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Perceived Barriers to Minority Female Recruitment and Retention in Law Enforcement

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Abstract

Perceived Barriers to Minority Female Recruitment and Retention in Law Enforcement

by

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Walden University

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Abstract

Representative bureaucracy indicates that police agencies should reflect the communities they serve to improve public perception of the agencies. An underrepresented population in U.S. law enforcement is minority females. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore participants' lived experiences regarding perceived barriers to the recruitment and retention of minority females in U.S. law enforcement agencies. The study used theories of representative bureaucracy and intersectionality as frames. Data were collected from 15 survey responses and semi-structured interviews with minority female officers from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. The data analysis included contingency tables and descriptive statistics. The findings revealed 5 core themes: motivation, evaluation, transformation, discrimination, and obstacles. Findings may be used to improve strategies for the recruitment and retention of minority females in U.S. law enforcement.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the minority female law enforcement officers nationwide who paved the way, especially those in recruiting and the academy. Thank you for all of your hard work and commitment to recruitment and retention in a turbulent world. Remember that every time you advantage one person, you disadvantage another. Treat people fairly and equitably. Fairly does not necessarily mean the same.

Ubuntu “I am because we are.”

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my dissertation committee who supported me during this extensive journey. Who stressed the importance of producing quality work, and pushed me to work harder. In addition to my committee, I am grateful to have had parents who instilled in me the value of education. Thank you to my family, immediate and extended, for willingly bearing with me so that I could dedicate time to work on my dissertation. To my husband and children, you have always challenged me to become better at everything that I choose to do, yet have always accepted me as I am.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In the United States, minorities and females have advanced during the last four decades in the field of law enforcement (Stroshine & Brandl, 2011); the percentage of females in law enforcement increased from 5% in 1987 to 12% in 2013 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2013). Likewise, minority officers increased from 9% in 1987 to 12% in 2013 (BLS, 2013). Despite these gains, minority females in law enforcement have not increased at the same rate as females or minorities in the general population (Greene, 2000; J.M. Wilson, 2011; J.M. Wilson & Grammich, 2009).

Studies that addressed females in law enforcement have not contained a significant sample of minorities (Bolton, 2003; Haarr, 1997; Yu, 2014). Bolton (2003) and Dodge and Pogrebin (2000) posited that studies of minority females in law enforcement have concentrated on Black females. Limited studies have focused on minority females in law enforcement (Del Carmen, Greene, Nation, & Osho, 2007; McMurray & Karim, 2008; Natarajan, 2008). The National Center for Women in Policing (Harrington, 2000b) and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (Reaves, 2015) indicated a downturn in the number of law enforcement applicants nationwide. Nashville police experienced a 60% decline in applications from 4,700 in 2010 to 1,900 in 2017 (BLS, 2016). A Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) survey of 400 police departments nationwide revealed a 66% decrease in police applicants (PERF, 2019). Black applicants are deterred by family members from becoming police officers. In the same study agencies "reported special challenges recruiting minority, female, and bilingual officers" (PERF, 2019). Law enforcement

agencies are confronted with recruiting and retaining qualified minority female applicants.

The recent statistical trend suggested that the level of female and minority officers may have plateaued (Harrington, 2000a; Kringen, 2014). This trend could be attributed to the inability of law enforcement agencies to hire and retain females and minorities to keep up with attrition. The research indicated that obstacles exist that contribute to the stagnation of the entrance of minorities and females into law enforcement. Authors mentioned racial discrimination, testing instruments, officer selection, a perception of law enforcement, and competition among agencies as hindrances to the recruitment of minorities (Ho, 2005; Perrott, 1999; Waters, Hardy, Delgado, & Dahlmann, 2007). Studies also indicated obstacles such as sexual harassment, disparate treatment, hostile work environments, and racial and sexual discrimination (J. M. Wilson, 2011; C.P. Wilson, S.A. Wilson, Luthar, & Bridges, 2013) to the retention of minorities and females. A few identified barriers to the recruitment and retention of females were the written exam, physical agility test, sexual and gender harassment, discrimination, retaliation, childcare issues, and flexible work options (Kringen, 2014; Perrine, 2009).

Changing demographics necessitate the recruitment of an adequate number of diverse law enforcement officers. The increase in recent decades of racial, ethnic, and immigration populations makes diversity commonplace in communities. Law enforcement must represent the multicultural communities they serve to meet the crucial demands of policing. Law enforcement agencies should seek to reach candidates from diverse communities to serve the emerging multicultural populations. Pfefferle and

Gibson (2010) stated “a diverse workforce can increase trust and engagement among the broader population in need of services” (p. 1).

Enhancing the community perception of the organization, recruitment, and retention of minorities and females who reflect the community is essential for law enforcement agencies. People within communities like encountering someone with whom they can connect and by whom they can be understood. However, the number of female and minority officers has not increased at the same rate as females or minorities within the general population (Greene, 2000; Harrington, 2000b; Kringen, 2014; J.M. Wilson, 2011; J.M. Wilson & Grammich, 2009). An objective of the current study was to explore an innovative selection process for the recruitment and retention of minority female officers in law enforcement agencies. The intent of the study was to understand why and how minority females overcome encountered barriers and joined law enforcement. The results (see Figure 1) may be used to retain minority females within the ranks and aid in future law enforcement recruitment efforts.

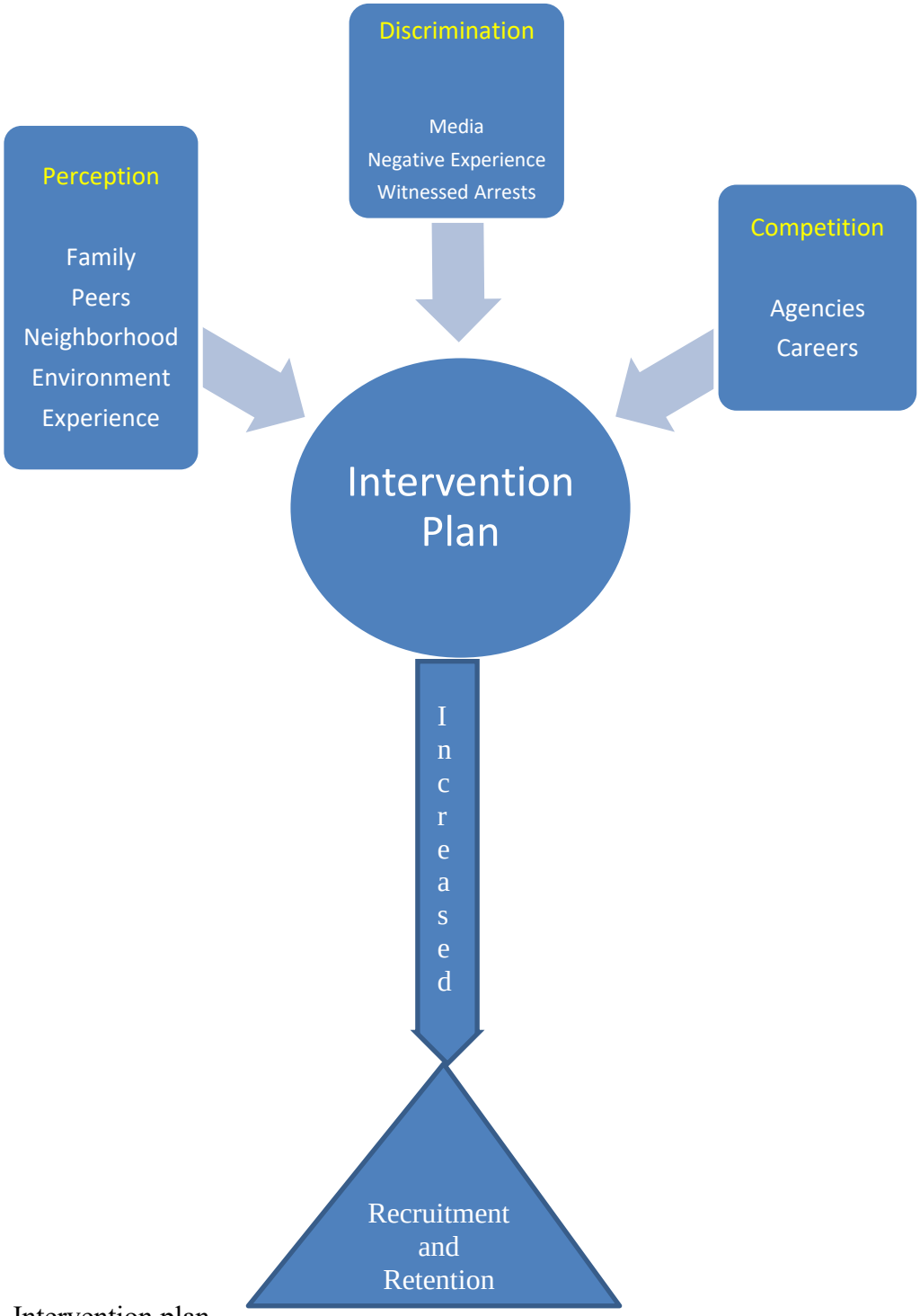

Figure 1. Intervention plan.

Literature Deficiency

Law enforcement is a field that many people have previously perceived as an exclusively male domain. Provisions for hiring females in the 1970s such as the Title VII Amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act for equal employment opportunity laws and affirmative action policies helped females to make progress in achieving law enforcement careers (Harrington, 2000b; Wilson, 2011). Despite the advances, the latest data from the U.S. Department of Justice (2001) indicated that law enforcement agencies continue to experience a reduction in the number of qualified minority female applicants nationwide.

Research on females or minorities in law enforcement has focused on recruitment or retention. Studies that involved minorities concentrated only on recruitment barriers. For example, Archbold and Schultz (2012) conducted an observational study of the roles of females in law enforcement and retention difficulties. Kumar (2012) created a barrier analysis model to comprehend how law enforcement agencies identified potential recruitment and retention barrier programs for women and minorities (Matthies, Keller, & Lim, 2012). Wilson (2011) focused on the challenges that law enforcement face to meet the changing visage of recruitment and retention. A 2009 survey completed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police revealed "unfavorable demographic and social trends…lack of diversity in some police departments…unattractiveness of paramilitary organizations…intense competition for candidates [and] bureaucratic and burdensome personnel regulations" (Oliver, 2014, p. 38) as key factors for recruitment of law enforcement officers.

Attempts to locate literature that addressed key factors for recruiting minority females in law enforcement and how to utilize those factors for active recruitment and retention garnered negative results. Obstacles identified in the literature indicated competition as a factor among law enforcement agencies to recruit qualified female applicants. Discrimination of minorities by law enforcement and minority perceptions of police (Schuck, 2014) were also cited as contributors to the decreased number of minority or female applicants vying for a career in law enforcement.

Research Problem

Underrepresented females in law enforcement have the potential to be identified as tokens within the agency or considered affirmative action hires. Kanter (as cited in Stichman, Hassell, & Archbold, 2010) concluded in a study of women working in a large industrial supply corporation that tokens or members of a token group have "negative workplace experiences due to low numerical representation" (p. 633). Kanter (1977) defined a dominant group as those representing 85% of the overall group. A smaller group that represents less than 15% of the dominant group is thought to be dissimilar and defined as a token group (Kanter, 1977). Based on the current rate of attrition for minority females in law enforcement, it would take several generations to achieve equality in law enforcement for minority females.

A need exists for the recruitment and retention of minority female officers. For example, the New Jersey State Police employs 2,539 troopers (Weaver, 2014). Caucasian males constitute 80% of the troopers (Weaver, 2014). The other 20% of troopers consists of 109 Caucasian females, 282 Hispanic males, 159 African American males, 8 Hispanic

females, and 13 African American females (Weaver, 2014). According to Kanter, the percentage of minorities and females employed as New Jersey State Police represents a token group. The public expects that law enforcement organizations reflect the diverse communities they safeguard (Meier, 1993b). Agencies must seek to meet this general expectation by hiring minority females beyond token numbers to achieve equality (Stichman, Hassell & Archbold, 2010). Minority females have overcome perceived barriers to joining state, federal, and local law enforcement agencies. To benefit future recruitment and retention efforts, agency administrators must recognize the factors associated with why and how minority females overcame the alleged obstructions.

Purpose of the Study

The current study addressed an understudied area of law enforcement—a dwindling population of minority female officers. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine minority female officers' perceptions of the organizational barriers in the recruitment and retention in law enforcement. The phenomenon examined in the study was the organizational barriers such as discrimination and competition that can exist in the recruitment and retention of minority female officers. The study results may provide insight into what administrators of law enforcement agencies can do to bolster minority female recruitment. The results may also indicate how to reduce identified perceived barriers and increase retention of recruited minority female officers. Exploring female minority officers' experiences and perceptions of organizational barriers within law enforcement may provide insight into

improving the recruitment and retention of female minority officers, a currently underrepresented group within law enforcement.

Law enforcement agencies should represent the community they serve. Law enforcement administrators must understand the issues involved in hiring and retaining females before implementing new policies or procedures. I utilized the theories of representative bureaucracy and intersectionality to identify the barriers associated with the recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement.

Research Questions

The central research question was the following: What are the perceived and organizational barriers to minority females interested in entering the law enforcement profession? The study targeted minority females from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. Minority females were interviewed to explore their perceptions and experiences regarding recruitment and retention in law enforcement. To answer the overarching research question, I used the following research sub-questions:

R1a: What organizational barriers do minority female officers perceive to exist within law enforcement toward recruitment and retention of minority female officers?

R2b: How do minority female officers face perceived or actual barriers to perception, discrimination, and competition in recruitment?

R3c: How do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward the recruitment of female minority officers?

R4d: How do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward retention of female minority officers?

Theoretical Framework

Two theories were used in this study as lenses to answer the research questions: the theory of representative bureaucracy and the theory of intersectionality. The theory of representative bureaucracy is based on the premise that social groups possessing specific identities, usually racial minorities and women, have unique life experiences that allow them to bring in crucial new insights and outlooks to the bureaucracy (Dolan & Rosenbloom, 2016). Most people treat the presence of these groups in bureaucratic settings as passive representation. Even though passive representation does not mean that members of these groups have the ability to make decisions for their particular identity groups, their presence can lead to an image of an inclusive governing body, which is crucial for a democratic society (Dolan & Rosenbloom, 2016). Because the current study focused on law enforcement, this theory was deemed appropriate for understanding the barriers that women of color face in pursuing law enforcement careers.

Representative bureaucracy is also perceived as providing more political responsiveness within the bureaucracy. According to Meier and Nigro (1976), if the attitudes of the administrator share some commonalities with the attitudes possessed by the general public, the administrators are likely to make decisions that meet the public's desires. When bureaucrats belonging to historically or traditionally underrepresented groups are making decisions on behalf of the groups to which they belong, their efforts may have the effect of correcting historical wrongs that the groups have faced. Passive representation has a chance of becoming active representation (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Researchers who have used the theory have assessed empirically how racial and

gender representation in bureaucratic settings can influence bureaucratic outcomes for the corresponding racial and gender minority populations (Kennedy, Butz, Lajevardi, & Nanes, 2017; Selden, 2015).

The theory of intersectionality was also used to support this study. Collins and Bilge (2016) described intersectionality as the constraints generated by a combination of micro- through macro-level power structures and interrelated systems of oppression. At the core of the theory is that for human behavior to be fully understood, there is a need to account for the socially constructed, oppressive forces affecting the person's identity (Potter & Brown, 2014). According to Brown (2015), humans exist within the social contexts formed by the intersections between systems of power and oppression. People make decisions during the course of their lives according to the juncture of these systems of power, shaped by race, gender, and class.

In modern society, race and gender act as social constraints despite the struggle for equal rights. Crenshaw (2018) posited that problems will ensue if race and gender are treated as mutually exclusive categories of experience. Nash (2008) also argued that intersectionality should be treated as the standard approach for analyzing individual or group experiences. Understanding the experiences or perceptions of minority female officers with regard to discrimination and competition they faced when trying to enter the law enforcement profession, given their minority race and gender status, may be effectively understood through the lens of intersectionality.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative phenomenological approach was used for this study to analyze the circumstances in a particular context through the meaning and description of participants' experiences (see Moustakas, 1994). I examined the organizational barriers that may affect retention and recruitment, specifically those perceived by minority female officers, within the context of law enforcement agencies. Using a qualitative method involved exploring and discovering themes based on the perceptions of minority female officers who experienced barriers within their law enforcement agency.

A quantitative design with closed-ended questions would not have enabled the identification of subjective themes based on participants' experiences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). A qualitative design rather than a quantitative design or a mixed-method design better served this current study. A focus on understanding complex situations containing a variety of variables indicated that the qualitative study of lived experience was suitable (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The quantitative approach involves a systematic, formal process in which researchers collect numerical data for statistical analysis (Pearce, Christian, Smith, & Vance, 2014). A mixed-method study involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. A mixed-method or quantitative approach was not appropriate because the current study did not include definite variables related to the proposed problems that would have yielded numerical data for quantitative analysis (see Creswell, Klassen, Clark, & Smith, 2011).

For the current study, the goal was to explore minority female officers' perceptions and lived experiences of organizational barriers toward the recruitment and

retention of minority female officers within law enforcement. The phenomenological research design is appropriate for analyzing individuals' lived experiences based on their perspectives (Kumar, 2012). According to Moustakas (1994), the phenomenological methodology allows the researcher to investigate individuals' lived experiences and provide an explanation and depiction of those experiences. Moustakas noted that the rationale for utilizing a qualitative methodology, particularly a phenomenological design, is to comprehend an unnoticed phenomenon, to make the implicit explicit, and to make the ordinary extraordinary.

Because the purpose of the current study was to explore the experiences of minority female officers in law enforcement regarding the organizational barriers toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers, the phenomenological approach was appropriate. I collected data from the survey responses from, semi-structured interviews with, and observations of minority female officers from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. Data were analyzed for categories and themes about organizational barriers that exist toward recruitment and retention of female minority officers within the law enforcement profession.

Definitions

The following definitions of key terms were used throughout the study:

Competition: Simmel (2008) stated that the "sociological essence of competition is that it is an indirect form of fighting" and "each competitor strives toward the goal without devoting any energy to the adversary" (p. 957).

Discrimination: The behaviors of others and policies of an organization that have a differential or harmful effect on minority, race, ethnic, or gender groups (Pincus, 1996).

Law enforcement: A body sanctioned by local, state, or national government to enforce laws and apprehend those who break them (Batton, 2010; Wadman, 2004).

Minority: A subordinate group whose members are dominated by a majority group and have less power or control over their own lives. An auxiliary group that experiences a narrowing of opportunities and is small compared to other groups in the society. Any racial or ethnic group other than White Americans (Steinmetz, Schaefer, & Henderson, 2017).

Organizational barriers: Racial and sexual discrimination, hostile work environments, testing instruments, officer selection, a perception of law enforcement, and competition among agencies (Ho, 2005; Perrott, 1999; Waters et al., 2007; J.M. Wilson, 2011; C.P. Wilson et al., 2013) as well as a written exam, physical agility test, retaliation, childcare issues, and flexible work options (Kringen, 2014; Perrine, 2009).

Recruitment: The method used to reach individuals who may be qualified for and interested in job openings. Ullman (as cited in Breaugh & Starke, 2000) posited that new employees are recruited through the use of informal (i.e., employee referrals, direct applications) or formal (i.e., newspaper advertisements or employment agencies) sources.

Retention: Employee job satisfaction (Wilkinson, 2005) based on "internal work motivation and satisfaction (general and growth) outcomes" (Stansbie, Nash, & Jack, 2013, p. 159).

Assumptions

Assumptions are the elements of a study that are out of a researcher's control (Simon, 2011). If the assumptions are not acknowledged, then a study may become irrelevant (Bakewell, 2008). A research problem cannot exist without assumptions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). One assumption of the current study was that organizational barriers exist within law enforcement recruitment, specifically toward minority females, and consist of discrimination and competition (Evans & Chun, 2007). I collected data based on minority female officers' perceptions of those organizational barriers. Perceptions that minority females had of law enforcement included the environment; views of family, peers, and neighbors; and personal experiences with police. For example, family may have a negative view of police that may adversely affect the participant's view of the police. Negative media portrayals of police and minorities, like the Rodney King beating and police profiling, may affect recruitment. The literature revealed that minorities distrust law enforcement based on accusations of discrimination and do not want to join the perceived enemy (Alex, 1969; Eterno, 2014; Huang & Vaughn, 1976; Ridgeway, Lim, Gifford, Koper, Matthies, Hajiamir, et al., 2008; White, Cooper, Saunders & Raganella, 2010). Participant views may be biased based on negative personal experiences with police.

Scope and Delimitations

Delimitations define the scope of a study and establish the research boundaries. Unlike limitations, delimitations are within a researcher's control. The current study took place within federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. Participants

included minority female officers with fewer than 5 years of experience in their respective agencies. Surveys, interviews, and observational notes were the sources of data collected for the study. Because of the use of phenomenological methodology, interviews and observational notes were appropriate to capture the participants' perceptions and experiences of organizational barriers toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers.

Limitations

Limitations are possible weaknesses of a research study that are out of a researcher's control (Simon, 2011). The setting was one limitation of the current study. The COVID-19 pandemic caused some of the interviews to be completed using video. The researcher selected minority female officers from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland to participate. The perceptions and experiences of minority female officers in other regions of the country may differ from those participating in this study. The criteria used for selecting participants was another limitation. Minority female officers with more years of experience within their respective law enforcement agencies may have provided different perspectives regarding the organizational barriers that exist within law enforcement. However, as the literature indicated, the selection of participants from such a group would be difficult because the retention rate of minority female officers beyond 5 years is low (Shelley, Morabito, & Tobin-Gurley, 2011). Police officers integration into the police subculture, altered perceptions, motivations, and job satisfaction are some of the reasons listed by White, Cooper, Saunders, and Raganella, (2010) for why officers leave the profession after 6

years. A limitation also existed within the phenomenon being studied: organizational barriers of discrimination and competition toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers. Although other organizational barriers may exist within law enforcement, only those demonstrated within the existing research were studied. Research indicated that discrimination and competition were found to be the most common barriers toward the recruitment and retention of females and minorities. Bias can be a limitation of the study. Members of law enforcement with five or fewer years of service are considered rookies. Participants may learn or be intimidated by being interviewed by a veteran of law enforcement. The research would involve recognizing and taking steps to minimize the bias prior to the interview.

Significance

Females and minorities have faced difficulty being accepted into the law enforcement profession (Martin, 1994, 1995, 1980; Morash & Haarr, 1995; Stroshine & Brandl, 2011). Over the past 3 years, the hiring and retention of females in law enforcement has decreased (Matthies, Keller, & Lim, 2012; Wilson, 2011). Obstacles to recruiting and retaining minority female officers include perception, discrimination, and competition (Rocque, 2011; Wilson & Henderson, 2014). The decrease may continue unless measures are taken to address the downward shift.

Traits and characteristics of law enforcement officers include empathy, compassion, intelligence, effective communication, and the aptitude to relate to people on a personal level (Diversity, 2013). Females possess these traits, yet fail to seek out law enforcement careers. Organizational barriers, in particular discrimination and

competition, have prevented minority female officers from pursuing a law enforcement career and staying in the profession. Exploring current minority female officers' experiences of organizational barriers may provide an insight into how the recruited and retained minority female population overcame these barriers.

Additionally, this study could have implications for positive social change within law enforcement agencies. By using the identified organizational barriers that minority female officers experience, law enforcement agencies could develop an intervention plan to improve the recruitment and retention of minority female officers, an underrepresented group in law enforcement. Efforts toward improving the representation of minority female officers can aid in creating a diverse workforce, which increases trust and engagement among the broader population in need of services (Pfefferle & Gibson, 2010).

