The participant's outcome was then analyzed across the other participants' results for a conclusive answer to RQ.

RQ asked, What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male? To address this question, I established Subquestions A and B that ask, respectively, Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias? and What implicit bias perceptions emerge for the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American male? To answer Subquestion A, I triangulated the data from each participant's semi-structured interview and IAT. Figure 6 shows a visual breakdown of the triangulation plan for Subquestion A. To answer Subquestion B, I triangulated the participants' responses from the three sources of data. Figure 7 shows a visual breakdown of the triangulation plan for Subquestion B. There is a triangulation breakdown for each participant for both questions.

Following each of the 7 participant's interviews, I began examining the data. I realized I met data saturation after the fourth participant. The evidence from the semi-structured interviews and IATs showed that 2 participants had implicit racial bias, and the other 2 participants did not. The evidence from the ATSS practicums showed that the 4 participants had the same results. Despite data saturation, I obtained 3 additional participants whose results were similar to the previous 4 participants. A more thorough analysis of the participants' responses and outcomes will be given in the Results section.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness for a qualitative design refers to the most reliable data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Reliable data includes the following characteristics: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Trachok, 2015). I did not make not make any adjustments to the strategies outlined in Chapter 3.

Credibility

Ravitch and Carl (2016) asserted that proper research alignment, followed by a rigorous process of developing data, will produce credible findings. I established credibility at the onset of this research. Prior to the interviews, I devoted significant time communicating with my committee and Walden University faculty discussing the proper alignment among this study's research components. It was a consensus that the research components of this research were aligned.

Transferability

Saldana (2016) defined transferability as the ability of the themes that emerge from one group of participants to reflect the thoughts of other like-minded groups. I created the constructs of this research by including facts and circumstances that most experienced police officers have encountered and seminal researchers have studied. In Chapter 2, I explained how explicit racism and police use-of-force have evolved into the ideology that implicit bias might cause police officers to use force. I surmised that most police officers in the U.S. have indirectly or directly experienced racially perceived use-of-force. For example, Question 14 on the semi-structured interview was, how do you

feel when you see, through media outlets or in person, racially-charged police brutality? Eighty-six percent of the participants from this study said--in some variation--that they do not think the media tells the entire truth about police use-of-force cases. Table 3 shows some of the participants' responses for question 14.

Table 3

Participants' Responses That Might Reflect Transferability

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Participants	Response to Semi-Structured Interview Question 14
Officer 7	"I think it's just part of the media. We only get that 10 second view of the entire incident but I think if we got the whole scope of what led to it, I think the media wouldn't play it."
Officer 23	"It's important for me to know the facts of what happened, what preceded the encounter, what was going on before, during, and what led up to it because those are important. Because now you get snippets of what happened."
Officer 25	"I do feel that sometimes we only see a small part of whole event." "Sometimes people start recording and where the police the clip we dropped, we didn't see what the other party was doing or what happened leading up to that."
Officer 31	"The media that's trying to sell that particular news, but in reality you don't see the totality of the circumstances. You don't see the totality of what actually transpired."
Officer 35	"It concerns me because I mean unfortunately sometimes some of it's justified. And sometimes it's unjustified. And it just gets that negative rap sometimes."
Officer 40	"It is not going to get a fair shake in the eyes of the court of public opinion." "It is already predicated that the reason this happened is because of the difference in race between the officer and the subject, as opposed to looking at what did the subject do that warranted the officer's response."

I surmised that if I presented question 14 to other police officers, they would make similar statements. Another example, would involve the video footage in the ATSS practicum. It contained a less compliant citizen. Most officers, if not all, with years of experience have encountered a less cooperative citizen. For example, Officer 23 stated the following in the ATSS Practicum, "…seeing that situation play out, I would say I've encountered people like that…"

Dependability

Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that research is dependable if the data emerge through a rigorous and empirical process. I maintained copious notes of this study's research process. These notes pertained to the development of research components, recruitment of participants and development of their responses, and the development of codes and themes. Additionally, Trachok (2015) asserted that maintaining notes in the above manner provides an audit trail, which produces dependable findings.

Confirmability

I obtained confirmability by keeping my personal biases at bay (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I made every effort to eliminate my biases from the collected data. I used the NVivo to code the data. I also consulted with peers to ensure my biases did not impact the meaning of participants statements. Also, when coding the data, I wrote reflective information and took numerous breaks to review the data with a fresh thought process.

Results

I will provide the research findings and a comprehensive breakdown of these findings that address the RQs The RQ was, what, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions

surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male? The answer to this question was obtained by answering Subquestions A and B.

Results for Subquestion A

Subquestion A was, Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias?" To answer RQ, I had to determine if the participants had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. This was the purpose of Subquestion A. The IATs were used as the primary instrument for addressing Subquestion A. The IATs showed that 43% of the participants had a moderate preference for European Americans over African Americans. Fourteen percent had a slight preference for European Americans over African Americans, and 43% had no preference for European Americans over African Americans. I focused on the participants that made up 43% and 14% that had a preference for European Americans over African Americans.

The Harvard Implicit Project used slight, moderate, and strong to indicate the strengths of implicit racial bias results (Nosek et al.,2007). I thematically coded these three strengths as an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. The sum of 43% and 14% was 57%. Therefore, according to the IAT results, 57% of the participants had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans, and the remaining 43% did not. I examined the participants in the 57th percentile in pursuit of the RQs. I analyzed the participants in the 43rd percentile for additional findings. I will discuss these participants' finding in the section labeled Discrepant Cases.

New themes from Subquestion A. The analysis of the 7 participants' responses from the from the semi-structured interviews produced two new thematic categories that were added to the following predetermined thematic groups: influenced by environment (IE), exposure to racism (ER), and self-awareness (SA) and egalitarian (Egal). The first new thematic category was reaction to force (RF). Eighty-six percent of the participants provided data from questions 11 and 13 that generated this theme. Question 11 was, "What is your style of policing?" and question 13 was, "In a police/citizen contact what would cause you to use force. Collectively, participants' responses revealed that their force would have been driven by a citizen's lack of cooperation. The second thematic code was created as a subcategory under SA. This code was true innocence (TI). Forty-three percent of the participants provided data that caused the emergence of this theme. This theme was generated from the participants' responses to questions 5, 6, and 8, which was, "What were your friends like?" "Growing up, how was racism viewed in your household?" and "How do you think racism personally affects you today?" The participants' responses for TI were similar to the belief that racism is a learned behavior.

Triangulation of IAT results with Semi-structured interview responses. For each of the participants that were in the 57th percentile, I triangulated the data among their IATs and semi-structured interviews. Officers 23, 31, 35, and 40 were in this percentile.

Officer 23's data for Subquestion A. On the IAT, Officer 23 showed a moderate preference for European Americans over African Americans. However, I coded the result as an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. This positive result was then

weighed against the data coded in the predetermined categories of Officer 23's semi-structured interview, which included IE, ER, SA, Egal, TI, and RF. Officer 23 had 12 responses in IE, two responses in ER, three responses in RF, 4 responses in SA. He also had in subcategories under self-awareness 12 responses in Egal and 1 response in TI. Table 4 shows a few of Officer 23's responses for each category and subcategory.

Table 4

Officer 23's Responses Displayed in Thematic Categories

IRB Categories	Officer 23's Statements
IE	"Most I would say 80% African American at the time, and then a 20% Hispanic [referring to the ethnicity of community Officer 23 grew up in]"
	"…it was kind of mutual. Just going outside and interacting and playing with different kids on the block...Yeah it was just involving myself in the same activities that they liked to do [referring to how Officer 23 selected friends]."
	"Growing up, it really wasn't an issue. You learn that from your parents. As kids, you're not aware of that [referring to racism discussed in the household].
ER	"…some things were blatant. What I can remember growing up, what I thought was normal, being pulled over, not knowing the mindset of the officers, it was just the norm. Okay. Not giving a reason as to why. I was just something that was happening [referring to experience with racism]."
SA	"Me growing up out here on the West coast, being from the West coast, we have this multicultural experience that people from the South don't have, at least myself personally, didn't have that [referring to currently being affected by racism]."
Egal	"I'm so happy to be in these times and seeing the evolvement and change and what's happening now with more inclusion"
	"…my day to day job…as an…officer is to change that perception."
TI	"You go outside and you see somebody of a different color or race, it's really no big deal until you get older and you start asking those

	questions. As far as I know, as I was concerned, I was just happy to be outside [referring to how racism was viewed growing up]."
RF	"If a subject was not compliant after several attempts to get that individual to relax and calm down"
	"I know the mindset, I know the behavior of the community, and the people who are involved in crimes and do crimes."

Note. IRB = Implicit racial bias.

The data from all categories showed Officer 23's profile as following. Officer 23 grew up in a homogenous environment and selected friends based on common interests. Officer 23 believed that racism was a learned behavior that was enhanced by the community. Officer 23's age reflected an understanding of the transition of racism in the U.S., and Officer 23 has been a recipient of racism. Despite being a recipient, Officer 23 explained that racism has not negatively affected him/her. Officer 23 has been in law enforcement over 15 years, and a citizen's lack of cooperation would compel Officer 23 to use force, which means Officer 23's use-of-force might be free of racial biases.

