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Effective Police Recruitment: Professional Misconduct Risk Regression Analysis for Law Enforcement Officers

Clinton Jenkins
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Clinton D. Jenkins

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

Effective Police Recruitment: Professional Misconduct Risk Regression Analysis for

Law Enforcement Officers

by

Clinton D. Jenkins

MA, Kaplan University 2011

BS, Kaplan University 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

February 2021

Abstract

Police departments are responsible for evaluating applicants to find suitable recruits to join a department's training program. It was not known how police officer recruits feel about the recruitment and selection process. The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine to what extent the 2 M-PULSE scale scores (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive behavior) account for variance in the MMPI-2RF (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) subscales scores. Archival data was provided by a private business that conducts these screenings for multiple law enforcement organizations (local and state). Law enforcement candidates ($N = 107$) were evaluated by a private business during the pre-hiring psychological screening process using the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF to assess their risk factors for employment as law enforcement officers. The scores from the 2 measures were provided for regression analysis to determine what effect the M-PULSE factors had on the MMPI-2RF factors. The results did not find any significant effect on either MMPI-2RF factor by the 2 M-PULSE factors. This study adds to the growing body of knowledge of law enforcement psychological screening processes and how different measures provide critical information on personality, aggression, and risk factors that should be considered for individuals seeking employment in a law enforcement position. This study has implications for positive social change by increasing understanding of how current psychological screening processes determine suitability of candidates and help to ensure that individuals who would put the public and law enforcement organizations at higher risk should be screened out prior to completion of any law enforcement training.

Effective Police Recruitment: Professional Misconduct Risk Regression Analysis for
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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my family: my wife Catherine Jenkins and my son Conley Jenkins who supported me through this lengthy and challenging endeavor. Although there were times that I doubted my capability to achieve any of my dreams and goals I set forth for my life, my wife has always been there to remind me that I am capable to achieve them. My son has always been my inspiration to set an example of not accepting limitations that may present themselves in your life but believing in yourself and knowing that only the skies are the limits.

In 2008, I joined the United States Air Force with the idea of finishing college and becoming a commissioned officer. Through my 8 years on active duty, I obtained my bachelor's degree and immediately started my master's degree and later finally saw it to fruition. After separating from active duty in 2017 and beginning my search for a civilian career in law enforcement, my best friends Shane Nishioka and Keith Ide reminded me of the same truth that my wife has continued to instill in my mind. That truth is that nothing is impossible, except when you place that barrier yourself. I started the pursuit of my Doctor of Philosophy in Forensic Psychology with Walden University and met great people and professors such as Dr. Jana Price-Sharps and Dr. Scott Gfeller, who welcomed me into the field of forensic psychology with welcoming arms and I am truly thankful.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

A common understanding among police officers and police recruits is that the job comes with certain risks. Police officers know they will face stressful, hostile, and volatile situations. They are tasked to prevent the situation from escalating in a more hostile situation while simultaneously bringing the situation to a resolution with minimal risk or threat of danger to all parties involved. Due to this inherent risk and potential for hostile situations, police departments are responsible to evaluate applicants to find suitable recruits to join a department's training program (Ainsworth, 2002).

The vetting process for police officer applicants is (in most cases) time consuming, costly, and burdensome to the department and to the applicant. However, the steps a candidate must go through during the hiring process are in place to ensure that those selected will be able to successfully complete training and work in the field of law enforcement. Police officers play numerous roles while carrying out their daily responsibilities. Police officers must be the enforcer, the diplomat, the sidewalk counselor, and the initial first aid or care providers for those in need of medical attention, among other roles (Ainsworth, 2002).

Psychology contributes to testing and assessing individuals to gain an understanding of their personality, intelligence, values, and other applicable factors (Ainsworth, 2002). In the past, police departments were reluctant to include psychometric tests in the selection process of potential applicants (Ainsworth, 2002). Many police department administrators already have a process for determining the ideal applicant for

employment within their department/agency (Ainsworth, 2002). However, psychometric testing brings a more objective decision-making process to the vetting process of police applicants. Psychological testing allows departments to choose candidates in a less biased and less subjective manner (Ainsworth, 2002).

Generally, police departments seek the following characteristics in applicants: bravery, decisiveness, reliability, and respect for authority, among others (Ainsworth, 2002). However, psychometric testing goes beyond these characteristics to identify individuals able to handle the stresses and demands of the profession (Ainsworth, 2002). Psychometric testing remains unbiased and impartial in evaluating applicants on pre-identified characteristics and/or qualifications required by the recruiting police departments and organizations (Ainsworth, 2002).

Background

Police officers work in a unique dynamic of complex duty and decision-making environments, sometimes autonomously (Huey et al., 2017). A career in law enforcement is demanding and stressful (Frank et al., 2017). A career in law enforcement could lead to harmful outcomes, such as job burnout, depression, substance abuse, family problems, aggression, and even premature death (Frank et al., 2017).

The work environment for police officers requires an understanding beyond the basic operations and administration practices of policing (Huey et al., 2017). Police agencies now incorporate numerous anticrime strategies and policing techniques, such as intelligence-led policing, problem-oriented policing, computer statistical models, evidence-based policing, predictive analytical methods, and forensic techniques that

continue to evolve (Huey et al., 2017). With the ever-evolving changes of modern-day policing, police recruitment strategies have started to focus on whether postsecondary programs, such as college, are the best fit to meet these operational requirements (Huey et al., 2017). Police organizations face many challenges recruiting candidates who meet the demand that today's policing requires (Linos, & Riesch, 2020). Additionally, police agencies are forced to compete in keeping those candidates engaged in the lengthy application and vetting process (Linos, & Riesch, 2020). After completing the application and vetting process, recruits are offered a conditional offer of employment and are required to attend a demanding training program (Linos & Riesch, 2020).

Linos and Riesch (2020) noted that police organizations have started to examine their current recruitment and selection process for candidates to become police officers and have begun to eliminate areas that are either outdated, unnecessary, or replaced by other tools and methods. Nonetheless, Linos and Riesch discovered there must be a balance in what is retained, revised, or eliminated; removing stages in the application process that allow for self-evaluation could increase cost and increase the potential to progress unqualified candidates to later stages in the process. Providing multiple assessments per day in the application process has shown a correlation to higher job persistence and greater overall quality of applicants (Linos & Riesch, 2020).

Police organizations have also discovered a disconnect between what is being presented to applicants during recruitment and what applicants understand about the requirements for applying and performing the job functions (Linos & Riesch, 2020). Scheer et al. (2018) explored what applicants know and do not know about the process of

becoming a police officer. Scheer et al. also examined how applicants feel about certain aspects of the application process, such as the degree of invasiveness into an applicant's background and the demands of policing overall. Scheer et al. conducted their study across five universities with college students enrolled in criminal justice classes. Responding to a questionnaire with a Likert-scale, student participants answered questions on aspects of an application process or the demands of a career in policing; responses ranged from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* (Scheer et al., 2018). The researchers sought to identify potential points of fear among individuals early in the process of becoming a police officer (Scheer et al., 2018).

The purpose of the survey questions was to solicit from the police officer recruits on the following fear points regarding to the recruitment and selection process: invasive background checks, discussion of prior drug use, the potential aversion to the length of the application process, and the scrutiny of one's social media use (Scheer et al., 2018). The results of the study indicated a mixed reaction among the participants' hypothetical fear points from overall apprehension to the application process to confidence and interest in the application process to become a police officer (Scheer et al., 2018).

Scheer et al. (2018) identified police officer candidates were being evaluated beyond the standard criteria in relation to their criminal history, mental aptitude, and/or psychological aptitude. For example, the study explored the participants' knowledge of what goes on at a police academy by asking the participants to rate their understanding within the range of strongly agree to strongly disagree using the Likert-scale (Scheer et al., 2018). Questions such as these demonstrated that 35.5 percent of the participants

agreed that they had little knowledge of what goes on at a police academy (Scheer et al., 2018).

Using the same Likert-scale evaluation of strongly agree to strongly disagree, this study also showed that recruitment questions went beyond the typical questions asked. For example, the candidates were asked whether people of their generation want a successful career immediately without “paying their dues,” to which 38.2% agreed. These two example questions from the study conducted by Scheer et al., (2018) demonstrate the value of pre-employment screening and evaluation of participants prior to recruitment, screening, and selection, to be police officers. This allows police officers to understand not only the knowledge base of the potential candidates applying, but also understand the areas they may need to address as far as educating the communities in which their recruitment approaches will be deployed (Scheer, et al., 2018).

Problem Statement

Police organizations face a challenge in finding qualified police officers who meet the ever-evolving criteria and demand of the job. As the demand for qualified police officers’ increases, the resources to screen and evaluate applicants continue to decrease (Huey et al., 2017; Wilson, 2010). Additionally, police organizations are seeing an increase in attrition and an expansion of law enforcement responsibilities. For most police organizations, the most basic qualities to become a police officer include having a clean criminal record, having graduated from high school (or obtained their GED equivalent), taking a written exam, participating in a physical agility test, participating in

an interview, successfully completing a polygraph examination, and possibly completing a psychological evaluation (Huey et al., 2017; Wilson, 2010).

The extraordinary challenge that many police organizations face with recruitment, selection, and training of new police officers has become a critical issue for police department around the world (Huey et al., 2017; White & Escobar, 2008). Police organizations have a responsibility to scrutinize applicants to not just determine their suitability for employment and physical ability to perform the duties, but also the potential for the liability that an applicant may cause the organization if employed. Due to most departments struggling to compete with vacancies within their departments with qualified applicants, many recruiters are finding themselves in a position where they are using more proactive measures to solicit interested and, more importantly, qualified applicants for employment within their departments (Huey et al., 2017; White & Escobar, 2008).

Most police recruiters have adopted the strategy to create the largest applicant pool possible (White & Escobar, 2008). A larger pool of eligible applicants allows police organizations to be more selective in their hiring process (White & Escobar, 2008). To ensure that candidates within the applicant pool are eligible, most departments have established the following minimum standards: educational level, criminal background, financial stability, aptitude and mental evaluation, and physical fitness (Huey et al., 2017; White & Escobar, 2008).

By utilizing the Matrix–Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection Evaluation (M-PULSE), police organizations are able to combat some of the barriers that

prevent them from selecting qualified and suitable police officer candidates prior to subjecting the applicant to the costly, and at times lengthy, application process (White & Escobar, 2008). The M-PULSE can provide information on the degree of liability the applicant may burden the police organization with once selected, trained, and hired (Huey, et al., 2017). Another advantage of the M-PULSE is that it is not considered a medical evaluation under Americans with Disability Act unlike the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory – 2 Restructured Form (MMPI-2RF). Therefore, some departments use the M-PULSE as a liability pre-screener prior to a pre-conditional offer of employment. Therefore, it is useful to understand the relationship between MMPI-2RF scales and the scales on the M-PULSE.