Summary

Perception, discrimination, and competition barriers impede the recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement. This phenomenological study addressed the perspectives and experiences of minority female officers regarding the organizational barriers within law enforcement toward the recruitment and retention of minority females. The chapter included a description of the problem that minority female law enforcement officers face during recruitment, barriers identified in previous studies, and the chosen theoretical framework. Chapter 2 includes a review of the relevant literature and the gaps that exist.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The election of the first African American president, Barack Obama, and the selection of a female as his Republican opponent's vice-presidential running mate suggested that glass ceilings are shattering across the country. Because the state of affairs in the nation today did not come about overnight, the past disparities will likewise not quickly be overcome. When it comes to the number of American women working in law enforcement today, this increase in recent years is noteworthy. The results of a comprehensive national survey administered by the U.S. Department of Justice over the past 20 years of agencies with 100 or more officers employed by state and local law enforcement, known as the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics, has shown an increase in recent years of the number of women in general and, in particular, minority women in law enforcement in the United States (Lonsway, 2000; Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013; Schuck, 2014). Despite these gains in representation, minority females remain underrepresented in some national, state, and local law enforcement agencies. To ascertain the current levels of women working in law enforcement across the country and describe some of the obstacles and constraints that these women typically experience, a review of the relevant scholarly peer-reviewed and organizational literature was conducted. A summary of the research and significant findings is presented.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature included in this review was sourced from databases including ERIC, EBSCOhost, Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. The key terms used in this study's search were *female law enforcement*, *female*

police, *female police officers*, *female policing*, *women law enforcement*, *women police*, *women police officers*, *gender discrimination in law enforcement*, *gender discrimination in male-dominated professions*, *minority females in policing*, *minority women in policing*, *racial discrimination in male-dominated professions*, and *racial minorities in male-dominated professions*. Most of the materials included for the review were peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last 5 years.

This literature review examines the studies on the history and entrance of females into the field of law enforcement, public perceptions of female law enforcement, perspectives of the civic community, and the male police officer. Also included are the questions and doubts involving the physical and mental capacities of female law enforcement officers to perform their jobs. This literature review on females in law enforcement revealed the dearth of studies on minority women in policing. There was, however, an abundance of literature on the unique experiences of racial minorities or females in traditionally male- and White-dominated positions that provided the foundation for the current research.

The chapter is divided into 5 sections, beginning with applicable theories relative to females and minorities in law enforcement and ending with current research. The theoretical framework for the study is outlined in the first section. The second section addresses the legislation and effects on hiring for law enforcement. The third section presents the literature on recruitment and selection in law enforcement. The fourth section introduces attitudes toward females in law enforcement, tokenism, and

recruitment and retention barriers. The fifth section discusses how the research relates to prior studies. The section includes perception, discrimination, and competition.

Theoretical Foundation

The theory of representative bureaucracy guided this study. This theory posits that a demographically diverse public-sector workforce, especially regarding characteristics such as race and gender, will help to ensure that the interests of various groups are represented in policy formulation and implementation processes (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Representative bureaucracy suggests that "passive representation, or the extent to which a bureaucracy employs people of diverse demographic backgrounds, will lead to active representation, or the pursuit of policies reflecting the interests and desires of those people" (Selden, 1997, p. 5). According to the theory, a connection between people and policy exists because the individual bureaucrats have demographic and social backgrounds that influence their socialization experiences. Based on these experiences, bureaucrats develop attitudes, values, and opinions that affect their decisions on policy issues (Meier, 1993b; Saltzstein, 1979). Organizational barriers that limit the representation of diversity within law enforcement and policies reflective of the diverse public affect the recruitment and retention of minority female officers. Based on the theory, and as outlined in the results of the study findings, when bureaucracy represents the public, policy decisions will reflect the public interest (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008).

Riccucci, Van Ryzin, and Lavena (2014) used the theory of representative bureaucracy to examine gender representation in a police department's domestic violence unit. Riccucci et al. studied how the domestic violence unit affected the way that citizens

perceived and judged the agency's performance, effectiveness, trustworthiness, and fairness. To carry out their research, Riccucci et al. asked female police officers to answer an online survey. These officers were asked to imagine that they were in a domestic violence unit. The results showed that gender representation could affect citizens' perception of the agency's job performance, trustworthiness, and fairness. With the study using the theory of representative bureaucracy, Riccucci et al. concluded that the symbolic female representativeness for the police could affect how citizens view and judge a law enforcement agency, which could affect officers' willingness to cooperate in ensuring public safety goals.

The theory of intersectionality is an additional theory that was used to support the current study. The theory originated from feminist and critical theorists describing the meaning of and the effects linked to being a member of at least two social groups (Bauer, 2014; Martinez, Marlow, & Martin, 2016; Veenstra, 2013). Intersectionality acts as a constraint generated by a combination of micro- and macro-level power structures as well as interrelated systems of oppression (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). At the core of the theory is the idea that for human behavior to be fully understood, the socially constructed, oppressive forces that shape a person's identity should first be acknowledged and represented (Potter & Brown, 2014). For scholars to understand individual human behavior, they must consider the social context in which an individual exists (Brown, 2015; Potter & Brown, 2014). The theory presupposes that all persons live within social contexts formed by intersections of systems of power, including those of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as oppression. Different decisions throughout a

person's life course, as defined by the junctures of these systems of power, arise from the factors of race, class, and gender (Brown, 2015).

In the United States, race and gender are indicative of several social constraints regardless of the decades devoted to fighting for equal rights. Both race and gender remain differentiators of a person's access to opportunities for success and prosperity or to experience failure throughout their lifespan. No era in human history has occurred in which a person's social, political, and economic standing was not affected by race, gender, and class (Brown, 2015). One crucial aspect of the theory of intersectionality is that the impact of gender and race is co-occurring. Their effects on a person's behavior cannot be considered additive; instead, they are contextual (Weber, 1998).

The impact of belonging to a minority race (i.e., African American. Latina) and being female can interact with each other through the social and economic structure (Potter, 2013). Minority women cannot be considered "White women plus color or men of color plus gender" (Potter, 2013). Instead, the identities of minority females must be multiplied together to form a holistic one, which is necessary when analyzing the state and nature of the discrimination they experience. According to Crenshaw (1989), race and gender should not be treated as mutually exclusive categories because this can lead to problematic consequences. The concept of intersectionality, wherein the combination of race, gender, class, and sexuality can interlock, oftentimes leads to oppressive experiences (Lynn & Adams, 2002). The majority of researchers, however, are focused on the particular intersection of race and gender (Nash, 2008). Nash (2008) claimed that intersectionality should be the gold standard approach for the comprehensive analysis of

an individual's or group's experience, which may not be characterized according to just one factor such as gender, race, or other influences.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

To be nonwhite and female poses barriers in contemplating, preparing for, and working toward a career in law enforcement. Law enforcement is traditionally male and white. Females and minorities have historically faced difficulty with acceptance into the law enforcement profession (Jefferson, 2013; Natarajan, 2008; Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013). This acceptance has entwined race and gender stereotypes that only legislation can loosen.

A series of legal sanctions pivoted females and minorities into the limelight. The Equal Pay Act approved in 1963 by Congress attempted to close the pay gap between women and men working in the same occupation (Siniscalco, Damrell, & Nabity, 2014). The 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed prohibiting discrimination by race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in private employment involved in interstate commerce employing 25 or more people. President Richard Nixon issued Executive Order 11478 in 1969, and decreed that the federal government could not use sex as a hiring qualification. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act was amended in 1972 to comprise state and local governments including law enforcement agencies. During the 1970s, Title VII propelled a significant number of women into law enforcement. The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 was amended in 1973 to the Crime Control Act prohibiting agencies that received federal funds from discriminating in employment practices (Schulz, 2014; Siniscalco et al., 2014). Law enforcement organizations responded to race

and sex discrimination as various civil litigations raised issues relative to entry requirements, selection criteria, and promotion procedures (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Magley, 2013; C.P. Wilson, S.A. Wilson, & Gwann, 2016).

A challenge facing the twenty-first-century government is maintaining democratic values (Azzellini, 2013; Yeoman, 2014). The attainment of a diverse workforce that looks like America is a historically-pursued egalitarian value. Diversity is essential to everyone, but particularly to traditionally underrepresented or excluded groups (Azzellini, 2013; Yeoman, 2014). Dynamics of workplace diversity include "race, culture, religion, gender, sexual preference, age, profession, organizational or team tenure, personality type, functional background, educational level, political party and other demographic, socioeconomic, and psychographic characteristics" (Wise & Tschirhart, 2000, p. 387).

Increased numbers of minorities in the United States have resulted in efforts to achieve diversity in the workplace (Darden, 2012; Yeoman, 2014). Lacking a diverse workforce has proved embarrassing to the United States. With the recent rash of shootings involving minorities and the police resulting in riots and public demonstrations, law enforcement has been almost stripped bare of the ability to use officer discretion. Law enforcement officers make split-second decisions that the public, politicians, and courts subsequently examine to determine accuracy. Politicians, lawyers, judges, and the community at large question agency policy and procedures, scrutinize training (or lack thereof), and examine every aspect of diversity. An example would be the Freddie Gray case of April 12, 2015. Commanders of police agencies have been placed on public view

to answer questions regarding the number of minorities on the police force versus the number of minority citizens living in residential neighborhoods. Chiefs have been replaced to appease the public and quell the masses of demonstrators. The public has demanded a workforce that reflects America's diversity (Yeomans, 2017).

To be effective, police cannot operate in a vacuum. Law enforcement cannot thrive without the assistance and active support of their communities. They must reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. Individuals bringing cultural and language skills to the workplace is critical to achieving diversity and is an asset to law enforcement agencies.

Role of Affirmative Action

Affirmative action aims at increasing opportunities for women and minorities to enter the law enforcement job market and at ensuring equity in competition for positions. Affirmative action programs have required any state, federal or local agency receiving federal funds to set goals aimed at increasing the number of women and minorities in law enforcement (Allen, 2003). Demonstrating each year that the agency has made a good faith effort to meet the goals (Allen, 2003).

Goal-setting has not resulted in the massive entry of minority female law enforcement officers. This is partly because of the complexities of implementation issues identified as: (1) how estimates are made of the availability of female and minority candidates; (2) how hiring goals are set; (3) how police agencies define their responsibilities in meeting institutional goals; (4) the kind of advertising and recruitment used for available positions; (5) the criteria for evaluating minority female candidates; (6)

the competition among agencies for minority female candidates; (7) how conscientious the agency is in meeting its goals and monitoring its performance; (8) whether there is persuasive pressure from leadership for the law enforcement agencies to hire minority females; (9) whether agencies have sufficient funding, staffing, and power to be effective; and (10) the extent of government inefficiency, ineptitude, and/or lack of will to enforce agency compliance (Martin, 1979, 1994, 1995).

Internal resistance plays a significant role in the implementation of affirmative action. Minority female law enforcement officers face exclusion not only from "dominant white males but also from other subordinate groups such as white female and black male officers" (Pogrebin, Dodge, & Chatman, 2000, p. 311). Changes in hiring patterns causing increased minority and female ranks result from affirmative action programs. The affirmative action programs enlarged the pool of recruited minority female candidates, but do not ensure retention through the vetting process. Studies of minorities and recruitment have found that the police service has consistently experienced significant challenges in the recruitment and retention of ethnic minorities to its officer ranks (Alderden, Farrell, & McCarthy, 2017; Todak, Huff, & James, 2018).

Females entering traditional male occupations encounter discrimination in hiring and work assignments, opposition from management and co-workers, and inadequate training (Gruber & Bjorn, 1982; Guajardo, 2014; Pogrebin, Dodge, & Chatman, 2000). Minority females in law enforcement face a double-edged sword. If they are competent at their job, they become a threat to the masculine self-perception of brave, strong, and

courageous protectors of the community. If minority females in law enforcement are inept, then they are touted as proof that females do not belong in a male profession.

Women in Policing

Before women could enter the field of law enforcement, an extensive expedition towards inclusion occurred. The first women who entered this field served initially as matrons who only attended to female inmates. Some assisted the male officers facing family problems involving women and children (Schulz, 2014). As such, characterization of their duties could be more custodial than law enforcement oriented. The custodial pattern persisted well into the twentieth century. Women were not given the chance to be part of criminal investigations, conduct laboratory analysis work, and other more substantial assignments until the 1930s (Schuck, 2014). In the mid-twentieth century, women started to gain ground and become entrusted with supervisory positions. The National Association of Policewomen was established in 1915 to advocate for women in law enforcement and to improve the standard roles of women in police work. For the next two decades after it was established, a critical role of the organization was fighting for the fair and equal treatment of women in law enforcement. They were still not able to substantially impact the status of women in policing (Schuck, 2014).

Not until the women's liberation movements that transpired in the 1960s was significant progress achieved in advancing women's roles in the field of law enforcement. Before this, a very limited number of female officers could engage in full patrol duties. In the late 1950s, fewer than 900 women nationwide were given patrol duties (Bell, 1982). Among those assigned patrol duties, none were given a chance to

lead or given the opportunity to test for the position of police sergeant (Dick, Silvestri, & Westmarland, 2013; Wood, 2013). The lack of representation in leadership, however, started to change in 1961 when a New York City policewoman filed a lawsuit because females were not being given a chance to take the city's police sergeant examination. In 1965, she became the city's first female sergeant (Bell, 1982).

The 1970s can be considered a breakthrough. It proved to be a significant period for changes to occur in policing for women. When the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 passed, there was an influx of women who entered the field, pursuing excellence and leadership in law enforcement (Dunn, 2014). However, as with other occupations dominated by White males, these desires for excellence and leadership were hard to attain. When women entered the profession, intragroup competition within policing was highly likely and expected. Apart from gender competition, there was also a high level of race competition within the field. A majority of the males resisted women entering law enforcement (Dunn, 2014). According to Alozie and Ramirez (1999), this is the reason why there are complicated relationships between local community racial minorities and local police agencies. The early researchers put forward that if both gender and race competition decreased within police departments, diversification of police agencies can occur, which would be the key to improving the relationships between minorities and police agencies.

Studies that highlighted the negative implications of gender and race competition within police departments all supported the claims of Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (1986), which stated that the absence of law enforcement officers like the people in the

communities they served can encourage outsider syndrome, a syndrome that can perpetuate an us-versus-them mentality concerning civic affairs. If diversity in the workforce is promoted and achieved, they can better meet the needs of the communities they serve. The variety will also lead to a more supportive work environment for all law enforcement officers, not just racial minorities or women.

Despite the progress in this decade, however, by the 1980s, women were still not fully accepted as equal members of law enforcement institutions. Scholars claimed that women were only being patronized (Alderden, Farrell & McCarty, 2017; Dunn, 2014). Moreover, stereotypical gender expectations and limited police powers remain persistent in these organizations. The culture created from the historical view that police work is reserved for men made it difficult for the full inclusion of women in policing to be achieved and made it challenging for women to work their way up to the highest-ranked positions within law enforcement (Dunn, 2014).

Like other traditionally male-dominated occupations, opportunities in the field of law enforcement started to increase with the enactment of the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Act as well as the intensification of the modern feminist movement (Alozie & Ramirez, 1999). The EEO Act was an extension of the anti-discrimination provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to state and local governments, which covered policing (Haarr & Morash, 1999). According to the United States Department of Justice (2016), minority women usually attain higher levels of education compared to minority males. As a result, minority women are often faced with greater competition with White

males, who dominated all sorts of occupations, but more so in uniformed services such as policing.

Twenty years after the EEO Act, the number of women as law enforcement officers increased. Among African Americans, however, there was only an 11.3% increase, but for Hispanics, the increase was just 6.2% (Reaves & Goldberg, 1996). Subsequent studies were designed to determine why these low statistics persevere. Most of the studies attributed the low figures to the persistence of the Anglo-American masculine values that formed uncomfortable as well as an undesirable social context for women and racial minorities in all aspects of their lives, especially in their careers.

Some studies claimed that structural and cultural elements are also at work within police departments, which led to problems for women to fully integrate and become successful in the field. Specifically, the police forces continue to have a semi-military structure and culture and are strictly hierarchical organizations that hold deeply sexist views about women and their supposed roles in the society. These elements created pressures for women and racial minorities making it hard for them to be resilient in the job and attain leadership positions. An early study by Haarr and Morash (1999) found that apart from the unique workplace stressors that the women and racial minorities encounter in the workplace because of intersectionality, they also must deal with everyday problems faced by men and women of all races, making their entry and stay in the law enforcement field difficult. Attainment of leadership positions for some has become next to impossible.

Morash, Kwak, and Haarr (2006) found that although men and women police officers often use similar methods for dealing with stress, female officers often faced higher levels of stress than their male counterparts. The findings revealed that men's sources of stress were from the workplace, specifically when they feel they lack control over practices and procedures at work. However, some women's stress is attributed not only to their workload but also to their heavy load at home, as they nurture and monitor their children and act as the primary caretakers of the household despite their equally demanding occupation. According to certain scholars, there may be a place for women in the law enforcement field, but traditional and embedded culture makes this problematic. They cited the theoretical position that the masculine paramilitary style of traditional policing has persistently rejected the introduction of female qualities into the occupation (Barratt, Bergman, & Thompson, 2014; Marshall, 2013; Prokos & Padavic, 2002). A unique level of masculinity that cannot be found in other occupations, even if they are traditionally male-dominated, shapes the legal system as a whole. As such, it can be hard for women to enter and be leaders in the field.

The persistent pressure for police officers to always have a masculine image negates the importance of feminine traits, therefore sidelining women who may want to enter the force (Barratt, Bergman, & Thompson, 2014; Marshall, 2013; Prokos & Padavic, 2002). As such, full acceptance of females in the field cannot be achieved for this reason. For the reverse to happen, police organizations must reconcile these issues and accept that certain female traits are also necessary for the field. Female officers, in

other words, are also required in the law enforcement field (Barratt, Bergman, & Thompson, 2014; Marshall, 2013; Prokos & Padavic, 2002).

Notwithstanding their inordinately meager representation in law enforcement and the other gender-related differences between male and female officers (i.e., pregnancies and infant care, physical strength differences), female officers in general (and particularly minority females) have much to offer a modern police force that appears to far outweigh these other constraints (Fernandes, 2016; Rabe-Hemp & Humiston, 2015). For instance, according to Lott (2000), "The potential law enforcement advantages from multiracial or female officers seem obvious. Minority police officers may be more effective in minority areas simply because residents could be more forthcoming about information that will lead to arrests and convictions or because of the officers' ability to serve as undercover agents" (p. 239).

Furthermore, female officers may be able to establish the necessary rapport to help victims traumatized by violent crimes such as rape and sexual assault to provide the required information to prosecute the criminals involved. For example, Lott (2000) added that "Rape victims or women abused by their spouses plausibly find it easier to discuss the traumatic events with women officers. Without female officers, many attacks against women may go undetected—thus lowering the expected penalty from attacking women and resulting in even more attacks." (p. 240).

Early studies such as one by Smith (2003) further supports these empirical observations. According to Smith (2003), women police officers were much better at defusing conflicts and de-escalating potentially violent situations involving the police and

the citizens. These attributes would appear to make female officers a valuable addition to almost any modern police force, and these benefits of having women employed in law enforcement have not been lost on policymakers who recognize the win-win aspects of this approach. As Smith (2003) emphasizes, “Proponents want to end discrimination in public services, improve the legitimacy of police, and bring women’s unique contributions to the occupation” (p. 149).

More studies subsequently revealed that there are several ways that police culture can suppress the advancement of women in the law enforcement field. At the same time, they claimed that the lack of women in decision-making and active positions led to a less efficient police organization. Researchers explored the relationship between a hyper-masculine organization and the adverse experiences of female police officers and found that the ideology of the police culture shaped the beliefs of male-only peer relations in this field (Cunningham, Bergman, & Miner, 2014; Hollis, 2014; Rabe-Hemp, 2008). They added that the police culture made it hard for diversity to thrive. The current culture explicitly encouraged male-only, gender powered relationships (Cunningham et al., 2014; Hollis, 2014; Rabe-Hemp, 2008).

Some studies also evaluated the psychological differences between male and female law enforcement officers (Hollis, 2014; McCarty, Zhao, & Garland, 2007). Measuring their psychological profiles through pre-employment screening, some researchers established that the personalities of female officers do not fit the stereotype of male officer personalities; this should not be treated negatively (Hollis, 2014; McCarty et al., 2007). There is a trend toward police officers to be more community-oriented and

some researchers found that females were more likely to have the necessary personalities and the ability to exhibit the correct community-oriented responses compared to their male counterparts (Hollis, 2014; McCarty et al., 2007). Some researchers indicated that there are categorically no significant differences in the behaviors, perceptions, and mannerisms of male and female officers. Instead, females can perform a range of tasks not that different from male officers. The stereotype against females' entrance and promotion in the law enforcement field was found to be baseless (Hollis, 2014; McCarty et al., 2007).

Some researchers have also refuted the traditional thought that male law enforcement officers are the only ones who can do police work efficiently because they can use necessary coercion when dealing with citizens (Faircloth & Clark, 2016; Violanti et al., 2016). Paoline, Terrill, and Rossler (2015) in particular examined how female police officers carried out verbal and physical coercion activities when dealing with citizens. The researchers obtained data from observational studies and focused on how female officers operated day-to-day coercion, such as whether they have weaker or stronger aggressive tendencies, made more or fewer arrests, and used more or less excessive force than their male counterparts. The study results indicated no significant differences between male and female officers in their coercive capacities.

Paoline et al. (2015) also found that both male and female officers alike encounter different types of verbal and physical conditions. Most of these encounters were of the same type, regardless of the officers' gender. At the same time, the effect of these encounters on their motivation to use force is relatively similar. However, the

researchers noted that they faced methodological problems in the study because they were unable to observe female law enforcement officers' routine use of coercion and that when they tried to obtain previous research data, they were already outdated.

The delineation between male and female law enforcement officers became a more important research area for understanding why female law enforcement officers encounter integration problems in the field. Particularly, Winfree and Dejong (2015), showed that as opposed to being different in their physical capacities, male and female officers also differed in how they provide comfort to citizens. Additionally, male and female officers do not encounter the same emotional challenges when doing their policing tasks, including serving and protecting citizens who are not suspects or offenders. According to Winfree and Dejong (2015), traditional research on how women take on their policing tasks focused on whether women can hold their own in combat but did not consider how male and female officers responded to citizens, especially in providing comfort. In their study, they were able to reveal that gender alone did not dictate officers' attitudes or behaviors.

Situational factors often come into play in shaping how male and female officers will react when encountering individuals. In addition, the management of one's emotions when encountering individuals is often perceived as a weakness because this does not fit the traditional philosophy of how police officers should behave towards people and cases. However, Winfree and Dejong (2015) asserted that the management of emotions is a skill and a requirement in the area of law enforcement for maintaining good communication and good relations with the citizens they serve.

Females are generally expected to be better as caregivers because of the traditional societal gender expectations and norms. However, Winfree and Dejong (2015) found that not only is this a weakness, it is also not necessarily women's forte. Among law enforcement, the acceptance of the caregiver role and communicating with citizens do not fundamentally differ by gender.

Racial Minorities in Law Enforcement

Diversity refers to the acknowledgment and understanding as well as celebrating and embracing differences among people concerning age, class, ethnicity, gender, mental and physical abilities, sexual orientation, and other characteristics (Green, Lopez, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002; Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). Diversity is anticipated to be of higher value in the future for all occupations and industries as change continues within the U.S. population and workforce. Today's workforce already consists of a more significant number of women than in any other period as traditional family roles continue to change and evolve. Organizations that will effectively embrace diversity in their recruitment and maintenance of the workforce are expected to reap greater success and rewards (Green et al., 2002); the law enforcement field is similar.

The 1960s civil rights movement resulted in a violent period in the United States. African Americans' relationships with police officers were frequently tumultuous. Often, African American demonstrators fought police during demonstrations, ending in violent and deadly encounters (McBride & Parry, 2016; Ryan, 2013). A hostile and untrusting relationship between African Americans and law enforcement lasted for years, taking decades to heal and it still has not been entirely repaired.

Another consequence of the strained relationship is African Americans' general lack of interest to be part of the law enforcement world. Researchers have shown that most African Americans today are disinterested in becoming police officers and have a sense of fear that joining the force would make them look bad to the minority community. This attitude is also one of the chief reasons why efforts to increase minorities in the law enforcement field is complicated (McBride & Parry, 2016; Ryan, 2013).

One of the most affected agencies is the New York Police Department (NYPD). As of 2015, the composition of the NYPD is 51% White, 26% Hispanic, 15% African American, and 5% Asian. In the hiring class consisting of 891 officers, only 10% were African Americans (Moore, 2015). According to the former NYPD head William Bratton, the insufficient number of minorities in the field is of great concern, even though he claimed that a lot of external factors are at play and the blame cannot be solely on internal recruitment policies. Bratton added that qualified African American candidates are too limited in number as most of them have been in jail at least once in their lives, making them unemployable because of their record. Bratton stated, "It's an unfortunate fact that in the Black male population, a very significant percentage of them…Because of convictions or prison records, are never going to be hired by a police department. That's a reality" (Moore, 2015, p. 1). Bratton also explained that as high as 20% of those in the Black community across the United States have a criminal record, so they cannot be recruited (Moore, 2015).