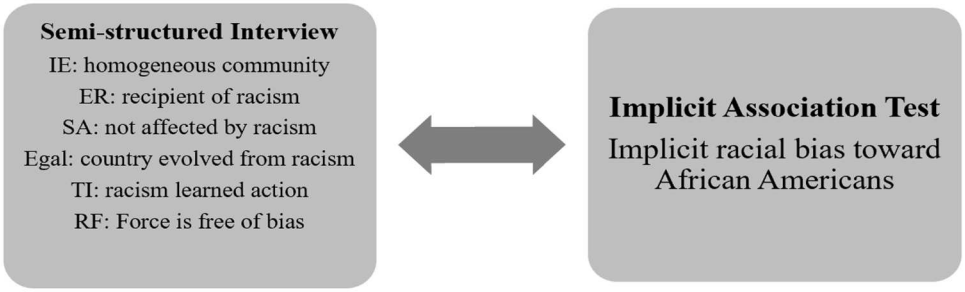

Figure 8. Triangulation of Officer 23's responses. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt Art. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force.

Officer 23 has received use-of-force training either yearly or every two years. This training included "hand-to-hand" combat, baton training, handcuffing, verbal judo, and

firearms training. Officer 23 has also received cultural awareness training online over the past few years. In examining Officer 23's use-of-force training and experiences, they have been extended across Officer 23's employment in law enforcement.

I concluded that Officer 23's profile supported the attributes that seminal theorists explained caused implicit racial bias. By triangulating the data in Officer 23's semi-structured interview with Officer 23 IAT results, it appeared that Officer 23 had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. A triangulation of some of Officer 23's responses from the semi-structured interview and IAT results are shown in Figure 8.

Officer 31's data for Subquestion A. Officer 31showed a moderate preference for European Americans over African Americans. This result was coded as an implicit racial bias toward African Americans and compared to the data in the predetermined categories of Officer 31's semi-structured interview. The categories included IE, ER, SA, and RF. Officer 31 had 8 responses in IE, 3 responses in ER, 6 responses in RF, and 5 responses in SA. In the subcategory of SA, Officer 31 had 4 responses in Egal. Table 5 shows snippets of Officer 31's responses in each category.

Table 5

Officer 31's Responses Displayed in Thematic Categories

IRB Categories	Officer 31's Statements
IE	"it was multi-racial obviously. As you can imagine…in a metropolitan city. As far as me growing up, up until the age of 18, 19 it was just basically just my race [referring to the ethnicity of community Officer 31 grew up in]"
	"One of the main things was being able to connect, having something in common whether it was having the same interest in sports. Or the

	majority of my friends were actually neighbors [referring to how Officer 23 selected friends]."
ER	"That is something that I started experiencing as I was growing up [referring to experience with racism]."
	"It's sad to say that I think that racism in my personal experience, it's been more among my own race."
SA	"Not personally. I think there is a problem with racism, but as far as being affected by it, I don't believe so. I don't see that with my immediate family. I don't. [referring to currently being affected by racism]."
Egal	"in traffic stops or responding to calls, you know you got to treat everybody with dignity and respect."
	"I think that the vast majority of police officers are out there to protect and serve with dignity. I'm not Saying that there is no bad apples out there"
RF	"I'm a very, very low key type person just in general. That doesn't in mean that I let my guard down. Especially when I was working patrol or when I was working gangs, always being aware [referring to style of policing]."
	"My voice of tone for the most part, depending on the circumstances, because when you are responding to a gang-related type call." "You have to be assertive, make sure you have that command presence because that's part of being a police officer."
	"As a police officer, you use the reasonable amount of force to effect an arrest or overcome resistance depending on the circumstances." "When you have the first encounter and you have a person who is unresponsive or is uncooperative, you try to verbalize." "The situation can escalate to a person being aggressive, combative and or being forced to use lethal force [Referring to using force in police/citizen]."

Note. IRB = Implicit racial bias.

Officer 31's profile denoted the following. Officer 31 grew up in a homogenized community and selected friends based on common interests. Growing up, racial beliefs between White Americans and African Americans were not a racial concern in Officer's 31's household; however, social-economic status was. Officer 31 had experienced

racism, but it was regarding Officer 31's social standing within the community. In other words, Officer 31's racial experience was from Officer 31's ethnic group. Despite what was going on in the community, Officer 31's parents taught Officer 31 and siblings to work hard and treat everyone with dignity and respect. Officer 31's age suggested an understanding of the transformation of the racial tension within the United States. Officer 31 explained that racial tension has not negatively affected Officer 31. Officer 31 has been a police officer for more than 20 years, and a citizen's lack of cooperation would compel Officer 31 to use force. Officer 31has received approximately three or four hours yearly of use-or-force training. This training included practical training and online training that also covered the department's use-of-force policy. Officer 31 explained the amount of use-of-force training depended on an officer's assignment. However, whenever Officer 31 was involved in a law enforcement operation (i.e., serving search warrants), the participating officers would go over the department's use-of-force policy. In examining Officer 31's use-of-force training and experiences, they have been extended across the number of years Officer 31 has been in law enforcement.

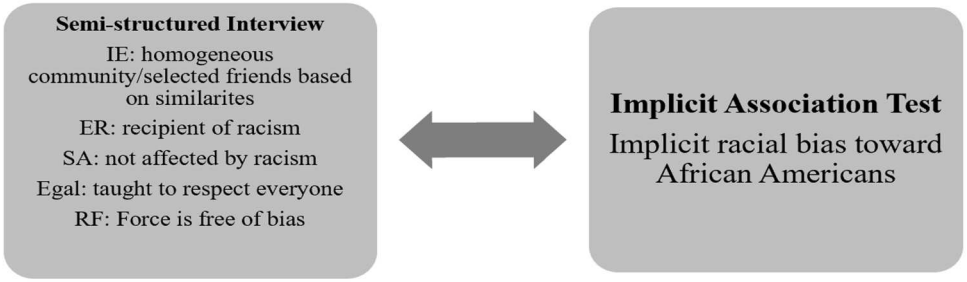

Figure 9. Triangulation of Officer 31's responses. I drew from Microsoft SmartArt. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force.

I concluded that Officer 31's profile, supported the symptoms that seminal theorists suggest caused implicit racial bias. Therefore, a triangulation of Officer 31's semi-structured interview and IAT results indicate that Officer 31 had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Figure 9 shows some of Officer 31's triangulated data.

Officer 35's data for Subquestion A. Officer 35's IAT showed Officer 35 had a moderate preference for European Americans over African Americans. Although the result revealed a moderate preference, I coded it as an implicit racial bias toward African Americans and compared this code to the data listed in the implicit racial bias categories of Officer 35's semi-structured interview. The categories included IE, ER, RF, and Egal. Officer 35 had 8 responses in IE, 3 responses in ER, 4 responses in RF, and 5 responses in Egal. Table 6 below shows a breakdown of some of Officer 35's responses.

Table 6

Officer 35's Responses Displayed in Thematic Categories

IRB Categories	Officer 35's Statements
IE	"White, Hispanic." "Some, Asians." "mostly Caucasians or whites." [referring to the ethnicity of community Officer 31 grew up in]
	"It was talked about. It's always been an issue. We've always known about it and discussed it. It was open, it was discussed freely in the house, so we knew all the aspects of not just one, but could be for anything [anything meant race, religion, gender]"
	"You can't discriminate or anything on one person" "It should be treated as an equal basis is how we were" [referred to what was taught in Officer 35'shousehold]
ER	"We had similar tastes [referring to how Officer 35 selected friends]." "I have, just seen some stuff, you know? And just with the mixture of friends that I had, that you can see sometimes that some people would

	say certain things or as you know as jokes. Or say something, but it was mainly just more of a tease, than anything else. I can kind of see that after a while who would pick on female for this or male for this, right? Asian for this one for just driving, or black for this, or white for something [referring to experience with racism]."
Egal	"I mean, I've always been equal, for lack of a better word, an equal opportunity."
	"Should never really judged by anything. That's one of my main goals I have"
	"Kind of try to treat everybody the same."
	"I based mine on relationships, so more community-based policing is what I've always grown up, and even before a cop, you can't always be like this but I've always tried to be that. You always want to be that nicer cop, because people always get that negative respect on law enforcement [Referring to Officer 35's style of policing]."
RF	"For noncompliance [referring to decision to use force]."
	"Depending on what it is and would dictate the necessary force that we use."

Note. IRB = Implicit racial bias.

Based on the data collected, Officer 35's profile denoted the following. Officer 35 grew up in a multicultural environment. It was comprised of Whites, Asians, and Hispanic individuals, which denoted not a vast exposure to African Americans. Officer 35 selected friends based on similarities. Officer 35's age suggested an understanding of racism and its transformation within the U.S. Officer 35's parents talked about racism in the household and explained that everyone should be equally treated despite race, gender, or religion. Officer 35 has been a police officer for more than 16 years and joined because of personal role models. Officer 35's described Officer 35's style of policing as community-based. In other words, Officer 35 liked to build relationships in the community with all individuals. A lack of compliance would cause Officer 35 to use

force. Officer 35 received use-of-force training yearly; however, Officer 35 conducted more online training as a personal preference. In terms of cultural and bias training, Officer 35 did not feel the department gave enough of this training. Officer 35 was given cultural awareness training at the academy, and specific topics have been discussed over the years during various training sessions. Officer 35's use-of-force training and experiences have extended across Officer 35's employment in law enforcement.