Gap in Literature

The focus of police recruitment is to seek out suitable candidates for employment as a police officer. Determining a police officer candidate's suitability for an agency is wide-ranging. Suitability questions can evaluate a candidate's health, aptitude, trustworthiness, and/or fitness. However, there has been limited research conducted to predict the future performance of an officer throughout the duration of their career (Stout, 2019). Two measures, the MMPI-2RF and the M-PULSE, provide insight into the mindset, mental health, potential bias, and impulsivity of candidates seeking employment as a police officer (Stout, 2019). Stout (2019) outlined in his study that these two measures (MMPI-2RF and M-PULSE) have a historical basis of providing organizations with measurable criteria for any future potential psychological issues that a candidate may display once employed as a police officer (Stout, 2019).

Stout (2019) referenced Professor Albert Bandura's social learning theory to predict an individual's future behavior would be influenced by the individual's experience, training, and beliefs. No research has been conducted to determine pre-employment screening of law enforcement candidates who could have a higher potential to participate in racial and/or sexually offensive conduct as the result of behavioral/externalizing dysfunction and anger proneness. Rostow and Davis (2008) developed the M-PULSE to provide the unique risk analysis that provides organizations with the ability to identify higher risk candidates and to determine the liability of that candidate (Stout, 2019). Furthermore, if the applicant was determined suitable to progress in the application process to be a police officer, the M-PULSE can additionally assist police agencies in development, maintenance, and use of organizational policies, training, and management strategies to use personnel/resources properly (Stout, 2019).

Purpose of Study

This quantitative study used archival data from law enforcement pre-employment psychological screenings. This study focused on determining if a relationship exists between 2 M-PULSE scales (racially offensive conduct and sexually offensive conduct) and two MMPI – 2RF (anger proneness and behavioral/externalizing dysfunction) subscale scores. The method chosen for this study was a quantitative approach. A private practice located in central California granted permission to use their archival data to conduct the analysis.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ 1 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and the anger proneness scale as measured by the MMPI – 2RF?

H₀1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 2 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale as measured by the MMPI-2RF?

H₀2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 3 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score?

H₀₃: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a3}: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 4 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF anger proneness subscale score?

H₀₄: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a4}: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Conceptual Framework

The social learning theory was the theoretical focus for this study (Bandura, 1971). Albert Bandura, a Stanford University professor with a 60-year career, has become one of the most prominent developers of the social learning theory (Kretchmar, 2019; Bandura, 1971). The social learning theory blends the dominant theory of learning and the cognitive theories of learning to define human learning as a function of both the environment and mental process (Kretchmar, 2019; Bandura, 1971).

Professor Bandura (1971) believed that when an individual learns a behavior through observing (observational learning), they then imitate that same behavior

themselves (Kretchmar, 2019; Bandura, 1971). Bandura outlines four components of observational learning: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motive/reinforcement (Bandura, 1971). Bandura explained that traditional theory of learning generally depicts behavior as a product of what an individual directly experiences and the associated consequences of those experiences. The social learning theory offers the viewpoint that an individual is neither driven by inward forces nor buffered by influences in their environment (Bandura, 1971).

The limitations of behaviorism (more specifically operant conditioning) started to shape Bandura's (1971) theory of social learning (initially referred to as observational learning) (Kretchmar, 2019). The key elements of the social learning theory are that people can learn by observing the behaviors of others (to include the consequences and/or rewards associated with those behaviors) (Bandura, 1971). An individual's learning is not necessarily like an individual's performance (Bandura, 1971).

The social learning system discusses that behavior is acquired through either directly experiencing an event and/or action or by observing the behavior of others (Bandura, 1971). Bandura (1971) states that the method in which behavior is learned is largely governed by a reward and punishment system. The reward or punishment is based on a desired response to a stimulus. Based on the informative feedback provided by the response (behavior) performed by the individual, that individual begins to develop theories or hypotheses about their behaviors and which of those behaviors would allow them to garnish the most success (Bandura, 1971).

A foundational concept of social learning theory is an individual's capability to anticipate a response to a stimulus in partnership with the strong incentive–motivational effects (Bandura, 1971). Those individuals that are aware of what responses are deemed appropriate in each situation and where the value is seen in the outcome of the appropriate behavior are more receptive to produce a change in their behavior in the direction that is reinforced (Bandura, 1971). Opportunities where novel forms of behavior are conveyed by social cues only, modeling behavior becomes an indispensable aspect of learning (Bandura, 1971).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was to perform a quantitative statistical analysis of archival data to determine whether relationships exist between results from the M-PULSE Inventory data (racially offensive behavior and sexually offensive conduct) and the MMPI-2RF data (behavioral/externalizing dysfunction and anger proneness). The data for this study were collected by a private business during law enforcement pre-employment screening processes. The data were accessed with permission by the private firm in California. In addition, no identifiable information was included in the results or any publications. Each research question was analyzed using a simple regression procedure to better understand the relationship between the variables.

Definitions

M-PULSE

The Matrix–Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection Evaluation (M-PULSE) Inventory is composed of 445 items designed to measure 18 liability conduct areas among law enforcement candidates (Davis & Rostow, 2008). In addition, the inventory measures four content areas or empirical scales that are derived from a factor analysis that relates to law enforcement candidates on the job performance and liability (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The M-PULSE instrument also includes two validity scales to evaluate the respondent’s response style (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

The M-PULSE instrument offers a profile on each participant (law enforcement candidate[s]) with sub-scores for each of the 18 liability conduct areas, four empirical scales, and the validity scales, to assist with determining the law enforcement candidates’ attitude toward the testing process itself and the integrity of the responses provided by the candidates (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The categories that each sub-score on liability conduct areas is placed (based on the responses of the candidate) into four categories: low risk, average, some concern, or at risk (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The development of the M-PULSE focuses on addressing the need that local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies express to improve the selection process of candidates to their agency. Lastly, the objective of this instrument is to minimize the risk to the agency by identifying candidates that are identified to be unethical or destructive (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

MMPI – 2RF

The MMPI – 2RF, published in 2008, is a 51-scale measure of personality and psychopathology with 338 items (Tarescavage, Fischler, Cappo, Hill, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015). Nine scales are used to measure a participant’s validity in their response

(Tarescavage et al., 2015). The scales were designed to assess non-content based invalid response such as nonresponding, random response and acquiescent responding, and content-based invalid responses such as over-reporting and under-reporting (Tarescavage et al., 2015). The other 42 scales are organized in a hierarchical order and demonstrate a broad range of measurement of clinically relevant psychological constructs (Tarescavage et al., 2015).

Assumptions

The assumption of this study was that all candidates that participated in the assessment provided accurate and honest responses. However, there was still the potential that candidates could have answered screening questions with the intent to deceive the test measures. A safeguard that was offered to ensure the integrity of the data is that both measures (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF) incorporated in them validity questions to identify those intentions to deceive the police psychologist and/or applicant screeners. Participants with invalid protocols were not included in the data set provided. The M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF have demonstrated to be reliable and valid through a steady history of being used by police psychologists and/or individuals participating in the screening process of police applicants.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on psychological screening of archival data for law enforcement candidates. A quantitative research design was determined to be the best approach to determine if any relationships existed between the selected variables of the pre-employment psychological screening measures (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF) archival

data. The archival data was acquired from a private practice in a California city that conducts pre-employment psychological screening of law enforcement officer applicants and existing police officer employees during the duration of their employment with their respective California police departments.

Another delimitation was acknowledged through the duration of this study, as was the scope of the study. The scope of this research study was limited to two measures: M-PULSE, the MMPI-2RF, and the selected factors highlighted from those two measures. These measures are commonly used in the selection and/or pre-screening of law enforcement candidates; however, measures to determine and/or evaluate the selection and/or pre-screening of law enforcement candidates are not only limited to the M-PULSE or MMPI-2RF.

Lastly, another delimitation that was identified for this study was the location where the information was collected, archived, and provided (with permission and coordination) by a private practice in a California city. There was a potential that the sample may not provide a diverse cultural representation that may be seen in more diverse populations. This was a precaution that was noticed at the preliminary phases of this study, but other populations have not been surveyed to determine the veracity of this delimitation. Furthermore, it should be noted that these data were collected from a diverse population of ethnicities, languages, religions...etc. The private California practice from which the data were collected was from a centralized city that has a large surrounding population of diverse socioeconomic and educational backgrounds.

Limitations

This study presented potential limitations based on the responses from the law enforcement candidates that were screened using the two different measures (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF). Both measures are self-report measures. However, both assessments included reliability and validity scales. The data set provided included protocols for candidates that passed their psychological evaluation. It is assumed that those candidates did not answer the screening questions dishonestly or misrepresent themselves to the screening psychologist.

Significance

The purpose of this study was to provide an analytical view of historical data collected from pre-employment psychological screening processes for law enforcement officer recruits. This study focused on determining whether there are relationships between the M-PULSE Inventory data (unprofessional misconduct, procedural and conduct mistakes, and the potential for resignation and/or termination) and MMPI-2RF data (behavioral/externalizing dysfunction and anger proneness) (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

Focusing on the relationships between M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF pre-employment psychological screening factors for law enforcement is important for several reasons. Applicants cannot be given any psychological assessments prior to a conditional offer by the department. The M-PULSE is not considered a psychological assessment but instead is considered a liability assessment as it assesses actions that people believe are acceptable. Therefore, in most states, the M-PULSE may be used as a pre-screening

assessment prior to the conditional offer. It is therefore important to understand the relationship of the scales on the MMPI 2RF and the M-PULSE. The purpose of the M-PULSE, as a liability evaluation, is to identify behaviors that may increase department liability such as inappropriate use of force. The results from both the liability evaluation and the pre-employment psychological assessment are key to determining who may or may not be a good fit for a career in law enforcement. Police departments are looking to modernize and revamp their training and department/agency policies to improve the standard practices expected by their officers and to meet the evolving problems that law enforcement face daily (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

The significance of this study shifted the attention from the law enforcement recruitment process to identifying risk factors and liability for both the police departments and the community those potential police officers would be policing once hired (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004). Pre-employment psychological evaluations are an important part of the process when hiring officers. An out-of-control officer can create significant liability for the department but also negatively affect the trust between the department and the community it serves. This study focused on the relationship between factors that create significant liability for the department and the community. Creating a better understanding of how these factors can be identified added to the literature in this area and can be used to bolster the efficacy of the pre-employment psychological evaluation process (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004).

The results of this study can be used to gain a better understanding of the multiple elevation scales of police recruitment with the objective of improving the selection

process. Additionally, the results of this study may assist with identifying recruits who are better suited for employment in law enforcement and limit liability (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004). Lastly, this study can serve as a contribution to identifying the use for police psychologists to use more clinical interview questions or identify early in the recruitment process those candidates that may require increased screening on those candidates that have demonstrated higher scale level results (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004).