What the Commissioner and NYPD head said did not sit well with the Black community, especially among city leaders and the elected officials. They claimed that what Bratton stated could not be true because many potential Black police officer candidates were not given a chance to be recruited, even if an arrest was not a factor. The National Black Police Association added that if there is something that can explain the lack of minorities in law enforcement, it is the NYPD's stop and frisk tactics. Increased targeting of minorities for petty crimes make them ultimately unemployable as police officers (Moore, 2015; Weichselbaum &Thompson, 2014).

The Commissioner's controversial comments did not stop there. He would later remark that the structure of the Black family, which is often led by single mothers, is another reason why minorities cannot be hired as law enforcement officers. He claimed that fathers are constantly absent in Black families because they are incarcerated. He added that these arrests occurred because over-incarceration occurred for several years. Ironically, some critiqued the NYPD head for being hypocritical since he had spearheaded broken windows policing tactics back in the 1990s, which resulted in many Black men or fathers being arrested for petty crimes (Bredderman, 2015).

Various studies have been conducted on how to diversify an organization, even though the ones focusing on the law enforcement field is still quite limited. These existing studies, however, have some significant findings. In one of these studies, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) determined several components needed for diversity initiatives to be effective. These efforts were said to be more appropriate for the local and public sector organizations, including law enforcement agencies. The researchers

highlighted the value of developing specific diversification strategies and not just some abstract plans. Included in the recommended plans are programs designed to increase the cultural sensitivity of everyone in the organization, decreasing instances of inequality experienced by women and minorities, and enhancing communication lines at all levels in the organization. Before these, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) claimed that organizations should first define diversity, including the mission, vision, and values they want to achieve in their diversity improvement strategies. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, the majority of organizations failed in their initiatives because they did not have an official definition of diversity (Wyatt-Nichol & Antwi-Boasiako, 2012).

The researchers then cited the recruitment process as another key to diversification. Successful federal agencies often approach minority colleges and universities to find candidates from all backgrounds. Succession planning and employee involvement are also important to diversification strategies. Organizations must watch the current makeup of their staff and those nearing retirement. When current employees retire, organizations must look for and make sure to maintain a qualified and diverse candidate pool. Top government agencies can be observed having diversity task forces as well as boards to ensure employee involvement. These task forces can also be the ones to determine issues and form initiatives to address problems (Wyatt-Nichol & Antwi-Boasiako, 2012).

In 2014, several high-profile incidents across the country negatively affected law enforcement and undermined efforts to enhance diversity and recruit more minorities.

Eleven unarmed victims killed by police in 2014 included Dontre Hamilton, Eric Garner, John Crawford, III, Michael Brown, Ezell Ford, Jr., Dillon Taylor, Dante Parker, Tanesha Anderson, Akai Gurley, Tamir Rice, and Rumain Brisbon. The Ferguson Police Department (FPD) found itself in trouble when an officer fatally shot Michael Brown, a young black male. Following the incident, widespread civil unrest occurred, and a deep mistrust of the police force happened in the area that spread to other urban centers. The violence peaked two weeks after the incident when the local District Attorney decided not to pursue charges against the officer who shot Brown. The hostility intensified when some residents claimed that discriminatory practices were occurring even before this incident (Maguire, Nix, & Campbell, 2016; U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

The Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice investigated the claims and, in a 102-page report, described the practices of the FPD (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). An alarming revelation of the investigation was that the FPD had a revenue-generating mindset as opposed to having the welfare of the people it was serving as its top priority. The report revealed that in March 2010, the city finance director wrote a very revealing email to the Chief of Police, where he claimed that the raising of collections could not occur unless ticket writing increased significantly by the end of the year. The same finance director called for an increase in court fees from ticket production. The majority of the FPD officers belonging to all ranks claimed that highlighting revenue generation within the department is mostly because of the city leaders.

As a result of FPD's priority of revenue generation, its approach to law enforcement negatively affected its relationship with the community, which reached its peak after the Brown incident. Officers viewed the citizens living in the Black areas as possible criminals and as sources of revenue rather than citizens to protect. As a result, Blacks feel mistrust of law enforcement officers and this reduces their desire to join the force (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

The investigation also revealed racial bias and stereotyping by the FPD, clearly evidenced by the arrest data. Although the Ferguson population is composed of 67% Blacks, from 2012 to 2014, 85% of the traffic stops, 90%of the citations, and 93% of the arrests were of Blacks. The investigation showed that citations received by Blacks were twice as much as Whites received during the same period. Blacks were also searched twice as much as Whites on traffic stops (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). The many pitfalls of lack of diversity in police departments have been highlighted (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

The already-lacking diversity on the FPD was made worse, and the same lack of minority law enforcement officers perpetuated the divide between the police and the African American community (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Apart from Ferguson, other high-profile incidents occurred in other areas where African American communities thrive. This lack of inclusion undermined efforts to diversify police departments across the country. At the same time, these events set recruitment efforts back and the same incidents highlighted for the agencies the importance of sound ethical police practices,

the value of maintaining stable and positive relationships with citizens regardless of their race, and the urgency to diversify the field.

Intersectionality of Gender and Race in Law Enforcement

The double jeopardy hypothesis described how membership in multiple vulnerable and minority social groups leads to the doubling of disadvantages a person experiences, particularly at the opportunities they can access, the discrimination they can experience, and the stereotypes they have to deal with every day (Berdahl & Moore, 2006). For example, a minority female officer might be disadvantaged due to her gender and ethnicity because of the stereotypes linked to being both a woman and Black. These problems can also be observed in law enforcement, no matter if minority females are just as capable as males (Martin, 1989, 1997; Morash, 1986). Taylor, Charlton, and Ranyard (2012) concluded that gender and ethnicity do not determine the skills of a law enforcement graduate. Male resistance to females in law enforcement is based on the attitudes of and stereotypes regarding roles in the workplace (Sims, Scarborough, & Ahmad, 2003). Law enforcement was believed to be a stressful, male-dominated milieu filled with violence and danger—an environment unfit for females to venture into for employment (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005; Kop & Euwema, 2001).

Distinct gender roles dictated the entrance of females into the fields of law enforcement and corrections. Believing that males did not have the ability necessary to care for women and children, females entering law enforcement and corrections in the 1820s initially were hired as prison matrons (Garcia, 2003; Kurtz, Linnemann & Williams, 2012). The matrons customarily worked assignments involving women and

children and had no arrest powers. A historic moment occurred in 1893 when Mary Connolly Owens became the first female in the Chicago Police to be given complete arrest powers (Whetstone & Wilson, 1999). Historians note that on September 12, 1910, Alice Stebbins Wells was sworn in as the first policewoman in the United States (Kingshott, 2013). However, 5 years earlier, in 1905, Lola Greene Baldwin had been appointed as a safety worker having full arrest powers in Portland, Oregon. In 1916, Georgia Ann Robinson joined the historical ranks of female firsts when she was hired by the Los Angeles Police Department and is noted as the first Black female police officer in the nation. Females have worked in law enforcement over the past four decades. They have held numerous supervisory and managerial positions, such as the promotion of Felicia Schpritzer in 1965 as the first woman police officer promoted to the rank of sergeant in the New York City Police Department (Whetstone & Wilson, 1999).

There have been continuous debates in the literature concerning police personnel management and the underrepresentation of women and racial minorities on the force. An early study by Kim and Mengistu (1994) was one of the first to examine the lack of proportional representation of minorities and women in local police departments. In particular, Kim and Mengistu (1994) investigated and reported the extent to which sworn police workforces across the state reflected the percentage of minorities and women in the local population. Kim and Mengistu found that a gross underrepresentation of women and minorities can be observed in a majority of local law enforcement agencies. Only a few larger metropolitan areas were the exception.

Kim and Mengistu suggested that the encouragement of diversity within law enforcement can lead to an understanding between those in the force and those they protect. Kim and Mengistu added that diversity in law enforcement can formulate a strong defense against the adverse effects of prejudice and racism and can lead to higher chances of eliminating instances of discrimination and other forms of power abuse. However, the problem of an insufficient number of racial minorities and women persists. This issue has negative consequences considering that not all citizens who came into contact with the law enforcement officers were criminals. Most of them were just minor miscreants, and police officers must care about those subjected to injustices or victimized with deeper sensitivity (Kim & Mengistu, 1994).

Despite efforts to hire minority females, the law enforcement numbers relative to the population remain low when compared to the combined number of minority hires (Gabbidon & Greene, 2013) and females. Internal and external barriers continue to hamper minority female opportunities to compete for law enforcement positions. Wilson and Henderson (2014) indicated that Black communities have a negative view of police and are the "least likely to support or call the police during a crisis and are least likely to view law enforcement as a career choice" (p. 46). These barriers result in challenges to recruitment and retention of minorities in law enforcement.

Hiring and retention of females in law enforcement decreased nationwide over the past three years. In 1999, females comprised 14.3% of law enforcement personnel nationwide (Seklecki & Paynich, 2007). In 2012, females represented 12% of all law enforcement (BLS, 2016). This decrease will continue unless mandates occur addressing

the downward shift. Diversity (2013) described the traits and characteristics of law enforcement requiring empathy, compassion, intelligence, effective communication, and the aptitude to relate to people on a personal level. Females possess these traits yet fail to seek out law enforcement careers. Obstacles to hiring minority females in law enforcement ascended from factors that included perception, discrimination, and competition (Rocque, 2011; Wilson & Henderson, 2014).

Recruitment Barriers Faced By Minority Females In Law Enforcement

Their Perception of Law Enforcement

The perception of law enforcement in minority communities affects the recruitment of minority females. Fine and Weis (1998) conducted a study of poor and working-class men and women in Buffalo and Jersey City (Gabbidon, Higgins & Potter, 2011). Results of the study indicated that African American and Latino women had only slight trust in the police (Gabbidon, Higgins, & Potter, 2011). The perception of law enforcement in minority communities makes it not considered a viable career. Negative publicity of racial minorities involved in excessive use of force and incidents of racial profiling contributed to the unfavorable thought process (Todak, 2017; Tyler, 2005).

Interaction of ethnic minorities with law enforcement has not been positive. Minorities view police as adversaries. For example, of the 2.8 million stops in New York from 2004 to 2009, African Americans and Latinos were stopped 80% of the time (Floyd v. City of New York, 2013, p. 827). For people growing up in Black communities, law enforcement is not viewed as a job of respect. From 1976 to 1998, law enforcement officers killed black suspects “at a rate about five times greater than White suspects”

(Sadler, Correll, Park, & Judd, 2012, p. 287). An article by Swaine, Laughland, Lartey and McCarthy (2016) in The Guardian indicated 1,134 people were killed by law enforcement in 2015. Black people (7.13) were killed at more than twice the rate of White people (2.29%). The remaining people killed were of Hispanic/Latino (3.48%), Native American (3.4%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (1.34%) origins. Research of African Americans overrepresented in the prison system revealed stereotypes influenced arrest behaviors of law enforcement. Minority communities perceive the police as racially prejudiced and insensitive (Waters, Hardy, Delgado & Dahlmann, 2007, p. 200).

Discrimination During Recruitment

Women in law enforcement experienced greater stress from discrimination and sexual harassment than men (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005; Lonsway, Paynich, & Hall, 2013). Social barriers that were unique to minorities in policing involved disparate treatment; gender compounds this treatment. Females experienced institutional and individual discrimination during the hiring process (Pincus, 1996), and sexual harassment and unequal treatment while hired (Bolton, 2003; Haarr & Morash, 2013; Pogrebin, Dodge & Chatman, 2000). Literature (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2006) revealed that females entering law enforcement had encountered enormous difficulties as a result of the negative attitude of males. Research completed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) (2006) indicated females still faced bias from male officers, sexual harassment still occurred, and gender discrimination prohibited promotion.

Some researchers maintained that women might be especially amenable, or at least not averse, to seeking careers that involve jobs that entail "dirty work," or expecting them to work physically hard and get their hands dirty. Examples of dirty work include "bail bondsmen, nursing home attendants, and law enforcement officers" (Morris, 2005, p. 131). Morris (2005) suggested that women pursuing a career in a field that involves this type of work may experience some unexpected reactions from others that will complicate their adjustment to the work.

Nevertheless, despite these perceptions and the challenges and obstacles involved, it is clear that many young American women today aspire to a career in some capacity of law enforcement. For example, the results of a study by Krimmel and Tartaro (1999) found that a significant percentage of undergraduate females who were enrolled in criminal justice programs desired a career with some type of law enforcement agency. According to these authors, "Nearly one-quarter of the students aspiring to such a career were women. The women in this category believed that salary was important, as was the opportunity to help people solve problems. Police recruiters should be encouraged by the fact that women are enrolled in college and are working toward a police career" (Krimmel & Tartaro, 1999, p. 281). Krimmel and Tartaro (1999) add that these trends should not be lost on recruiters who are advised to pay special note that women in criminal justice programs have strong motivation by an interest in this area.

Competition

The enactment of affirmative action has aided nationally in the recruitment of racial minorities into law enforcement (Ho, 2005). Federal, state, and local law

enforcement agencies compete for the minimum number of qualified ethnic minority female applicants. Competition between law enforcement agencies and businesses to recruit the best and brightest from the dwindling available pool of minority females is a factor in the number seeking a career in law enforcement. Options for females when committing to serve in law enforcement through other fields, such as forensics, are further limiting the applicant pool. Applicants cited the extensive length of processing time and lack of communication (Orrick, 2008; Potts, 1983) as deciding factors for not choosing a law enforcement career. Agencies that shepherded the applicant throughout the process experienced the most success in retention after hire.

Retention Barriers Faced By Minority Females In Law Enforcement

Police departments are "complex bureaucracies with clearly defined rank structures that are organized vertically" (Archbold & Schulz, 2008, p. 50). Law enforcement applicants complete a written test, physical agility test, oral board, background check, psychological test, and polygraph exam before hire. The process takes upwards from six months to a year to complete. After completion of the application process and attaining the job, applicants are hired as officer candidates. The officer candidate starts an intense 26 –32-week academy training program. The academy training consists of classroom courses in various subjects as well as defensive tactics, the shooting range, and defensive driving.

After graduation, the officer candidate then completes an eight-week field training program. Upon entrance into the law enforcement organization, many females, particularly minority females, may opt to resign. The resignation is often due to the

organizational environment, their home conditions, or the external job market where they can receive higher wages, which make working as a police officer difficult (Matthies, Keller, & Lim, 2012). In particular, organizational barriers for minorities and females in law enforcement included disparate treatment, harassment, hostile work environments, sexual harassment, and race and gender discrimination (del Carmen, Greene, Nation, & Osho, 2007; Texeria, 2002). These systemic barriers affect the career of the police officer resulting in early employee separation and limited advancement opportunities (Bolton, 2003).

Perception of Minority Females in Law Enforcement

Television portrays the female law enforcement officer as sexy, intelligent, and physically capable of keeping up with their male counterparts in crime solving (Hartley, Mnatsakanova, Burchfiel, & Violanti, 2014; Natarajan, 2016; Yu, 2015). When hired, the truth becomes evident. Female law enforcement officers choose either to sacrifice their femininity for acceptance by male coworkers or to keep their femininity and work a subordinate position as law enforcement officers (Martin, 1979). They are also perceived as more likely to be distracted by work-family conflicts (Martin, 1979).

The fundamental gender-related issue that remains a prominent topic for opponents of initiatives such as the Equal Rights Amendment Act is that American society and culture still limits women to certain stereotypical roles. Moreover, as most women, regardless of their occupation, will eventually give birth, they are perceived as incapable of handling many of their more physically demanding job responsibilities as their pregnancies progress (Hartley, et al., 2014; Hoffnung, 2004; Natarajan, 2008; Yu,

2015). Due to the physical limitations levied on pregnant females while employed as police officers, they may need longer time periods off from work. Females who want to be viewed as part of the police team find that pregnancy adds to the trials confronting them. Females in law enforcement have difficulty overcoming the all-male age-old and ubiquitous culture portrayed within most police agencies (Hartley, et al., 2014; Natarajan, 2016; Yu, 2015).

Long-held stereotypes concerning the physiological differences of females with children who also aspire to a professional career, unfortunately, continue to pervade the law enforcement community (Marshall, 2013; Roberts et al., 2016). Sullivan (2005) discovered a common stereotype during her research: "women with preschool age children have worse attendance records than other workers because of their responsibilities," resulting in the intentional drafting of formal policies (p. 911). Because of the importance of their command, all types of law enforcement agencies reasonably expect officers to be reliable and available to work when scheduled. The impact of such work-family conflicts on the ability of organizations of all types is well documented. Work-family conflict is defined by Boles, Howard, and Donofrio (2001) as a "type of inter-role conflict wherein some responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible and have a negative influence on an employee's work situation" (p. 376). Females are biologically required to be the person who grows, nurtures, and births a baby, so the physical limitations and absence from work that having a family causes are therefore natural concomitants of being female (Harding, 2015; Rabe-Hemp & Humiston, 2015). Not surprising are the adverse effect that misperceptions, stereotypes, sexism, and

even jealousy from male officers can have on the perception of the value of having female officers on the force (Crain et al., 2014; Korpi, Ferrarini, & Englund, 2013).

The thought of these perceptions is comparable to what Boles, Howard and Donofrio (2001) stated: “Results from previous research indicate that work-family conflict is related to a number of negative job attitudes and consequences including lower overall job satisfaction and greater propensity to leave a position” (p. 376). Many studies to date have examined the issues of work-family conflict and their impact on police officers (Harding, 2015; Rabe-Hemp & Humiston, 2015). Burke (1994, 1993, 1989) in three separate studies concluded that work-family conflict is a “major factor in measuring attitudes about work as well as emotional and physical well-being. The findings from this series of studies showed a consistent correlation between work-family conflict and stress; furthermore, Burke also identified a potential direct inverse relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction” (cited in Boles et al. at p. 376)

Most women today expect to work after they complete their education. This increased commitment to career has led to the postponement of marriage and childbearing and a decrease in the number of children born to educated women (Hazan & Zoabi, 2015; Shang & Weinberg, 2013). However, even if many young American women are committed to achieving their professional goals by delaying the start of a family, most also remain determined to have one eventually (Hazan & Zoabi, 2015; Shang & Weinberg, 2013). Female police officers are not exempt from this desire for a family and career. The life of a member of the law enforcement community is characterized by the same types of work-family conflicts as virtually any other kind of profession in ways that

introduce unusually high levels of stress for police officers (Hartley, et al., 2014; Natarajan, 2008; Yu, 2015).

Beyond these otherwise-normal stressors, though, many police officers are routinely exposed to life-threatening encounters and other traumatic events that can result in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other emotional and physical problems related to their job responsibilities (Henry, 2004). As Iwasaki, Manneli, and Smale (2002) point out, "Police and emergency response services have been identified as occupational groups that tend to experience very high-stress levels both in work and family lives" (p. 311). Likewise, Tanigoshi, Kontos, and Remley (2008) emphasized that "To date, law enforcement is considered to be one of the most dangerous, stressful, and health-threatening occupations. Many researchers have suggested that life as an officer poses many hazards to the psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual, and social self" (p. 64). These findings would certainly account for the inordinately high levels of domestic abuse identified among male police officers and suggest that law enforcement is a highly stressful career field for many men and women today. The National Center for Women and Policing noted in two studies (1991, 1992) that "at least 40% of police officer families experience domestic violence" compared to 10% of families in the general population (see Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2001).

Another prime example of why perception is a barrier to minority women entering the law enforcement field is explained by the gender-role congruity hypothesis (Li, Bagger, & Cropanzano, 2016; Rollero, Fedi, & De Piccoli, 2015). If one's behavior is congruent with their gender, this is perceived more favorably compared to behavior not

considered compatible with the expected gender behavior. Because of the negative consequences associated with out-of-gender or unexpected behaviors of female officers, the researchers claimed that they could only be successful if they maintain their feminine gendered qualities in their police work instead of pursuing masculine styles (Dunn, 2014).

Other research of this gender-role congruity in other fields has revealed that both males and females are equally capable as supervisors. However, if the leadership position is considered gender-presumptive, or if the majority of people, particularly those within the organization, expect the leader to behave stereotypically male or female, effectiveness can be affected if the leader acted otherwise. In law enforcement and policing, women are more at risk of receiving prejudiced or negative job performance evaluations as well as low effectiveness ratings because they have not demonstrated the expected gender behavior (Dunn, 2014).

Several more researchers have studied the phenomenon of resistance and barriers for women police officers and determined that police culture is the main reason why these barriers are not being eliminated (Jefferson, 2013; Natarajan, 2008; Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013). Hence, female officers are the ones adjusting. Some of the researchers also evaluated and explored the coping mechanisms women use to overcome these obstacles and the high resistance to their integration into law enforcement (Dunn, 2014; Jefferson, 2013; Natarajan, 2008; Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013). Understanding the common themes behind the experiences of a diverse sample of tenured female officers can reveal the details of resistance to their integration.

Some of the researchers found that women in law enforcement faced no shortage of sexual harassment, discrimination, and repeated instances of disrespect (Dunn, 2014). However, some researchers found that even with these negative experiences, the female officers reported that they had achieved a sense of acceptance in their respective departments and gradually, they experienced an improvement in the culture of policing from the time they started their law enforcement careers through their coping strategies. Female officers can overcome obstacles and be effective in policing if they learn to navigate. However, the studies commonly held that supervisory positions filled by female officers are still quite low in number despite the status of women in policing improving over the last century (Dunn, 2014).

Sexual and Racial Discrimination

One of the most perplexing issues faced by the nation's police agencies is the lingering virile nature of these departments that some experts have referred to as a "hyper masculine culture." Harris (2000), for example, highlighted in her study that, "As of 1998, eight out of ten municipal police agencies with the largest percentage of sworn women officers are currently under, or have been under, consent decrees to hire women or minorities" (p. 777). The fact that fully 80% of the nation's police agencies with the highest numbers of females became that way by being forced to do so suggests that male officers who subscribe to the traditional male-only culture may highly resent females and that has historically characterized these municipal police organizations. For females who successfully complete the academy, the resentment is exhibited through attempts to eliminate them through other means, such as field training.

Law enforcement officers who complete the academy training are subjected to field training. The purpose of field training is to expose the officer to real-life policing situations guided by an experienced officer. The experienced officer is referred to as the Field Training Officer (FTO). Black officers placed with White Field Training Officers (FTOs) were sometimes not successful in completing this phase of training (Bolton, 2003). Black officers were subjected to racial slurs, bullying, pranks and harassment. Black officers receive harsher evaluations and are discipline for minor infractions (Bolton, 2003). Black officers undergo unauthorized extended training, not experienced by their White counterparts to complete field training successfully. Bolton (2003) posits that Blacks experienced ongoing racism and not as a series of separate events (p. 397). Black police officers suffered discrimination during field training with White officers.

Females reported experiences of racial and sexual harassment during and after field training completion. A study by the National Center for Women and Policing revealed that this may occur when FTOs have personal bias against women in law enforcement or marginal skills in dealing with diversity (Harrington, et al., 2000b). The FTO may be inadequately selected or trained and may view training the female recruit as punishment or more difficult (Harrington, 2000b). Minority officers reported feeling excluded from training, specialized assignments, or rewards and recognition that would aid in career advancement (Bolton, 2003). A solution to the institutional racial practices would be to remove subjectivity from the decision making by White officers (Bolton, 2003). Having Black female officers in leadership positions would offer the potential for fair assignments, evaluations, and treatment.

Even as females have successfully entered supervisory and middle management ranks within various arenas, including policing and law enforcement, it is relatively rare that they are elite leaders or top executives. According to Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001), a glass ceiling exists in most occupations, excluding women from attaining the higher-level leadership positions. This concept is rooted in the persistent scarcity of women occupying top leadership positions, despite showing that females and males have many shared leadership abilities such as being confident, influential, assertive, critical, and delegating tasks.

Competition

Competition exists internally and externally for minority female officers in law enforcement. External competition occurs when law enforcement officers recruited for an organization find themselves sought after by other agencies during their careers. Females that excel in their careers leave the initial law enforcement agency for higher pay, perceived better treatment, and status. Professional internal competition occurs when minority females are pitted against minority males and female counterparts for promotions or coveted positions. Conformity through dress and action to assimilate presents a double challenge for minority females who feel they have to betray their culture and their femininity.