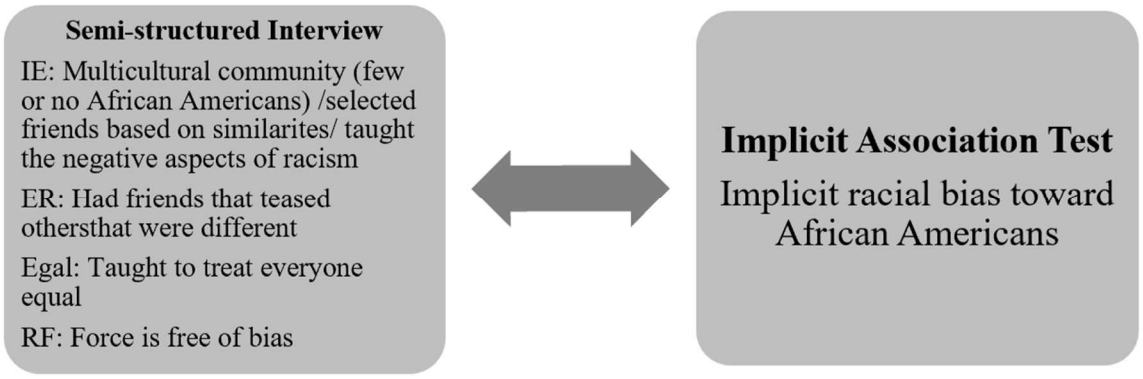

Figure 10. Triangulation of Officer 35's Responses. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; Egal = egalitarian; RF = reaction to force.

I concluded that Officer 35's profile supported the symptoms that seminal theorists explained caused implicit racial bias. As a result, a triangulation of Officer 35's semi-structured interview and IAT results supported the notion that Officer 35 had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Figure 10 shows an image of some of Officer 35's triangulated data.

Officer 40's data for Subquestion A. Officer 40's IAT indicated a slight preference for European Americans over African Americans. This finding was coded as an implicit racial bias toward African Americans and triangulated against the data in the

predetermined implicit racial bias categories of Officer 40's semi-structured interview. The predetermined categories included IE, ER, SA, and RF. Officer 40 had 13 responses in IE, 4 responses in ER, 6 responses in RF, and 1 response in SA. In the subcategory of SA, Officer 40 had 3 responses in Egal. Table 7 shows a few of Officer 40's responses.

Table 7

Officer 40's Responses Displayed in Thematic Categories

IRB Categories	Officer 40's Statements
IE	"The community I would say was together because everyone in the neighborhood knew one another."
	"If someone strange came in an area [referring to the neighborhood] and there was an interpretation that they meant harm to anyone"
	"It started out mostly as black but became multiracial [referring to the ethnicity of community Officer 40 grew up in]"
	"They were for the most part assigned by default of what was available in the neighborhood [referring to how Officer 23 selected friends]."
ER	"excited about the responsibility of being assigned a car every day and going out and chasing bad guys. [referring to the reason Officer 40 chose to become an officer]."
	"I would not say it was from childhood, but that was as I was beginning to mature and gain some degrees of independence and be away from home. So I experienced, and I had an experience, that I interpret to be race based"
SA	"No, I do not think so [referring to currently being affected by racism]."
Egal	"excited about the responsibility of being assigned a car every day and going out and chasing bad guys."

Note. IRB = Implicit racial bias.

Officer 40's profile was as follows. Officer 40 grew up in a homogenized community that later became multiracial. The community members protected themselves from unfamiliar people. Officer 40 selected friends because they resided in the same community. These two factors denote familiarity or a common interest. Officer 40's parents did not teach Officer 40 about racism; however, Officer 40 became a recipient of it as Officer 40 got older became independent. Officer 40's age indicated an understanding of racism and its transformation within the United States. Officer 40 asserted that racial tension in the United States did not negatively affect Officer 40's perceptions. Officer 40 had been in law enforcement for over 20 years and described Officer 40's style of policing as "palpable." Moreover, Officer 40 makes reactive decisions instead of proactive decisions during police/citizen encounters. In other words, Officer 40's use-of-force choices would be free of bias. To this extent, Officer 40 has received approximately 16 to 40 hours of use-of-force training either yearly or every two years. Officer 40 was not certain that Officer 40 has obtained any cultural or bias-related training. In examining Officer 40's use-of-force training and experiences, they have extended across the number of years Officer 40 has been in law enforcement.

When examining Officer 40's profile, the data supported the attributes that implicit bias theorists explained caused implicit racial bias. As a result, a triangulation of Officer 40's profile and IAT result supported the notion that Officer 40 had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Table 11 below shows an image of some of Officer 40's triangulated data.

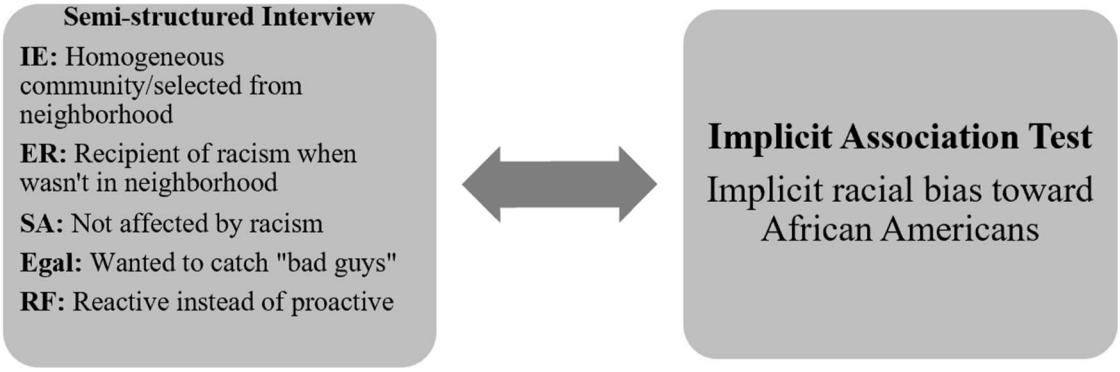

Figure 11. Triangulation of Officer 40's responses. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force.

Results for Subquestion B

Subquestion B was, What implicit bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American male? The ATSS was the primary instrument used to identify if implicit bias perceptions emerged from the police participants. The data from this instrument was weighed against the data from the semi-structured interviews and IATs. The same four police participants, Officer 23, Officer 31, Officer 35, and Officer 40, were used in this examination because of their positive results from their IATs. The following predetermined thematic codes were used for analysis: bias alluding to criminality (BAC), bias alluding to a violent persona (BAVP), action alluding to force (AAF), and non-bias related (NBR). Neither of the four participants provided data that were placed in BAC, BAVP, and AAF. 100% of their data were coded in NBR. However, prior to me giving Officer 40 the ATSS, I was setting up the video and had the video paused on the screen with an image of the African American man standing in the

community. Officer 40 saw the image, and spontaneously stated, “He looks like he doesn’t belong in the neighborhood.” I made a note of this statement and will discuss it when discussing the triangulation of Officer 40’s data. Nevertheless, Table 8 shows a few of the ATSS’ responses from Officers 23, 31, 35, and 40.

Table 8

Participants’ ATSS Responses in Non-Bias-Related Thematic Category

Police Participants	Non-Bias Related Statements
Officer 23	“who was sitting down, and wasn't aggressive [referring to the African American male], the encounter was consensual”
	“I've encountered people like that, and my approach would be different than that officers. I would try to appeal more to, not in a way to where it's creating small talk, and I can ascertain more information”
	“there obviously wasn't a crime being committed, and the situation kept escalating when it shouldn't have got to that level. There should have been, in my opinion, more communication, more patience”
	“I think some additional training is needed from the officer's standpoint”
Officer 31	“Officer, professional, individually initially”
	“Individual extremely uncooperative, officer professional. Obviously, he is there on a legitimate complaint trying to do his investigation. Very uncompliant individual refuses to follow his commands, keeps on walking away. The officer is still very patient.”
	“Officer, in order for him to conclude his investigation and address the radio call, had to handcuff the individual.”
Officer 35	“I'd be concerned about what he's doing there. Who the PR [person reported the compliant] is, what exactly he was doing. Was he knocking on the doors?”
	“I would've contacted some of the neighbors to see if a crime did occur. If he's just walking down the street on a public road, that's not a crime no matter what area.”