Lastly, this study focused on providing information on how police psychologists can make a more accurate decisions on law enforcement candidates. This information impacts social change by assisting in the development of more concise protocols for pre-employment assessments to hire better police officer recruits. In turn, these candidates will establish better working relationships with their communities and colleagues. Most importantly, the relationships identified between the M-PULSE scales (racially offensive behavior and sexually offensive conduct) and the MMPI-2RF scales (behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional and anger proneness) has set a benchmark of proven importance of identifying liability characteristics in police officer recruits (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004). Furthermore, the significance of this study outlined ways to help police departments find suitable candidates with limited liability to their agency (Chappell, & Piquero, 2004).

Summary

This chapter focused on the social learning theory. Furthermore, this chapter identified and explained the variables from the M-PULSE measures (racially offensive behavior and sexually offensive conduct) and the MMPI-2RF data

(behavioral/externalizing dysfunction and anger proneness) that were used in this study.

This research study used a quantitative research approach. A quantitative analysis provided a framework that can build on the already established knowledge basis to pre-screen and select candidates for employment within law enforcement departments and/or agencies.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Police departments and agencies must meet the policing needs of the communities they serve (Braga & Weisburd, 2019). Police officers take an oath to serve and protect their communities while accepting in the same breath to be held to a higher standard and accept the danger and risk that are associated with everyday policing (Braga & Weisburd, 2019). Initially, police officers must be able to meet the demands of the application process, which can be extremely intensive. After completing their training, they are then tasked to bear the weight of the high standards from their agency as well as their community (Braga & Weisburd, 2019).

The current task police agencies face is the responsibility of putting forth the maximum vetting strategies and processes possible (Braga & Weisburd, 2019). The strategies ensure that the police candidates selected for training, and ultimately employment with their agency, can not only endure what it takes to become a police officer but can maintain that integrity, professionalism, morality, and mental fortitude to endure the demands of being a police officer today (Braga & Weisburd, 2019). The pre-employment process for most police officer agencies focuses on screening candidates for personality traits and work characteristics with the use of instruments such as the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF (Villarama, 2020).

The M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF have been demonstrated through previous research as psychometrically sound instruments that can be used in the pre-employment phases of a police agency (Ellingwood, Williams, Sitarenios, & Solomon, 2018; Morison,

2017; Villarama, 2020). These assessments help determine to a degree of certainty how capable a police candidate is to be able to carry out their duties as once sworn in as active police officers within their communities (Ellingwood et al., 2018; Morison, 2017; Villarama, 2020). At the same time, the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF can identify a candidate's suitability to perform their duties effectively as duly sworn peace officers, and these instruments can identify personality traits and characteristics that could serve as a liability or be problematic for the agencies once hired (Ellingwood et al., 2018; Morison, 2017; Villarama, 2020).

The information gathered using the aforementioned instruments (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF) can not only assist with disqualifying police officer candidates that are deemed unsuitable for employment as a sworn peace officer but can indicate candidates that may appear to be suitable. However, these instruments may also identify other characteristics of the police officer candidates such as the following: negative emotions, stress, family/marital problems, alcohol or drug dependency, deviant urges to participate in sexual misconduct, and unconscious biases such as racial discrimination or opinions (Ellingwood et al., 2018; Morison, 2017; Villarama, 2020).

Using these instruments in the pre-employment phases of evaluating suitability for employment with the respective agency should be further explored. Research has shown, and will continue to show, the psychological benefit of these instruments adds value to the candidates that are selected to be sworn police officers (Villarama, 2020). This study will demonstrate how effective these instruments are in the pre-employment

screening of police officers and how they must continue to be researched and explored as it relates to screening and selecting new police officers (Villarama, 2020).

Little research has been conducted on the use of scores on the M-PULSE to predict the score on scales from the MMPI-2RF (Villarama, 2020). The more research conducted on these two instruments and the relationship the scores on the scales of both instruments as they relate to determining suitability of law enforcement candidates to be selected as duly sworn peace officers. (Villarama, 2020). Furthermore, as previous researchers have discovered, law enforcement candidates where concern toward the liability for employment based on the relationships between their scores on the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF but selected for employment can utilize the information from the pre-employment screening to monitor those individuals as the progress in their training and/or career in law enforcement (Villarama, 2020). This study fills the gap in the literature by examining whether scores from the racially offensive behavior and sexually offensive behavior from the M-PULSE can predict scores on the anger proneness and behavioral/externalizing dysfunction from the MMPI-2RF.

This literature review outlines the search terms, databases, and other strategies used to search, obtain, and analyze research articles relevant to this study. Furthermore, this literature review outlined the conceptual framework (social learning theory), instrumentation (MMPI-2RF MPULSE), variables and concepts used in this study, and relativeness the research articles had to this study.

Literature Review Search Strategies

The sources of research for this study were primarily conducted using the Walden University Library and the Google Scholar search engine. Other published literature on topics such as Bandura's (1971) social learning theory, police officer selection techniques and/or methods, and many other terms associated with this study were included based on their relevancy to the topic of this study and the timeframe outlined as the guideline for this study. Most articles for this study were limited to a date ranging from the current calendar year to 5 years prior to the current calendar year. Furthermore, within the Walden University Library, EBSCO databases were made available for this study and used, such as the following: PsychINFO; PsychARTICLES; PsychEXTRA; Sage Premier; SocINDEX; and Thoreau.

Multiple search terms were applied using a Boolean method to yield the research outlined in this study. The following search terms are examples of the terms that were used in the research gathering process for this study: "Police Recruitment", "Police Selection Process", "MMPI-2RF", "M-PULSE", "Social Learning Theory", "Bandura", and "Police Attrition Rates." Through diligent searching, I used these search engines and/or databases to obtain specific and technical information pertaining to the MMPI-2RF and M-PULSE.

Beyond the research databases housed within those search engines and/or databases previously described contribution from psychological professionals from a private firm in California who had an operational understanding of the practice methods on how these measures are implemented in the recruiting, screening and overall selection

of today's law enforcement professionals were also provided throughout the course of this study.

Overview of Pre-Employment Testing/Screening of Peace Officer Candidates

Police Culture

Silver, Roche, Bilach, and Ryon (2017) defined traditional police culture as a set of attitudes and values developed to serve as a coping mechanism for the work of police officers. Furthermore, traditional police culture provides officers with guidelines for how to conduct themselves as sworn police officers (Silver et al., 2017). The decisions that police officers make at the street level during their encounter with members of the community can not only have an immediate positive or negative effect, but also provide a long-lasting effect (Anthony, 2018). Bad decisions made by one police officer can cause a loss of trust and respect and negatively influence the public's view of the legitimacy of police officers and the department (Anthony, 2018). Furthermore, bad decisions made by police officers can negatively affect the communities they police by festering violent confrontations and laying the foundation for long-term friction between the police officers and the community members they police (Anthony, 2018).

There are few disputes on the fact that law enforcement is, in most cases, an extremely dangerous and demanding profession (Morin, Parker, Stepler, & Mercer, 2017). According to Morin et al. (2017), 84% of police officers worry about the risk they may face while deployed in their communities they police. Additionally, 86% of police officers have expressed the belief that the public lacks understanding of the risks and challenges they face (Morin et al., 2017). The settings in which police officer interact

with the communities they police range from obedient to radical and/or violent in nature (Morin et al., 2017).

A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2016 found that 79% of police officers were thanked for their service to their communities, whereas 67% of police officers reported being verbally abused by those in the communities they police (Morin et al., 2017). The same Pew Research study showed 58% of police officer often feel proud of their work as law enforcement officers (Morin et al., 2017). Furthermore, 51% of police officers in the 2016 research study expressed frustration with their work as police officers, while 49% expressed anger about their role as law enforcement officers (Morin et al., 2017). In addition, 42% of police officers involved in the study feeling fulfilled with their work as law enforcement officers (Morin et al., 2017).

Morin et al. (2017) states that there are times police officers are faced with situations where they struggle between the decision to do what is morally right versus following a department policy that contradicts that morally right decision. Most police officers are satisfied with the departments they work for and are committed to ensuring their agency is successful (Morin et al., 2017). Police officers have indicated that their departments lack sufficient resources and training and do not have enough police officers to police their communities effectively (Morin, et al., 2017).

The Pew Research study conducted in 2016 stated that 91% of police officers have an excellent relationship with White community members, 56% of police officers have a good relationship with the African American members within their communities, and 70% police officers report good relationships with the Hispanics in the communities

they police (Morin et al., 2017). Most officers (approximately 72%) believe that to be effective in policing, they must first understand the needs of the communities they police (Morin et al., 2017).

Currently, police officers state the policing has changed (Morin et al., 2017). This is due to the impact of police involved shootings that have intensified the racial tension between the citizens and the police officers to serve them (Morin et al., 2017). Ways policing has changed are increased safety concerns; increased reluctance to use force; increased tensions between police and the African American communities they police; increased reluctance to stop and question suspicious people; efforts to improve the relationship between police and the African American communities; and changes to most police departments' use of force policies and procedures (Morin, et al., 2017).

Current policing methods are working to modify policing techniques and procedures, while providing transparency and eliminating skewed perceptions of incidents (Morin et al., 2017). Police departments are turning towards body cameras to meet the demand of modern policing. Body cameras not only protect the citizens but also the police officers and the reputation of their agency (Morin et al., 2017). This meets the needs of modern policing (Morin et al., 2017). For example, body cameras allow police departments a method to enforce police department policies and address areas of opportunity to develop better training for their police officers (Morin et al., 2017). Additionally, body cameras protect the civil rights and dignity of citizens that interact with police officers and the police officers from false accusations (Morin et al., 2017). Lastly, modern policing methods such as body cameras offer a candid view of the

incident that took place without any skewed perceptions or interpretations (Morin et al., 2017).

There is a sharp contrast between how society views policing in respect to policy issues and training, and how police officers view themselves (Morin et al., 2017). Where the public opinion differs from the opinion of police officers, such as the ban on certain styles and/or quantities of firearms an individual may purchase, it generally agrees on modern methods of policing such as enforcing the policy for police officers to wear body cameras, allowing for transparency (Morin et al., 2017). Approximately 62% of police officers view their primary role is to serve as both protectors and enforcers of laws and rules within the public they police, and 53% of private citizens share this perception of the police officers within their communities (Morin et al., 2017).

Police Recruitment/Application Process

The police recruitment process is an objectively based process to assist in identifying the correct individuals to serve as police officers (Hoisington, 2018). The process involves input from the department's human resource officers, supervisors, and managers with extensive knowledge of the job expectations (Hoisington, 2018). Furthermore, the application process includes how many vacancies are expected to be filled and the timeframe to fill those vacancies (Hoisington, 2018). Lastly, the requirement process should include applicants that meet the diversity needs of the department, education levels of the applicant, and overall skills sets determined by the department's experienced officers (Hoisington, 2018).