Researchers have also highlighted the role of internal resistance in limiting female officers from pursuing supervisory positions within law enforcement (Fernandes, 2016; Marshall, 2013; Natarajan, 2008; Swan, 2016). For instance, Archbold and Hassell (2009) designed research to determine the issues linked with the decision of female

officers to seek promotions and be promoted. The researchers interviewed policewomen working for a Midwest police agency to identify organizational and personal factors that affect participant decision making. Findings indicated that marriage to fellow officers is one of the overlooked issues preventing female officers from seeking promotions. Archbold and Hassell (2009) found that many of the participants described marriage as a deterrent because women felt the need to prioritize their family more compared to male officers and that by pursuing promotions, women feel that they would have to give more time than they were just willing to give. Archbold and Hassell concluded that female officers often make a conscious approach not to pursue leadership ranks and advancements, contrary to what other researchers concluded, and that the external barriers faced by females are the only ones preventing female officers from seeking promotion. Attributing a lack of promotions to external factors alone implies that this is beyond women's control. Understanding that it can also be the women's decisions themselves is key.

Some researchers also evaluated whether male and female officers differed in their styles and strategies to respond to certain situations and carry out specific tasks, and looked at how the public evaluated their actions (Dick et al., 2013; Hassell, Archbold, & Stichman, 2011). They found that most of the time, differences in societal expectations of male and female police officers revealed stereotypes and that officers are often evaluated according to their gender more than their abilities. Female officers are viewed more negatively in specific situations among the public, even more than male officers doing the same police work (Dick et al., 2013; Hassell, Archbold, & Stichman, 2011).

One study by Carlan and McMullan (2009) showed that current attitudes towards policewomen in comparison to their male colleagues are shaped by societal expectations more than what women can do compared to men in police work. Carlan and McMullan (2009) interviewed 1114 female police officers on their opinions on professionalism, job satisfaction and stress levels, and confidence through anonymous questionnaires. The results showed that between male and female police officers, professionalism, job satisfaction, stress, and confidence levels do not significantly differ. These findings showed that women officers can be considered equal to men in their capacity to meet police demands and modulate their anxieties associated with their daily activities. Women are just as physically and mentally resilient, but they are often negatively evaluated because they do not align with gender stereotypes.

Other researchers confirmed that female officers viewed themselves as equal to, if not more capable of, carrying out their job as an officer as their male counterparts (Poleski, 2016; Smith, 2016; Swan, 2016). In these studies, female officers claimed that there have been promising strides made toward reducing male harassment in the law enforcement occupation. However, there are still instances of offensive transitional behavior being exhibited. Female officers reported that they avoid letting these behaviors harm their disposition by taking little or no offense to this behavior, not taking negative comments personally, and accepting the behavior as just part of the organization and the job culture (Poleski, 2016; Smith, 2016; Swan, 2016).

Comparison of White Female Officers and Minority Female Officers

More pronounced recruitment and retention issues could be reasonably expected for minority women working in law enforcement who routinely confront other stereotypes concerning their ethnicity. The issues affect their coworkers' perception of their abilities and overall "worthiness" to join their exclusive group of comrades in arms (Bush, 2013; Davis, 2013; Glenn, 2015). These issues will be discussed further.

Although most authorities agree that affirmative action has produced some positive results for women in the workplace (Leach, 2004), the results of studies on minority employment in law enforcement in recent years have identified several issues that appear to affect the number of women who police departments in various cities recruit and employ in positive or negative ways. For example, researchers have determined that the population of a city is a significant predictor of how many female officers it will employ; likewise, larger cities likely have more resources available to recruit and provide training for female candidates than smaller municipalities (Lott, 2000). In this regard, Zhao and Lovrich (2001) report that "City size may also be important for female officer recruitment because larger cities offer a broader range of employment opportunities. Additionally, these areas are more likely to have large concentrations of well-educated and civic-minded persons who support the implementation of affirmative action than do small cities" (p. 245). As a result, large urban police departments may enjoy a relatively stable cadre of Black female police officers that reflect the broader society the department serves, but those with equal population percentages in smaller communities would lack such diversity.

Affirmative action constraints illustrate that the experience of Black and White female officers is particularly problematic, but these limitations do not end there. For example, there are also some substantial differences in how the organization's leadership perceives minority female officers and White female officers that can affect how each group is positively or negatively regarded and therefore treated by the rest of the organization. For example, Morris, Shinn, and Dumont (1999) report that White and minority female officers differ in two ways:

1. "Perceptions of the command (such as the commanding officer's sensitivity to diversity) can vary systematically by ethnicity and gender, so actions perceived as fair by one group might be seen as discriminatory by another;
2. Relationships among variables might vary systematically across groups, so, for example, the commanding officer's sensitivity to diversity might be positively related to organizational commitment for one group but unrelated, or even inversely related, for another" (Morris et al., 1999, p. 75).

These observations suggest that lawsuits and other affirmative action initiatives could potentially work to the detriment of White female officers while favoring the promotion of their minority counterparts. These types of legally-mandated human resource solutions, though, can also be reasonably expected to backfire and engender even more resentment among male officers, as well as White female officers who have been denied promotional or other advancement opportunities because of a quota that did not include them. Furthermore, and despite these legislative initiatives, McCartney and Parent (2004) emphasized that "Historically, minorities and women have been highly vulnerable to such

abuses of ‘selective enforcement’ of policies, as have ‘whistle-blowers’ and change agents” (p. 54) (see Kania, 1998).

Summary and Conclusions

The research showed that a significant number of American females entering criminal justice studies in colleges across the country today aspire to a career in law enforcement in some capacity. The research also showed that despite significant gains in achieving equal opportunity, in theory, many police departments in the United States continue to be characterized by a male-dominated organizational culture that makes entering this profession especially difficult for females. For those who do succeed in overcoming these initial barriers, many are relegated to support roles at the federal, state, and local levels in ways that continue to reinforce a glass ceiling that may be breaking in other parts of American society, but which remains firmly in place in many law enforcement settings today (Pompper, 2011).

This glass ceiling does not mean that many women, both White and minority, do not succeed in law enforcement in virtually any capacity. It does mean, though, that the research consistently showed that beyond the traumatic aspects of the job, the same constraints that females in other professions experience, such as work-conflict issues and stereotypical perceptions of their abilities and commitment, were particularly pronounced for females working in law enforcement. Females aspiring to this profession should consider these harsh realities.

For the past four decades or so, a large body of research has been conducted regarding women in law enforcement, but is quite limited for minority females in the

field. Very little research has been conducted on minority females' experience in law enforcement. One of the few studies was by Lonsway (2007), who mainly assessed the gains and gaps in the numbers of sworn females and the current state of minority women in the field of law enforcement. The study is included in this review because it involved the largest law enforcement agencies in the nation.

Lonsway (2007) also discussed the second annual survey encompassing smaller law enforcement agencies located in rural areas. The results were discouraging. The pace of increase for minority females within the field has stalled in the latter years being covered and, for some agencies, even reversed in trend.

Additionally, aside from their decreased representation in these organizations, minority females were found to face discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. When it comes to leadership positions, the numbers were more discouraging. Among mid-level command positions such as the ranks of lieutenants and captains, minority women only held 1.6% of these posts in the larger agencies and then less than 1% in the smaller agencies located in rural areas. For the larger agencies, more than 5% claimed they have zero females in mid-level command positions and as high as 87.9% claimed they have zero females in the highest ranks of commanders, chiefs, superintendents, and others. The numbers for the smaller agencies were more alarming, as almost 95% claimed they have no women in the mid-level command positions and only one of the 25 agencies included in the story claimed they had a minority female in the highest ranks.

An effort was made to incorporate relevant, up to date literature pertaining to the various recruitment and retention topics involving minority females. Much of the

research is outdated or limited. The need exists for a study to further examine the barriers that exist for recruitment and retention of minority females. Chapter 3 will describe the rationale for the research method and procedures used for the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

This chapter highlights the in-depth discussion of the method used for conducting this study. I describe the research design, population and sample, data collection method, data analysis method, and role of the researcher. Also detailed are the steps followed to ensure confidentiality, validity, and reliability of the findings.

Research Design and Rationale

The central research question for this study was the following: What are the perceived and organizational barriers to minority females interested in entering the law enforcement profession? To answer the overarching research question, the following sub-questions were used: (a) what organizational barriers do minority female officers perceive exist within law enforcement toward recruitment and retention of minority female officers? (b) how do minority female officers face perceived or actual barriers to perception, discrimination, and competition in recruitment? (c) how do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward retention of female minority officers? And (d) how do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward retention of female minority officers?

Whereas quantitative research presents results in quantities (Patton, 2002), qualitative research focuses on the context and interpretation of data regarding what and how (Patton & Cochran, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Qualitative research is consistent with understanding and describing minority female officers' perceptions of organizational barriers toward recruitment and the retention of female minority officers.

Qualitative research can be used to create a theory that benefits from the theoretical lens (Collins & Stockton, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

A phenomenological approach was used in this study. Phenomenology is a qualitative method used to understand social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives and lived experiences of people involved with the phenomena (Greene, 2000; Groenewald, 2004). An examination of the phenomenon of organizational barriers within law enforcement agencies toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers occurred in the study. Data are collected from people who have experienced the phenomenon to develop a description of what they experienced and how they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). Through the collection of surveys, personal interviews, and observational data, I described female minority officers' lived experiences of organizational barriers that they perceived as affecting the recruitment and retention of female minority officers in the law enforcement profession. The results may provide insight into perceptions among current minority female officers of organizational barriers, such as discrimination and competition, that have affected the recruitment and retention of minority female officers, a group disproportionately represented in law enforcement agencies.

Qualitative designs considered for this study included phenomenology, ethnography, narrative, and case study. Phenomenology was determined to be the most appropriate for the implementation of the study. Ethnography relies on up-close, personal expertise and individual involvement, not a merely distant observation (Lahlou, Le Bellu, & Boesen-Mariani, 2015), which was not a goal of the current research. Narrative inquiry

is a type of qualitative investigation in which stories describe human action (Polkinghorne, 2013). Narrative research involves discussions arranged chronologically around a plot, which was not the goal of the current study.

Role of the Researcher

To minimize the potential effects of researcher bias on the results of the study, minority female officers who were not members of my immediate social network were recruited to participate. Recruitment of 15 minority females occurred using the results of the demographic survey sent to Maryland police organizations representing federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies outside of my community. I did not know any potential participants. Guidelines and ethical principles for research involving human subjects as provided by the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979) were followed in the current study.

Participants were assured that they would receive respect as autonomous agents and as people entitled to protection. Participants were allowed to answer interview questions as freely as possible. Moreover, the informed consent form they were asked to sign included everything they could expect from the interview. No information was withheld from participants. They were made aware that minimal risk would accrue from answering the interview questions. The emphasis on protection from harm was in line with the Belmont Report's emphasis on beneficence, which states researchers must not harm their study participants (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

Participants were sent an informed consent form to review before the interview. The informed consent provided information about the study as well as my contact information should participants have any questions before agreeing to participate in the study. At the beginning of the scheduled interview, participants were asked to sign the informed consent form as an agreement to join this study and express their willingness to participate. Participants were offered the opportunity to have the interview conducted at a convenient and comfortable location and at a time that suited them. To minimize bias during and after each interview, I audio-recorded the interview and asked each participant to review their respective transcript to ensure responses were captured accurately. During the review of transcripts, participants were allowed to change or add to their responses, if desired.

During the interview, each participant was given a chance to think about and respond to the questions. The questions were clear so that participants would not have difficulty understanding them. A pilot study with four nonparticipating minority female officers was conducted before the interviews to ensure the questions were clear and based on the participants' language, rationality, and maturity. Pilot test participants were recruited through a review of the survey answers. Participants chosen for the pilot test met the same selection requirements as those who were interviewed for the study.

To minimize researcher bias before interviewing participants and during the subsequent analysis of the collected data, I noted my perceptions, personal interpretations, and expectations of the possible findings. Before each interview, I noted in a journal any assumptions and beliefs regarding the topic. During the analysis of the

interview data, I used this journal to note any interpretations that may include personal perceptions and assumptions that could limit the interpretation of participant responses. The protective measure of setting aside bias helped me to be aware of expected results and mindful of interpretations (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). To guard against a trustworthiness threat I had to prepare prior to the interview. The pilot study helped to test the quality of the interview procedures and identify bias in advance of the study. The researcher as instrument (Plano & Creswell, 2008) can be a threat to integrity in qualitative research. Triangulation of the data sources and evaluation of data help to increase trustworthiness. For example, the research would involve conducting a check of interviews for confirmation of transcripts by participants.

Methodology

Participant Selection

To maximize understanding of the barriers associated with minority female law enforcement officer recruitment, I conducted a purposeful selection of participants. The female law enforcement population was information-rich (Patton, 2002) and able to give depth to the study based on the goal of the research. Surveys were sent to federal, state, and local law enforcement organizations in Maryland seeking participants who met the inclusion criteria. The sampling frame included minority female officers with up to 5 years of law enforcement experience. A check of the survey responses for the law enforcement agencies ascertained minority female officers that had 5 or fewer years of service. The rationale for the target population of minority female officers with up to 5 years in law enforcement was that a change occurs in police attitudes over time. Officers

with 5 years or less do not have a chance to become disenchanted with their law enforcement career choice (Foley, Guarneri, & Kelly, 2007). An intended sample of at least 15 minority female officers, five from each—federal, state, and local—law enforcement agencies in Maryland were selected to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

Semi-structured individual interviews and observational notes during interviews served as the data collection tools for the study. Interviews allowed minority female officers to speak on the importance of recruitment and retention to identifying and overcoming barriers. An interview guide (Appendix A) listed key questions needed to answer the research questions and provide context for the study. The interview guide served as a tool upon which the researcher could rely to make sure that not only the interview questions were all asked, but also provided the opportunity for participants to expand on a topic or thought. The interview guide was developed from the existing literature on organizational barriers, such as perceptions, discrimination, and competition, toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers.

Pilot Study

A pilot study of each interview type was conducted with four participants not from the primary sample before the start of the study. The purpose of the pilot study was to ensure there was no ambiguity in the interview questions during the proposed study, confirming the validity of the interview protocol. Any questions that needed further explanation or clarification during the pilot study were reworded and revised. A revised interview guide was then used for the prevailing research study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

To maximize understanding of the barriers associated with minority female law enforcement officer recruitment, a purposeful selection of individuals occurred (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Selection in the initial stage of the sampling frame transpired with survey results from individuals representing minority female law enforcement officers in Maryland's federal, state, and local police agencies. The second stage included a purposive selection of participants from the first stage that fit the criteria for selection. The sampling frame comprised minority female officers with up to 5 years of law enforcement experience. An intended sample of at least 15 minority female officers, five from each of the law enforcement—federal, state, and local—agencies were selected to participate in the study.

The data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews and observational notes. The researcher took observational notes during the interview to record the time, date, and site of the interview as well as participants' feelings, observations, problems, and impressions (Creswell, Clark & Plano, 2011). Interviews were audio-recorded to ensure participant responses were captured verbatim.

Individual interviews took approximately 45–60 minutes to complete. Before the interview, informed consent forms (Appendix B) were signed to not only give potential participants an overview of the study but also to communicate the scope of their participation. The setting of the interviews was held at a pre-determined location chosen by the participant and agreed upon by the researcher. Interviews were scheduled at a time suitable for both the participating minority female officer and the researcher. All

interview sessions were audio-recorded after each of the participants granted permission, and the researcher took observational notes on any additional information that the participant mentioned that was pertinent to the context of the study. After the interviews, the participants were provided with an email address and telephone number so that the researcher could be reached should questions or concerns arise.

Each participant received an email that included their respective interview transcript of responses and researcher notes for participants to confirm or provide additional clarification of interview responses. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher used a digital coding system for each minority female officer participating in the study. The participant was given a number and letter designation corresponding to the order of interviews. For example, the researcher scheduled the interviews for a particular date and time. If one or more of the interviews took place on the same date, the researcher was able to ascertain participant information by using codes. Coding the data allowed the researcher to identify the participant while keeping critical information confidential. During data analysis, participant codes were also used to store and review participant responses using NVivo 12 software.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, the validity of a study's findings can also be referred to as its the trustworthiness (Bowen, 2005; Silverman, 2005). In establishing trustworthiness, the data sources and collection and the study results should be credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable (Bowen, 2005). Multiple lines of evidence used in the proposed study—semi-structured interviews and observational notes during interviews—

are tools adapted from and currently found within the existing literature to establish the credibility of study procedures. A pilot study (Chenail, 2011) helped to test the quality of interview processes and identify bias in advance of the primary study.

A pilot study of the interview questions occurred with four minority female officers that were not part of the proposed study. Pilot study outcomes were used to revise any questions to be more explicit for study participants. The actual study occurred after completion of the pilot study, which helped determine bias and test the validity of the instrument. The researcher (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003) can be a threat to integrity in qualitative research. The degree of kinship the researcher has as a member of law enforcement could introduce bias into the study. The researcher recognized the bias and limits within whenever doing observation, whether directly, indirectly, or in a participant or nonparticipant role. Patton (2002) stated humans can "become part of other people's experiences, and through watching and reflecting…come to understand something about those experiences" (p. 319). Identifying self-imposed bias and keeping an open mind during the interviews aided in reducing researcher bias.

The triangulation and member checking of data also helped to increase trustworthiness. The triangulation of data sources increased the generalization of the study. The researcher asked participants to verify the data collected during interviews to ensure the accuracy of the interview data. Each participant received their respective transcript to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses. Using each data source in conjunction with the other contributed to the data validity. The overlapping description resulting from the combination of sources provided triangulation of the data sources.

Additionally, multiple reviews of data collected and analyzed ensured the reliability and trustworthiness of the study findings.

Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative descriptive analyses were conducted for the data collected from participant interviews and observational notes taken during the interview sessions. The data gathered from the minority female officer interviews was first read to learn about their experiences and perceptions of organizational barriers within law enforcement as well as any other relevant data specific to recruitment and retention of minority female officers in law enforcement agencies. The data was then coded into descriptive categories derived from themes related to "organizational barriers," "recruitment," and "retention," each important aspects of the study. Observational notes from interviews were also coded for thematic analysis. Using NVivo 12 software, the analysis consisted of looking for recurring words and phrases that generated codes that fit into emergent themes (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Participants ranked the Likert scale data by choosing the factors related to why they choose law enforcement as a career and collected during interviews. Factors were analyzed by comparison to interview responses. The researcher then reviewed the analysis of the participant responses and researcher notes. Participants were also asked to review their interview responses and the researcher notes taken during the interview. Multiple reviewers of data analyses provided more reliable results than would be gained if the researcher alone conducted the study.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine minority female officers' perceptions of organizational barriers toward the recruitment and retention of females in law enforcement. Through a purposive sampling method, 15 minority female officers from Maryland federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies were recruited to participate in the current study. Data was collected from surveys, individual interviews, and observational notes from the interviews to gather descriptions of female minority officers' lived experiences of organizational barriers perceived toward the recruitment and retention of female minority officers in the law enforcement profession within the context of these experiences.

Chapter 4 will look at findings from the study and provide insight into what administrators of law enforcement agencies could do to improve the recruitment and retention of minority female officers, a group disproportionately represented in law enforcement agencies today. The long-term effects of the study identified how to reduce perceived barriers and increase retention of recruited minority female officers.

Chapter 4: Results

Over the last four decades, the percentage of females and minorities who have entered the law enforcement profession has increased. Despite the increase of minorities and females in law enforcement, the field is viewed as a White male-dominated profession. This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to provide a deeper understanding of the barriers associated with the recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement. Through an investigative process of inquiry conducted in a natural setting, qualitative research helps the researcher to make sense of a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative studies are conducted to construct a complex, holistic description with informants' exact words to document an understanding of a human problem.

This chapter contains the analysis (see Appendix C) and results of the qualitative phenomenological data collected using a survey and interviews. The study addressed the following central research question: What are the perceived and organizational barriers to minority females interested in entering the law enforcement profession? Four sub-questions addressed the overarching research question:

R1a: What organizational barriers do minority female officers perceive to exist within law enforcement toward the recruitment and retention of minority female officers?

R2b: How do minority female officers face perceived or actual barriers to perception, discrimination, and competition in recruitment?

R3c: How do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward recruitment of female minority officers?

R4d: How do minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward retention of female minority officers?

The chapter includes how data were developed, collected, and recorded as well as the method by which the themes were identified. The results from the data collected from 54 surveys and interviews with 15 minority females within law enforcement were used to answer the research questions. The identified themes, coupled with research, were used as a catalyst for formulating suggested public policy changes for law enforcement organizations.

Pilot Study

Four participants were selected from the survey responses to participate in a pilot study—one from federal and state law enforcement agencies and two from local law enforcement agencies. The participants were selected from a pool of survey respondents who indicated they would like to participate in the interview phase. The pilot study respondents met the qualifications for participation as they were minority females with 5 or fewer years of law enforcement service. The participants were selected from the first 10 respondents volunteering for interviews. The participants were contacted by email and advised of the study parameters. I arranged an interview date, time, and location that was convenient for each participant. At the beginning of the semi-structured interview, I reviewed the consent form. All four participants agreed to have their interviews audio recorded. I advised participants that they could stop the interview at any time. The results of the interviews and observations of the participants were stored on a password-protected computer to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

The results of the pilot interviews revealed that some of the questions were unclear to participants and needed to be reworded to avoid confusion. In the initial interview questions, I probed participants for further responses beyond a basic yes/no response. For example, instead of asking, “did the method of recruitment affect your decision to apply?” participants were asked, “what method of recruitment influenced your decision to apply?” The reworded question resulted in participants freely answering and offering richer data for analysis. The questions were revised after each interview to arrive at the final interview questions used in the study.

Research Setting

There were no experiences that would have influenced participants through the survey portion of the study. Skewing of closed-ended questions can occur due to the context in which the questions were asked, and the time, place, and situation in which they were presented (Friborg & Rosenvinge, 2013). The survey was distributed during the holidays, which slowed the response of participants. The survey was sent to several law enforcement organizations that agreed to distribute it to their members. One organization put the survey on their upcoming holiday events email. When I discovered this, the organization was asked to resend the survey announcement independent of other events. A second organization that initially agreed to distribute the survey had changed leadership. A request was resubmitted to the new gatekeeper, and once approved, they distributed the survey. The data gathered through the end of the year were reviewed and used to schedule interviews for the pilot study.

The participants chose the date, time, and meeting place for the pilot study interviews. Of the four pilot study participants, three scheduled the interview on their days off. The remaining participant scheduled the interview after getting off of work. After a full day of work, the participant who agreed to do the pilot study interview appeared to be initially less talkative. However, the participant eventually identified with a couple of the questions that she was passionate about answering, resulting in the participant relaxing and being more informative. This experience allowed me to make a note to attempt to schedule the interviews when study participants were not coming from work.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the rescheduling of some interviews. One participant who had agreed to the interview before the pandemic failed to show after two separate times were set and confirmed. Once Walden University IRB allowed electronic meetings, I completed the interviews using Google Duo, a video conferencing site. The final participants who agreed to do face-to-face interviews used personal protective equipment and adhered social distance protocols. These interviews occurred without incident.

Demographics

The experiences of minority females in law enforcement will enhance police agencies' implementation of diversity and excellence (Collins & Gleaves, 1998; Pompper, 2011; Wright, 2015). The current study's population was minority females who described their experiences of recruitment, training, and retention. Participants provided an authentic account of their lives as minority female law enforcement officers. Creswell

(1994) posited that a phenomenological study "describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon" (p. 51). I was motivated to find meaning in concepts or phenomena to identify human experiences and their meaning.

The phenomenon addressed in this study was the lived experiences of minority females in law enforcement. Moustakas (1994) described phenomena as "the building blocks of human science and the basis for all knowledge" (p. 26). The experiences of the minority female participants were explored using open-ended questions. Del Carmen, Green, Nation and Osho (2007) described the uniqueness of minority females because of their race and gender experiences within a primarily white male-dominated profession. These unique experiences can better benefit from a qualitative rather than quantitative study. The qualitative study allowed for a deeper understanding through clarification of answers to interview questions.

The study was comprised of two parts: a survey and an interview. Participation was voluntary and comprised minority females employed 5 or fewer years in law enforcement. The survey participants were not asked to provide demographic information but were asked only to participate if they fit the parameters of the study. In addition to having 5 or fewer years in law enforcement, participants had to be an actively-licensed minority female, honorably-retired female, or graduate of a federal law enforcement academy. The participants who agreed to interviews were from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland.

Participants responded to demographic questions before the interview. The demographic information collected included the age of participant, race, level of education, marital status, and number of children, if any. Occupational information collected from participants included whether they were actively-licensed in law enforcement, the agency in which they were employed, and how long the participant had been employed as a police officer.