	"He's kind of doesn't really want to talk to the law enforcement. And so, which kind of leads me to, he might be doing something in the area."
	"He was uncooperative. Just trying to make a basic stop."
	"My concern was his hands. His hands were going into his waistband quite a few times. So I don't know if there was any other weapons or anything."
	"So I would have enough just to talk to him, to detain him, to see exactly what's going on. If nothing happened, he would be released."
Officer 40	"it does not appear that he is breaking any laws. He is sitting there and he is agitated because he gets up and walks away versus remaining calm, and continues to assert his rights to be there, as I would continue to try to engage in conversation"
	"I would let him just walk away. I have no idea what this could escalate into and I do not have a firm crime or offense that I put my fingers on."
	" I am always looking for that to avoid being in that liability situation where it escalates to something horrible."
	"That is a bit more than what I would have been willing to do on that particular call [referring to handcuffing the African American male]. I would have let the subject just go, because again, I cannot identify a specific crime"

Triangulation of the three data sources. A combination of the participants' responses from the ATSS was compared with their results from the semi-structured interviews and IATs to answer Subquestion B. The triangulation for each officer is as follows.

Officer 23's data for Subquestion B. From the data provided in Officer 23's ATSS, I did not identify any data that alluded to Officer 23 showing that Officer 23 was racially biased against the African American man in the interview. For example, in Table 8, Officer 23's following responses, "Who was sitting down, and wasn't aggressive" and "I would try to appeal more" indicated that Officer 23 did not think the African American

man was a danger or threat. These two comments were made in the Approach Segment of the practicum.

Officer 23 gave the following statements during the Metastases Segment, and they were, “There obviously wasn't a crime being committed” and “There should have been, in my opinion, more communication, more patience” suggested that Officer 23 did not think the African American man was committing a crime, and Officer 23 needed to use patience and communication to resolve the matter. My prior assertion was supported by Officer 23's next statements, “The situation kept escalating when it shouldn't have got to that level" and "additional training is needed from the officer's standpoint. “These statements were made in the Climax Segment, which was synonymous with the point where an officer feels he has to make a decision. These statements showed that Officer 23 did not agree with the Officer's (in the video) decision to handcuff the African American male. When looking at the totality of Officer 23's ATSS responses, it appears that he/she would not have taken any force related actions.

I then compared Officer 23’s ATSS statements with his/her semi-interview responses and IAT result. Although Officer 23’s IAT result and semi-structured interview showed an implicit racial bias toward African Americans, there were some data within the semi-structured interview that possibly supported the notion that Officer 23 would not have used bias related force in the ATSS. For example, in the semi-structured interview, this author looked at Officer 23’s data regarding what might have cause him/her to use force and Officer 23 style of policing. Specifically, I used Officer 23’s responses for questions 11, which is, “What is your style of policing” and question 13,

which is, “In a police/citizen contact, what would cause you to use initiate force?” In each of these statements, Officer 23 indicated that Officer 23 would use force if the citizen were non-compliant after several attempts to relax him, and Officer 23’ style of policing included a “humanistic approach” by educating the citizen about the investigative stop. This evidence was coded under RF, SA, and Egal. Figure 12 shows the triangulation of some of the data from the three resources.

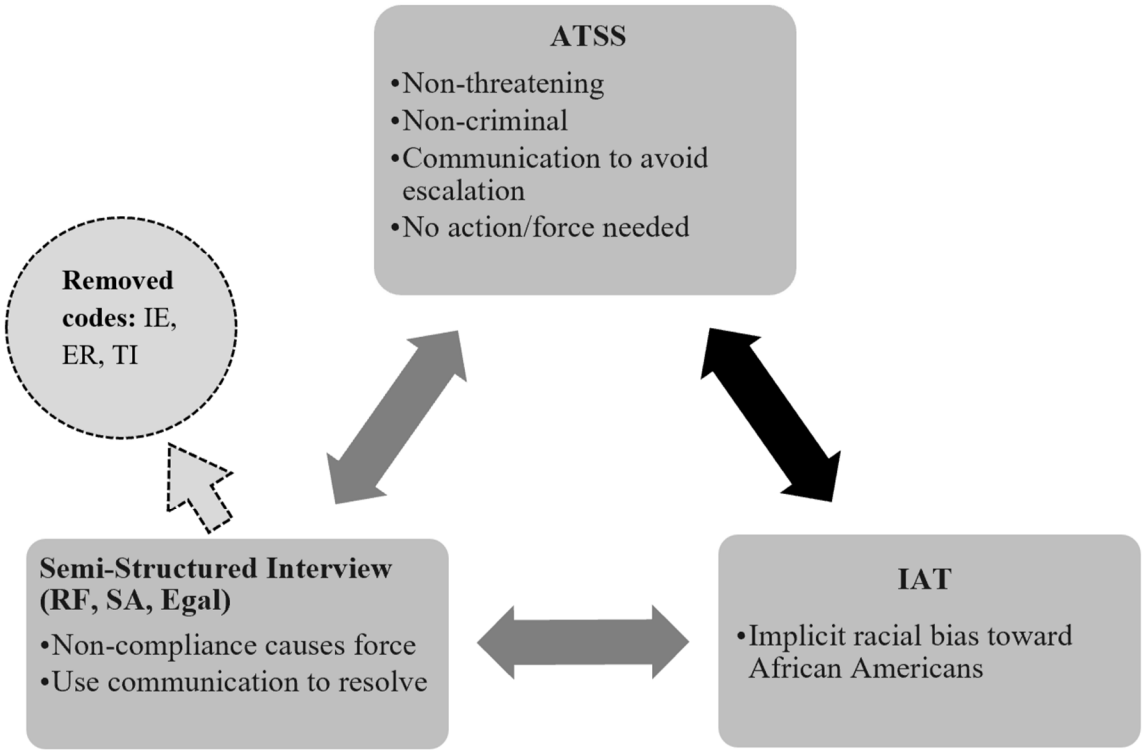

Figure 12. Triangulation of 23's data for Subquestion B. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. ATSS = Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations; IAT = Implicit Association Test; IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian.

The three sources in Figure 12 were semi-structured interview, IAT, and ATSS. The black arrow indicated the flow of data between the ATSS and IAT does not corroborate, and the dark gray arrows indicated the flow of corroborating data from the

IAT, semi-structured interview, and ATSS. However, to effectuate the flow of corroborating data, I extracted codes from categories IE, ER, and TI, which was mentioned at the beginning of this section. The extraction is identified in the gray dotted circle and arrow that emerge from the semi-structured rectangle. In other words, the data from the three resources did not indicate that Officer 23's implicit racial bias perceptions would have emerged and negatively affected his decision to use force during the encounter with the African American male.

Officer 31's data for Subquestion B. Officer's 31's ATSS did not reveal any data that showed Officer 31 would have used biased related force when encountering the African American man. During the Approach Segment, Officer 31 stated, "Officer, professional." This indicated that Officer 31 agreed with the officer's approach in the ATSS video. This inference was supported by some of Officer's 31's responses during the Metastases Segment, which were, "He is there on a legitimate complaint trying to do his investigation" and "The officer is still very patient." These statements suggested that Officer 31 agreed with the officer's approach, and he -- the officer in the video -- initially showed respect toward the African American. Also, during the Metastases Segment, Officer 31 stated, "Individual extremely uncooperative" and "Very uncompliant individual refuses to follow his commands, keeps on walking away." These statements suggest that Officer 31 identified that the African American man was uncooperative, and therefore, Officer 31 might have started to prepare to take some action. And finally, in the Climax Segment, Officer 31 stated, "In order for him to conclude his [referring to the officer in the video] investigation and address the radio call, had to handcuff the

individual.” This statement indicated that Officer 31 would have handcuffed the African American man. Handcuffing is form of force.

Despite the notion that Officer 31 would have handcuffed the African American man and that Officer 31’s IAT showed an implicit racial bias, Officer 31’s actions in the ATSS did not support several pieces of evidence displayed in Officer 31's semi-structured interview. In particular, these pieces of evidence came from Officer 31's responses regarding questions 11 and 13, which asked, What is your style of policing? and “In a police/citizen contact, what would cause you to use initiate force?" For example, some Officer 31's responses were, “I'm a very, very low key type person,” “That doesn't mean that I let my guard down,” “You have to be assertive, make sure you have that command presence because that's part of being a police officer,” “You use the reasonable amount of force to effect an arrest or overcome resistance depending on the circumstances” and “In traffic stops or responding to calls, you know got to treat everybody with dignity and respect.” These pieces of evidence were coded under RF, SA, and Egal. Figure 13 below shows the triangulation of some of the data from the three resources.

Figure 13 shows the triangulation of the three sources, ATSS, IAT, and the Semi-structured interview. The black arrow indicated the flow of data between the ATSS and IAT did not corroborate, and the dark gray arrows indicated the flow of corroborating data from the IAT, semi-structured interview, and ATSS.