Police departments rely primarily on two methods of hiring practices when determining whether to approve a candidate from progression in the recruitment process or eliminating that candidate (Hoisington, 2018). The two criteria used for this determination are a psychological assessment and identifying previous deviant behavior, which can serve as an indicator for future conduct (Hoisington, 2018). For most police departments, the use of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), which is composed of over a hundred true or false questions, is a common practice in the application processes (Hoisington, 2018). Mental health professionals analyze the applicant's responses to those questions (Hoisington, 2018). After the analysis of the applicant's responses to those questions, the mental health professionals follow up with a face-to-face interview of the applicant(s) to determine the applicant's suitability for employment as a police officer (Hoisington, 2018).

The hiring officials for the police department and the department leadership determine what criteria the applicants must meet to be hired, based on the minimum standards outlined by their state or federal government (Hoisington, 2018). Along with the established minimum standards set forth for selecting these police officers for employment, subject matter experts further offer standards and requirements based on their knowledge of the job and experience performing it (Hoisington, 2018). Applicants are subject to investigation by the police department's recruitment officers and human resource staff for accuracy and truthfulness (Hoisington, 2018). This investigation includes (but not limited to) the following: criminal background check, polygraph examination, employment history review, educational history, and a financial history

check (Hoisington, 2018). The objective of the investigative process in partnership with the mental health psychological screening is to determine any factors that could eliminate the applicant for employment as a police officer (Hoisington, 2018). Those that are eliminated for employment have demonstrated to be a liability to the department if hired or have proved to be dishonest or lacking in credibility to serve as a police officer (Hoisington, 2018).

Aspects of Policing

Stress

Occupational stress and burnout are common among police officers (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Police departments and their officers have been burdened over the past decades of facing a heightened threat of international and domestic terrorism, budget cuts, as well as the requirement of advancing policing technology and methods (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Furthermore, the demand of transparency, accountability and legitimacy of police officers and the departments they employ have added additional stress and/or strain (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Overall, the concept of stress has been defined in numerous ways and whether the stress effects an individually medically, psychologically, or socially depends on the approach the term stress is being researched and applied to that field of study (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Police officers face both external and internal stimulus daily (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Examples of external stimulus of stress that police officers face are pressure and/or demands from superiors or gunfights (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Examples of internal stimulus of stress that police officers face are the police officer's ability to restore themselves back to a sense of normality and equilibrium

(homeostasis) after experience a traumatic event such as a high-speed chase or an officer involve shooting (Griffin & Sun, 2018).

Early research on police officer stress was placed into two primary categories: occupational and organizational (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Occupational stress in policing is where a police officer endures stress based on the danger and unpredictable nature that comes with their responsibilities of their policing their communities (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Organizational stress in policing are the stressors within the organization such as shift schedules, conflicts with supervision, policy issues, and lack of training (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Another aspect of stress that police officers face is burnout, which is the prolonged and at times chronic stress they face during their responsibilities within their occupation (Griffin & Sun, 2018).

Coping with Stress and Burnout

Due to the multiple avenues in which police officers may face stress through their occupation they may rely on negative coping strategies, such as alcohol or physical isolation, to deal with stress and burnout (Griffin & Sun, 2018). In some circumstances where the negative coping strategies such as substance abuse or extreme isolation is not effective to assist the police officers in dealing with stress and burnout, they turn to suicide ideations or actions (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Police officers not only face the internal physical demands of their occupation such as muscle soreness and fatigue, but also face internal mental demands from their occupation such as depression and sleep disorders (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Externally police officers can demonstrate burnout by exhibiting defiant behavior while at work, increased absences from scheduled shifts, or

overall displaying intentions or actions toward leaving their employment with their police department (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Stress those police officers face does not end while on duty within their communities (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Police officers suffer from the impact the occupational stressors and the burnout affect has on them personally and their families (Griffin & Sun, 2018).

Post-Traumatic Stress & Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:

The American Psychiatric Association defines the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a psychiatric disorder that is present in those individuals that have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). In the past, PTSD was known in nonprofessional's terms as shell shock or combat fatigue during the first and second World War (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). PTSD affects approximately 3.5% of the adults in the United States, and one (1) in eleven (11) individuals are estimated to be diagnosed with PTSD during their lifetime (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Women are more twice more likely to suffer from PTSD than men (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Those who suffer from PTSD have thoughts and feelings in a very intense nature as a response to a traumatic event that can occur even long after the traumatic event occurred (American Psychiatric Association, 2020).

Symptoms of PTSD fall into four (4) categories: 1. Intrusive thoughts; 2. Avoiding reminders; 3. Negative thoughts and feelings; and 4. Arousal and reactive symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Intrusive thoughts are where an individual has flashbacks or re-experiences the traumatic event through vivid memories

(American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Avoiding reminders are where those suffering from PTSD will avoid people, places or activities that force them to revisit that traumatic event that caused them to suffer from PTSD (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Negative thoughts and feelings occur when a person views themselves or others through a distorted lens, typically in form of guilt, shame, or anger (American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Arousal and reactive symptoms in one sense where individuals behave in reckless or self-destructive behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2020).

Law enforcement officers as part of their professional duties are placed in situations where they are exposed to traumatic events at a high frequency (Chopko, Palmieri, & Adams, 2018). Throughout their duties, police officers could witness tragedy and harm being forced upon others or be on the receiving end of that harm and/or violence (Chopko, et al., 2018). PTSD is not a new problem among highly stressful and demanding jobs such as policing and military (Sharps, 2017). PTSD comes from the result of one or more powerful acute stressors, or a culmination of chronic stress (Sharps, 2017).

It is common for police officer candidates to be individuals who recently separated or served on active duty in the United States military (Sharps, 2017). These individuals carry over their military trauma and combine it with the trauma and stressors related to serving as a police officer within their communities (Sharps, 2017). Normally, when an individual faces danger, the body triggers a flight, fight response, where the body prepares to either deal with the danger, or flee from it (Sharps, 2017). However, in relation to PTSD, this reaction either is damaged or altered completely (Sharps, 2017).

Those suffering from PTSD (such as police officers and military members) continue to feel this sense of fear or in danger, even when there is not stimulus to propose an actual situation where that individual should normally feel afraid or in danger (Sharps, 2017).

PTSD is a result of when an individual either personally experiences a traumatic event or witnesses another person (such as a family member) or to a stranger experience a traumatic event (Sharps, 2017). Police officers and military members share similarities to traumatic events previously described on a more frequent basis than the average person (Sharps, 2017). Example of events that police officers may experience that could be highly traumatic would be engaging in a shootout with an armed suspect or responding to a call where someone has been harmed due to being shot by an armed suspect (Sharps, 2017).

Bias (Implicit vs. Explicit):

In 1995, psychologists Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald coined the term implicit bias (Ruhl, 2020). This term was founded in the argument that social behavior is largely influenced by judgements derived from an individual's unconscious (Ruhl, 2020). Implicit (or commonly referred to as unconscious bias) relates to the attitudes and beliefs a person possesses that occur outside of their conscious awareness and/or control (Ruhl, 2020). According to Ruhl (2020), implicit bias runs counter to an individual's conscious belief without any knowledge of that person. On the contrast, explicit bias are biases that are present on the conscious level (Ruhl, 2020).

An Israeli psychologist and economist Daniel Kahneman distinguished between the implicit and explicit bias by placing them into two systems of thinking (Ruhl, 2020).

The first system of thinking (implicit bias) operates in the unconscious portion of the brain and is instinctive, quick, automatic and occurs with little to no effort by the individual (Ruhl, 2020). The second system of thinking (explicit bias) occurs in the conscious portion of the brain (Ruhl, 2020). This system is more logical, slower in response, rationally evaluates complex thoughts and decisions and places more effort in the digesting the thought before responding (Ruhl, 2020).

Instrumentation

M-PULSE

The M-PULSE is a 455 item, self-reporting liability instrument that assesses the future performance of police officer candidates (Davis, & Rostow, 2008 & MHS, n.d). The instrument measures the police officer candidate's attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors related to the profession and culture of law enforcement agencies (Davis, & Rostow, 2008 & MHS, n.d). The M-PULSE is made up of two validity scales, eighteen liability scales, sixteen empirical scales, ten California POST scales, and one supplementary scale that serves as an indicator for potential substance abuse (Davis, & Rostow, 2008, MHS, n.d. & Villarama, 2020). The primary goal of the M-PULSE is to assist law enforcement agencies in vetting peace officer candidates to determine their suitability to serve as sworn peace officers and limit the liability of hiring individuals who are deemed unsuitable for service as sworn peace officers (Villarama, 2020).

In contrast to the MMPI-2RF, limited research has been conducted on incorporating the usage of the M-PULSE in the pre-employment screening phase of peace officer candidates (Villarama, 2020). Most research conducted on the M-PULSE

have been on an explorative platform through dissertations; however, the first peer reviewed published study that discusses the implementation and practice was done in 2018 (Ellingwood, et al., 2018 & Villarama, 2020). This current study aims to contribute to the utility of the M-PULSE in conjunction of the MMPI-2RF in the process of screening police officer candidates in the pre-employment process.

Stout, (2019); discovered using an Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) no significant relationship between MMPI – 2RF scales (aggression and antisocial behaviors) and M-PULSE scales (interpersonal difficulties, unprofessional conduct, discharge of weapon, and inappropriate use of a weapon). However, as encouraged empirically as further research is conducted the findings offer an extended knowledge of how various factors between the two measures (M-PULSE and MMPI – 2RF) can be used as an initial pre-employment psychological evaluation tool for police officer candidates (Stout, 2019). Stout, (2019) further advocates that over time the M-PULSE was developed to psychologically evaluate police officer candidates during their initial hiring phase and at later points in their career. The M-PULSE provides a unique perspective tool that can gauge the development and progression of a policer as they mature in their career (Stout, 2019). Furthermore, this tool can offer a lens into the change of the police officer's behaviors since their initial evaluation during their pre-screening phase (Stout, 2019).

Villarama, (2020) highlights the importance of exploring the statistical relationship between the M-PULSE and the MMPI – 2RF since they are used to determine a candidate's suitability to be hired as a police officer. These instruments assist

with the ability to detect problems that a candidate may suffer while being employed as a sworn law enforcement officer (Villarama, 2020). Furthermore, it gives police departments the ability to make an informed decision to hire those individuals based on the identified problems and the potential liability that individual would pose to themselves and the department once hired (Villarama, 2020). Villarama, (2020); found by a multiple regression that negative emotions and interpersonal difficulties scores on the M-PULSE significantly predict family problems scales on the MMPI – 2RF.

