

2021

## Officer Perceptions of Cultural Competency and Growing Hispanic Suburbia in Northwest Indiana

Joseph William Swanson  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Joseph William Swanson

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. David Milen, Committee Chairperson,  
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Daniel Jones, Committee Member,  
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Dianne Williams, University Reviewer,  
Criminal Justice Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost  
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Officer Perceptions of Cultural Competency and Growing Hispanic Suburbia in

Northwest Indiana

by

Joseph William Swanson

MPhil, Walden University, 2020

MPA, Indiana University Northwest, 2008

BS, Indiana University Northwest, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

February 2021

## Abstract

Increased interactions between police and Hispanic citizens in suburban communities suggest a need for officers to possess cultural awareness and competency for successful service; however, how cultural competency develops in officers remains elusive. This qualitative interpretative phenomenological study's purpose was to explore cultural competency's role in police-Hispanic citizen interactions through the lived experiences of officers in Northwest Indiana. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Bennett's developmental model for intercultural sensitivity comprised the research frameworks. Data collected through semi-structured interviews of 9 officers representing 4 police departments in northwest Indiana revealed the officers' existing cultural competency was predicated by self-motivation reflective of lifetime family and social influences. While professional interaction experiences played a role in cultural competency development, the policing profession demonstrated limited influence, lacking in developing and measuring cultural competency in their officers. Policy implications include cultural competency assessments in the hiring process, cultural competency training reflecting the community's cultural makeup, and cultural competency measurement of officers engaging in police-citizen interactions. Implications for positive social change include creating community partnerships to develop cultural awareness in officers, establishing department cultural competency development policies, and promoting culturally competent officer-community engagement, affirming the policing professions' commitment to not only protect but to serve all community populations.

Officer Perceptions of Cultural Competency and Growing Hispanic Suburbia in

Northwest Indiana

by

Joseph William Swanson

MPhil, Walden University, 2020

MPA, Indiana University Northwest, 2008

BS, Indiana University Northwest, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

February 2021

## Dedication

My doctoral journey has not been an individual accomplishment, and proper dedications are an absolute necessity, starting with thanks and praise to the Lord above. My father, William, whose passing during this adventure caused me to double my efforts and complete this journey, taught me the meaning of hard work, respect for others, and staying the course. I can feel him with me every day, reminding me of the characteristics that impressed me to be the man I am. My mother, Janet Swanson, taught me about love, strength and compassion, and to always look at things from multiple points of view to make sense and find a positive solution. My sister, Christy, was my consistent sounding board and editing support—not afraid to tell me her opinion and kept me from throwing in the towel. To my daughters Alexandra, Adrienne, and Angelica: Each of you gave me the motivation to continue and the pride in showing you anything is possible no matter what life throws at you. Each of you were in my mind every time I sat down to work, speaking in my ear to stay strong and keep going.

My final dedication is to the person who has, maybe foolishly, chosen to spend her life with me—my beautiful wife Dawn. I cannot begin to describe the many types of strength and support she has given me, most of it at her expense. Whether it was to tell me that I was doing good work or to tell me to knock off my needless worry and self-doubt, she never wavered in her support nor left my side. For 30 years, she has been my rock, and this journey would have never been conceived without her being an equal partner. To all of you I offer my thanks, admiration, and enduring love.

## Acknowledgments

With the greatest of gratitude, I would like to thank my doctoral committee who helped develop and guide my path throughout this journey. First, to Dr. David Milen, whose support directed me to accomplishing this journey, I owe a great amount of thanks. To Dr. Dan Jones, my committee second and Dr Dianne Williams, my URR, additional resources guiding my completion, I also offer my thanks. To Dr. Kimberly Blackmon and Dr. Jesse Lee, who offered me their patience and willingness to talk when it was needed, your support is greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank my WinsApp cohort of Walden University colleagues and friends who have started their own doctoral journey and whom I met at our first residency. To my colleague and friend Dr. Joseph McMillan, who was a continuous sounding board and source of information and direction, I owe a great level of thanks. To Evelyn, Jennifer, Karyette, and Zuri, thank you for the continuous communication, support, and sharing of accomplishments, each of which served to motivate me to continue to move forward.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	vii
List of Figures .....	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background .....	3
Statement of the Problem .....	8
Purpose.....	9
Research Questions .....	9
Theoretical Framework.....	10
Nature of the Study .....	12
Definitions.....	14
Assumptions.....	16
Scope and Delimitations .....	17
Limitations .....	18
Significance of the Study .....	22
Summary .....	23
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	26
Introduction.....	26
Literature Research Strategy.....	29
Theoretical Foundation .....	30
Systems of EST.....	31