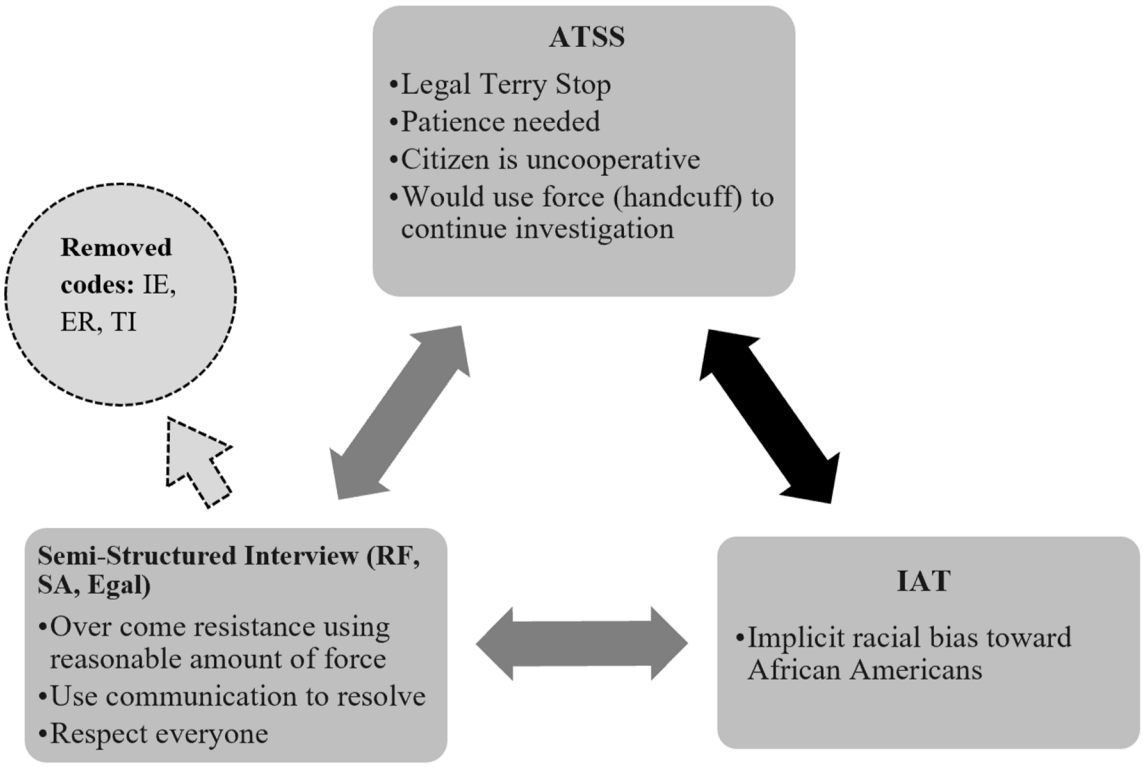

Figure 13. Triangulation of 31's data for Subquestion B. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. ATSS = Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations; IAT = Implicit Association Test; IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; RF = reaction to force; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian.

Nonetheless, to effectuate the flow of corroborating data, I extracted codes from categories IE, ER, and TI as mentioned at the onset of this section. The extraction of codes is denoted in the gray dotted circle and arrow that extends from the Semi-structured rectangle. Specifically, the triangulation of the data showed that although Officer 31 would have taken a use-of-force action in the encounter with the African American, the use-of-force response would have most likely been free of an implicit racial bias perception.

Officer 35's data for Subquestion B. Officer 35's responses revealed that Officer 35 would have possibly used force in the ATSS practicum; however, the evidence

suggested that it would have likely been free of an implicit racial bias perception. For example, Table 7 showed some of Officer 35's ATSS responses. In the table, the answers were haphazardly displayed; however, when I triangulated the data, he used the different segments (i.e. the Approach, Metastases, and Climax) within the ATSS video to arrange the responses. During the Approach Segment, Officer 35 stated, "I'd be concerned about what he's doing there. Who the PR [person reported the compliant] is. Was he knocking on the doors" and "I would've contacted some of the neighbors to see if a crime did occur. If he's just walking down the street on a public road, that's not a crime no matter what area." These statements indicated that Officer 35 would try to legitimize the investigative encounter, and if Officer 35 could not, Officer 35 would not have made the investigative stop.

During the Metastases Segment, Officer 35 stated, "He's kind of doesn't really want to talk to the law enforcement. And so, which kind of leads me to, he might be doing something in the area" and "He was uncooperative. Just trying to make a basic stop." Officer 35 also stated, "My concern was his hands. His hands were going into his waistband quite a few times. So, I don't know if there was any other weapons or anything." A combination of these statements showed that Officer 35 believed that the African American man was probably hiding something because he refused to give identifying information. Because of this lack of cooperation, Officer 35 became cautious about the African American man going inside his waistband area. In the Climax Segment, Officer 35 stated, "So I would have enough just to talk to him, to detain him, to see exactly what's going on. If nothing happened, he would be released." This statement

showed that if Officer 35 developed probable cause, Officer 35 would have used force to detain the African American man, but if not, he would have released him.

Despite Officer 35's possibly using force against the African American man and Officer 35's implicit racial bias, there was evidence in Officer 35's semi-structured interview that indicated Officer 35's decision to use force in the ATSS would likely have not involved an implicit racial bias perception. This evidence came from the officer's responses to questions 11 and 13, which asked, "What is your style of policing" and "In a police/citizen contact, what would cause you to use initiate force?" Some of the responses to these questions were listed in Table 7. Additionally, a few of Officer 31's responses were, "I based mine on relationships, so more community-based policing," "For non-compliance," and "Depending on what it is and would dictate the necessary force that we use." These pieces of evidence were coded under RF, SA, and Egal. Figure 14 shows the triangulation of some of the data from the three resources.

Figure 14 shows the triangulation of the three sources, ATSS, IAT, and the Semi-structured interview. The black arrow indicates the flow of data between the ATSS and IAT does not corroborate, and dark gray arrows indicate the flow of corroborating data from the IAT, semi-structured interview, and ATSS. Nevertheless, I had to removed codes IE and ER to allow the flow of corroborating data between the three sources of data. The triangulation of Officer 35's data showed that if Officer 35 had used force to temporarily detain the African American man, the force would have likely been free of an implicit racial.

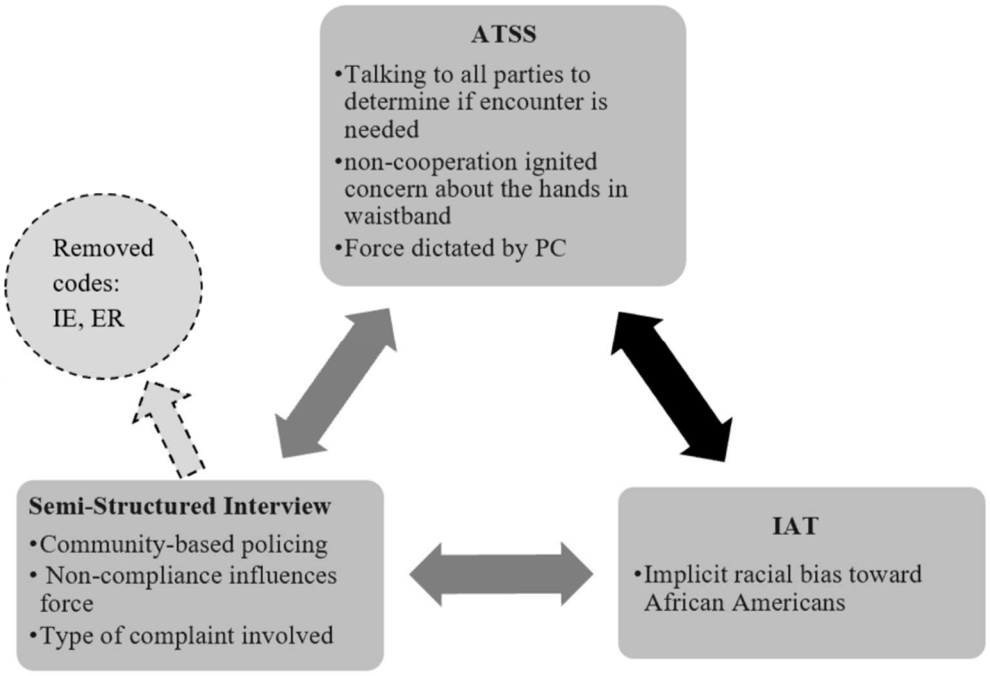

Figure 14. Triangulation of 35's data for Subquestion B. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. ATSS = Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations; IAT = Implicit Association Test; IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian.

Officer 40's data for Subquestion B. The data provided in Officer 40's ATSS did not reflect any responses that revealed any implicit racial bias perceptions. An example of some of Officer 40 data that were also included in Table 7, were as follows. During the Approach Segment, Officer 40 stated, "It does not appear that he is breaking any laws" and "continues to assert his rights to be there." Based on these statements, Officer 40 acknowledged the African American man might not have broken the law and had a right to be agitated. This notion is supported by the following statements: "He is sitting there, and he is agitated because he gets up" and "I would continue to try to engage in conversation." These statements indicated that Officer 40 identified a resistance from the African American man, but Officer 40 would try to use verbal communications to calm

the situation. In the Metastases Segment, Officer 40 stated, “I would let him just walk away,” “I do not have a firm crime,” “I have no idea what this could escalate into,” and “I am always looking for that [referring to an applicable law] to avoid being in that liability situation.” Collectively, these statements suggested that Officer 40 did not believe a crime was violated and, as such, Officer 40 would have allowed the African American man to walk away. In other words, the police/citizen encounter would have ended when the African American man walked away. This proposition is further supported by Officer 40’s statements in the Climax Segment, which are, “That is a bit more than what I would have been willing to do on that particular call [referring to handcuffing the African American man]” and “I would have let the subject just go, because again, I cannot identify a specific crime.” These statements deduce that Officer 40 disagreed with the Officer’s action in the video; therefore, indicating that Officer 40 would not have used any force.