MMPI – 2RF

The revised version of the MMPI-2, known as the MMPI-2RF, is an instrument that is made up of 338 items minimized from the original 567 items (Tarescavage, Fischler, Cappo, Hill, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015). Villarama (2020) outlined that the intended purpose of the MMPI-2RF computer-based test was to test individuals from ages 18 or older. The MMPI-2RF instrument is made up of fifty-one total scales: nine scales test validity, three scales testing higher order, nine restricted clinical scales, twenty-three specific problem scales, two interest scales, and five PSY-5 scales (Wygant, 2017 & Villarama, 2020). The revised self-report measure has been used in numerous settings such as medical, mental health, forensic, and public health (Wygant, 2017). One primary use for the MMPI-2RF being explored in this study is the use of the MMPI-2RF instrument in pre-employment screening of police officer candidates seeking employment as sworn peace officers for their respective department/agencies (Wygant, 2017).

Empirical evidence and past research have demonstrated and validated that the MMPI-2RF is a sound instrument for evaluating police and other public safety personnel

(Morison, 2017 & Villarama, 2020). The MMPI-2RF has shown predictive validity of identifying problem behaviors in police officer candidates (Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben – Porath, 2015). Some of the predictive problem behaviors the MMPI-2RF assists with identifying in the employment pre-screening phase are as follows: emotional control and stress problems, negative interpersonal interaction with private citizens, failure to control conflict, and failure to engage with criminal subjects properly and calmly (Tarescavage, et al., 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Social Learning Theory

The theoretical base for this study was the social learning theory. Broadly, stated social learning theory has three factors that determine an individual's actions: personal factors, environmental factors, and behavior (Stout, 2019). Furthermore, social learning theory is summarized into four processes: attention, retention, motivation, and reproduction (Bandura, 1971 and Stout, 2019).

Albert Bandura, an influential social cognitive psychologist well known for the social learning theory, and other theories and/or experiments such as the concept of self-efficiency, and the famously known Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, 1971 & Stout, 2019). Social learning theory states that individuals shape their perception of events and actions based on what they experience or endure throughout their lives (Bandura, 1971 and Stout, 2019). Bandura (1971) explains that developments in learning theory shifted the focus from casual analysis from hypothesized inner determinants to detailed examination of external influences on responsiveness.

Extensive analysis of human behavior was conducted in terms of events driven by stimulus that evoke behavior and the reinforcing consequences needed to alter that behavior (Bandura, 1971). Researchers have demonstrated repeatedly that the response patterns that generally attributed to underlying forces such as: how they are induced, eliminated, and reinstated was done by varying external forces (Bandura, 1971). The phenomenon that was demonstrated in the researcher's analysis of the response patterns discovered that causes of behavior are found not in the organism [individual] but rather in the environment surround that organism [individual] (Bandura, 1971).

In contrast, the concept that a person's actions were under external control was not enthusiastically welcomed, regardless of the ample documentation demonstrating the phenomenon (Bandura, 1971). For most this discovered phenomenon of the cause of behavior not being found in the organism, but rather found in in the environment surrounding that individual because it implied a one-way influence process that reduced a person to a mere helpless reactor to the vagarious of external rewards and punishments (Bandura, 1971). Additionally, the newly founded phenomenon that an individual's behavior is determined externally by their environment contradicted firm, ill – founded beliefs that individual is possess generalized personality traits that lead them to behave in a consistent manner (Bandura, 1971).

Another criticism of the social learning theory in its early development and exploration was the argument that individuals are self-thinking organisms that possess the capability to provide that individual with some self-control or self-direction (Bandura, 1971). Social learning rebuts these criticisms by stating that individuals are neither driven

by inner forces nor pummeled helplessly by the influences of their environment, but rather a psychological functioning is understood best in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between the individual's behavior and the controlling conditions (Bandura, 1971).

Bandura (1971) states that an individual's capacity to learn through observation enables that individual to acquire large, incorporated units of behavior through observed example without having to build up gradual patterns through trial and error. Furthermore, not only can individuals learn behavior through observed examples, but those individuals can also observe and adopt emotional responses and/or effective reactions demonstrated by others enduring experiences either painful or pleasurable (Bandura, 1971). Bandura (1971) continues to add with social learning theory that a person's cognitive capacity is an additional factor that determines not only how an individual will be affected by his or her experiences but the future direction that individual's actions will take.

The ability to observe someone perform a specific behavior or action or by direct experience and redisplay that behavior or action is categorized within the social learning theory as learning through direct experience (Bandura, 1971). The most fundamental component of learning through direct experience is governed by the rewarding and punishing consequences that follow a specific action or behavior performed by an individual (Bandura, 1971). Furthermore, the individual's cognitive ability to process actions and learned behavior by direct experiences separates us from organisms that do not have the ability to think for themselves or process actions and/or behaviors and

determine whether the reward or punishment offers guidance on whether that specific behavior is suitable to advantages for them (Bandura, 1971).

The anticipatory capacity of an individual's conditions of reinforcement have strong incentive and motivational effects (Bandura, 1971). Bandura (1971) states that most human behavior is not controlled by immediate external reinforcement. Based on past experiences, individuals can come to expect to gain certain outcomes they value or those outcomes they do not favor, or value based on the action they perform (Bandura, 1971). Bandura (1971) noted a study conducted to measure an individual's awareness and found that learning cannot take place without the awareness of what is being reinforced based on the desired behavior being performed.

As a caution, it is noted that behavior learned by positive and negative reinforcement would be not only extremely laborious but rather in some instances dangerous (Bandura, 1971). Behavior can be learned either deliberately or inadvertently through the influence of an example behavior demonstrated by another (Bandura, 1971). An operant condition analysis of modeling behavior relies on three standard component paradigm which is as follows: stimulus, overt matching response, and reinforcing stimulus (Bandura, 1971). Burrhus Frederic (B.F.) Skinner, an American psychologist famously known for experiments such as the "Skinner Box" like Thorndike's puzzle box, demonstrated how behavior can be learned through conditioning techniques where desired behavior is rewarded and undesired behavior is punished or nor rewarded (McLeod, 2018).

Albert Bandura states that modeling can have additional effects such as how the observer may view behaviors performed by another individual and/or group and use those observed behaviors in the same way but to a greater extent (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961). Just as seen in an experiment conducted in 1961 by Albert Bandura called “Bobo the Clown”, children from the Stanford University day care were observed in respect to either demonstrating either aggressive or nonaggressive behaviors and were placed in their respective groups in partnership with a controlled group. These children observed an adult perform actions toward a clown doll and researchers observed whether the children would imitate the same behavior and with the same displayed aggressive behavior as the behavior they observed (Bandura, et. al., 1961).

Conceptual Framework

Racially Offensive Behavior (in Law Enforcement):

The phrase racial profiling has been targeted toward denoting police bias and stereotypes in its law enforcement practices (Kamalu, 2016). Statistics on racial profiling are limited; however, in certain localities, suggestive evidence claims that minority drivers are stopped, interrogated, and frisked much more often than Caucasians (Kamalu, 2016). The perception that one group of individuals are targeted by law enforcement activities over another is festered if not aggregated by other elements of probable cause associated to initiating that law enforcement action (Kamalu, 2016). The actions of one police officer can delegitimize available proven tools for law enforcement professionals. Vetting those officers prior to granting them employment is critical to verify to a certain

degree if a level of racial bias is present prior to applying a law enforcement tool such as profiling (Kamalu, 2016).

In the discussion of racial profiling or discrimination, it is not uncommon for the discussion to involve the interactions between police officers and members within their communities (Harris, 2017). In the past decade, racial animosity has heightened tension between police officers and their communities (Harris, 2017). However, the term of racial profiling as a tool of policing has been misunderstood (Harris, 2017). Harris (2017) offers a clear and reasonable definition of what racial profiling is. Racial profiling is the use of race or ethnicity by police officers as one factor in combination with other factors to decide whether the activity or individual being witnessed by the police officer is suspicious enough to warrant police interaction (Harris, 2017). This police interaction could include detention, questioning, a search, or any other routine police action (Harris, 2017). Although racial profiling can be dated back to the 1980's, in the 1990's racial profiling became prominent in national discussion as it referred to police actions toward drug enforcement (Harris, 2017).

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) focused on drug interdiction at United States Airports and based on common factors observed began to put together what they called to "drug courier profile" (Harris, 2017). The common trends or characteristics collected by the DEA on those caught trafficking drugs included traveling from known documented source cities for drugs, paying for tickets with cash, and leaving with little or no advance notice (Harris, 2017). These, among other characteristics, became helpful in identifying drug traffickers (Harris, 2017).

The criteria used to yield evidence of those individuals trafficking drugs was the same criteria used in situations where no evidence was gathered (Harris, 2017). However, the United Supreme Court decided that utilizing these factors in profiling if the factors were evaluated aggregately (which any or all could constitute innocent behavior) could give police officers the probable cause they needed to conduct a legal stop (Harris, 2017). Taking this precedent from the U.S. Supreme Court, a Florida State Trooper Bob Vogel applied the same application of aggregated factors to constitute a reasonable suspicion to conduct a traffic stop (Harris, 2017). This pioneer application of racial profiling by Trooper Vogel, who soon was titled the Sheriff of Volusia County, Florida, led to large-scale drug seizures (Harris, 2017).

For law enforcement, the application of racial profiling is seen in the commission of traffic stops or pedestrian stops (Harris, 2017). *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 US 1 (1968), became a prominent law enforcement precedent (known among law enforcement officers as a Terry stop or frisk) for how officers use aggregated factors as previously described and the definition of racial profiling to conduct traffic stops (Harris, 2017). Aggregated factors along with racial profiling would be (but not limited to) a driving infraction, safety concern for the driver and/or occupants in the vehicle toward the public, or an observed defect to the vehicle that would render it safe to be operated on the public roadways (Harris, 2017).

Police departments can build trust through transparency and training by identifying the implicit biases and explicit biases in a police officer candidate prior to selecting them for employment (Sue, Alsaidi, Awad, Glaeser, Calle, & Mendez, 2019).

Introducing micro-interventions in the training process of the police officer and throughout their employment can build trust and confidence in the police within their communities (Sue et al., 2019). The practice of police officers approaching a criminal or criminal act utilizing tools such as racial profiling in an aggregated fashion with other factors (such as traffic violation or statics gather on that community population) not just based on a personal bias can lead to the utilization of the tool to intercept crime from taking place (Sue et al., 2019).

In most cases, the perception of a police officer that an individual develops is through their personal interaction or contact with police officers (Weitzer, 2017). A national survey revealed that African American were three (3) to eleven (11) times more likely than Caucasians to report that someone in their household (other than the respondent) were stopped by a police officer based solely on their race, treated unfairly by a police officer, and verbally or physically abused by a police officer during that interaction (Weitzer, 2017). These vicarious experiences highlight the importance of how social networks can shape an individual's perception of police officers (Weitzer, 2017).

Weitzer, (2017) states that the foundational perspective on race and policing, racially disparate orientations toward police are generationally transmitted. Minority members have passed down through generations their cautionary tales of their interaction with police officers (Weitzer, 2017). It is common among African American elders to have educational conversations with the youth of their families and social groups on how to properly behave during the interaction with a police officer (Weitzer, 2017). These

discussions have not been noted to take place in Caucasian families and/or social groups (Weitzer, 2017).