Rationale for EST .....	34
Conceptual Framework.....	36
Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity .....	37
Literature Review.....	40
Culture, Competency, and Cultural Competency .....	40
<i>The Pluralism of Cultural Competency Definitions</i> .....	41
<i>Cultural Awareness</i> .....	44
<i>Cultural Bias</i> .....	45
<i>Cultural Knowledge</i> .....	47
<i>Cultural Interaction</i> .....	47
<i>Cultural Sensitivity</i> .....	48
Cultural Competency Frameworks .....	50
Cultural Competency and Policing .....	53
<i>Police Definition of Cultural Competency</i> .....	53
<i>Cultural Competencies in Public Organizations</i> .....	54
<i>Cultural Competency in Police Organizations</i> .....	54
<i>Cultural Awareness and Police Diversity Training</i> .....	56
<i>The Measure of Cultural Competency</i> .....	59
<i>Issues With Cultural Competency Measurement Tools</i> .....	61
Increasing Hispanic Populations and Suburban Culturally Competent Policing .....	62
<i>Police-Hispanic Citizen Relationships-Police Perspective</i> .....	62

<i>Police-Hispanic Citizen Relationships-Citizen Perspective</i> .....	64
Summary .....	65
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	68
Introduction.....	68
Research Design and Rationale .....	69
Role of the Researcher .....	73
Methodology .....	75
Participant Selection .....	76
Identification of Participants.....	76
Sampling Method and Rationale.....	77
Instrumentation .....	78
Data Analysis Plan .....	81
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	82
Credibility .....	83
Dependability .....	84
Confirmability.....	84
Transferability.....	85
Authenticity.....	86
Ethical Considerations .....	86
Access to Participants .....	87
Interview Data Collection .....	88
Summary .....	89

Chapter 4: Results .....	91
Introduction.....	91
Research Setting.....	92
Participant Demographics .....	93
Data Collection .....	94
Interviews.....	94
Data Analysis .....	96
Data Coding .....	96
Codes, Categories, and Themes .....	98
DMIS Scale.....	99
Data Analysis Discrepancies.....	100
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	100
Credibility .....	100
Dependability .....	101
Confirmability.....	102
Transferability.....	102
Authenticity.....	103
Data Results .....	104
Theme 1: The Influence of Increased Hispanic Migration Into Suburban Communities on Policing Is Underrecognized and Under Addressed.....	105

Theme 2: Cultural Competency in Officers Is Developed Through a	
Lifetime of Influences .....	107
Theme 3: Successful Engagement With Hispanic Citizens Is Reflective in	
Individual Officer Motivations to Become Culturally Competent .....	109
DMIS and Participants' Cultural Positioning .....	112
<i>Ethnocentric Denial</i> .....	112
<i>Ethnocentric Defense/Reversal</i> .....	112
<i>Ethnocentric Minimalization</i> .....	112
<i>Ethnorelative Acceptance</i> .....	113
<i>Ethnorelative Adaptation</i> .....	114
<i>Ethnorelative Integration</i> .....	115
Summary .....	115
Research Questions Answered.....	116
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations .....	118
Introduction.....	118
Interpretations of the Findings .....	119
Interpretation of Participant Responses to Research Questions .....	119
Population Change Influence .....	120
Training and Education.....	120
Cultural Competency Measurement .....	121
Culture and Cultural Competence Comprehension .....	122
Findings Analyzed Through EST and DMIS.....	124