Officer 40’s ATSS statements were triangulated with Officer 40 semi-interview responses and IAT result. Although Officer 40’s IAT result showed an implicit racial bias toward African Americans and the answers in Officer 40’s semi-structured interview supported the bias, there were some data within the semi-structured interview that validated the notion that Officer 40 would not have used any implicit racial bias-related force in the ATSS. For example, in the semi-structured interview, I focused on Officer 40’s responses regarding what might cause Officer 40 to use force and what was Officer 40’s style of policing. In other words, this evidence came from questions 11 and 13, which asked, “What is your style of policing” and “In a police/citizen contact, what

would cause you to use initiate force?" Regarding the use-of-force question, Officer 40 stated, "The person's behavior would cause me to initiate that force. I am going to always be reactive as opposed to aggressive when it comes to interacting with members of the public." This statement also aligned with Officer 40's style, which Officer 40 described in the following manner, "It is palpable," "No other officer either would agitate the situation," "Letting nature unfold on its own," and "When it comes to enforcement for instance, I would say I am reactive on enforcement." These statements denoted that Officer 40 did not allow other officers to dictate how Officer 40 responded to situations, and Officer 40 does not over-react to the citizen's behavior. These responses and other responses were coded under RF, SA, and Egal. Figure 15 shows the triangulation of some of the data from the three resources.

Figure 15 shows the triangulation of some of the data among the three sources. The dark gray arrows indicate the flow of corroborating data from the IAT, semi-structured interview, and ATSS. I had to removed codes IE and ER to allow the flow of corroborating data between the three sources of data. However, the black arrow indicates that there was no flow of data between the ATSS and IAT. Therefore, the triangulation between the three sources suggests that although Officer 40 has an implicit racial bias toward African Americans, Officer 40 would not have taken any use-of-force action against the African American man in the ATSS video.

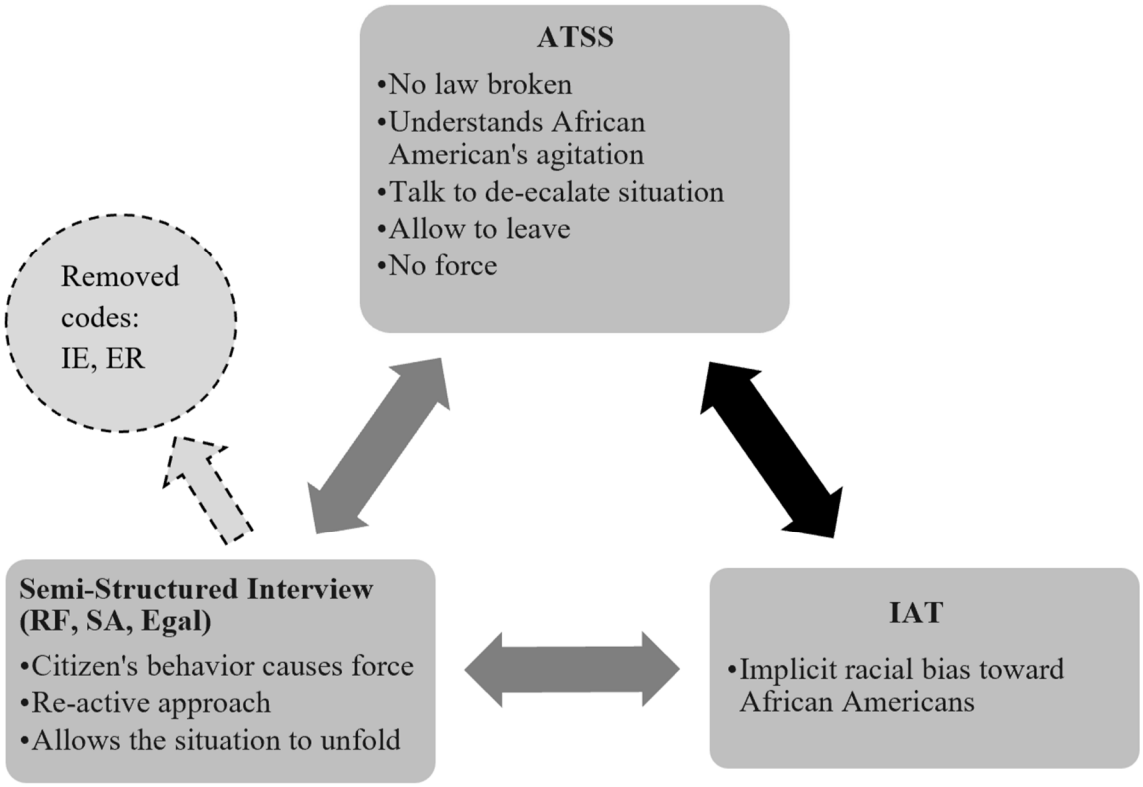

Figure 15. Triangulation of 40's data for Subquestion B. I created the figure using Microsoft SmartArt. ATSS = Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations; IAT = Implicit Association Test; IE = influenced by environment; ER = exposure to racism; TI = true innocence; RF = reaction to force; SA = self-awareness; Egal = egalitarian.

Discrepant Cases

According to the IAT results, 43% of the participants did not have an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Despite not having this bias, I coded and analyzed the participants in the same manner as I did the other participants in the 57th percentile. Officer 7, Officer 14, and Officer 25 made up the remaining 43%. I provide the findings of these officers in a collective manner. In these officers' semi-structured interviews, they all exhibited symptoms of implicit racial bias perceptions. For example, these officers grew up in homogenized communities and selected their friends based on similarities.

Officers 7, 14 and 25 were not taught anything about racism in their households, but have been recipients of indirect or direct racism. Additionally, these participants' ages were indicative of them experiencing the transition of racism in the U.S. Regarding Officer 7, 14, and 25's ATSS responses, the data from Officers 14 and 25 were not ambiguous and were coded under NBR. Officer 7's responses were ambiguous but also coded under NBR.

Officer 14's data analyzed. During the Approach Segment, Officer 14 stated, "I think the officer approached very well. I think what I would have asked if I could see one of the flyers. Just so information that I have to see what he was asking about" and "I understand that he's not violated any rules, but they did have an ordinance and that maybe he wasn't aware of that in the neighborhood, so I would have schooled him on that." During the Metastases Segment, Officer 14 stated, "I think the officer should have asked him to keep his hands where he could see him and not put them underneath his jacket. That raises my suspicion that he's either hiding something, concealing something or is going to try and hurt me. I've already given him a lawful order to stop and he hasn't done that." And during the Climax Segment, Officer 14 stated, "I think the officer has given him plenty of time to identify himself to stop what he's doing, to obey a lawful order, to give the information to the officer that he's asking for" and "The officer's decision to put hands on him and put him in cuffs to make sure they were both safe is a good idea. The individual kept putting his hands in his jackets and in his pockets."

Based on Officer 14's responses, Officer 14 believed that the investigative stop was legal, and the African American man's lack of willingness to comply with orders

raised Officer 14's level of suspicions as the African American man put his hands in his waistband several times. Moreover, the African American man's behavior would have resulted in Officer 14 handcuffing him to complete the investigation. The lingering question in the analysis of Officer 14's responses was whether Officer 14's decision would be free of an implicit racial bias perception. I surmised the answer pendulated on Officer 14's IAT result, which indicated Officer 14 did not have an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Therefore, it would appear that if Officer 14 had used force, it would have been free of an implicit racial bias perception.

Officer 25's data analyzed. During the Approach Segment, Officer 25 stated, "How do you know that this is what ... Because he was just sitting at a curve" and "He wasn't handing out a flier. I didn't see any flier on his hand. The approach could be a bit different." During the Metastases Segment, Officer 25 stated, "I feel the officer's approach could have been more friendlier and be more inquisitive, and he probably would not escalate it in such a manner" and "He probably could get more information out of this citizen to be more cooperative." During the Climax Segment, Officer 25 stated, "He has no right to detain him. Just let the guy walked away." I surmised from these responses that Officer 25 would not have used force. A triangulation on Officer 25's ATSS and IAT data validated each other.

Officer 7's data analyzed. Officer 7's ATSS responses were not as apparent as the other officers. During the Approach Segment, Officer 7 stated, "He seems like he's being targeted because of the way he looks, the neighborhood" and "So it's probably somewhere and in an affluent community and they think because he also doesn't fit it." In

the Metastases Segment, Officer 7 stated, “The gentleman being questioned has stuff that’s suspicious or is out of character,” “He hides the documents he was passing out inside his jacket and seen fidgeting and with the waistband,” “He became argumentative right away,” and “Just to stop and then there was a guy walking a dog and he didn’t seem to be faced with the weather.” In the Climax Segment, Officer 7 stated, “The thing that stuck out the most was there was no respect” and “It looked like the young man didn’t have any respect for not only authority but just for the elders.” Officer 7 also stated, “His actions made it seem like he was doing something wrong by hiding” and “His jacket seemed too thick for the weather, hiding, kept reaching for his pockets that could have all been avoided just by showing little respect.”