Sexually Offensive Behavior (in Law Enforcement):

In the past, sexual misconduct within the ranks of police officers has been considered a hidden topic of discussion (Stinson, Liederbach, Brewer, & Mathna, 2015). Police work not only provides an individual with the power to detain someone and take their freedom or even in most severe situations take a life, but police work can also be conducive to sexual misconduct (Stinson, et al., 2015). The job of a police officer allows an opportunity for an officer (if they choose to) go rogue and engage in acts of sexual deviancy under the cloak of their authority as a police officer (Stinson, et al., 2015). Police officers encounter individuals who are typically in a vulnerable state (Stinson, et al., 2015). These individuals that police officers encounter are victims or suspects of a criminal act (Stinson, et al., 2015). A deviant officer may use this encounter as an opportunity to abuse their powers as a police officer and take advantage of them sexually (Stinson, et al., 2015).

Interactions with vulnerable individuals typically happen within the late hours of the day (Stinson, et al., 2015). These late hours of the day provide concealment of the darkness from the public view of deviant criminal sexual acts (Stinson, et al., 2015). Researchers have also extensively documented police misconduct where unwarranted custodial strip searches occurred (Stinson, et al., 2015). Research on sex-related police misconduct shifted to emphasize those police officers that used their position to harass, coerce, or abuse females (Stinson, et al., 2015).

The theme for the study was on a contextual bases to refer to a national problem titled “driving while female” (Stinson, et al., 2015). The study identified 183 cases of sexual misconduct over a 12-year period (Stinson, et al., 2015). Approximately 40% of those identified cases involved teenage victims (Stinson, et al., 2015). Approximately 34% of these cases occurred within the context of a traffic stop (Stinson, et al., 2015). These cases further demonstrated where some officers took advantage of their authority where the individual they encounter was in a vulnerable state (Stinson, et al., 2015).

There has been scarce research on the reactions to police misconduct, specifically sexually related misconduct; especially as it related to sexual misconduct from their peers and superiors (Stinson, et al., 2015). However, sexual misconduct has risen to a top priority and important issue not only for researchers but for the leadership of law enforcement agencies (Stinson, et al., 2015). Approximately 48% of cases where police officers were involved in sexual misconduct during their duties where the officer ended up being arrested were found in the southern region of the United States (Stinson, et al., 2015).

Law enforcement agency policies do not provide a clear statement of the organization’s priorities, goals, and commitment to confronting the issue of sexual misconduct conducted by police officers during their duties (Stinson, et al., 2015). However, protocols for both pre-service and in-service should reflect and enforce those policies (Stinson, et al., 2015). The training should have a targeted approach to familiarize officers (or pre-hired candidates) on policies related to prohibiting sex-related misconduct (Stinson, et al., 2015). The most important aspect of these policies in

combination with effective training, the overall police culture should not tolerate and openly condemn those officers that decide to go rogue and tarnish the representation of their fellow law enforcement colleagues (Stinson, et al., 2015). This, furthermore, emphasizes the importance of utilizing the MPULSE in the pre-screening process of police officer candidates. The MPULSE will help identify those candidates that may have trouble conforming to these policies, training requirements and accepted behavior adopted by the police culture they are looking to be employed by (Stinson, et al., 2015).

Anger Proneness (in Law Enforcement):

Policing is rated as one of the most stressful occupations (Christopher, Hunsinger, Goerling, Bowen, Rogers, Gross, Dapolonia, & Pruessner, 2018). Chronic exposure to incidents involving people in critical conditions, violence, plus high expectations in combination with the demands from society are just a few ways to lead to negative mental health, professional, and behavioral outcomes within law enforcement officers (Christopher, et al., 2018). In some situations, adequate use of force is a necessary component of policing (Christopher, et al., 2018). However, law enforcement officers that are psychologically impaired are more likely to use excessive force, be aggressive toward suspects, and exhibit poor decision-making (Christopher, et al., 2018). There are several key factors associated with law enforcement officers who use excessive force (Christopher, et al., 2018). The factors include burnout, abnormal stress reactivity, abnormal stress, and poor psychological health (Christopher, et al., 2018).

Legally, the standard of negligence is set forth by a test labeled “the reasonable person test”, which is defined by viewing an act through the lens of what a reasonable

person would do under those circumstances (Akerlof, 2016). In some situations, police officers must use appropriate force to get noncompliant individuals to comply to safely put them into custody (Akerlof, 2016). Law enforcement officers that are psychologically impaired may not be able to distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force if they are unable to control their anger in a heated situation (Akerlof, 2016). This, furthermore, emphasizes the importance of the utilizing the MPULSE in the pre-screening process of police officer candidates. The MPULSE will help identify those candidates that may have trouble controlling their impulse to relinquish anger in hostile situations (Akerlof, 2016).

Anger Proneness (ANP) scale on the MMPI-2RF consist of seven items that describe anger and anger – related tendencies (Ben-Porath, 2012). The anger related tendencies include how easy an individual gets upset; how impatient a person gets with others, and how easy an individual becomes angered (Ben-Porath, 2012). An individual that receives a T score ranging from 65 – 79 demonstrates that individual is anger prone (Ben-Porath, 2012). Furthermore, an individual that receives a T score of 80 or higher demonstrates that individual gets upset easily, is impatient with others, and becomes angered easily (Ben-Porath, 2012). Lastly, the T score of 80 or higher also demonstrates that an individual can at times become overcome with anger (Ben-Porath, 2012).

Consistent research has demonstrated consistent evidence that non-offenders have greater self-control than prior offenders (Meldrum, Donner, Cleary, Hochstetler, & DeLisi, 2020). The daily responsibility of police officers is to interact with the public daily (Meldrum, et al., 2020). Police officers serve as peacekeepers, mitigators, and

immediately intervene during times of crisis (Meldrum, et al., 2020). Police officers are entrusted and held to a higher standard to respond to a situation regardless of its intensity or chaotic nature in a respectful and professional manner (Meldrum, et al., 2020).

Meldrum, et al., (2020) note the offenders that police officers may display lack of restraint; however, police officers must have the ability to and responsibility to show restraint during times of verbal and/or physical altercations. The analysis offered by Meldrum, et al., (2020); showed the police officers on a majority score higher on global measures of self-control versus prior offenders. Meldrum, et al., (2020); found after analyzing police officers and offenders across six dimensions of self-control; police officers consistently scored lower in impulsivity, self – centeredness, and anger.

Behavior/Externalizing Dysfunction (in Law Enforcement):

Contributors to the fields of personality and psychopathology have sought for a long time to identify meaningful structural models that provide an organized descriptive framework for psychological assessments and psychodiagnosis (Ben-Porath, 2012).

Francis Galton facilitated empirical efforts to discover such structures which led to the precursor to the correlation coefficient (Ben-Porath, 2012). Later Francis' student Karl Pearson refined the procedures of Francis' previous empirical efforts (Ben-Porath, 2012).

A 90 – item rating scale was constructed and approximately 3,000 physicians were asked to apply it to individuals they knew well (Ben-Porath, 2012). The correlational analysis was performed on the results and eight primary character traits were identified: amorphous, apathetic, nervous, sentimental, sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, and impassioned (Ben-Porath, 2012). A Dutch philosopher Gerardus Heymans

and a Professor from the University of Groningen (in the Netherlands), Enno Dirk Wiersma delineated a higher-order structure from their observations of the correlations between the previous eight factors (Ben-Porath, 2012). The constructs consisted of the following: activity, emotionality, and primary versus secondary function (Ben-Porath, 2012).

Behavioral/externalizing dysfunction (BXD) assess problems associated with uncontrolled behavior (Ben-Porath, 2012). BXD is a 23 – item scale designed to assess behavioral problems on a broad scale (Ben-Porath, 2012). The score received for BXD gauges an individual’s productivity for acting out behaviorally (Ben-Porath, 2012). The lower the score an individual receives in this element of the MMPI-2RF demonstrates that person’s above average to demonstrate behavioral restraint (Ben-Porath, 2012). However, were as higher scores being present under BXD demonstrates a broad range of externalizing and acting out behaviors (Ben-Porath, 2012).

The MMPI-2RF calculates a raw score for each fifty-one scales that are eventually converted to a standard “T” score based on the norms outlined by the MMPI-2RF (Ben-Porath, 2012). A T score less than 39 the participant indicates a higher-than-average level of behavior constraint (Ben-Porath, 2012). A T score ranging between 65 – 79 the participant indicates significant levels of externalizing and acting out behavior (Ben-Porath, 2012). Finally, a score of 80 or higher indicates a participant having considerable levels of externalizing and acting out behavior (Ben-Porath, 2012).

The central importance when evaluating police officer candidates is their ability to externalize their behaviors (Corey, Sellbom, & Ben-Porath, 2018). Police officers are

expected to conform to rules, control their behavior, and can make ethical decisions (Corey, et al., 2018). The pre-employment psychological assessment evaluates a police officer candidates' ability to externalize behaviors can be used universally in most police departments in the United States (Corey, et al., 2018). Prior to the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I, it was a routine for a psychologist to evaluate police candidates on a routine and frequent basis (Corey, et al., 2018). Research investigating the association between a candidate's history of externalizing tendencies and their future performance in high-risk occupations has shown that past misconduct identified predicts future misconduct (Corey, et al., 2018).

Summary

This chapter provided an analytical review and synthesized synopsis of relevant research to the MMPI-2RF and the M-PULSE as it relates to the pre-employment screening of potential police officers seeking employment as sworn peace officers. The research provided in this chapter provided a further developmental understanding of the police occupation, the pre-employment screening process police candidates endure, the culture surrounding policing, and the demands that are encompassed in the policing culture.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the participant selection, data selection, and the data analysis chosen for this study. A quantitative research approach was chosen and used to examine relationships of variables on the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF that were used in pre-employment assessments. Specifically, this study analyzed the relationships between M-PULSE factors (racially offensive behaviors and sexually offensive conduct) and MMPI-2RF factors (behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional and anger proneness).

Research Design and Rationale

This study used archival data to analyze the relationship between the variables and applied Badura's (1971) social learning theory. This study analyzed archival data to determine if a relationship exists using M-PULSE data (racially offensive behaviors and sexually offensive conduct) and MMPI-2RF factors (behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional and anger proneness). This study was a quantitative non-experimental study. According to Price, Rajiv, I-Chant, Leighton, and Cuttler (2020), the non-experimental method lacked the ability to manipulate the independent variable(s) within a study. Rather, the use of an experimental research design is appropriate when the research question(s) or hypothesis within a study referred to the specificity in the causal relationship between two variables and if it was applicable, feasible and ethical to manipulate the independent variable(s) in the study. A non-experimental research design does not only manipulate the independent variable; however, it does not have a specific

research question or hypothesis included in the study that addresses the causal relationship between two variables (Price et al., 2020).