Limitations of the Study.....	129
COVID-19, Procuring Participants, and the Interview Process.....	129
Participants.....	130
Interview and Data Collection .....	131
Recommendations.....	132
Research Implications .....	136
Positive Social Change: Culturally Competent Policing .....	136
Methodological Approaches to Achieve Positive Social Change.....	137
Benefits to Stakeholders .....	138
Conclusion .....	140
References.....	142
Appendix A: Hispanic Population in Lake County Municipalities, 2010-2017.....	172
Appendix B: Interview Script and Questions .....	173
Appendix C: NVivo Word Cloud and Word Tree for Participants Top 35 .....	180
Appendix D: NVivo Word Cloud and Word Tree for First Cycle Coding Top 35 .....	182
Appendix E: Participant’s Perceived Placement on Bennett’s DMIS Scale.....	184
Appendix F: Key Participant Responses to Theme Development.....	185

List of Tables

Table 1. Interview and Member Checking Timeline ..... 101

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Developmental Model Measurements for Intercultural Sensitivity .....39

Figure 2. EST Applied to Police Cultural Competency Development .....127

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

Police officers and citizens experience perpetual challenges in achieving successful interactions. Solidifying positive police-citizen interactions has long been essential to improving police relations within the communities. Citizens expect the police to understand their needs and expectations (Van Damme, 2017) and officers expect a level of respect and acquiescence from the citizens served. The disconnect between police and citizen expectations is exacerbated when a partial view of the relational equation is considered. Research on police-citizen interactions and views center on citizens, with a dearth of research exploring the police officer perspective. Recent dissertation researchers have recognized this absence and its need to achieving a holistic view of police-citizen interactions and subsequent police action, but the depth of empirical research in the literature remains lacking.

Frontline officers must effectively interact with Hispanic citizens who bring a new cultural identity into suburban communities. Research examining the perceptions of police in achieving effective police-citizen interaction depict a need for greater officer cultural competency (Body-Swan & Molina, 2018), and Hispanic growth in increasingly suburban communities suggests suburban officers are culturally ill-prepared for effective police-Hispanic citizen interactions, requiring additional skills to address citizen challenges unfamiliar to them. Likewise, research identifying citizen perceptions of police reveal that a lack of understanding of the Hispanic culture increases negative interactions with police (Nuño, 2018; Roles et al., 2016). However, the police-Hispanic



citizen interaction is under researched, leaving a gap in exploring police perceptions of the Hispanic public served (Weitzer, 2014). Indeed, Martinez (2010) reflected on the limited police-Hispanic relational studies as “one of the most enduring shortcomings in the development of race/ethnicity and the criminal justice system scholarship” (p. 435).

Thus, the goal of this research was to determine if a lack of cultural competency affects police-Hispanic citizen interactions. Aligned with the research goal, the purpose of my research was to explore the individual perceptions of officers regarding cultural competency’s effect on police-Hispanic relations using a phenomenological approach. I conducted interviews with nine officers randomly chosen from four suburban police departments to identify each officer’s experiences and interpretations of police-Hispanic interactions, the impact of an increased suburban Hispanic population on police-Hispanic interactions, the officer’s comprehension of cultural competency, and whether the officer has engaged in service adaptation. By identifying officer motivations to engage in culturally sensitive interactions with Hispanic citizens, I ascertained directions of common and contrasting themes, imparting insight into officer behavior and interactional conflict and informing organizational and community entities engaged in efforts seeking to improve police-Hispanic citizen relationships. Ecological systems theory and the intercultural sensitivity development model comprised the theoretical and conceptual perspectives for my research conducted to explore the police-Hispanic citizen dynamic.

Citizens develop preconceived opinions of police and police culture from a plethora of references, including many that are inaccurate and inflammatory (Wright & Unah, 2017). The same development of cultural understanding must be expected of

officers who have not interacted with and connected with a new cultural identity. Experiential knowledge offers confirmation of assumptions that can serve to reduce the negative stigma attached to a group (Liederbach et al., 2008). By exploring individual concepts of culture and cultural competency held by officers, comparative themes affecting police-Hispanic citizen interactions can be identified to promote officer cultural competency and improve officer-citizen engagement and service.

Chapter 1 provides background support for the identified problem, highlights the purpose for the research, and identifies the research questions and theoretical framework for this study. Additionally, I recognize the assumptions, limitations, and scope and delimitations, and I outline the significance for this research study.