The demographic attributes allowed the responses to be compared to determine if age or marital status were factors in recruitment. Another benefit of the demographic attributes when compared to the factors list revealed whether education or experience had an impact on a decision to join or remain in law enforcement. Twelve of the participants were African American and three were Hispanic. The participants ranged in age from twenty-four to thirty-nine. Participants were tallied by years of service in law enforcement.

Table 1 depicts the demographic attributes of education and employment. One participant had completed close to 5 years of service and had a bachelor's degree. Two participants had 4 years of service, with one having a bachelor's degree and one having some college. Four participants had 3 years of service, with two having associate degrees and two having some college. Five participants had 2 years of service and all had bachelor's degrees. Three participants had 1 year of service and all had some college. One participant was married, one was divorced, and the remaining thirteen were single. Nine of the participants had no children. One participant had three children, one participant had two children, and each of the remaining four participants had one child.

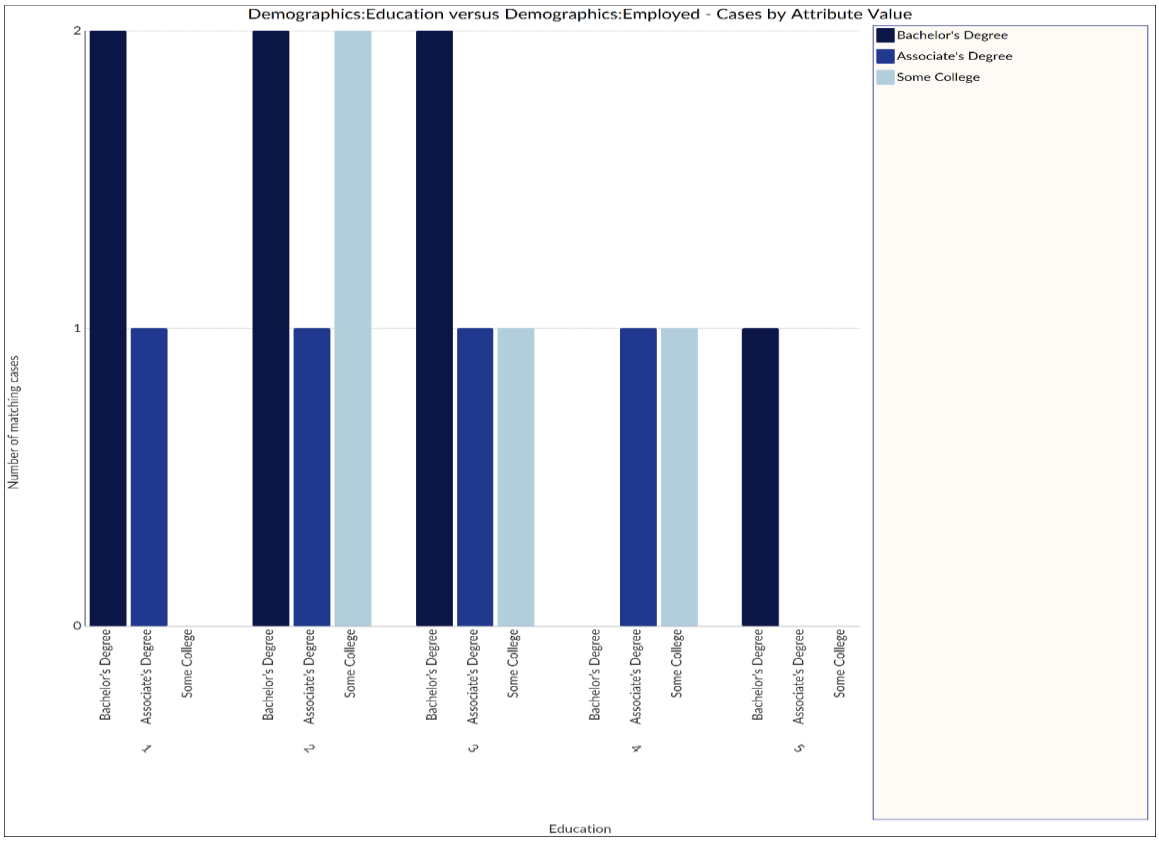

Figure 2. Education versus employment.

Data Collection

The data collection process began with the researcher contacting the gatekeepers of various law enforcement organizations to ascertain whether they would be willing to release a survey to potential participants. Gatekeepers are those persons through whom access is gained (Greig & Taylor, 1999). A letter (Appendix D) was sent via email to these presidents or chiefs of the organizations along with a sample email and the survey (Appendix E) if they agreed to allow the organization members to participate. The survey was housed on Survey Monkey and consisted of 33 questions. The survey questions were adapted using a survey created in conjunction with the Texas Metropolitan Police

Department, Texas Department of Public Safety, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation with assistance from Dr. Anne Kringen (2014) for her study regarding the recruitment and retention of female police officers. The survey they modified was from a study on tokenism (Stroshine & Brandl, 2011). The survey instrument created by Stroshine and Brandl (2011) was modified from a survey created by Morash and Haarr (1995) to study tokenism in 25 police departments across the United States. Stroshine and Brandl (2011) modified the instrument to measure visibility, polarization, and assimilation—three aspects of tokenism. The instrument used by Kringen (2014) pertained to concepts of visibility, polarization, assimilation, organizational issues, childcare and family, finding a spouse, spousal support, and safety concerns.

The survey questionnaire this researcher used modified Kringen's (2014) instrument. Questions about hair (i.e., "I would be less likely to apply for a job in policing if I were required to cut my hair short for the academy") were removed and not considered relevant to this study. This researcher wanted to examine not only the parameters established in Kringen's (2014) survey instrument but also how respondents would answer questions related directly to being viewed as minorities. Two questions were added to the Polarization section: (1) "coworkers will joke or make offensive remarks about being a minority; and (2) "coworkers and supervisors will exclude me from things because I am a minority," resulting in nine total questions. Two questions were added to the Assimilation section: (1) "I will be expected to work well with minorities because I am a minority"; and (2) I will need to do the job differently because I am a minority," resulting in a total of six questions. A question was re-worded in the

Safety section: “policing will be more dangerous for me because I am a minority.” Seven questions remained in this section. Throughout the survey, the word “woman” was changed to “female.” The change was made to coincide with the course of this study. The questions about Visibility (four questions), childcare and family (retitled as Family—four questions) and Finding a spouse and spousal support, (retitled Significant Other—three questions) were left intact. The survey was posted for approximately eight weeks to gather responses. There were 54 respondents to the survey. Twenty-seven of the respondents agreed to participate further in an interview.

The survey participants were contacted via email using the address they provided after completion of the survey. After corresponding with each survey respondent who answered the email, they were vetted during telephone calls to determine if they were from federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies and their number of years of service. One agency had several survey participants. Only a few agreed to an interview. Another agency appeared to have provided every available minority female that qualified to complete the survey. However, only a few were selected for the pilot and others for the actual study in order to have a variety of agencies participate. The selection was based on the order of responses to the questionnaire. Four participants assisted with the pilot study semi-structured interviews.

The interview phase of data collection occurred for the pilot and study using the following process:

1. The researcher established contact by telephone, described the study's purpose, the risks associated with the study, sources of collected data, and the voluntary and confidentiality of collected data.
2. The researcher informed all participants of the benefits of the study and that they could stop the interview at any time without reprisal.
3. The participants were informed that the study sought to benefit law enforcement organizations seeking to increase minority female recruitment and retention.
4. The researcher informed participants that they would be asked demographic questions before being asked the 18 open-ended interview questions.
5. The data, time, and location were arranged with participants who agreed to the semi-structured interview. The interviews took place with minimal interruptions, as scheduling occurred during times for minimized possible interruptions.
6. The participants were given the informed consent form and interview questions before the interview. The researcher repeated or elaborated on questions unclear to the participant.
7. Participants were informed that the interview would be audio recorded and that they could stop participation at any time. Permission was received from participants to audio record the interview.

8. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and provided to participants by email. The transcriptions were the foundation data for analysis of the phenomenon.
9. Participant identities were changed using pseudonyms. The researcher created a code for each participant pseudonym consisting of a letter and number. The participants were coded P1 through P15. The researcher maintained the key to match the identities of the participants with their codes.

Creswell (2002) suggested that the lived experiences of 5–20 individuals might offer new knowledge or insight. Initially, the researcher planned to select fifteen survey participants for the semi-structured interviews from the remaining survey respondents. There were numerous state and local survey participants but the federal participants lacked in number. The researcher selected two federal, five state, and five local law enforcement personnel. Purposeful and snowball sampling methods (Babbie, 1995; Creswell, 2008) of asking certain people for names of potential participants was utilized to gather the final three federal interviews.

The purposive sample of 15 minority female officers were selected based on their lived experiences and knowledge associated with the phenomenon concerning the barriers to recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement. The participants agreed to meet at a time and location convenient for the interview. A few of the actual study interviews occurred using Google Duo, a video conferencing site. The consent form was reviewed with each of the study participants before the start of the interview. Semi-structured audiotaped interviews and observational notes during

interviews served as the study's data collection tools. The interviews were 37 to 85 minutes in duration, with most lasting approximately 45 minutes. The researcher provided participants with the researcher's phone number and email address should they have any questions after the interview.

The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed. Each of the participants received a transcript of their interview responses for clarification. The data was coded to allow participant confidentiality. The participants were given pseudonyms and participant numbers to conceal their identity. The agency-identifying information was removed. All law enforcement agencies were given generic names for what they called their work areas, shifts, or officers. After all the interviews were completed, the researcher was not learning anything new and felt thematic saturation was reached. Analysis of the data was performed applying the constant comparative method. NVivo 12 qualitative computer software was used to analyze the data by coding and placing the words and phrases into categories.

Data Analysis

A phenomenological approach was used to capture the participants' experiences and examine how they made sense of those experiences (Creswell, 2008). The interview transcript and observation notes collected during the interview were analyzed through detailed description, constant comparison, direct interpretation, and establishment of patterns. NVivo 12 qualitative computer software was used to analyze the data.

A theoretical thematic analysis was used to interpret participant interviews and look for common themes according to the categories of organizational barriers,

recruitment, and retention from the existing literature. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as "A method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data" (p. 79). Thematic analysis is a six-step analysis process, which is an appropriate tool for phenomenological analysis. The first step is to become familiar with the data. The data for this study was provided through the transcribed interviews. The data, coupled with the observation notes, was reviewed several times to get a sense of the participant and the lived experiences.

The second step involved coding phrases, sentences, or words that appeared meaningful using different codes or labels to describe the content. The constant comparative approach occurred after uploading data into NVivo 12. The use of NVivo 12 aided in thematic content analysis to enhance rigor, expedite the process, and add the opportunity for data analysis from different perspectives. As each interview was reviewed, it was coded while seeking differences and similarities. The questions asked during this process to test each expression were, "What is this about?" "What is the point of this experience?" "Is it possible to abstract and label the experience?" The process included many pages of text broken down into segments of text using open coding. During open coding, properties were identified and assigned a code (see Table 1).

Table 1

Example Using an Extract from Interview Responses on Training Challenges (P1)

Responses	Codes
My answer of men being considered the experts in everything.	Attribute
They paired the female up with the males during academy training and wanted us to fight with them, like boxing.	Training/gender roles
I guess they were trying to make sure that we were cut out for the job.	Proving herself
The males in the academy really did not like fighting with the females.	Resistance

Axial coding was employed to develop the categories and systematically organize the relationships. A determination was made if the coded data related to the research question. Any unrelated data was not coded. For example, when speaking about what method of recruitment influenced the decision to apply, one participant talked about an experience she had relocating. This experience was interesting but was neither connected to the categories nor the literature. The participant used the relocating event as a prelude to revealing embedded relevant data pertinent to the research.

Each phrase or passage was coded into one central idea to complete the third step. Codes that occurred frequently were clustered together for further interpretation. The data flowed into logical categories until 78 codes were synthesized, resulting in emergent themes. Subcategories were created from categories not observed at the beginning of the study. The subcategories were coded as additional information and incorporated into the new research information.

The fourth step was a review of the themes to ensure that they coincided with the data. Changes were made to any themes that were not accurate or useful. The fifth step was to define the themes according to how helpful it would be to understand the data. The 26 codes were reduced to five themes related to the theory (see Table 2). The associated themes contained sub-themes that were an essential connection to the general theme.

Table 2

Thematic Analysis

Motivation	Evaluation	Transformation	Discrimination	Obstacles
Desires	Experience	Culture	Visibility	Agency support
Awareness	Training	Communication	Confidence	Work/life balance
History	Identity	Relationship	Perceptions	Family and significant other
	Treatment	Retention	Tokenism	Childcare
				Safety

The final step in the thematic analysis was writing up the data explaining how the thematic analysis was conducted.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility and Transferability

Accuracy of data and findings are essential to ensure credibility and transferability. Determining if the data and results truly reflect participant experiences (Creswell, 2002). The research was conducted using an online survey created through Survey Monkey. The interviews were transcribed and reviewed multiple times to ensure

that proper coding occurred. Surveys, interviews, and observational notes were used during the coding process. Peer debriefing was employed by colleagues not involved in the research to help triangulation. The interviews were transcribed and sent to participants for review to check for accuracy. Participants were asked to indicate any changes in the transcript. Fourteen of the fifteen participants accepted the transcripts. The sole participant that rejected the transcript did so because the transcript named specific individuals. After being assured that the research would not contain detailed information (i.e., names, locations, etc.) the participant accepted the transcript. Creswell's (1994) suggested peer review, member checks, and rich, thick descriptions were implemented. Using direct quotes from interviews provided the rich, thick description necessary to support the uncovered themes.

Dependability

The process of coding data includes the development, finalization, and application of the code structure. In cases where the researcher is the instrument, some experts (Morse, 1994; Morse & Richards, 2002; Janesick, 2003) posit that a single researcher conducting all the coding is sufficient and preferred. As part of bias disclosure, it was revealed that the researcher is a minority law enforcement officer. Before the interview, the consent form was reviewed with participants. They were advised that they could stop the interview at any time.

During interviews, the researcher had to be mindful of any related experiences regarding recruitment and retention. Gubrium and Holstein (2001) advised that disclosure of researcher bias and philosophical approaches is vital for the study's trustworthiness.

The researcher took care not to affect participant interviews negatively. The questions used as a guide assisted with keeping the interview on track and the researcher on target. Participants were given ample time to respond to the research questions. Any follow up questions were written down and then asked once the participant finished responding to the original question. At the end of the interview, participants were asked if they had any questions for the researcher. The interview was transcribed, coded, and reviewed for accuracy. Thematic analysis was used to code descriptive categories related to recruitment, retention, and organizational barriers. Using NVivo 12 software, analysis consisted of looking for recurring words and phrases that generated codes that fit emergent themes. Data coding and recoding occurred to qualify the dependability of the research.

Confirmability

Journaling during research shielded the study findings from potential bias or the researcher's personal motivations. The researcher reassessed expectations, and efforts were made to locate and examine discrepant cases. Two peer scholars referred to this researcher by a colleague reviewed the data to ensure that the information gathered from participants was clearly described in the data and that the researcher remained neutral. Participants' emotions were documented using field notes and included in the coding. Member checking with participants by sending them a transcript of the interview for confirmation was another step taken to ensure triangulation.

Results

A conversational semi-structured interview process was used. In a phenomenological study, Jensen and Helles (2019) theorize that "the data are collected by in-depth conversations in which the researcher and the subject are fully interactive" (p. 33). The participants answered four demographic questions, two occupational information questions, and 18 open-ended questions. The purpose of the demographic questions was to establish rapport and define personal information. The occupational information was asked to gain insight into the participant's foundation in law enforcement. As Creswell (2008) suggested, the questions helped to develop a description of each participant.

Themes Identified

The qualitative study was intended to discover and analyze perceived barriers to minority females entering or remaining in law enforcement. The research question driving this study is: What are the perceived and organizational barriers to minority females interested in entering the law enforcement profession? Fifty-four participants who helped to give some insight into perceived barriers completed a survey. Those barriers were broken down into six concepts: (1) Safety; (2) Assimilation; (3) Significant other; (4) Childcare and family; (5) Visibility; and (6) Polarization. The survey respondents were segmented into a group of 39 (*Appendix F*) and a group of 15 (*Appendix G*). Table 3 highlights the top responses of each group to ascertain the differences between the participants surveyed and the participants surveyed and interviewed.

Table 3

Survey Results Comparison

Concepts	39 participants	15 participants	Difference
Safety	23% strongly disagree	33% disagree	10%
Assimilation	27% agree/strongly agree	34% agree	7%
Significant other	25% strongly disagree	29% agree	4%
Childcare & family	29% agree	37% agree	8%
Visibility	38% agree	43% agree	5%
Polarization	27% disagree/strongly disagree	34% disagree	7%

The table shows that a clear difference of 4% to 10% exists between participants who were surveyed and those that agreed to be interviewed after completing the survey. The 15 participants either agreed (4 categories) or disagreed (2 categories) in their choice. Of the 39 participants, 23% strongly disagreed regarding safety, but of the 15 participants, 33% disagreed, with an overall 10% difference. When reviewing the list of concepts for the 39 participants, 27% agreed or strongly agreed regarding assimilation; 25% strongly disagreed regarding significant other; 29% agreed regarding childcare and family; 38% agreed regarding visibility; and 27% disagreed or strongly disagreed with polarization when responding to the survey questions. As Table 3 shows, of the 15 participants, 34% agreed with assimilation; 29% agreed with significant other; 37% agreed with childcare and family; 43% agreed with visibility; and 34% disagreed with polarization survey questions. The chart of 15 participants showed they were definitive in their choices, while the 39 participants oscillated in some concept categories. These

survey results were computed for the researcher to get an idea of participant choices to compare with interview data.

The results of the interviews are presented by stating the theme and ensuing sub-themes used to label the participants' experiences. The themes and resultant sub-themes stemmed from a thematic analysis process. The interview themes differed in areas from the survey themes. The survey only captured the surface meaning of experiences. During the interviews, the participant's tone, gestures, and inflections were observed and captured. The researcher could delve into meanings with the participants to gain a greater understanding of their experiences. Participants' significant experiences resulted in the themes and sub-themes of the study.

Five core themes emerged from an analysis of the paradigm participants used to make sense of their experiences: (1*)* Motivation, (2) Evaluation, (3) Transformation, (4) Discrimination, and (5) Obstacles. The reasons participants provided were clustered into meaning units from the interview. The development of themes occurred in two parts: general and specific. The general themes were identified by grouping pervasive individual codes into similar theme patterns. The same process was used to group specific themes.

Themes are presented based on the chronology of the interview data. The interviews started at the beginning of the participant experience to the interview date. The researcher learned that most of the responses to the interview questions could apply to more than one theme. The questions are categorized under the theme where relative

responses were coded. The theme area contains sub-themes and codes to summarize the narratives.

Theme 1: Motivation

The *Motivation* theme describes how participants perceived law enforcement before joining and how that perception prompted them to decide to join law enforcement. This theme was discerned from reviewing the responses to the questions: (1) Did the reputation of the law enforcement agency treatment of minorities influence why you chose to enter law enforcement? (2) Did the reputation of how the law enforcement agency treated females influence why you chose to enter law enforcement? and (3) Did your perception of police have an impact on the decision to apply to law enforcement? The questions provoked participants to identify what motivated them to decide on law enforcement rather than another career. As participant 13 more aptly phrased it, "what made me fit?"

Females seek law enforcement careers for personal, professional, or economic reasons. The participants' responses for this study indicated they were motivated by those reasons but viewed them through a different lens. Some of the responses noted participants joined because they had a goal in mind they wanted to reach. For a few of the participants, the policing career choice was not their first.

- I started out early, believe it or not. I started out as a head start teacher, and I was not making any money. So, the jail was hiring. So, I went. I did not honestly think I was going to get the job, but I went, did the interview, and

> they hired me. I worked there for six years before applying to police, because I really wanted to do policing, and that is how I ended up here. (Participant 6)

- I have always had an interest in law enforcement ever since I was in high school. I could not see myself being happy doing any other thing. I worked in a law office, I worked as a correctional officer, and those jobs were not well suited to me. (Participant 4)

Some might reasonably question why it took so long for participants to arrive at a career in law enforcement if they were motivated. Speaking with participants revealed that there was an occurrence in their life that made them seek out their desire. As one participant noted:

> I went the long route, but there are reasons. I had my child at a young age and had to put off my goals and dreams because I had to work. When I started working, it was about getting paid and less about following my goal. I did not want to be on state assistance. So, it just took me a little bit longer to complete my goals. (Participant 6)

Sub-themes for *Motivation* include: (a) desires, (b) awareness, and (c) history.

Sub-theme A: Desires

The sub-theme *Desires* includes how participants used their inner strengths to seek out a law enforcement career. These desires had many facets, as observed in the codes associated with motivation. Codes with the highest reference counts included altruistic desires for making an impact, helping people, and giving back. Participants mentioned success as a desire in their careers. Success takes on many meanings, and it

was no different for the participants of this study. The motivations behind participants' desire to succeed were how they felt about others and the sacrifices and hardships they were willing to face.

- I never thought that I was going to be a police officer until a tragedy in my family occurred. Then I thought about policing and how I could give back. (Participant 12)
- I made a lot of sacrifices, and a lot of women are not in a position to make those types of sacrifices to stay at an academy or be gone hours in a day. (Participant 6)

Eight of the fifteen participants mentioned helping people as the motivation for joining law enforcement. Protecting and serving people was equally as important as their desire.

- I like the idea of serving the community. I had already started to serve my country, so I just liked the idea of serving. I like the idea of helping people. (Participant 2)
- Knowing that I help people, knowing that I am doing something that I love, helping people. (Participant 13)
- I wanted to make a positive impact in the community. (Participant1)
- …the recruitment video was showing the officers and how they were helping the public. That is what made me really want to go ahead and apply. I always knew that this was what I wanted to do, so I applied. (Participant 7)

Sub-theme B: Awareness

Participants described why it is crucial for them to succeed in a law enforcement career and how being cognizant of the experience helped them to not fail. The theme that coded high for this category was *awareness*—awareness of self and an awareness of what was going on with policing in their communities. Participants remarked on negative things they saw or heard about other officers in their community and how this affected their decision to join law enforcement.

- My experience with the police at a younger age kind of stopped me from joining much sooner. A lot of the stuff they did was illegal, and that kind of build my hatred towards police before I became a police officer. (Participant 9)
- I heard and still do hear how police officers are racist or how, for example, White males in law enforcement use their power to do certain things (illegal activity, framing minorities). (Participant 4)

What people in the community experience with the police has a significant impact on whether people will join. Seeing how the police treated people in the community, their own self-awareness, and a desire to relate to people were some of the things mentioned within this theme. The community and media were referred to as dissuading people, particularly minorities, from joining law enforcement. Freddie Gray and other high-profile cases impacted minority females' decisions to join. Contrary to what the media reported about how these incidents negatively influence the minority community, minority females wanted to join law enforcement after these incidents to relate to people

and make them understand that not all police are corrupt. Most examples were positive, but three of the 15 participants cited negative experiences as an inspiration.

- People get tired of watching minorities get beat up or worse, killed. Usually by Caucasian male officers. Not everyone joins the force to become combative with minorities or people of different races. We become officers to protect and serve, to be a part of the change. (Participant 1)
- With the Freddie Gray riots, I had to do a self-check because the things I saw on television, I was like, could you stand there and allow someone to spit on you or throw a brick? With the riots, I feel like that was one of the wake-up moments. Something had to be done. (Participant 14)

Sub-theme C: History

While reviewing the coding for motivation, personal *History* was another concept that became relevant. The data reflects the different ways minority females engaged with law enforcement based on how they grew up and were socialized. Whether life history is positive or negative contributed to individuals' perceptions and how they chose the path of their lives.

Seven of the fifteen participants listed or named a connection with the military, corrections, or policing as motivation to join law enforcement.

- I come from a military police background. My father was a police officer and a Marine. My mother was a correctional officer. My grandfathers were prior military. (Participant 9)

- I come from a background where when I was in high school, I did JROTC. I was army based, and I had some experience in ROTC in college. I liked the structure and discipline. (Participant 13)

Four of the fifteen referred to a friend, role model, parent, or another familial source of inspiration that led them to enter law enforcement.