The non-experimental research design is applicable if any of the follow criteria are present: (1) the research question or hypothesis relates to a single variable not the statistical relationship between two variables; (2) the research question in the study pertains to a non-causal statistical relationship between variables; (3) even if the research question demonstrates a causal relationship, the independent variable or the participants cannot be manipulated; nor are the participants randomly assigned to conditions or orders of conditions for practical or ethical reasons; and lastly (4) the research question is broad in an exploratory in nature toward an experience (Price et al., 2020).

The assessment measurements used, the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF, were initially used in the pre-employment psychological evaluation of police officer candidates. For the sake of this study, specific scales were compared to determine if specific scales on the M-PULSE predict scores on specific scales on the MMPI-2RF. The scales were compared as they relate to racially offensive behaviors and sexually offensive misconduct as measured by the M-PULSE and anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunction as measured by the MMPI-2RF. The research questions were as follows:

RQ 1 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and the anger proneness scale as measured by the MMPI – 2RF?

H₀1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 2 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale as measured by the MMPI-2RF?

H₀2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 3 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score?

H₀3: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a3}: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 4 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF anger proneness subscale score?

H₀₄: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a4}: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

This study used archival data that was collected during pre-employment evaluations by a private firm in California.

Methodology

Population

For this study, the target population was candidates who were offered a conditional offer of employment with a law enforcement agency and participated in a psychological screening process. The screening process was conducted by a private firm in a midsized city in California. The private firm screened the candidates using an assessment battery that included the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF measurements. Archival data were collected from these studies and, upon informed consent from the participants, was provided by this private firm was used for this research study. A linear regression

analysis was utilized to evaluate the relationships between the variables (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF).

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

Archival data was used for this study. The initial data were collected by a private business that provides psychological screening for multiple state and local law enforcement agencies in central California. The agency was provided a letter of agreement to use the data. The participants were to be randomly selected; no identifying information was provided that ensured complete anonymity. Candidates who participated and completed the pre-employment psychological screening process all signed agreements with the private practice to allow their data to be utilized for research purposes.

G*Power

Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang (2009) developed the G* Power software to assist researchers in determining the minimum sample size needed to carry out an effective study to detect the size of population effected at specific alpha and power levels. The minimum sample size is determined based on statistical criteria; however, it does not serve as a representative sample (Faul et al., 2009). The effective size index for a linear regression is 107 participants. This sample size was needed with two predictors for each research question at $\alpha = .05$ and power = .95.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

As previously stated, this study used archival data, which was provided by a private firm that conducts pre-employment testing of candidates seeking employment as

police officers. For this study, there were no recruitment procedures or requirements to obtain informed consent. Informed consent had already been obtained during the pre-employment testing of these participants and was be required for this study. Furthermore, the participants who were evaluated by the firm and the data collected from those evaluations had already provided a signed informed consent form at the time of their evaluation that explained that their data could be used for future research to include the data that was provided to be used in this study.

The archival data was provided from the stored files of police officer candidates who underwent pre-employment screening by a private firm in California. This company is owned and operated by a licensed psychologist who is primarily a police psychologist. Per the guidelines outlined by the American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2010), the data collected by this private firm were placed into a Microsoft Excel data file. The data file was protected by a password, imported into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and stored safely in my computer in a password protected file.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The instruments that this study used were the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF. The scores were provided as archival data by the private practice in a midsized city in California. The firm used these instruments to score those potential law enforcement candidates during the administration of the pre-employment psychological screening process following their conditional offer of employment by their respective law enforcement agencies.

M-PULSE: The Matrix – Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection

Evaluation Inventory is composed of 445 items designed to measure 18 liability conduct areas among law enforcement candidates (Davis & Rostow, 2008). In addition, the inventory measures four content areas or empirical scales that are derived from a factor analysis that relates to law enforcement candidates on the job performance and liability (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The M-PULSE instrument also includes two validity scales to evaluate the respondent's response style (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

The M-PULSE instrument offers a profile on each participant (law enforcement candidate[s]) with sub-scores for each of the 18 liability conduct areas, four empirical scales, and the validity scales, to assist with determining the law enforcement candidates' attitude toward the testing process itself, and the integrity of the responses provided by the candidates (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The categories that each sub-score on liability conduct areas is placed (based on the responses of the candidate) into four categories: low risk, average, some concern, or at risk (Davis & Rostow, 2008). The development of the M-PULSE focused on addressing the need local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies express to improve the selection process of candidates to their agency. Lastly, the objective of this instrument is to minimize the risk to the agency in respect to the potential for their candidates to perform unethically or destructively during their employment with the law enforcement agency (Davis & Rostow, 2008).

MMPI – 2RF: The MMPI – 2 – RF is a 51 scale with 338 items that measures personality and psychopathology (Tarescavage, Fischler, Cappo, Hill, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015). Nine scales are used to measure a participant's validity in their response

(Tarescavage et al., 2015). The scales were designed to assess non-content-based responding (nonresponding, random response, etc.) and content based invalid responses (over and/or under reporting) (Tarescavage et al., 2015). The other 42 scales are organized in a hierarchical order and demonstrate a broad range of measurement of clinically relevant psychological constructs (Tarescavage et al., 2015).

Data Analysis Plan

The conclusion of the collected data and the imputation of the data into SPSS for statistical analysis, a regression analysis was conducted to evaluate whether the scales on the M-PULSE predict the scale scores on the MMPI-2RF. The scales on the M-PULSE were racially offensive behaviors and sexually offensive conduct and the scales on the MMPI-2RF were behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional and anger proneness. The first regression analysis regressed the M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behaviors with the MMPI-2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale.

The second regression analysis regressed the M-PULSE scales for sexually misconduct behavior on the MMPI-2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score. The third regression analysis regressed the M-PULSE scales for racially offensive behavior on the MMPI-2RF anger proneness subscale score. The final regression analysis regressed the M-PULSE sexually offensive conduct on the MMPI-2RF anger proneness subscale score. Confidence intervals and the probability values were reviewed and determined no significance relationship was present between the selected variables.

The excel file that was provided by the agency was transferred into SPSS for analysis in accordance with the research questions presented throughout this chapter

and/or study. Per the MMPI-2RF technical manual for administrating the measures, the scores are to be assumed normal and within range.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ 1 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and the anger proneness scale as measured by the MMPI – 2RF?

H₀1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 2 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale as measured by the MMPI-2RF?

H₀2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 3 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score?

H₀3: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a3: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 4 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF anger proneness subscale score?

H₀4: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a4: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Threat to Validity

Creswell & Creswell, (2018) warned of two types of threats to validity: internal or external. Internal validity threats are procedures in the experiment where the treatment or experiences the participant has or will encounter can cause harm to the results of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data in this study were archival in nature;

therefore, the data results were examined during the analysis as they are provided by the private firm (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

External validity becomes possible when the researcher themselves draw incorrect inferences from the sample data to other persons, settings and past or future situations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). External validity was avoided by analyzing the data as it is provided as it correlates to the variables within this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Lastly, this research study needed to be concerned of the presence of any other threat to validity; statistical conclusion validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Statistical conclusion validity happens when the researcher/experimenter gather incorrect conclusions from the data being analyzed based on statistical power or assumptions were incorrect (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As previously stated, the data that will be provided is archival data; therefore, the data will be analyzed as it is presented and the correlation between the data and the variables will be closely examined to ensure integrity in the findings presented (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Ethical Procedures

The pre-employment archival data provided by a private practice in a midsized city in California was provided in an excel file. Only the files that pertained to the specific variables being studied were provided for this study. Participants were drawn randomly from a larger sample and provided by a password protected file. No identifying information was provided. All participants signed an informed consent in complete transparency to allow the results from their prescreening results to be utilized in future research. The participants participated in a prescreening psychological evaluation

that utilized the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF measurement instruments to produce the archival data analyzed in this study.

All the consent forms signed by consenting participants are on file and available for review (based on the private firm's policies) at the private firm who conducted the prescreening evaluations. The private firm who owns, manages, and controls the archival data needed for this study granted access to the archival data that was analyzed in this study.

Furthermore, this study was submitted to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) who upon reviewing the proposal, granted permission to progress with this study. All data utilized in this study was kept confidential. Participants were assigned a number by the organization. No identifying information was included in the data file. The Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that was created for this study remains stored at the private psychological firm and destroyed by the researcher after five years in accordance with the American Psychological Association guidelines (APA, 2010).

Summary

The intent of this chapter was to provide the research questions for this study, the chosen research design, the participant selection process, and the analysis plan. This was a quantitative study. The focus of this study was to further the research on the pre-employment psychological screening process.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the analysis and explanation of the results obtained during this study. This study examined the relationship between two subscales from the MMMPI-2RF (behavioral/externalizing dysfunction – BXD and anger proneness – ANP) and two scales from the MPULSE (racially offensive conduct – ROC and sexually offensive conduct – SOC). The objective of this study is to offer more research in understanding to potential that the selected MPULSE factors cause an increase on the selected MMPI-2RF scales. The data provided for this study to analyzed was archival data obtained by a private organization the performs psychological prescreening for law enforcement candidates in central California.

The research questions for this study were as followed:

RQ 1 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and the anger proneness scale as measured by the MMPI – 2RF?

H_0 1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a 1: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 2 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale as measured by the MMPI-2RF?

H₀2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 3 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score?

H₀3: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a3: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

RQ 4 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF anger proneness subscale score?

H₀4: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a4: The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Setting

This study consisted of candidates seeking positions as sworn peace officers who have received conditional offers of employment with their respective law enforcement agencies. The measures administered were in line with normal portions of the psychological prescreening process for employment as a peace officer. All the candidates involved in the study signed an informed consent for both the testing procedure and that the data may be used for research purposes. None of the participants' personally identifiable information was provided by the private business to me during any part of the research process. The private business did not disclose the timeframe for when the participants took these measures.

Demographics

The private business provided the specific requested section scores for the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF for 107 participants. The candidates involved in this study applied for sworn law enforcement positions with either state or local law enforcement agencies. There was no data collected on these individuals' demographics; thus, the candidates demographics such as sex, age, and other specific data were unknown during this study.

Data Collection

Prior to conducting this study, I conducted an extensive literature review on the instruments used in this study (M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF) and how those instruments were used in the prescreening psychological process of law enforcement candidates. Before conducting the linear regression, a power analysis was conducted to determine an appropriate sample size using the G* Power system. A sample size of 107 was determined to be the necessary participant size based on statistical criteria; however, this does not serve as a representative sample. The sample size of 107 was needed to with two predictors for each research question at $\alpha = .05$ and power = .95.