### **Background**

This research study was conducted to address the impact of cultural competency on police-Hispanic citizen interactions in four suburban Northwest Indiana communities. In this study, approached from the police side of the police-citizen interaction equation, I focused on individual officers' methods of acquisition, interpretation, and adoption of cultural competency, and the resulting influence when officers interact with a growing Hispanic population. Hispanic people represent the most significant population growth in the United States (Johnson & Lichter, 2016) and represent 18.3% of the total U.S. population as of July 1, 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.b). In 2018, the U.S. Hispanic population reached 59.9 million, an increase of 20.2% from a 2008 high of 47.8 million, and a 40.4% increase since 2000 (Flores et al., 2019). The Midwestern region of the United States has experienced a 24% growth in the Hispanic population since 2008

(Flores et al., 2019). Locally, Lake County, Indiana experienced a Hispanic population growth by 39.8% from 2000 to 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a) and a total Hispanic population of 19.4% as of July 1, 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.b). These data do not reflect the undocumented Hispanic populations in these communities that additionally invoke police contact and interaction. Individual communities within Lake County have experienced varying increases in Hispanic populations (Appendix A), demonstrating that Hispanic influx holds influence in police-citizen interactions. The resulting growth and existing presence of Hispanic populations predicate the need for officers to develop effective interaction approaches to service the Hispanic population efficiently.

Existing research conducted on police-Hispanic interactions has been concentrated in large cities with existing Hispanic populations and the effect of Hispanic populations on nontraditional “new destination” settling (Johnson & Lichter, 2016, p. 704). The last three decades have seen Hispanic migration into less urban communities creating a presence in suburban localities (Lee & Hughes, 2015), yet the increased Hispanic population effect on police-Hispanic interactions in suburbia has seen little to no interest in the research literature. Thus, the impact of Hispanic populations on police-Hispanic interactions in changing suburban demographics is largely unknown.

Existing research on police-minority citizen relationships has centered heavily on police-African American interactions (Wu, 2014). Police-minority citizen research that has included Hispanics has linked them into a multiracial classification with other populations such as Asians, Native Americans, or other minority-shared categories (Weitzer, 2014; Wu, 2014). Studies that link the findings of police-African American

citizen relationships to Hispanics have failed to consider the unique characteristics of Hispanic people (McCluskey et al., 2008; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). McCluskey et al. (2008) suggested that the unique aspects of Hispanic culture relative to other ethnicities necessitates additional study focused on police interactions with this population. Immigration identified within Hispanic contexts as “crimmigration” (Pickett, 2016, p. 104) and largely recognized as a plight of the Hispanic population, has seen research emphasis in understanding police-Hispanic interactions (Barrick, 2014; Beckett & Evans, 2015; Coon, 2017; Pickett, 2016). Additionally, researchers seeking to spotlight Hispanics as a significant category of study relative to other minority groups have identified a failure to achieve a participant sample size to reach significance (Boyd-Swan & Molina, 2018). Ultimately, the lack of research into police and Hispanic citizen engagement signifies a failure in recognizing the effects of the U.S. mainstream population changing (Weitzer, 2014).

The limited existing research literature focused exclusively on police-Hispanic relationships (Barbosa, 2012; Barrick, 2014; Roles et al., 2016; Wu 2014) have been situated within a citizen perspective approach and are becoming outdated. Current political, economic, and legal climates faced by Hispanic citizens challenge positive engagement with police, adding additional, often negative complexity to establishing a relational development derived from a culturally competent impetus. Addressing cultural significance relative to police-Hispanic relationships becomes academic when officers are faced with the challenges of immigration enforcement versus relationship building (Barbosa et al., 2017; Barrick, 2014; Pickett, 2016). Citizen-centric research, while

informative, fails to equalize the relational equation. Police-citizen interactions develop from divergent, sometimes overlapping approaches. Law enforcement's approach stems from a traditionalist fundamentally legal precept, whereas citizen perceptions arise from the experiential engagement between officers and citizens (Meares et al., 2015). Meares et al.'s (2015) study exploring police-citizen interpretations of good policing indicated that citizens and police derive their greatest opinions of their counterparts during moments of personal significance. Officers working within expanding Hispanic populations maintain a legal presence for achieving positive outcomes with little relational concerns, whereas Hispanic citizens view the legal interaction with apprehension and appreciate a less rigid interactional experience (Roles et al., 2016).