- I have a friend that worked at another police agency. So, I think just proximity and knowing somebody that worked in policing influenced me to choose to come to police and start my law enforcement career. (Participant 2)
- My grandfather was a police officer. So, when he worked, he would sometimes babysit, and we would have to go to the police station with him while he was working. (Participant 6)
- I have a female cousin; she is a Sheriff. When I was little, I would visit her, and she kind of sparked my interest. She would tell me stories about the things she would get into as a police Sheriff. (Participant 8).
- My daughter's grandfather had a friend that worked for this agency. He told me that the police were hiring. He said that I should apply. (Participant 10)

Theme 2: Evaluation

The *Evaluation* that the participants experienced involved adjusting or aligning themselves to the policing surroundings or circumstances. Responses ingrained in this theme were in answer to the questions: (1) What method of recruitment influenced your decision to apply? (2) Did the length of time for the application process have any effect on your decision to apply? (3) Where there any challenges experienced during

recruitment? and (4) Were any challenges experienced during training? Evaluation in policing begins with the recruitment process of completing an application, agility test, polygraph, background check, physical, and psychological test. Participants indicated they were orienting themselves to the police environment by physically and mentally preparing for the evaluations. Participants who did not typically exercise began an exercise regimen. Knowing that they would be judged by their associations, other participants indicated they stopped socializing with friends or family members that did not conform with what they perceived was the police image.

Recruitment was another area where participants evaluated themselves with perceived expectations. Participants expressed that they knew that the process would take a long time to complete. Depending on a person's prior history, the recruitment process could take from three months to a year to complete. The officers in this study ranged from three months to two years. Participants were asked if the length of time for the recruitment process would have influenced their decision to apply. All participants stated that they would have continued with the process regardless of the length.

Recruitment occurred in several ways for participants. Four participants heard their agency was hiring through word of mouth. Seven participants used a website (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, USA Jobs) or the agency's website. One applicant found a flyer, one learned of the police opportunity through a job fair at her college, and one had a mentor who worked for the agency. Various recruitment methods worked to encourage women to apply to law enforcement. Some of the participants indicated that they were actively seeking a career in law enforcement. Participant 8 stated she was not actively

looking, stumbled across the agency on a Facebook page, saw they had walk-in testing, and just walked in.

This researcher examined the barriers associated with not only evaluation but also the lived experiences that officers had when recruited. Evaluation had the second-highest word count when coding. Four relative sub-themes were noted when coding *Evaluation*: (a) Experience; (b) Training; (c) Identity; and (d) Treatment.

Sub-theme A: Experience

An adverse *Experience* during recruitment, training, or during field training can have an undesirable effect on a potential officer candidate trying to decide whether to join or remain in law enforcement. Conversely, positive experiences can reinforce an applicant's decision to join law enforcement. Participants spoke of their experiences in preparation for pre- and post-hiring. Participant 5 spoke of doing a ride-along with the agency prior to applying: "I had to do a ride-along because that is what we are supposed to do. To see what the job is like." Two participants spoke of extensively researching the police agency.

- I searched it up online, I did a lot of research, searching for police. (Participant 12)
- So, I definitely did research…with this agency right now. (Participant 15)

The experience code was the highest sub-theme under Evaluation. Experiences included the perception of the agency and females in the agency.

Disorganization within the agency was mentioned by two participants as a negative experience during recruitment.

- I was initially told after the test and agility that the agency was not hiring. Then I was called and told the next day to report for the next phase of the process. So, I guess the agency needed to be more organized. (Participant 1)
- The biggest challenge would be the agencies communicating with one another to transfer…like bureaucracies not handling certain paperwork properly. (Participant 7)

A reason that Participant 2 mentioned involved having negative experiences and just that alone would generally be a reason she would not want to continue in law enforcement.

Participants revealed the physical agility or physical training (PT) test as a barrier to recruitment. The physical tests were another highly-coded category that 13 of the 15 discussed.

- Having the confidence to know that I could complete the fitness test every month (Participant 3)
- Defensive tactics, for example, females had a hard time pairing up with males because the males did not want to fight with us or train with us. (Participant 4)
- Having to retake the fit test. (Participant 5)
- Whew, everything physical. I excelled in the classroom, but when it came to the physical stuff, like running and pushups…was where I struggled. (Participant 8)
- Whew, man, those pushups. I passed everything except for the pushups. (Participant 12)

- …my initial pushups. That is the only thing. (Participant 15)

Sub-theme B: Training

The *Training* of recruits to become police officers occurs within the academy. Academy training can last from 12 to 34 weeks. Once the recruits graduate, they are sent into the field for 8 to 12 weeks or longer, depending on the ability of the trainee, for additional training. Participants discussed their positive and negative experiences regarding the training they received. Some coded words included academy, team, training, adapt, accomplish, goals, and class. This section discusses the challenges and opportunities participants faced during training.

- …coming together with people in the academy. Just trying to work as a team together to accomplish whatever the goals were that we had to accomplish in the academy. (Participant 2)
- I broke my foot during week 5 of the training and got recycled. I had to sit home almost a year before the next class. (Participant 6)
- Lord have mercy, I think the academy was harder than basic training. (Participant 9)
- I had a good experience when I went to field training. Trying to adapt to the new lifestyle I had chosen and stepping into the unknown. Trying to apply everything I learned in the academy into training, trying to put two and two together. (Participant 12)
- During field training, they want you to get into everything. So, you are just, you know, getting into stuff that you really, I guess, did not want to get into…

> they just want you to go all in…in field training, you are writing everybody. (Participant 11)

Sub-theme C: Identity

Retaining your own *Identity* is difficult for police officers. They are expected to look uniform while remaining individuals. The police identity for minority females is overshadowed by how they engage others first as minorities and second as females. Norms and expectations about minority females varied among participants. Some participants expected not to see other minority females with whom they could identify, but others appeared to be surprised that there were few or no minority females. This sub-theme was generated by coded words such as relate, looks like, and identify.

Having someone with whom they could relate during the academy was one of the most mentioned codes linked to identity.

- Two Black female officers presented my orientation, and they did an excellent job describing what the agency was about, its performance, and what duties you would be expected to do. (Participant 3)
- I met a minority corporal during orientation. I liked how she dressed and how squared away she was. Just the way she presented herself made me want to join the police. (Participant 4)
- I would like to have seen more women there. There was one female instructor that was at the academy. Other than that, none. (Participant 6)
- Seeing other females and being inspired by them. (Participant 1)
- People are drawn to people who look like them. (Participant 2)

- …a lack of seeing other females. Of course, I had a ton of questions and no one there that I could identify with to ask, just to pick somebody else's brain other than a male, because of course, that is two different perspectives. (Participant 8)
- I do not want to lose my individuality. I know that there are certain things that my career calls for me to do, but I do not want to have to change my hair. (Participant 14)

Sub-theme D: Treatment

The *Treatment* police officers received in the academy by superiors and then on the street after graduation by colleagues affects their mindset. Organizational inequality and relational intolerance can have significant implications for individual confidence. Lacking encouragement compelled participants to feel that they did not measure up to their coworkers' expectations. The coded interviews revealed that how an officer is treated affects whether they feel accepted or rejected by their peers and supervisors. Teamwork, proving self, camaraderie, and encouragement were some of the coded words.

- When I got out into the field, the guys were trying to say that I could not drive. Also, the shooting, they kept asking me if I could shoot. I had to prove myself to my coworkers, to the guys I worked with. (Participant1)
- The females knew that it was a tough academy, and as females, we knew we had to really prove ourselves. (Participant 5)

- Throughout the application process, I did get a lot of encouragement. The encouragement, I guess, was a push for me to get into the academy. (Participant 3)
- I started to see females after the academy, and even, I mean, while in the academy when I began seeing females, they were welcoming. (Participant 7)

Theme 3: Transformation

Transformation considers whether competition exists among agencies to recruit or retain minority females. The following questions were asked: (1) What factors influenced why you joined law enforcement? (2) What factors would influence your decision to consider leaving law enforcement? (3) Do you perceive that competition exists among agencies attempting to recruit minority female officers? (4) Do you perceive that competition exists among agencies to retain minority female officers? Transformation included codes such as shortage, qualified, minority, numbers, and viable. The codes pertained to the challenges the agencies face when recruiting and retaining minority females. Participants talked about pondering whether they were hired to comply with diversity mandates. These thoughts led to participants asking if the agency genuinely wanted to transform or just conform to the directive. Participants questioned whether they should remain loyal to an organization that was not necessarily loyal to them when they are sought out by other agencies.

Federal, state, and local law enforcement can be thought of as different cogs of the same wheel. Participants from federal, state, and local agencies each referred to some aspect of the other as being “better” than where they worked. Better pay, hours, training

or environment. This fact revealed that all agencies have their differences, and most times, the better parts are revealed and the worse parts remain hidden. The better parts are used to persuade people to switch agencies.

Participants spoke about the competition among agencies. Some indicated that they had been approached in an attempt to be recruited. Some key code words for this theme included shortage, qualified, apply, competitor, recruit, and offer. Participants discussed various aspects of minority recruitment.

- They all want minority females, and there is a shortage of qualified minority females. (Participant 1)
- Different agencies want minority females because there is not a lot of them applying to police work. (Participant 2)
- …they are like, hey, my agency is hiring and we have LEOPS. My agency is hiring, and we have take-home cars. My agency does not have a black female. Everybody wants one because they do not have one. (Participant 6)
- They also need numbers. They need for minorities to join because it is like our agency, we have more Caucasians in the department. (Participant 3)

Participants expressed their views on minority recruitment and how they felt once the agency hired them. This discussion resulted in the following coded *Transformation* sub-themes consisting of (a) culture; (b) communication; (c) relationship; and (d) retention.

Sub-theme A: Culture

The *Culture* of an agency is the glue that holds it together. Branding is what by which outsiders know the organization. Police are identified by the "thin blue line" that separates them from other professions. Minorities view that line as something that they are not welcomed to cross. The culture must change for perceptions to change about the thin blue line brand. Some codes specific to culture were change, conform, and welcoming.

- The culture is like the default is, as a police officer, is a white male. So, anybody that does not fit in that, it is like you need to conform to this default. If you cannot conform or you have trouble conforming, then you are on the outside. It is not a welcoming environment for anyone that does not fit that default. (Participant 2)
- The culture of the agency in itself, the people that you work with, and it is how you interact with those people. You have to be careful, or you could be pegged or described as aggressive…more than your counterparts. (Participant 6)
- The academy for females is harder than for males. Because males can physically do it, and it is definitely harder for a female to do, to be expected to do what a male can do. (Participant 7)
- A continued lack of representation. When you see an advertisement, you see the typical male, the tests cater to men with upper body strength, that alone scares women away. As long as there are no faces that represent us women of

color or just minorities in general, that is where the disconnect will always be. (Participant 8)

- It is a male-dominated field, and not every male thinks that a woman deserves the badge that she has earned. (Participant 14)

Sub-theme B: Communication

Communication is essential to any organization. For law enforcement, it is paramount to be able to communicate clearly to get the job done. If communication does not occur, orders are not carried out and people are directionless. Participants spoke about how the agencies, coworkers, supervisors, and the public communicate. Codes associated with this sub-theme were perception, yelling, listen, questions, being heard, speak, and talking.

- …the agency called in December, and they were like, listen, our class starts in January, do you want the job or not? (Participant 6)
- During field training, I felt that the communication was not there…he was always yelling at me. (Participant 5)
- Being respected, being heard, not just by the public, but internally, like within our agencies. You could go out into the public every day and be disrespected, but internally, if this is home and you do not feel that love and respect, you will not stay. (Participant 14)
- When we have a situation…and it looks like we do not know our job. Then our supervisors or our coworkers start talking down to us, saying, you sure you know what you are doing? (Participant 3)

- The stigma that comes with being a minority female. When I have conversations with people, they say, oh, you know, before I spoke to you, I thought that I could not talk to you because I see you are about your business. So that kind of makes me feel like I cannot bring certain things to you. (Participant 15)
- So, they would yell at me, thinking I did not do my hair. I got yelled at quite a bit. (Participant 3)

Sub-theme C: Relationships

The *Relationships* that participant's discussed and which were coded in this section were those with the public, coworkers, and supervisors. Coworkers garnered the most codes. The codes were equally positive and negative. The public had some positive but more negative codes. Participants spoke about the impact that being called names, being disrespected, and being ignored by the public affected how they felt policing within communities.

- The public loves me. The media makes us look bad, so bad that people only love the police when they need you and when they do not need you, they do not really have a use for you. (Participant 6)
- It is like you have to be on point all the time. You have to be a little bit more private about who you are. (Participant 6)
- The treatment by the minority community, feeling like we are traitors in our own community. (Participant 1)

- People cuss me out. I am not even the primary officer, but when I get there, they are cussing me out. (Participant 10)
- Things are so tense that we do not focus on building relationships with each other. (Participant 3)
- I am talkative. My coworkers would not tell you that at work. They would not tell you that I am talkative because I am not, not here at work. It is really how you want to be perceived at work. I think it has a lot to do with the people that you work with. Their attitudes towards minorities. (Participant 6)

Sub-theme D: Retention

Retention in policing for this sub-theme was identified like a three-legged stool: supervisors, coworkers, and the agency. Participants identified retention with coded words such as supervisors, coworkers, concern, support, and the community. Participants did not feel that they were genuinely valued by the organization or the public once they were hired.

- I do not think that agencies think about retaining officers that much, to be honest. I believe agencies have other things that worry them. I do not feel that they are concerned with retaining female officers or minority females or minorities in general. (Participant 2)
- …Not feeling that sense of welcome. I did not feel like I was getting that. (Participant 13)
- The negative outlook, that the way that the public just views the career in general. There is definitely a need for repair. (Participant 14)

- Agencies feel like they got you in the door, and you are her, okay, whew, we are put to the side. The agency says, we got one, and I guess the work is done. She is in the door, that is a statistic. So, you know, if she leaves that is on her. (Participant 8)

Theme 4: Discrimination

The *Discrimination* theme was the third-highest coded concept. The questions were: (1) Do you perceive that discrimination exists towards minority female officers? and (2) What obstacles have you faced regarding other people's perceptions of minority female officers? These questions invited participants to respond directly to the perceived experiences of discrimination. The words surrounding discrimination were Caucasian, Black, female, separate, White, and treatment. Participants mentioned that they work hard and see other minority females work hard, yet they do not experience the benefits attributed to the White males and females. Nor do they see male minorities benefit who also work hard. Participants stated that they felt that they had to keep their professional and personal lives separate without having a desire or need to socialize with other officers. Choosing to separate may exacerbate coworkers' nonacceptance of the minority female. Participants spoke about the pros and cons of how others viewed them and the perceived "privilege" that comes with being a minority female.

- As a Black female, you can write your own ticket, and you can go anywhere you want to go because everybody wants you and nobody has you. I think that. On the other side of that, a lot of our counterparts look at it like, there is nothing special about you because you are Black. (Participant 6)

- She's new, is it because she is a Black female? (Participant 6)
- Discrimination exists with both the public and coworkers. The African American community does not like police, which is taken out on the minority female officer. The Caucasian community is okay with police, just not females or minorities. (Participant 1)

Discrimination sub-themes which occurred through coding were (a) visibility; (b) confidence; (c) perception; and (d) tokenism.

Sub-theme A: Visibility

The sub-theme V*isibility* refers not only to the perceptions of participants but also to how others view participants inside and outside the police world. Participants spoke about how they were treated by coworkers, supervisors and the public. They spoke about their perception of visibility or invisibility. When coding visibility, words that were prevalent included stare, understand, together, and balance:

- You have to be a little bit more private about who you are. Kind of play a role and be on point all the time. Knowing your stuff and being able to stand up for yourself. But you have to be careful how you stand up for yourself. (Participant 6)
- People are drawn to people who look like them. (Participant 2)
- I do not know if it is because we are not expected to do a lot, or it is like there are low expectations of us. Kind of like which comes first, the chicken or the egg. They have a low expectation of us, so we do not do much because there is a low expectation, or is it we do not do much, and that is why they have low

expectations. So I do not think that minority females get a lot of recognition. If there is a minority female that is breaking barriers, people are surprised and shocked. (Participant 2)

- The topic of women comes up in conversations between male officers, and it is degrading, very degrading. (Participant 14)

Sub-theme B: Confidence

While coding for the sub-theme *Confidence,* words participants used words such as attitude, angry, reputation, and Black. Participants who mentioned having self-confidence remarked how others perceived that self-assurance as a negative attitude.

- If you speak your mind, your opinion is automatically considered insubordination. (Participant 5)
- Lack of confidence is the issue. Just being within a male-dominated field, feeling like we do not match up, we are not on the same level as these males. (Participant 3)
- If I change my hair and walk into a room, they say, oh look, she thinks she's better. Look who wants to be confident today. I did not do anything, and I did not say anything, just walked into the room. (Participant 14)
- You are always being questioned about why. Why would you do that? They view you as the enemy somehow. (Participant 14)

Sub-theme C: Perception

Participants indicated their *Perception* through coded interviews that all minority females are viewed in the same way by coworkers and the public. When interacting with

White people, they were considered by males as all alike. When enforcing the law with someone of the same race, they were negatively viewed and seen as oppressing their own race of people. Some coded words included females, ghetto, differently, hiring, Black, working for the man, and skin color.

- When I got out into the field, the guys were trying to say that I could not drive. Also, the shooting, they kept asking me if I could shoot because another minority female crashed up a couple of cars, so now, they think that all females cannot drive, but especially minority females. (Participant 1)
- She is a female, and I am not going to listen to her. Then when my backup comes, and it is a male officer, they automatically go, okay, I will listen to him. I get both sides, the color of my skin, and the fact that I'm a female. (Participant 3)
- An officer saying, why are we recruiting from the ghetto. Meaning we are police officers. We should be holding ourselves differently and not be hiring ghetto (Black) people. (Participant 3)
- I did a Black history speech and then was approached by the supervisor and asked to represent the agency at another event. A lot of the guys, I could tell from their comments or their lack thereof, it is kind of like, what are you asking her for again? She is new. Is it because she is a Black female? (Participant 6)

- I have been in a couple of struggles and a couple of fights. People think they can push through you just because you are small. They look at you with a certain attitude.
- Just being on the street and someone saying all day, you work for the man, you work for the White man. Calling you all kinds of names because they feel like as a Black woman, why are you doing this? You could be doing something else. I am supposed to be more lenient because I am a female. Especially being a Black female, if the person is also Black, they will come at me like, oh, it is always our own people. Can't you let me slide just this one time? (Participant 7)
- People do not take us seriously. I hear a lot on the streets, you a female, why you decide to do policing? Or you too pretty to be an officer, or what made you want to do this? The male officers do not take us seriously. (Participant 11)

Sub-theme D: Tokenism

Tokenism was felt by participants who perceived that they are viewed by race first and then gender. According to participants, despite policies and procedures intended to promote equity and opportunity for minorities, hidden bias remains that negatively impacts minority female officers. Participants said that they were often not seen as equal by their coworkers or the public. They expressed a sense of frequently being the only minority female. Some coded words for this sub-theme included level, being the only one, Black, female, unit, lonely, feeling, skin color, and gender.

- You felt like you will never be up on the same level as your male coworkers. Feeling like all eyes are on you. (Participant 3)
- More difficult for us to get through the promotion process and actually promote because of our skin color because we are female (Participant 3)
- I think, honestly, I got into this unit based on the fact that I am a minority, and I am a female, and they do not have many minority females in this unit or a lot of units. (Participant 3)
- I do not see a lot of females that look like me in the agency, and there are no minority females where I work, except for me, yeah, it is just me. (Participant 6)
- I did not see anyone that looked like me. I did not see an African American woman; I did not see an African American. I was looking, and I could not find one. (Participant 13)
- If I speak up as a minority woman, I am always "the angry Black woman." There has to be a way for us to voice our opinions and be heard without being viewed as our gender and race. (Participant 14)

Theme 5: Obstacles

When interviewing participants about why minority females may not join or remain in law enforcement, they revealed several *Obstacles*. The questions for this theme were: (1) What factors would influence your decision to consider leaving law enforcement? (2) What organizational barriers do you perceive exist within law enforcement toward recruitment and the retention of minority female officers? (3) What

do you believe are the obstacles regarding the retention of minority female officers? (4) What do you think would prevent a minority female officer from applying to law enforcement? and (5) What do you think would prevent minority female officers from remaining in law enforcement? These obstacles were not all experienced by the participant; they may have been experienced vicariously through a coworker or someone the participant knew in the profession. Some codes for this theme were job, satisfaction, stigma, career, advancement, respect, doubt, treatment, environment, negative, harassment, sex, race, gender, and targeted.

- Not being respected. People are making snide remarks about the way your uniform fits, joking about you or making snide remarks. You want to be comfortable in your own environment. (Participant 15)
- When you are dealing with Caucasian male and female coworkers who you know have an officer side, and then there is the real side. Sometimes the real side peeks out, and you have to know how to deal with them. I have one who says certain slurs, and you can kind of tell that he is not really a fan of an African American woman, but he has to play friendly. Put on a show while he is working. (Participant 14)
- Stigmas associated with policing. You are always going to fight that stigma, especially in a high crime state. You have to choose sides, people making you have to choose to be part of the blue. When everybody wants to name a color. (Participant 13)

- Not having minority females in higher ranks. I do not think that our agency has ever had a female captain. The promotion process could be a problem. (Participant 9)
- The moment that I do not feel satisfied with what I am doing or the moment I feel insecure is the moment that I will say, okay, this is not for me, I am leaving (Participant 12)
- The agency may not be for the person. Certain agencies do certain things, and maybe the agency may not be for them because it is not what they expected it to be. (Participant 8)
- Not being able to promote for any reason. A bad workplace environment. (Participant 4)
- Sexual harassment, discrimination, and being treated with indifference. Unfair treatment by supervisors and other people in the community. Not being given the same opportunities for advancement. Being looked at as if the job we do is not good enough. (Participant 1)
- Lacking diversity is the biggest thing for me and why I am passionate about getting more women out on the road or at least at recruiting events (Participant 5)

Five sub-themes coded from the *Obstacles* theme are: (a) agency support; (b) work/life balance; (c) family and significant other; (d) childcare; and safety.

Sub-theme A: Agency Support

Agency Support was important to participants in determining whether they would stay or leave the agency. When participants spoke about agency support, they wanted to know that the agency would be there for them whether the experience was positive or negative. Participants mentioned that they wanted to know that the agency cared about what was important to them as a law enforcement officer. Coded words included position, respect, and policies.

- Every agency puts out what benefits they have. The benefits matter, somewhat, but I do not feel that was the main thing that got my attention. The main thing that got my attention was where we were located and where I was going to be policing. (Participant 11)
- Dotting your Is and crossing your Ts and not feeling that you are appreciated. You just feel like you are not getting anywhere. Not feeling that the organization values you. (Participant 14)
- Having a policy in place to assist officers when they experience sexual or workplace harassment. Policies for fair promotions. (Participant 3)
- They show favoritism to certain officers…It seems like certain supervisors like certain officers, and if they put in for something, they are more than likely to get it. (Participant 13)
- …when it comes to like management, or like your higher ups, they have everything because they have the agency backing them. You need to have that

representation…you need to know someone that knows the policy and the procedures and everything that is willing to step up for you. (Participant 15)

Sub-theme B: Work/Life Balance

Participants spoke about keeping a *Work/Life Balance*. Keeping their professional and personal lives separate and not have a desire or need to socialize with other officers from work. Choosing to separate their work life from their personal life may influence why some participants felt ostracized by peers. The coded words for this sub-theme included missing out, lifestyle, sacrifices, work, life, balance, and time.

- A loss of work/life balance. I see a lot of females in the field, and I listen to their testimonies of the sacrifices that they had to make or the lifestyle they do not get because they had to work harder to be something and have that authority. You have to make time in your life. The problem with minority females is the perception that you have to give it your all, and there is no time for anything else but work. My biggest fear is realizing I am a goal-oriented person, and I like to give everything my all. Realizing that I have achieved the goal that I set for myself, to be in this agency, and you are proud. But what did it cost me? Am I going to able to live with just my pension? Was what I sacrificed worth what I ended up with. That is a constant thing that you are faced with and balancing and trying to figure out. Will that self-fulfillment be okay ten, twenty years from now or even when on the day I am retiring? (Participant 13)

The six participants who had children and the nine that did not spoke about being single parents and how that affects work/life balance. The six participants that had children spoke about how they miss out on their children's lives, lose friends, and try to decide if it was worth the stress.