Throughout Officer 7’s ATSS practicum, Officer 7 made comments about the surrounding community and the African American male’s attire. Officer 7 did not state if Officer 7 would use force. However, the feedback regarding the African American man becoming argumentative and putting his hands in his waistband area might suggest that Officer 7 would use force. Nonetheless, just like in the analysis of Officer 14’s responses, the lingering question for Officer 7’s responses was whether Officer 7’s decision to use force would be free of an implicit racial bias perception. I surmised the answer focused on Officer 7’s IAT result, which indicated Officer 7 did not have an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. Therefore, it would appear that if Officer 7 used force, it would have been free of an implicit racial bias perception.

Summary

The RQ was, What, if any, implicit racial bias perceptions surface among a small sample of experienced police officers when they are confronted with a possible use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American man? To address this question, Subquestions A and B were answered. Subquestion A was, Do the police officers have an implicit racial bias, and Subquestion B was, What implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from the officers when they are faced with a possible use-of-force decision during a simulated encounter with an African American man?

Regarding Subquestion A, 57% of the participants showed to have an implicit racial bias toward African Americans. The IATs were used as the primary instrument to identify these participants, and the semi-structured interviews were used for triangulation to support the IATs. Forty-three percent of the participants did not have an implicit racial bias against African Americans. Regarding Subquestion B, the officers in the 57th percentile did not have an implicit racial bias perception emerge when they faced an African American male during a simulated encounter.

In Chapter 5, I will provide an in-depth interpretation of the research findings and how these findings related to the literature in Chapter 2. I will also discuss how these findings could affect social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to describe what implicit racial bias perceptions emerge from a small sample of experienced officers when the officers were confronted with a use-of-force decision during an encounter with an African American male. To achieve this endeavor, I administered a three-phased interview process, which included a semi-structured interview, IAT, and ATSS practicum, to 7 sworn and experienced police officers who were from a medium-size police department in California. The semi-structured interviews, IATs, and ATSS practicums were given in tandem on the same day. The data from each of these sources were analyzed independently and coded according to preestablished themes and triangulated with the other sources of data. These findings were then analyzed across all participants for an inclusive finding as to whether racial bias perceptions emerge during possible use-of-force encounter with an African American man.

The findings showed that 57% of the participants had an implicit racial bias against African Americans. However, the evidence indicated that no implicit racial bias perceptions emerged from the small sample of officers when faced a use-of-force decision involving an African American man. In this chapter, I will provide an interpretation of the findings, discuss the limitations of this study, offer recommendations for future research, and consider the relevance of the outcomes for social change.

Interpretation of the Findings

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 described how the study of police use-of-force and racism has evolved into the belief that an implicit racial bias might influence

police officers' decisions to use force (Weir, 2016). Consequently, police administrators have started implementing the constructs of the implicit bias model within their departments as a way to minimize racially perceived use-of-force actions. However, a growing number of researchers have conducted studies because of their uncertainties in the findings that support the ideology that explain implicit racial bias influence officers' decisions to use force (Fridell & Lim, 2016). The majority of the past studies that attempted to explain this phenomenon were conducted using extrinsic methods (Smith et al., 2017). In contrast, I used an intrinsic method to examine this phenomenon through a microscopic view. In this section, I offer my interpretation of the study findings.

Findings Related to Implicit Racial Bias Model

I used the implicit racial bias model as a conceptual framework for this study. Regarding the implicit racial bias model, researchers have asserted that implicit racial bias is innate and that officers might garner it but not espouse the bias until confronted with a use-of-force situation (Hutchinson, 2014). In this study, I found that 57% of participants had an implicit racial bias toward African Americans, based on their responses to the IATs. The responses from the semi-structured interviews supported these results. More pointedly, for each participant, the IATs indicated whether the participant had an implicit racial bias. The questions from the semi-structured interview open-ended questions focused on the symptoms that seminal theorists have postulated cause implicit racial bias. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, researchers have identified that implicit racial bias is innate and is cultivated by macro and micro environments (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). Researchers have also explained that implicit racial bias could be

obtained through various experiences. Questions such as, “What year were you born?” “How was your neighborhood? (Was it multicultural?),” “What were your friends like? (what were their ethnicities, and how did you select them?),” and “Growing up, how was racism viewed in your household?” provided insight on each participant’s life experiences and whether these experiences contributed to who he or she was as current police officer.

As mentioned, 57% of the participants were identified as having an implicit racial bias. The perceptions of the remaining 43% were harder to identify. I gave each participant the semi-structured interview with the same questions. From an initial observation and with research showing that implicit racial bias is innate and cultivated (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016), all of the participants’ responses contained evidence of these actions. That is, 100% of the participants explained that they grew up in a homogenized community, they selected friends who were of their ethnicity, and they had all experienced racism either directly or indirectly. However, their ages and the amount of exposure to racism might have been the catalysts that caused the differences in their IAT results. My rationale for this accretion came Chapter 2, where I discussed the shift in the explicit racial bias that the citizens in the United States experienced. As mentioned, in the late 1960s, the despicable images of police brutality displayed in the media were thought to have been a change agent for reducing racism in the United States (Nimtz, 2016). The mean age of the participants was 47 years old. These officers were born on the outskirt of the Civil Rights Movement. Their ages indicated that participants had experienced the most challenging times in the United States in terms of racism. Also,

their years in police work indicated that they were a product of change after the police attacked Rodney King. Knowing that all the participants grew up in the same manner, during the same time frame, I wondered why the participants in the 43rd percentile--Officer 7, Officer 14, and Officer 25--did not show an implicit racial bias toward African Americans as the participants in the 57th percentile did. Specifically, Officers 7 and 14 showed a slight bias for African Americans over European Americans, and Officer 25 showed no preference for European Americans over African Americans.

Findings Related to Street-Level Bureaucratic Model

I used the street-level bureaucratic model as a supporting framework for this research. Because law enforcement officers operate with autonomy and discretion, I thought it would be necessary to see what, if any, bias perceptions emerged during a possible contentious encounter with an African American male. The ATSS practicum contained a video of an officer dispatched to a neighborhood to investigate a suspicious complaint that involved a possible violation of a solicitation ordinance. Fifty-seven percent of the participants said that there was no law broken and, as such, no force would be taken. Twenty-nine percent said that a possible crime was afoot, and because of the lack of cooperation from the African American male, they would detain him to conduct the investigation properly. Fourteen percent did not mention whether the law was broken but made reference to the African American male putting his hands in his waistband area. Despite the varying responses, 86% of the participants used their perceptions of the law to dictate how they would approach and handle the investigation. Each of the participants made a statement that referenced the law in the Approach Segment, which refers to the

discussion of the Terry Stop in Chapter 2. This type of real data, in comparison to the lack of implicit racial bias in the participants' use-of-force actions, might reveal some other cause of force.

Findings Related to Reaction to Force

In Chapter 4's "Results" section, I discussed the development of the thematic code, Reaction to Force (RF). Briefly stated, 86% of the participants offered that a citizen's lack of cooperation would lead them to use force. This theme supports the findings of researchers James et al. (2018), who explained that prior implicit bias studies produced contradicting results because of certain mitigating variables that were left out of the equation, especially the unwillingness of an African American to comply with lawful commands. James et al. also echoed these findings and explained in their study that officers did not use force because of racism; they used it because of the aggressive behavior presented by the African Americans.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation dealt with my using the qualitative research method to explore the possible implicit bias perceptions in police officers. This research method involves the researcher's interpretations of the findings and should be free of biases (Maxwell, 2017). To prevent my biases from affecting the outcome of the findings, I wrote reflective journals to discuss some of the data as I coded it. Additionally, I used NVivo to analyze and sort data, and I consulted with peers to ensure the accuracy of the coding. I also created an interview tool that asked open-ended questions that produced nonambiguous data. In other words, the questions aligned with the research questions.

The next limitation I dealt with was making sure the participants gave accurate data. At the onset of this research, I thought about this issue and implemented strategies that included triangulating the data among the three data sources. I also arranged the way I administered the three data sources to the participants to minimize them provide embellished information. For example, first, I administered the semi-structured interviews to draw out natural data. I did not want the IAT or the ATSS practicum to influence this information. Then, I administered the IAT to break up the participants' thinking process. I thought by putting it between the semi-structured interviews and the ATSS practicums, it would prevent the participants from using the contents from the interviews to provide favorable responses in the practicums.

The final limitation I dealt with involved the trustworthiness of the IAT and ATSS results. In Chapter 2, I explained that these instruments had preexisting challenges regarding their ability to produce valid data. However, as of 2014, over 14 million studies have included IATs (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016), and the ATSS--although a newer instrument-- has been used in several complicated research studies. Because the challenges in validity, I conducted triangulation among the data sources to produce trustworthy data (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Recommendations

In the underlined study, I explored the interaction between an officer and an African American man during a contentious investigative stop. I wanted to identify if an implicit racial bias perception emerged and influenced the officers' decision to use force. Taking this naturalistic approach was the gap in the literature. To this extent, I

recommend that future research use more intrinsic investigations to determine if racism plays a role in officers' use-of-force decisions. I believe by using intrinsic investigations would provide an in-depth understanding of what officers feel, see, and understand at the time they decide to use force.