Data were provided by a private business of a total of 107 participants from the M-PULSE (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive conduct) and MMPI-2RF (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) screening measure factors. The data were provided by a private firm through a prebuilt Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with a designed purpose to collect the results of the measures for each participant. The records for the private firm were not accessed, and no personally identifiable information was collected and/or included on the provided Microsoft Excel spreadsheet from the private firm. Complete anonymity and objectivity of each participant were maintained when the data sets were selected by the private firm and provided to be analyzed in this study.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the participants were verified to be true and valid by ensuring that both the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF had deception detection factors built

into them. All candidates were successfully screened for employment as sworn law enforcement officers, which suggest that no fraud or deception of the measurement protocol was discovered. All concerns for deception or false answers by the participants in the prescreening process was mitigated due to both measures. M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF have a proven historical record of being reliable and valid.

SPSS was used to complete four separate linear regression analyses to address the four research questions posed in this study to determine the effect of the two M-PULSE (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive conduct) subscales on the two MMPI-2RF (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) scales. The first linear regression focused on the MMPI-2RF anger proneness subscale and the M-PULSE sexually offensive conduct subscale. The second linear regression focused on the MMPI-2RF anger proneness subscale and the M-PULSE racially offensive behavior subscale. The third linear regression focused on the MMPI-2RF behavior/externalizing dysfunctional subscale and the M-PULSE racially offensive behavior subscale. The fourth and final linear regression focused on the MMPI-2RF behavior/externalizing dysfunctional subscale and the M-PULSE sexually offensive conduct subscale.

Results

MMPI-2RF - Anger Proneness (AP) & M-PULSE Racially Offensive Conduct (ROC) Linear Regression

A simple linear regression was used to assess whether anger proneness predicts racially offensive conduct. The results of the regression suggested that anger proneness

explained .01% of the variance. Racially offensive does not predict anger proneness, $\beta = .124, p > .05$.

RQ 1 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and the anger proneness scale as measured by the MMPI – 2RF?

H_01 : The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a1} : The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

The analysis conducted through SPSS demonstrated no significant impact or relationship between the MPULSE scales effecting the MMPI-2RF subscales. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it would be suitable to reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis for this research question.

MMPI-2RF - Behavior/Externalizing Dysfunctional (BXD) & M-PULSE Racially Offensive Behavior (ROC) Linear Regression

A simple linear regression was used to assess whether behavior/externalizing dysfunctional predicts racially offensive conduct. The results of the regression suggested that behavior externalizing dysfunctional explained .01% of the variance.

Behavioral/externalizing dysfunction predicts/does not predict racially offensive conduct, $\beta = .018, p > .05$.

RQ 2 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between officer candidates' scores on the racially offensive behavior scale on the M-PULSE and behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale as measured by the MMPI-2RF?

H₀2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a2: The M-PULSE scale scores for racially offensive behavior are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunctional subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Based on the analysis conducted through SPSS that demonstrated no significant impact or relationship between the MPULSE scales effecting the MMPI-2RF subscales. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it would be suitable to reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis for this research question.

MMPI-2RF - Behavior/Externalizing Dysfunctional (BXD) & M-PULSE Sexually Offensive Conduct (SOC) Linear Regression

A simple linear regression was used to assess whether behavior/externalizing dysfunctional predicts sexually offensive conduct. The results of the regression suggested that behavior externalizing dysfunctional explained .06% of the variance. Sexually offensive conduct does not predict behavioral/externalizing dysfunction, $\beta = -.143$, $p > .05$.

RQ 3 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score?

H_03 : The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_a3 : The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the behavioral/externalizing dysfunction subscale score on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Based on the analysis conducted through SPSS that demonstrated no significant impact or relationship between the MPULSE scales effecting the MMPI-2RF subscales. Therefore, based on the results of this study it would be suitable to reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis for this research question.

MMPI-2RF - Anger Proneness (ANP) & M-PULSE Sexually Offensive Conduct (SOC) Linear Regression

A simple linear regression was used to assess whether anger proneness predicts sexually offensive conduct. The results of the regression suggested that anger proneness explained .02% of the variance. Sexually offensive conduct does not predict anger proneness, $\beta = -.575$, $p > .05$.

RQ 4 - Quantitative: Is there a relationship between the M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct and the MMPI – 2RF anger proneness subscale score?

H_04 : The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct will not significantly predict the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF.

H_{a4} : The M-PULSE scale scores for sexually offensive conduct are significantly related to the anger proneness subscale scores on the MMPI – 2RF such that a predictive model is generated.

Based on the analysis conducted through SPSS that demonstrated no significant impact or relationship between the MPULSE scales effecting the MMPI-2RF subscales. Therefore, based on the results of this study it would be suitable to reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis for this research question.

Summary

This chapter demonstrated the data collection, analysis process, and the resultant data. This study demonstrated that the two subscales of the M-PULSE (racially offensive conduct and sexually offensive conduct) do not account for the variance on with of the MMPI – 2RF subscales (anger proneness and behavioral/externalizing dysfunction). As previously stated, the analysis conducted through SPSS that demonstrated no significant impact or relationship between the MPULSE scales effecting the MMPI-2RF subscales. Therefore, based on the results of this study it would be suitable to reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis for this research question.

The subsequent chapter will elaborate on the insight of the research, resultant data with recommendations for future research applications and opportunities involving the instruments and variables of this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This quantitative study's objective was to use archival data provided by a private firm of pre-employment psychological screenings of law enforcement candidates to determine if a relationship was revealed between M-PULSE scales (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive behavior) and MMPI-2RF scales (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) (Davis & Rostow, 2008 & Tarescavage et al., 2015). This study revealed no significant relationship exists between the selected MMPI-2RF scales (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) and M-PULSE scales (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive behavior) factors when a linear regression was performed.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings in this study furthered the knowledge of how various factors between the two measures (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF) can be used in partnership when conducting pre-employment psychological screening of law enforcement officers (Davis & Rostow, 2008; Tarescavage et al., 2015). The effect M-PULSE scales (sexually offensive conduct and racially offensive behavior) did not have any significant correlations to effect MMPI-2RF scales (anger proneness and behavior/externalizing dysfunctional) (Davis & Rostow, 2008; Tarescavage et al., 2015). This study demonstrates a supportive argument to deviate from the current model of a single measure (MMPI-2RF) as the psychological prescreening assessment of law enforcement candidates. The two instruments (MMPI-2RF and M-PULSE) can offer a more in-depth

and well-rounded psychological assessment and exploration of the law enforcement candidates psychological state and any potential underlying issues (Stout, 2019).

Stout (2019) stated it best when he advocated for using the social learning theory as a framework to help understand how behavior is developed either by observing existing behavior performed by others or learned through a punishment and/or reward process. The social learning theory offers the best summary of how individuals comprehend behavior and how that behavior is displayed in a certain situation causing either positive or adverse effects (Stout, 2019; Bandura, 1971). The score range that the participant receives from the instruments (high or low) demonstrates whether the behavior such as sexually offensive conduct and/or racially offensive behavior can be managed and demonstrates if the law enforcement candidate would be a liability if employed with the agency (Davis & Rostow, 2008 & Tarescavage et al., 2015). Stout (2019) articulates that, even though behaviors are explored and documented based on the scores each participant receives, this does not prevent a police officer once hired from changing or adapting to their environments based on further experiences or exposures to other police officers and the organizational culture (Stout, 2019).

Limitation of the Study

No indication was identified during the psychological screenings that the participants had intentions to deceive the researchers of the private firm where the screenings took place and the data were collected, managed, and disseminated to this research study. To further protect the integrity of the psychological screenings and the data collected, the MMPI-2RF and the M-PULSE instruments both have built-in factors

to identify any deception attempted by the participants (Davis & Rostow, 2008; Tarescavage et al., 2015). The limitations of this study focus on the candidates answering the psychological measures with transparency and truthfulness. Davis & Rostow (2008) and Tarescavage et al. (2015) further assure that the two measures used in this study (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF) have built-in detection methods to identify deception and have been proven reliable over time. The limitation of this study was mitigated by the private firm that administered the psychological screenings and collected, managed, and disseminated the data used in this study ensured that all participants involved in the psychological screenings were screened intensively and thoroughly.

Recommendations

To further build on recommendations found from other researchers exploring the usage of the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF in partnership with each other to screen potential candidates to be sworn police officer candidates; since the M-PULSE was developed over time with the focused approach to look at police officers candidates at their initial screening; this instrument should be used beyond the hiring point of becoming a police officer, but rather continue to screen those police officers throughout their career so that those behaviors are documented and managed as those police officers progress in their careers (Stout, 2019).

Future Research

As prior colleagues and researchers have demonstrated and advocated for; continued studies on the subscales and other subscales of the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF to evaluate whether correlations exist is highly encouraged. The more research and

published studies performed on these two instruments and their subscales would not only provide a further understanding of the two instruments; but rather, build a stronger and more robust police officer candidate screening process and offer not only offer managing process for behaviors of police officers as they progress in their careers post being hired; however, should also offer mitigating options to help police officers in situations where these variables examined and researched by the M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF (such as stress or anger proneness) could hinder a police officer from carrying out their duties unhindered as well as transition from on duty performance and the demands and stressors of their personal lives as well.

Implications

This study did not offer significant shifting results. The results presented in this study further demonstrated the validity of the two measurements used in this study (M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF). Furthermore, this study continues to build on existing research on the instruments to evaluate police officer candidates on their suitability to become sworn police officers. As previous researchers have stated within their studies on this subject; these studies demonstrate the method of continuing to improve the psychological screening process of police officer candidates (Stout, 2019). Furthermore, this study builds on similar research from past studies on utilizing the M-PULSE in partnership with the MMPI-2RF to identify those potential officer candidates that pose a higher risk to ignore their department and/or agency policies and rules as well as local, tribal, and federal laws governing how they should perform their duties as police officers and

causing not only extreme liability to their departments and/or agencies but harm to the communities they police.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study is not found solely in the results of the M-PULSE and the MMPI-2RF instruments and the subscales as it relates to the psychological screening process of police officer candidates. This study further contributes to build upon and add to that preexisting research further establishing the validity of the instruments and applications the results must screening police officer candidates. The results of this study did not provide significant disparities and/or errors in the psychological prescreening process of police officer candidates; however, as previously stated it builds on past research on these two instruments and the significant impact they offer to screening police officer candidates and providing these departments and agencies as well as the communities where these officers will serve and protect officers with limited liability to violate department and/or agency rules and policies or legal statutes.

Stout, (2019), articulates that even though the use of a single measurement method could be sufficient in the pre-screening process of police officer candidates; he further advocates just as this study supports the argument that using two measurements furthers ensures another layer of accuracy on the evaluations processes. As the world continues to change in their view of law enforcement officers and the community's relationships with law enforcement officers continue to evolve, morph and in times must endure setbacks or hurdles of maintaining a positive relationship with the communities they police. The M-PULSE and MMPI-2RF add protections on both sides by ensuring

not just an initial evaluation of potential liability behaviors of police officer candidates but continue to evaluate them throughout their career in policing to offer a proactive approach to eliminating liable behaviors and builds the confidence in the trust of those police officers left remaining in employment to police their communities.

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