- You miss a lot, especially when you become a mother. My son is literally growing before my eyes, and I am missing it. I am missing everything. It breaks my heart. Right now, it is definitely a struggle. I am exhausted, and I just want to shower and go to sleep. But I have to help him with homework, try to get some study time in, make dinner, make sure he eats and put him to bed, Then by the time I actually lay down, I have got to turn right around and get back up again. (Participant 9)

Sub-theme C: Family and Significant Other

Participants indicated that *family or a significant other* played a part in whether they joined law enforcement and would most likely be a factor in whether they remained. Family is important to almost everyone, especially law enforcement officers who experience critical incidents more often than the average citizen. The coded words for this sub-theme included family, working, spouse, marriage, marry, and prevent.

- Having a family and working. People do not think that they can coexist. (Participant 13)
- Family can prevent females from applying. My mother asked me, are you sure you want to do this? Nobody in my family is the police. I am the first one. (Participant 10)

- There may be a spouse at home that does not want you to be an officer. (Participant 8)
- You may be in a relationship, or your family may cut you off. People feel like they cannot trust police officers, so that maybe something that pushes them away. (Participant 7)

Sub-theme D: Childcare

Fourteen of the 15 participants spoke about *childcare*. The comments spanned from not having a familial support system in place to working with an uncertain future. Participants that did not yet have children spoke of not knowing whether children would prevent them from continuing in law enforcement.

- Childcare. We do rotations every week, and that schedule is not easy for childcare. (Participant 3)
- I may not be able to work the street anymore because of childcare issues, and it seemed to be just interfering with my job, I would not quit, I would find a good support system and take it day by day. (Participant 5)
- Being a single parent and not having support. (Participant 7)
- If a person has children, their responsibility is going to change. Their responsibilities may make them have to leave. (Participant 12)
- I do not have a child right now, but I could see how the shifts or rotating schedules could hinder. Especially if the female cannot provide or have daycare. That could hamper females from continuing to work within the law enforcement field. (Participant 4)

Sub-theme E: Safety

All 15 participants cited *safety* as a factor for whether they would remain in law enforcement. They were all familiar with Fallen Heroes week. The week in May dedicated specifically to honor the fallen officers, a sullen reminder that you may not always be back at the end of the workday. This sub-theme had the most codes for this section of the study. Codes included safe, fear, danger, terror, scared, and hurt.

- Female officers may feel like the streets are too dangerous. (Participant 11)
- You see a pattern where supervisors will not put the officer who is scared in an urban area. You know the officer is scared when you see somebody committing a crime, and the officer is too terrified to go up to them and talk to them and tell them to stop. (Participant 9)
- The danger of the job and not knowing what to expect. (Participant 1)
- Just being afraid, females being afraid. Not feeling like they can do the job (Participant 7)

Summary

Various viewpoints exist for aggressively and deliberately integrating minorities into the workforce. These perspectives are no different for minority females. The perceived and organizational barriers for minority females interested in entering the law enforcement profession were examined using surveys and 15 coded interviews. The participants in this study described their role in law enforcement, the challenges they faced trying to fit in, and the adversities they faced. These experiences seem to have a harmful impact resulting in a disproportionate number of minority females entering law

enforcement. Participants in this study feel that their desire to join policing outweighed the adversities. The theme of motivation included sub-themes examining the desires, awareness, and history of minority officers.

The four sub-questions used to address the overarching research question were explored within subsequent themes. Evaluation with sub-themes of experience, training, identity, and treatment addressed the sub-question (R1a) of whether organizational barriers exist or are perceived to exist in law enforcement toward recruitment and retention of minority female officers. The purpose of this question was to give the researcher a better understanding of the recruitment and retention challenges that participants experienced. Motivation, coupled with desire, awareness and participant histories moved them to seek out recruitment opportunities for law enforcement. Transformation, using sub-themes of culture, communication, relationship, and recruitment, addressed the research sub-question (R2b). The responses to this sub-question showed how minority females face perceived or actual barriers to law enforcement. Discrimination with the sub-themes of visibility, confidence, perceptions, and tokenism touched on all four sub-questions of the study.

The recurring focus of participants was mainly on sub-question R3c regarding discrimination and whether it is perceived or actual for minority females. The final sub-question (R4d) looked at how minority female officers perceive discrimination and competition toward retention. This sub-question paralleled R3c and was examined using the discrimination and obstacles theme and sub-themes. The participants' experiences were consistent with prior intersectionality and representative bureaucracy research and

yield a powerful message that law enforcement must address the disparities and disadvantages in federal, state, and local agencies. Chapter 5 presents the conclusions, explanation of the analysis, and recommendations drawn from the data gathered in the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This qualitative phenomenological study addressed the perceptions of a purposive sample of 15 minority females with 5 or fewer years in law enforcement in Maryland federal, state, and local agencies. Prior studies have addressed personnel who have worked in law enforcement for more than 5 years. This study addressed the gap in research by considering the perspectives of minority female law enforcement officers who are considered rookies in the field. Participants had recently experienced problems in recruitment and had novel ideas of what their futures would hold. Some participants reported that they had plotted out their career to retirement, although other participants indicated that they hoped to make it to retirement by avoiding a tragedy. The connection between phenomena knowledge and experience implies a "special unity between those individuals known as the knower and the things that we come to know and depend upon for existence" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 44).

Participants were selected based on their lived experiences concerning the perceived barriers that could contribute to minority females not entering or remaining in law enforcement. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define qualitative research as including the use of more than one method of data collection in a natural setting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of their meanings to those involved. The phenomenon addressed in the current study was perceived organizational barriers of discrimination and competition that exist in the recruitment and retention of minority female officers. To identify core themes that clarified the participants' lived experiences, I incorporated theoretical thematic analysis from existing literature. The investigation of perceived

barriers to recruitment and retention included the theories of intersectionality and representative bureaucracy.

The experiences of minority females interviewed in this study were found to align with the theories. Participants indicated the reason they joined law enforcement was that the agency did not represent the community it policed. This coincides with the theory of representative bureaucracy. Participants in the study were minority and female, which caused participants to feel disadvantaged due to the double jeopardy associated with intersectionality.

Specific themes emerged from the NVivo 12 data analysis. A composite description of the phenomenon consisted of five core themes based on the analysis of the data: motivation, evaluation, transformation, discrimination, and obstacles. The themes emerged from the response patterns of the interview questions posed to the participants. After 15 interviews, a point of saturation of the qualitative data was achieved. The findings showed that a need exists for law enforcement organizations to examine their recruitment policies and other practices that intersect with the experiences impacting gender and race.

Chapter 5 provides the study findings and a discussion of the major themes that emerged from the data analysis. The chapter includes an interpretation of the findings and recommendations that might encourage law enforcement organizations to increase minority female recruitment and retention. The results of this study may provide a platform for future research in minority female recruitment and retention.

Interpretation of the Findings

Minority female participants in this study discussed a lack of role models, racism, sexism, positive, and negative treatment by the public and fellow officers, personal image, limited promotional opportunities, childcare, safety, and limited support from colleagues and the agency as perceived barriers to entering law enforcement. The listed obstacles were related to the themes and exposed through analysis. The qualitative descriptions addressed what minority females experience in law enforcement. Participants discussed respect, work/life balance, underrepresentation, changing the police culture, gender diversity, and changes for testing and training during recruitment.

The results of the 21 factors that participants were asked to consider revealed that the opportunity to help people was the number one motivator for joining law enforcement. Followed by increased minority representation, being a role model for minority females, a role model for other minorities and the military structure. None of the participants considered benefits, salary, job security and using the job as a stepping stone to a better career as factors for joining or remaining in law enforcement.

Intersectionality refers to the way different types of discrimination (i.e., sexual or racial) can have cumulative adverse effects on an individual (Crenshaw, 2017). Representative bureaucracy suggested that social groups, such as women and minorities, have unique life experiences that bring new insight into bureaucratic settings. Methods used to force acceptance in these bureaucratic settings included The Equal Pay Act, the Civil Rights Act, the CROWN Act, and Affirmative Action. These legal actions aimed to diversify the workplace by adding minorities and females. Initially, these laws were

deemed successful due to the increased number of females and minorities joining the workforce. Despite the progress, participants in the current study reported what Browning et al. (1986) deemed the *outsider syndrome*.

The data showed the participants felt disrespected in law enforcement and in the community they served. Participant 15 noted "we are not equally respected. It is sad to say, but that is just the biggest thing, that we are not respected in a sense, and we are an inferior race and sex to the others." Participants' responses suggest that affirmative action and other laws aimed at diversity did more harm than good. Participants reported that minority females are viewed as unqualified due to a perception of being hired to fill a quota. The minority females in this study had to continually prove that they were as qualified and capable as the White males or anyone else in law enforcement. The minority females were judged not based on their skills but rather on their race and gender, preconceived notions, and unconscious bias. Information gathered from participants supported the views of Crenshaw (2017) and Cho, et al. (2013) who contended that representative bureaucracy and intersectionality impact minorities in general and minority females in particular.

Part 1 of Chapter 5 outlines the perceptions associated with the themed barriers that contribute to the low number of minority females joining law enforcement. Part 2 outlines the organizational obstacles that contribute to decreased retention rates. Part 3 offers insight from participants regarding organizational policy changes that could be used to solve recruitment and retention issues.

Theme 1: Motivation (Desires, Awareness, and History)

Gabbidon et al. (2011) showed that African American and Latina women had only slight trust in the police. That perception may negatively impact minorities joining law enforcement. Responses from 12 of the 15 participants in the current study supported those results. Instead of not joining law enforcement because of the mistrust they experienced or observed, the participants joined with a desire to improve the quality of life for the communities in which they worked. The participants felt that they were able to show empathy based on their ability to relate to disenfranchised people within the community. Participants reported that their motivation to become police officers included recommendations from friends, their environment growing up, an opportunity to help people, and family members already involved in law enforcement or the military.

Competition exists among agencies attempting to recruit minority females. Affirmative action quotas, coupled with the limited number of qualified minority females desiring to make a career of law enforcement, results in competition between federal, state, and local agencies. Harrington (2000b) cited the length of time for the application process and lack of communication as contributing factors for fewer minority female hires. Participants in this study did not support these results of the Harrington study. Two of the 15 participants aggressively monitored the progress of their application. This aggressive approach resulted in a shorter time between the submission of the application and the hire date of the participants. Four of the 15 participants researched the length of time for the hiring process. Nine of the 15 participants indicated that they had to repeat

some phase of the hiring process. Twelve of the 15 participants had to retake the physical agility test.

Theme 2: Evaluation (Experience, Training, Identity, and Treatment)

The minority females are evaluated on a process of acquiring new knowledge through failures, successes, and the consumption of information disguised as learning. The academy experience negates the development of ideas that other people view as valid, logic, and imagination (thinking beyond what is known). The boot camp training model used in the academy does not leave room for adult learning techniques such as role playing.

Caucasian society's constant proliferation of false narratives that stigmatize minority females while benefiting themselves resulted in the conditioning of participants to believe that the problems they face are personal. This prevailing illusion has more to do with the dominant race in law enforcement than with the minority female. Participants in this study feared speaking out to supervisors or coworkers. They felt that their thoughts, opinions, and ideas were not as important as everyone else's. The fear they experienced affected the participant's identity, treatment, training, and experience in law enforcement, resulting in the participant focusing on the negative experiences. The minority female should be confident and bold. Knowing that they are not the stereotypical "angry Black woman" but that they have something important to say and that their voice matters. The stereotypes can be eliminated through coordinating and generating diverse ideas that benefit the organization. The result would exchange the triggers that usually surface with fear to feelings of strength.

Theme 3: Transformation (Culture, Communication, Relationship, and Retention)

The compounding effects of racism and sexism have long-term implications for females of color throughout their careers (Hunt, 1990). From a structural level, according to the Lacarte and Hayes (2020), based on an analysis of current data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Black women will not reach pay parity with White men until 2124, and Hispanic women will not see pay parity until 2248. At times, law enforcement organizations must hunker down to preserve its life against a hostile culture. But the ultimate purpose of law enforcement is never hunkering down to the detriment of the community it serves.

To conform is to change outwardly, referring to the external form. The look of the agency is different when including minorities or females in the count. Diversity is mandated. The organization needs to transform inwardly. The transformation involves a change of people's mindsets and personalities. Agencies must not only show conformance but also transform the inward culture to prove they genuinely accept diversity. A culture of personnel thinking different thoughts and looking at the organization differently. The transformation of the culture will ensure that law enforcement organizations always exist for the communities they ostensibly serve. Having minds that are inwardly transformed, open, and accepting of minority females is not the norm. Allowing participation of everyone would change minds to thinking of inclusion. Eventually, law enforcement organizations will change for the better, and so will the communities around them.

Theme 4: Discrimination (Visibility, Confidence, Perception, and Tokenism)

Study results of Waters, Hardy, Delgado, and Dahlmann (2007) indicate that minority communities perceive police officers as racially biased and insensitive. The relationship between minorities and the police often results in conflict. All 15 participants agreed that the relationship between police and the community is discriminatory. An understanding between officers and those they protect in the community can be forged through the encouragement of diversity within law enforcement (Gowland, 2018; Kim & Mengistu, 1994). The study showed that females are treated differently than males within male-dominated environments and face barriers due to the biased mentality of some males (Eagly & Johannansen-Schmidt, 2001; Hunt, 1990). The participants of this study collectively supported these results.

Theme 5: Obstacles (Agency Support, Work/Life Balance, Family and Significant Other, Childcare, and Safety)

Law enforcement organizations should spearhead combatting law enforcement officers who cross moral, ethical, and legal lines that result in the continued degradation of policing. Law enforcement officers face daily perils that come with the job (Maguire, Nix & Campbell, 2016). However, a minute number of police officers continue to erode the trust and confidence of the community (Kania, 1998). These officers' improper behavior has become a national issue that should elicit a call to action to result in sustainable change. The anger over the continued deaths of minorities at the hands of police officers lends itself to the continuation of minority females feeling ostracized by the community and their families. The participants in this study indicated that they had to

overcome the barriers presented by family members. The impediments consisted of the family's perception of law enforcement and the participant defending the profession. Law enforcement organizations must hold police officers accountable to protect our communities and each other from danger.

Fearing for their safety, the safety of coworkers, and the community affects how minority females take risks. One participant indicated that her viewpoint of enforcing the law went from enthusiastic to apathetic once she had a child. The participant stated that she took into consideration factors that would impact her child should she get hurt or killed. Two participants admitted that they deliberated whether to volunteer for a unit based on the effect it would have on childcare. Nine participants stated that they were treated differently by male coworkers because they watched out for them on difficult police calls. When viewing the survey data, 33.3% of participants indicated that they would not worry about handling dangerous situations alone, nor would they be offended if a male officer protected them.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study involved the number of participants studied, the geographic boundaries, and the number of years of law enforcement experience for the study participants. The study consisted of 15 minority female participants from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. Perceptions and experiences could differ from those in other regions of the country. There is limited generalizability to minorities, males, or females in law enforcement not included in the study. The study

focused only on the human experience and may be interpreted beyond what the data reveals based on the reader's life experiences.

The study results should be read with caution due to the small sample size of 15 minority females. Securing the requisite number of females for the study proved difficult. The number of minority females joining law enforcement has dwindled. To further complicate recruitment, the study targeted minority females from three venues in Maryland. The state and local minority females proved more significant in number than federal minority females.

The minority females in the study had 5 or fewer years in law enforcement. Studies by several researchers indicated that new officers do not experience police work in the same way as veteran officers (Conroy & Hess, 1992; May & Higgins, 2011; Neiderhoffer, 1969; Raganella &White, 2004). The studies showed that officers with 0 to 5 years are generally viewed as rookies. Any time after 5 years, officers are considered as seasoned or veteran officers (White, Cooper, Saunders, & Raganella, 2010). The perspectives of veteran officers could differ due to their extensive experience in law enforcement.

Recommendations

Considerable literature exists on minorities in law enforcement and females in law enforcement. The literature reveals that race and gender are factors that should not be treated as mutually exclusive (Crenshaw, 1989; James, 2019). Possibilities for further research would include potential impacts on the relationships between agencies and minority communities if minority females are not represented.

Participants in the study indicated that they could not be themselves at work. The inability to be themselves could contribute to the occupational stress felt by participants. Studies by Morash, Kwak, and Haarr (2006) evaluated attributes of stress and workload for law enforcement males and females. The male stress derived from situations where they felt they lacked control over work practices and procedures. The study revealed that female stress is attributed to combined workload and household duties. The participants in this study felt that they could not discuss childcare or relationship issues without being judged by the males on the job. The participants did not want to appear unable to handle the dual roles of the job and the household flawlessly. The inability to discuss impactful issues resulted in females socially shutting down and appearing aloof to coworkers.

The current study mentions, but does not delve deeply into, the socio-psychological effects of social isolation for minority females within law enforcement. This study consists of African American and Latina females. A future study investigating factors such as stress and coping could help discover why minority females insulate themselves at work. The research could isolate Latina females and the difficulties they face due to acculturative stress.

This research study could be used to expand the body of research compared to past research. The findings of the current study could help future research provide a better understanding of what changes are needed within law enforcement organizations to decrease isolation and separatism. The research might also provide a better understanding of the future roles organizations envision for minority females in law enforcement. The

role of advising what changes need to occur to address stereotypes, biases, and favoritism within law enforcement organizations that have existed since females were matrons.

Females that entered law enforcement in 1915 served as matrons who only attended to female inmates or assisted male officers handling cases involving women and children. Females in law enforcement have made great strides, yet are not entirely accepted as equals in law enforcement. The culture is not the same as in 1915, but the created historical view that police work is reserved for Caucasian males has persevered through today.

Participants from this study realized that they benefited from the minority females that paved the way before them in law enforcement. They pondered whether they would contribute to any changes in how the community and coworkers view females. What legacy would they leave for those minority females that would follow in their footsteps. One participant would begin to be considered a seasoned or veteran officer in 2021. Yet, all of the participants contemplated whether their perspectives would change when they became veteran officers. A research study could take a second look at these minority female officers to determine if they did influence their field once they become veterans.

Participants indicated that they wanted a better understanding of females' problems, issues, and experiences in law enforcement so that they will know that they are not alone. A strength of this study is that it addresses the perceived issues and experiences of recruitment and retention through the lens of new officers. This unexplored view would help rookie officers know that they have experiences akin to

other officers in federal, state, and local agencies. The participants felt that this understanding would make their work life more fruitful.

Race and gender impacted the rookie participants of this study. However, the long-term effect on these same participants remains open for examination. To deny one factor, either race or gender, would negate their importance to each other and the role they play in understanding the minority female officer. The emphasis on race and gender for minority law enforcement officers could be further addressed to create a clearer understanding of minority female officers and their significance to society.

Implications

The implications for positive social change include a better understanding of minority females in law enforcement, their impact on police organizations, and the potential to minimize the negative influences and maximize potential positives. A significant finding of this study is that the participants in describing their role in law enforcement found it increasingly difficult to separate their experiences as females and minorities from their roles and responsibilities as police officers. This integration indicates that the issues that were identified in the participants' experiences should be included in the planning process when determining the recruitment and retention of minority female police officers. When addressing barriers, they can be broken down into real and perceived. A real barrier is knowing that law enforcement is a male-dominated field due to the ideology that males can get the job accomplished more efficiently than females. A perceived barrier would be that males in law enforcement exhibit covert resistance and do not want to work with the females.

The perceived barriers affected each participant differently, even in the cases where their experiences were the same. Based on the descriptions provided in this study, law enforcement organizations should pause and consider each individual's strengths and challenges before recruitment. No participant described dramatic changes from who they were before joining law enforcement. To meet the needs of participants, families, and communities, organizations must understand the importance of recruitment and plan accordingly.

Recruitment and Retention

Many police organizations have attempted to increase the recruitment and retention of minority females. In most organizations, statistics reflect low numbers for recruitment and retention of minority females. Study findings reveal possible reasons for the small amounts might include:

1. Lack of role models that look like the females they are attempting to recruit.
2. The recruitment processes.
3. The limited respect and acceptance of differences.
4. Nonacceptance into the police organizations' thin blue line culture.
5. Lack of promotional progression opportunities.

Kanter (1993), Lester, (1983), Martin (1990), Pitts (2005), Weldon (2006), and other researchers confirmed the findings in this research.

Community

The recent incident involving the death of George Floyd while in police custody continues to underscore the disparity of treatment of arrested, detained, and suspected

minorities as compared to their Caucasian counterparts. The images of another African American male losing his life at the hands of a Caucasian professional law enforcement officer were troubling, but nothing new. Participants in this study spoke about in-custody deaths to describe why their families and others in their lives found it difficult to accept them becoming police officers. Participants kept reiterating that a change needed to occur between the minority communities and law enforcement. They stated that they needed to be in law enforcement to effect that change. Other ideas garnered from the study involving communities included creating public policies such as:

1. Establishing a national partnership program designed explicitly for open dialogue between law enforcement and minority communities to discuss what could or should be done to address issues of racism and disparate treatment.
2. Communicating with stakeholders in the community to establish positive relationships before an issue occurs.
3. Working within communities to aid them in curing problems of homelessness, addictions, and crime. The problems that contribute to broken down communities and high crime occurring.
4. Having minorities visible in minority communities. Participants felt that this would benefit them and the community. Through familiarization with the community, they would begin to trust and respect them as officers.

Recommendations for Organizations

Recruitment

1. Develop a liaison program targeted at minority female high school students. The purpose of the program would be to increase communication between youth and the police. The interaction would promote law enforcement's positive role models and familiarize minority females with the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement.
2. The use of target marketing that reflects what is important to minority females. Efforts that would incorporate family, community, and childcare.
3. Visit areas frequented by minority females such as minority conferences and interact with females that reflect the audience the agency is attempting to recruit. The visits could be accomplished with videos, Facebook pages, and face-to-face recruitment events.

Retention

1. Develop a mentoring program to allow recruits to have minority female police officers as role models. The female officers would provide them with someone with whom to engage in positive dialogues about serving in law enforcement.
2. An examination of the promotion process to ensure equity and efficiency of the process. Outsourcing the testing process while ensuring that minorities are involved would allow officers to feel that they have a fairer chance of being promoted.

3. Offering elective courses to all personnel in law enforcement that exposes the experiences of minorities, females, and minority females. The open communication could aid law enforcement officers to see their similarities instead of differences. Opening the courses up to all personnel instead of just minorities or females would serve to include officers who feel isolated and negatively impacted by diversity mandates.

Organizational Barriers

Researchers Patrick, Bruch, and Jehangir (2006) recommend that law enforcement agencies have a diverse environment of different races and genders. The data revealed that diversity could be achieved for these underrepresented groups through hiring, socializing, and career mobility of minority females. A diverse environment presents a welcoming environment that mirrors the community (Patrick et al., 2006). The potential benefits of having minority females in the organization are that they could serve as liaisons in minority communities where residents would be more forthcoming due to an established rapport (Lott, 2000). Other benefits of minority females legitimize the police organizations and bring the unique perspectives of females to law enforcement (Martin, 1980; Smith, 2003). There are several ways that the law enforcement culture suppresses the inclusion of minority females. Organizations should seek to reduce or eliminate these barriers by:

1. Securing an expert to examine practices that influence traditional thinking toward females and minorities. The expert could suggest alternatives to modify areas needing change.

2. Ensure ownership takes a top-down approach to sustain changes incorporated within the organization. Organizational change takes 5 to 7 years before long term results occur. The benefits to the organization would outweigh the cost to recruit. Benefits would include improved relationships between males and females, better cohesion and teamwork, improved community relations, increased tolerance of differences, and increased retention of minority female officers.
3. Advocating for minority female officers. Acknowledging and celebrating differences among law enforcement officers and the contributions they make to the organization.

The process of perceiving and making sense of the law enforcement world for minority female Participants included several distinct observations. Introspection by the minority females and those with whom they interact would benefit communication and future interactions. The use of logic to support a choice driven by motivation (desire or fear) affected the perception of minority females and their reactions to situations. Changing perceptions would allow minority females to make informed judgments through formed relationships rather than inferences based on past experiences. The benefit could be a change in the perception's minority females have of themselves as viewed by others in the workplace and community.

Conclusion

Law enforcement can choose to languor towards the recruitment of minority females or be resilient. The resiliency payoff would be long term, profoundly-engaged

law enforcement officers whose expectations and attributes match those of the law enforcement agency. No one-size-fits-all approach works for any recruitment process, not just law enforcement. Without constructs that allow us to view how social problems impact the members of a targeted group, law enforcement organizations will lose the recruitment and retention battle and the trust of the larger communities they serve.