Although I created secure research venue to express their thoughts, the recruitment of a police department and officers was difficult. I believe a reason for this difficulty was that the qualitative strategies I used were intimate and revealing. However, I believe this is the information researchers need to address the racially perceived use of force. An ice-breaking question that I asked participants at the beginning of their interviews was, "How do you feel right now?" The common answer was that they felt nervous. In the closing statements, I asked them how they felt about their participation in the interviews, and the typical response was that the questions made them "think about things. The participants also stated they thought the semi-structured interview, IAT and ATSS were good instruments for researching the phenomenon.

My next recommendation would be to use the grounded theory to identify new themes that might arise from the encounter between the police and an African American. There are very few studies that have obtained this in-depth information. I used the phenomenology design, implicit racial bias model, street-level bureaucracy model, and the directed content analysis to extract the data from the participants. I believed these steps were essential to identify if officers had implicit racial bias perceptions that emerged when they were confronted with a less cooperative African American man. Although my research was a pre-emptive step, and it produced salient information, the

design narrowed the focus to racism. The ground theory would give a researcher an open design to obtain more unsolicited themes (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).

The final recommendation would be to examine police use-force with a nexus to emotional intelligence. This recommendation stems from the findings of this underlined study and the belief that reducing implicit racial bias in officers might be a difficult task (Spencer et al., 2016). Moreover, the underlined study indicated that some participants had an implicit racial bias and the remaining participants did not. It also indicated that the participants' discretions and autonomy produced a difference in how they handled the simulated complaint. As such, police work is a difficult job that involves requires officers to maintain emotional stability while controlling and investigating ambiguous situations (Smith (2009). Therefore, I believe that the officers should be aware of their emotions to possible help them prevent situations under their control from escalating. If the situations escalate, they can apply only the amount of force necessary to gain compliance.

Implications

The repercussions of malign use-of-force by the police against African Americans are historic, and they have scorned the relationship between the police and the public. Researchers have postulated that racially motivated police brutality in the United States has improved (Chapman, 2012); however, officers might harbor implicit racial biases that sway their decisions to use force against African Americans (Weir, 2016). Past research regarding this phenomenon has espoused contradicting findings as to whether implicit racial bias causes officers to use force. Currently, police administrators are implementing implicit racial bias into the governance of their agencies (Whitfield, 2019). However,

there is contradicting research showing that implicit racial bias might not be the cause of police use-of-force. If police administrators and public leaders continue to use implicit racial bias and it is not the culprit, I surmise that no changes between the police and the African American community will occur. Because of this doubt, the evidence from the underlined study will help advance social change. The most significant contribution would be that it serves as a research foundation that included a naturalistic approach that attempted to garner police officers' implicit racial bias perceptions during an investigative stop with an African American man. From the small sample of participants. I determined that some officers had an implicit racial bias; however, it appeared that the bias did not affect their use-of-force decisions. This information is essential for social change because the findings can support additional research regarding this phenomenon, which will get researchers closer to the truth.

Another contribution would be that I met with the police participants and discussed their up-bring, experiences, and how they see themselves. Specifically, the underlined study gave these officers a voice. I hope that by showing the willingness of these officers to participate in this study, their willingness will inspire other departments and officers to participate in similar studies. Just as Henwood and Pidgeon (1994) explained, the field of behavioral sciences can push beyond extrinsic knowledge if individuals can provide information based on their experiences. By obtaining this information, researchers can get factual data that will help identify whether racism is a factor of use-of-force decisions. Once that knowledge is reobtained, police departments

can begin working on amenable solutions, which might ultimately help departments build working relationships with the communities they serve.

Conclusion

To develop policies and procedures that will prevent racial perceived brutality by police toward African Americans, academics must determine if the force is racially motivated. In other words, if a police excessive force situation happened, did the officer's decision to use force include racial intent? For example, Fingert (2020) reported that Mobile Police Officer Blake Duke was under investigation by the police department for using excessive force against an African American man, Howard Green, Jr. Officer Duke, who was a White man, arrested and handcuffed Green for three active warrants. As Officer Duke walked Green to the patrol car, Green spit in Officer Duke's face. A recorded image showed Officer Duke pushing Green into the patrol car and placing him in a chokehold. In this instance, did Officer Duke have a racial intent when he used this excessive force, or did he let his emotions influence his actions? Despite Officer Duke's motives, the incident was viewed as racially motivated. In the aftermath, Mobile Police Chief Lawrence Battiste stated, "Our goal is to gather all of the facts and then, of course, hold those individuals within our de0partment, if there were policy violations, accountable for their behavior" (Fingert, para. 8, 2020). To assist Chief Battiste and others police officials with future situations such as this, researchers must obtain an understanding of these officers' experiences directly before they use force. This information would be vital because it would reveal if officers need cultural training, use-

of-force training, policy training, emotional intelligence training, or if police administrators need to reevaluate their departments hiring processes.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions for Phase 1

Upbringing and Background

1. What year were you born?
2. What is your ethnicity?
3. Where did you spend most of your childhood?
4. How was your neighborhood?
    a. What was its spirit like?
    b. Was it multi-racial?
5. What were your friends like?
    a. What was the ethnicity of your friends growing up?
    b. How did you choose your friends?
6. Growing up, how was racism viewed in your household?
    a. What were you taught about it?
    b. How did you feel about it?
7. What was your experience with racism?
    a. Directly (self-exposed)?
    b. Indirectly (exposed through third party, i.e. friend, family, media, etc.)?
8. How do you think racism personally affects you today?

Lived Experiences as a Police Officer

9. What made you want to become a police officer?
10. How long have you been in law enforcement?
11. What is your police style?

12. How much use-of-force training do you receive yearly?
    a. How about bias and cultural training?
13. In a police/citizen contact, what would cause you to initiate force?
    a. Why?
14. How do you feel when you see, through media outlets or in person, racially-charged police brutality?

Appendix B: Instructions for the Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations

The video that you are about to see involves the actual body camera footage of an investigative encounter between a police officer and a citizen. I have carefully selected this footage because it reflects an investigative encounter that most police officers have experienced. The video is divided into three 2-minute segments that are labeled as the Approach Segment, Metastases Segment, and Climax Segment. Each of these segments will require that you only view it, and it will end with a blank screen that contains a prompt that tells you to begin thinking aloud (speaking) after you hear a single beep and stop when you hear two beeps. Each think-aloud session will last 30 seconds. Following the 30-second sessions, there will be blank screens that contain prompts that instruct you to get ready to focus because the video segments are about to begin. This prompt will state, "Standby! The scenario is about to continue!" The scenario will automatically begin several seconds after these prompts.

As you look at each video segment, superimpose yourself into the situation. Assess the environment and people as you would if you were in a typical police setting. Remember, I am interested in how you see things based on your perception as an expert. There is no right or wrong answer. In the think-aloud session that follows each video segment, please continue talking aloud in a clear manner. Do not say which party you feel is right or wrong. But, say the first things that come to your mind. Your statements do not have to make complete sentences, and try not to explain what you say, speak freely. Please continue to talk for thirty seconds. If you are silent for an extended period, I will instruct you to keep talking. Act as though I am not in the room. I am only here for

technical difficulties and to prompt you if you are silent during the think-aloud sessions.

Do you have any questions? Are you ready to begin?

Appendix C: Implicit Association Test Stimuli Citation and Approval

Nicole@projectimplicit.net Tue, May 14, 2019
11:05a.m. (10 days ago)

Hi Billy,

Thanks for reaching out!

There is no permission needed to use an IAT in research – only proper citation is needed. Similarly, there is no permission necessary for researchers to use the stimuli from our website. The stimuli and appropriate citation can be found here: http://projectimplicit.net/nosek/stimuli/.

Best,
Nicole
Program Manager
Project Implicit
nicole@projectimplicit.net

Appendix D: Overview of Implicit Association Test and Instructions

Nosek et al. (2007) provided the following overview of the IAT on the Harvard Implicit Project website (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html) that I read verbatim to the participants upon them participating in Phase 2 of this research:

> People don't always say what's on their minds. One reason is that they are unwilling. For example, someone might report smoking a pack of cigarettes per day because they are embarrassed to admit that they smoke two. Another reason is that they are unable. A smoker might truly believe that she smokes a pack a day, or might not keep track at all. The difference between being unwilling and unable is the difference between purposely hiding something from someone and unknowingly hiding something from yourself.
>
> The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report. The IAT may be especially interesting if it shows that you have an implicit attitude that you did not know about. For example, you may believe that women and men should be equally associated with science, but your automatic associations could show that you (like many others) associate men with science more than you associate women with science.
>
> We hope you have been able to take something of value from the experience of taking one or more of these tests. The links above will provide more information about the IAT and implicit attitudes; we will periodically update the information to reflect our current understanding of the unconscious roots of thought and feeling. (Nosek et al., 2007)

Nosek, B., Smyth, F., Hansen, J., Devos, T., Lindner, N., Ranganath, T., Olson, K., Chugh, D., Greenwald, A., & Banaji, M. (2007). Pervasiveness and correlates of implicit attitudes and stereotypes. *European Review of Social Pyschology, 18*. 36-88.