This research study identified themes that indicate now is the time for a change. Law enforcement agencies must confront the painful obstacles faced by minority females outlined in this study that they to date have not confronted, evidenced by the continual low recruitment and retention numbers of minority females in law enforcement. Law enforcement has the opportunity to stand for these females, support them, and allow them to thrive. When organizations recognize the value bought by minority female officers, they will seek to change recruitment and retention policies. Only then will minority females experience the benefits of a lasting law enforcement career and genuinely become loyal to the agency.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Protocol

Date: _____

Location_____

Name of Interviewer _____

Name of Interviewee_____

Interview Number –

1. Did the reputation of the agency's treatment of minorities influence why you chose to enter law enforcement?
2. Did the reputation of how the agency treated females influence why you chose to enter law enforcement?
3. What method of recruitment influenced your decision to apply?
4. Did the length of time for the application process have any effect on your decision to apply?
5. Did your perception of police have any impact on your decision to apply to law enforcement?
6. Would your experience with the police have any impact on a decision to leave the agency? Why or Why not?
7. What challenges did you face during recruitment?
8. What challenges did you experience during training?
9. What factors influenced why you joined law enforcement (see 21 factors list)?
10. What factors would influence your decision to consider leaving law enforcement?

11. What organizational barriers do you perceive exist within law enforcement toward recruitment and retention of minority female officers?

12. Do you perceive that discrimination exists towards minority female officers? Why or Why not?

13. Do you perceive that competition exists among agencies attempting to recruit minority female officers? Why or why not?

14. Do you perceive that competition exists among agencies to retain minority female officers? Why or why not?

15. What obstacles have you faced regarding other people's perception of minority female officers?

16. What do you believe are the obstacles regarding retention of minority female officers?

17. Of the obstacles you listed, how many have you personally experienced?

18 What do you think would prevent minority female officers from applying to law enforcement?

19. What do you think would prevent minority female officers from remaining in law enforcement?

INTERVIEW DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Contact Information

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

In what year were you born? 19___

1. What is your race/ethnicity?
   a. White/Caucasian
   b. Hispanic/Latina
   c. African American
   d. Asian-Pacific Islander
   e. Native American
   f. Other: _____

2. What is your highest level of education:
   a. High school diploma or equivalent
   b. Some college
   c. Bachelor's degree
   d. Master's degree
   e. JD/Professional degree
   f. Doctorate degree

3. What is your marital status?
   a. Single, never married
   b. In a relationship, never married
   c. Married/Civil union
   d. Separated
   e. Divorced
   f. Widowed

4. Do you have children?
   a. Yes *If so, how many children do you have?*
      _____
   b. No

Occupational Information

1. Are you an actively licensed minority female law enforcement officer OR graduate of a federal law enforcement academy?

   _____Yes _____No

2. By which law enforcement agency are you employed?

   _____

3. How long have you been employed as a police officer? _____

The 21 factors would consider:

1. Opportunity to help people
2. Lack of other job opportunities
3. Enforce laws of society
4. Good companionship with co-workers
5. Professional prestige
6. Excitement of the work
7. Fight crime
8. Job security
9. Financial security (salary)
10. Benefit package (medical/pension/leave)
11. Early retirement
12. Advancement opportunities
13. Work on own a lot/have a lot of autonomy
14. Job carries power and authority
15. Friends/relatives are police officers
16. Provide an essential service to community
17. Job used as a stepping stone for a better career
18. Structured like the military
19. To increase minority representation
20. To be a role model for minority females
21. To be a role model for minorities

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Study Title:	Perceived Barriers to Recruitment and Retention of Minority Females in Law Enforcement
Researcher:	Lucy Lyles
Email Address:	XXXXXXXXXXX
Telephone Number:	XXX.XXX.XXXX
Research Supervisor:	Dr. Frances Goldman
Email Address:	XXXXXXXXXXX

You are invited to be part of a research study. The researcher is a doctoral learner at Walden University in the School of Public Policy and Administration. The information in this form is provided to help you decide if you want to participate. The form describes what you will do during the study and the risks and benefits of the study.

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT? The researcher wants to find out how (and to what extent) barriers affect a law enforcement officer's perception of recruitment and retention of minority female officers.

WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO BE IN THE STUDY? You are invited to be in the study because you are:

- At least 21 years of age, AND
- A minority female law enforcement officer with 5 or less years of service; AND
- Are an actively licensed minority female law enforcement officer or an honorably retired minority female law enforcement officer; OR
- Are a minority female law enforcement officer as defined by the Annotated Code of Criminal Procedure; OR
- Are a female graduate of a federal law enforcement academy.

If you do not meet the description above, you are not able to be in the study. About 15 responses is the minimum required for statistical purposes, but up to 250 officers will be asked to complete the survey for the study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE: The researcher is employed at the Maryland Transportation Authority Police but is not receiving funds to conduct this study. The researcher will not be paid for conducting the study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY? If you decide to be in this study, you will do the following:

- You will be required to give personal information about yourself, such as name, age, race, years in law enforcement, marital status, agency, and email address;

- You will be required to acknowledge your reading and understanding of this consent form prior to participating in any portion of the study;
- You will complete a written survey which contains questions about your perception of various types of police recruitment,
- The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete;
- You may be asked to submit to an interview 45-60 minutes in duration.

WILL BEING IN THIS STUDY HELP ME? Being in this study will not help you. Information from this study might help others in the future.

ARE THERE RISKS TO ME IF I AM IN THIS STUDY? No study is completely risk free. However, we do not anticipate that you will be harmed or distressed during this study. Risks involved in this study may include frustration with the law enforcement organization and stress as a result of answering questions about your profession. Possible benefits include being able to voice your opinion about your law enforcement career. Participation is voluntary and completely up to you. If you decide not to participate, you may end the interview at any time without prejudice or jeopardy if you become uncomfortable.

WILL I GET PAID? You will not receive any compensation from the researcher for being in the study.

WHO WILL USE AND SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT MY BEING IN THIS STUDY? Any information you provide in this study that could identify you, such as your name, age, or other personal information will be kept confidential. The information gathered in this study will be private and maintained for five years. All identifying data will be guarded and remain private regardless of the status of this research. Your experiences will be audio-taped to accurately preserve your accounts and experiences.

This study is completely confidential and voluntary. In any written reports or publications, no one will be able to identify you as no personal identifiers collected at any time while participating in the study will be revealed.

The researcher will keep the information you provide in a password protected computer and/or a locked file cabinet at her personal residence and only the researcher, researcher's supervisor, and dissertation committee will have access to the study data. Additionally, Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the University Research Review (URR) Board, or its designees may review your research records.

Even if you leave the study early, the researcher may still be able to use your data. Partial responses will still be utilized in the various statistical analysis as every answer is helpful in the study.

WHO CAN I TALK TO ABOUT THIS STUDY? You can ask questions about the study at any time. You can call the researcher at any time if you have any concerns or complaints. You should contact the researcher if you have questions about the study procedures, study costs (if any), study payment (if any), or if you get hurt or sick during the study.

Walden University's Institutional Review board (IRB) has been established to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants. Contact the Research Participant Advocate at 612- 312-1210, or irb@mail.waldenu.edu if you have questions or concerns about this research study. You may contact the IRB without giving us your name. We may need to reveal information you provide in order to follow up if you report a problem or concern.

Walden University's approval number for this study is 10-17-19-0335171 and it expires October 16, 2020.

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN THIS STUDY? By clicking the link below you agree to the following statement:

I have read this form, and I have been able to ask questions about this study. I voluntarily agree to be in this study. I agree to allow the use and sharing of my study related records as describe above.

I have not given up any of my legal rights as a research participant. I will print a copy of this consent information for my records.

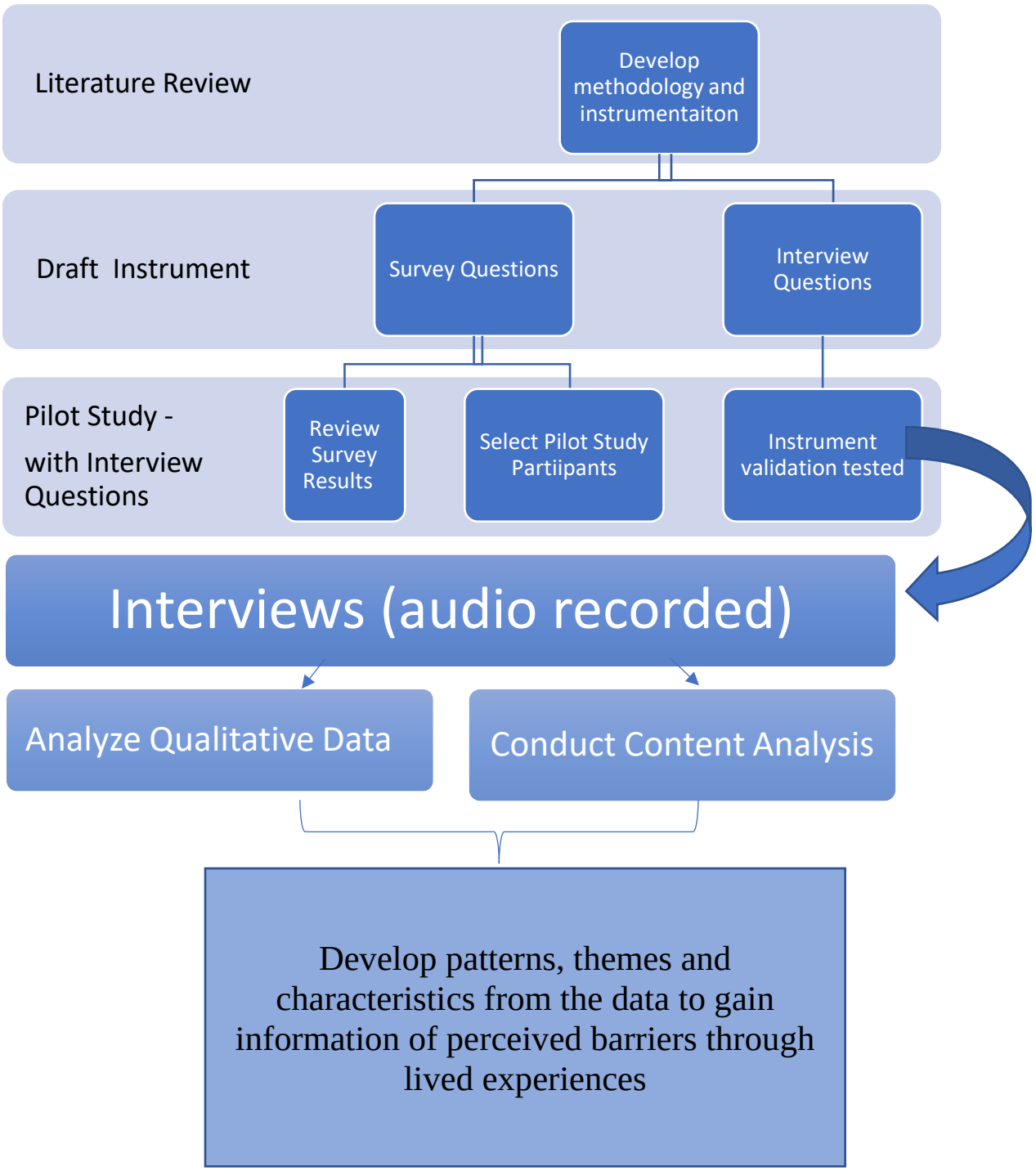
Printed Name of Participant: _____

Date of consent: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Appendix C: Research Methodology Map



Appendix D: Letter to Law Enforcement Agencies

Date

Agency or Organization
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Gatekeeper:

My name is Lucy Lyles and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting dissertation research on the perceived barriers to the recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement. There is a plethora of studies regarding barriers faced by minorities and barriers faced by females in law enforcement, but no study addresses the concept of the barriers faced by minority females in law enforcement.

Your assistance in conducting this much needed research is important. If willing, I need for you to post the attached survey online to identify minority females in law enforcement who would like to participate in the study. The participants of this study will need to be 21 years of age and a minority female with five or less years of service. The participant will have to be actively licensed in law enforcement as defined by the Annotated Code of Criminal Procedures or a female graduate of a federal law enforcement academy. Participants are free to choose whether or not to participate and can discontinue participation at any time. Information provided by the participants will be kept strictly confidential.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss any questions you may have concerning this study and your role in posting the survey. I can be reached at XXXXXXXXXX or emailed at XXXXXXXXXX

Sincerely,

Lucy Lyles
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University

Appendix E: Informed Consent for Survey Questions

Perceived Barriers to Minority Female Recruitment and Retention in Law Enforcement

INFORMED CONSENT

You are being invited to participate in a research study that I have developed as part of a Ph.D. program with Walden University. The information in this form is provided to help you decide if you want to participate. The form describes what you will do during the study and the risks and benefits of the study.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are at least 21 years of age and an actively licensed or retired minority female law enforcement officer with 5 or less years of service. Your experience in law enforcement can contribute to the understanding and knowledge of what perceived barriers affect recruitment and retention of minority females in law enforcement.

The researcher is employed at the Maryland Transportation Authority Police but is not receiving funds to conduct this study. The researcher will not be paid to conduct the study nor is the study related to any of my job responsibilities, activities or programs of the organizations to which you may be affiliated.

If you decide to be in this study, you will be required to acknowledge your reading and understanding of this consent form prior to participation in any portion of the study. You will be asked to answer 33 survey questions which are expected to take approximately 5 minutes to complete. You will be asked to provide your name, age, sex, race, years in law enforcement and marital status. Your participation is confidential, and your information will be protected from disclosure. Your participation is completely voluntary and there is no compensation, financial or otherwise, for completing the survey. There is no more than minimal risk associated with this study, including minimal potential psychological risks from answering these questions.

You may skip any questions you choose not to answer, however, incomplete surveys may not be useful in data collection. You may opt out of this survey at any time prior to submitting the survey. However, your responses will be utilized in the various statistical analysis and every answer is helpful in the study.

By clicking the Done button at the end of this survey, you consent to participate in this study. Thank you for your valued participation. Your contribution will help law enforcement administrators to understand how perceived barriers may affect recruitment and retention of minority females.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher at XXXXXXXX. If you have questions about your rights Walden University's Institutional Review board

(IRB) has been established to protect the rights and welfare of human participants. Contact the Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210 or irb@mail.waldenu.edu if you have questions or concerns about this research study. You may contact the IRB without giving you name. We may need to reveal information you provide in order to follow up if you report a problem or concern. Walden University's approval number for this study is 10-17-19-0335171 and it expires October 16, 2020

Survey Questions

Please circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree that the following statements describe what it is like to work at a law enforcement agency.

Coworkers will often commend me when I do good work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

If I do not do well at something, everyone will notice

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Supervisors will often commend me when I do good work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I am worried about missing time with family (mother, father, sister, brother, children and extended family) due to the work schedule of being a police officer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I will have difficulty getting adequate childcare because of the work schedule of being a police officer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Coworkers will ridicule me if I have to ask questions about how to do my job

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Supervisors will ridicule me if I have to ask questions about how to do my job

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Divorce or relationship problems are more likely because of my career

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I will need to do the job differently because I am a female

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Policing will be more dangerous for me because I am female

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Coworkers will joke or make offensive remarks about being a female

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

The danger of policing scares me

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

As a police officer, I will have difficulty dating, finding a significant other, or spending time with my current partner

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Co-workers and supervisors will exclude me from things because I am a female

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

My family (mother, father, sister, brother, children, and extended family) will not support my decision to be a police officer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I will have as much opportunity as my coworkers for receiving preferred assignments or promotion

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Coworkers will joke or make offensive remarks about being a minority

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

If I decided to have a child or another child, my career would make it more difficult

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I believe that I can make good decisions about how to react to the situations that I will face

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I will be expected to work well with women and children because I am a female

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

I am afraid I will have trouble protecting other officers in dangerous situations

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

If a male police officer tries to protect me, I will not be offended

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

Coworkers will joke about sex and these comments will bother me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

I will be expected to work well with minorities because I am a minority

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

My spouse/partner/significant other will not support my decision to be a police officer

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

If I encounter someone physically bigger than I am, I do not know if I can subdue them

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree

I am worried about having to handle dangerous situations by myself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

It will be difficult for me to do my job without being noticed by my male coworkers and supervisors

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I believe I can be authoritative in situations that I may encounter

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

I will need to do the job differently because I am a minority

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Supervisors will joke about sex and these comments will bother me

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

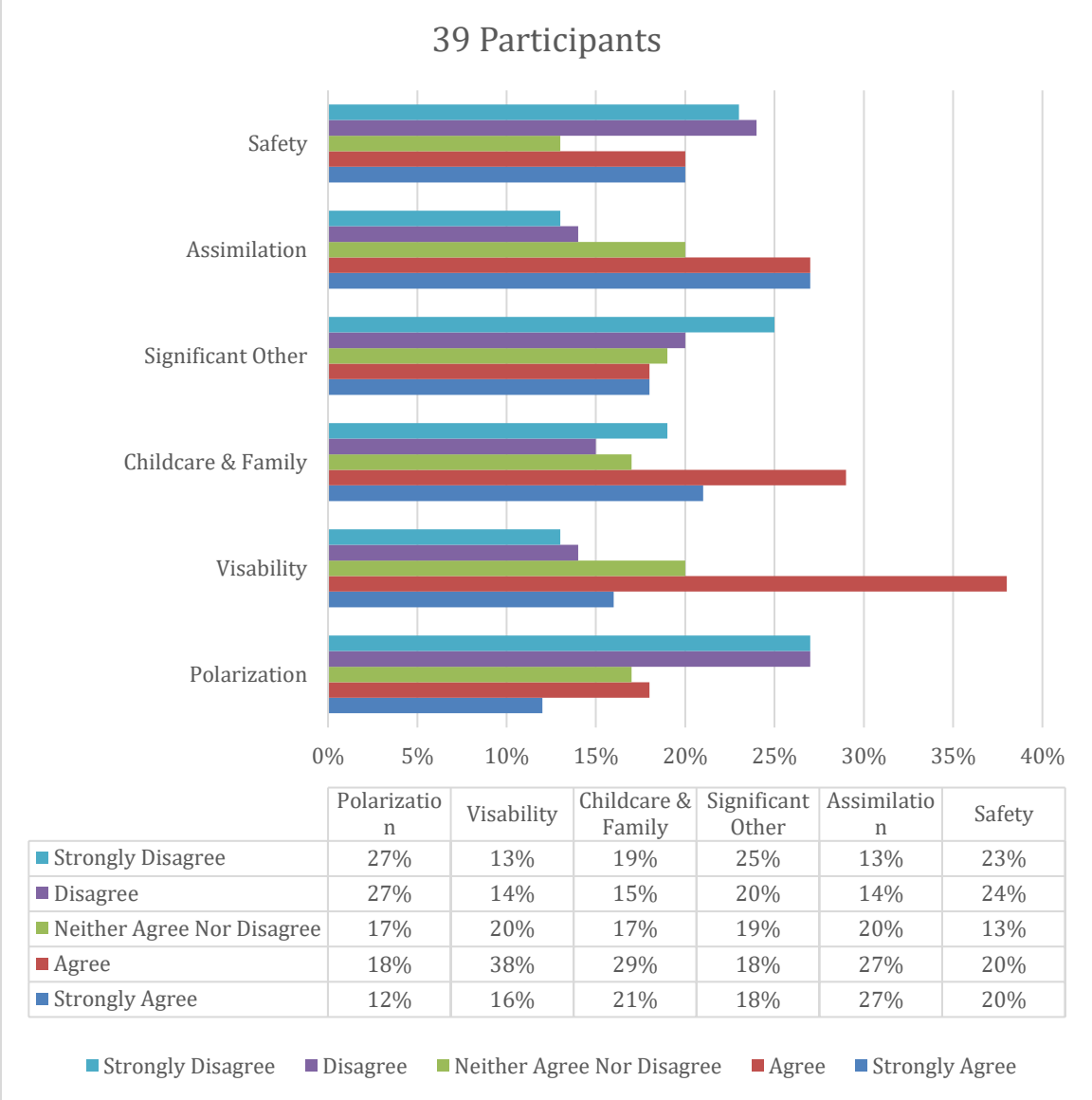
Policing will be more dangerous for me because I am a minority

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Co-workers and supervisors will exclude me from things because I am a minority

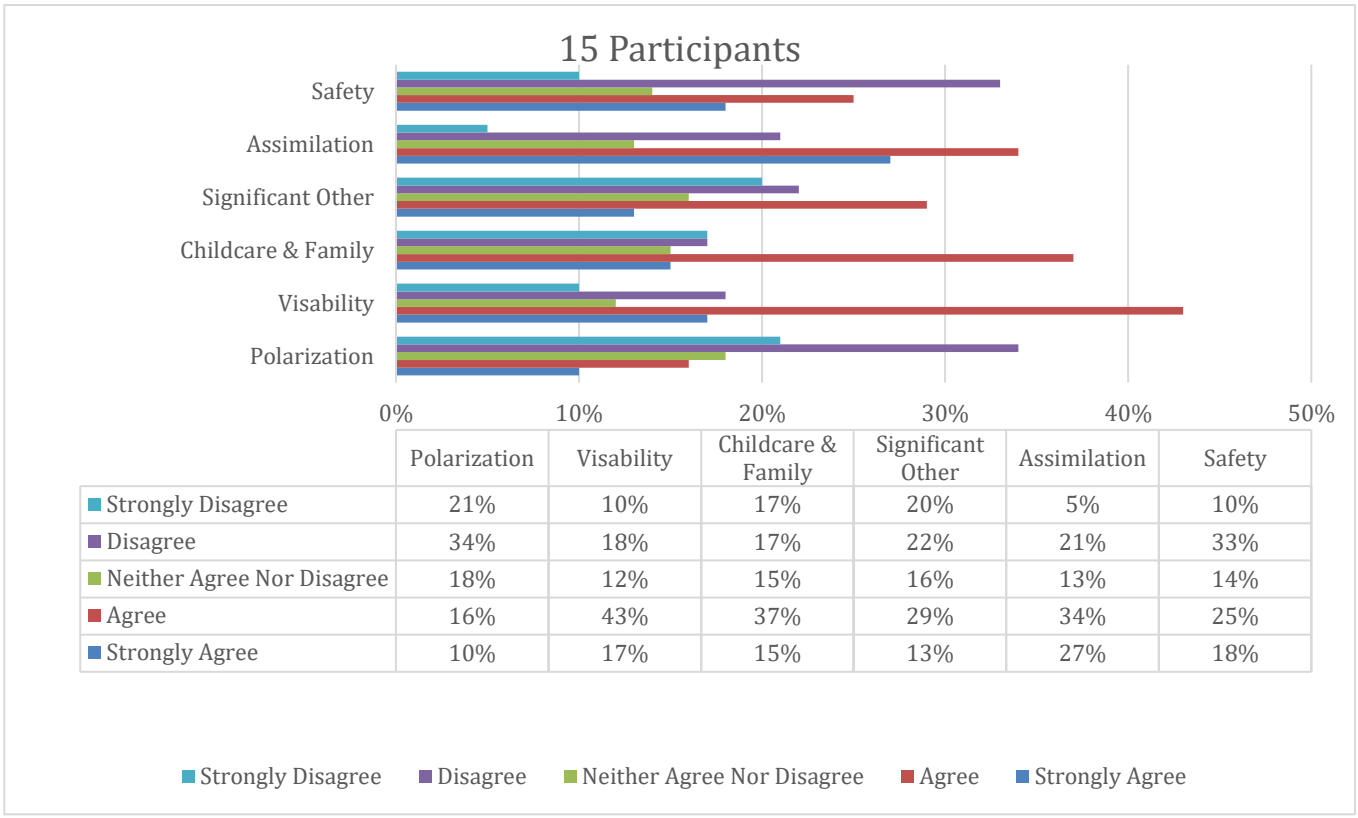
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree

Appendix F: 39 Participant Survey Results



	Polarization	Visability	Childcare & Family	Significant Other	Assimilation	Safety
Strongly Disagree	27%	13%	19%	25%	13%	23%
Disagree	27%	14%	15%	20%	14%	24%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	17%	20%	17%	19%	20%	13%
Agree	18%	38%	29%	18%	27%	20%
Strongly Agree	12%	16%	21%	18%	27%	20%

Appendix G: 15 Participants Survey Results



	Polarization	Visability	Childcare & Family	Significant Other	Assimilation	Safety
Strongly Disagree	21%	10%	17%	20%	5%	10%
Disagree	34%	18%	17%	22%	21%	33%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	18%	12%	15%	16%	13%	14%
Agree	16%	43%	37%	29%	34%	25%
Strongly Agree	10%	17%	15%	13%	27%	18%