When approaching police-Hispanic interactions from the officer perspective, the level of cultural competency held by an officer and its significance is acknowledged. Jeffries and Han (2011) studied officer perceptions of police-Latino relations and identified that officers believe possessing cultural knowledge strengthens police-citizen relations and has maintained it is a consistent predictor in police-minority relationships. Beyond Jeffries and Hans' (2011) study and a handful of dissertations exploring police-citizen relations from a police perspective, a focus of how officers identify, interpret, and adapt into cultural competence remains elusive in the research literature.

Cultural competency's prominence in police-minority interactions that derive from either a citizen or police perspective, when broached, continues to be concluded as a panacea obligated upon officers to improve police-Hispanic relationships. Boyd-Swan and Molina (2018) argued that cultural competency and value congruence share a merged

responsibility for improving police-minority relations but it is perceived as the responsibility of the officer. Similarly, racial stereotyping and social identity threat assessments are targets for police intervention training in cultural competency to improve police-minority interactions (Kahn et al., 2017). Racial tension, procedural justice, and communication studies recognize the need for a cultural competency acumen within officers as interpreted by Hispanic citizens (McNeeley & Grotholff, 2016; Nuño, 2018; Roles et al., 2016). Gleaning from the existing studies was the necessity to understand from officer perspectives how cultural competency is identified, acquired, and applied when interacting with a culturally robust population.

Police agencies are aware of the influences of cultural competency on police-citizen relationships (Schlosser et al., 2015; Zimny, 2015). Existing research has documented the efforts of law enforcement administrations in promoting cultural acumen in officers through early recognition in the hiring process and through initial and continuing education efforts, supported by cultural competency assessment from organizational and administrator measurement frameworks (Carrizales et al., 2016; Lumb, 1995; Rice, 2007; Weimer & Zemrani, 2017) to individual officer measure and analysis (Blakemore et al., 1995; Moon et al., 2018; Schlosser et al., 2015; Serini-Massinger & Wood, 2016). Researchers have demonstrated cultural competency relevance but have not explored the individual processes officers invoke in ascertaining and developing cultural competency. The lack of individualized, in-depth investigation into officer cultural competency and the importance of effective police-citizen interactions supported this research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Suburban police officers struggle to interact effectively with increasingly culturally distinct populations. Hispanic citizens who possess a strong cultural identity represent 62% of nonmetropolitan population gains from 2000 to 2010 (Johnson & Lichter, 2016) and typify the need for officers to increase their culturally competent awareness to improve police-citizen interactions (Moon et al., 2018). However, researchers have not identified how cultural competency affects officers in police-minority interactions (Moon et al., 2018, p. 340). Furthermore, Boyd-Swan and Molina (2018) found minority citizens identified that officers lacking in cultural competency impeded communication, reduced police legitimacy, and weakened trust in police.

Recent efforts to improve officer cultural competency include academy training, continuing education programs, and increased minority police representation (Schlosser et al., 2015; Shjarback et al., 2017). In current literature on police-minority interactions, researchers have explored cultural competency from the citizen perspective, identifying how policing methods, social interaction, and communication affect police-citizen interactions (Barboza et al., 2017; McNeeley & Grothoff, 2016; Nuño, 2018). On the other hand, cultural competency's role in police-minority interactions remains unexamined from the officer perspective. With my study, I sought to fill a gap in understanding police perceptions of cultural competency while providing policymakers with information to use when developing policies on improving officer-minority interactions.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative interpretative phenomenological study was to explore how cultural competency affects police-citizen interactions through the lived experiences of officers from suburban police departments in Northwest Indiana (hereafter identified as *NWIPD*), which are experiencing increases in Hispanic populations. Extant literature exploring police-Hispanic citizen interactions has been derived from the citizen perspective, while research from the officer perspective of the relational equation, with attention on cultural competency influences, remains elusive. I conducted semi structured interviews with nine officer participants from four *NWIPDs* to obtain individual perspectives on the role of cultural competency in police-Hispanic citizen interactions and then extracted and interpreted shared and individualized experiences. As such, by exploring the officers' perspectives of cultural competency, my study advanced the literature on police-Hispanic interactions while providing evidence for the need to increase cultural competency awareness in officers serving culturally diverse populations through organizational and community collaboration and education.

### **Research Questions**

Officer perspectives of the importance and impact of cultural competence on police-Hispanic citizen interactions in suburban communities were examined in this qualitative phenomenological study. Two central questions framing this research were:

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population?



RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study incorporated a theoretical and conceptual framework comprised of a triangulated framework used to explore the captured perceptions of police officers interacting with Hispanic citizen interactions and influenced by cultural competency. This research study incorporated Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory (EST) and explored the potential to employ Bennett's (1986) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) in measuring cultural competency in officers. Ecological systems theory was situated appropriately within this qualitative research design exploring individual interpretations of the construct experience: the lived cultural experiences of officers working within Hispanic populations. Ecological systems theory proposes that an individual's surroundings affect their development and can be explored through an ecosystem model incorporating five environmental levels: (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977):

The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate surroundings in which, the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.21)

The relational development between an individual and their environment is demonstrated through continuous reciprocal communal engagement (Epp, 2018). Environmental stimuli offer a lens from which to explore officers' cultural awareness and competency acumen, with a greater focus in the macrosystem where cultural influences pose the most significant effect on individuals' relationships with their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Within the macrosystem, established cultural elements impacting the social world engaging with outside stimuli influences successful direct engagement (Epp, 2018). Additionally, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is situated within a perceptive analysis driven from an inductive posture and does not seek the development of a hypothesis. Thus, lived experience perspectives offer individualized perceptions, driving the qualitative methodology of this study.

The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) presented a framework from which individuals' cultural competency acumen could be explored through stages of cultural mindset, moving from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative position of individual cultural wealth and recognizing the relational understanding of multiple cultures and their resulting behavior (Bennett, 1986). Individuals transition from monocultural to intercultural development through stages of denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation (Bennett, 2004). DMIS offers an underpinning of cultural competency indicators from which to interpret the macrosystem influence described in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. By exploring officer perceptions of cultural competency's relational effect on police-Hispanic citizen interactions, a greater understanding of the influence of cultural competency in policing

was identified. Chapter 2 will further explore the tenets and research applications of Bronfenbrenner's and Bennett's theoretical/conceptual frameworks within relative disciplines, buttressing their positioning within this study.

As a result of integrating the identified theoretical and conceptual perspectives for this study, the gap in police-Hispanic relationships examined through a cultural competency paradigm was addressed. The analysis of officers' lived experiences in Hispanic interactions acquired an educative insight to inform police training and shape policy, improving officer opportunity for effective, culturally competent interactions with increased Hispanic community populations. Additionally, insight gleaned from this research offers administrators education in guiding future officer acquisitions through assessing cultural competency potential within officers.

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of this study explored cultural competency through the experiences of police officers facing increased growth in the Hispanic population in communities in Northwest Indiana. A qualitative phenomenological approach achieved the specific tenets of this research. A qualitative approach attempts to observe the phenomenon of interest exposed to an individual within its naturally occurring environment, seeking to collect the described individual lived experiences and interpretations embedded within those experiences (Allwood, 2012; Campbell, 2014). Homogenous research processes allowing for replication and data generalization (Goertzen, 2017) sought in quantitative research are replaced with a rich exploration of the effect of the phenomenon on each individual participant, selected due to their unique knowledge base (Cruz & Tantia, 2017). Key to

qualitative research is the enlightened awareness of the position by the researcher within the research. Qualitative researchers develop a researcher-participant relational rapport that demonstrates the researcher's transparent bias while seeking accurate interpretations of experiences of the participant (Roger et al., 2018). The focus of this research study captured the interpretive lived experiences of officers engaging in interactions with increasing Hispanic populations to understand how officers are individually affected by the cultural significance of the population. Subsequently, how each officer adapts using cultural competency constructs was the crux of this research and is best explored through a qualitative process.

A phenomenological approach seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon as personally experienced by an individual (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015). Officer interactive engagements with Hispanic citizens offer a first-person, authentic, and descriptive experience of cultural influences, which leads to the subsequent officer response. An interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) expands beyond a descriptive explanation from participants, attempting to capture the essence of the meaning of the experience relative to the world experience of the occurrence within the authentic verbiage of the individual (Alase, 2017; Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015; Pringle et al., 2011). Moon et al. (2018) suggested "intercultural experiences are interpreted differently by different individuals based on subjective self-other templates, worldview assumptions, and contextual influences" (p. 345). As such, the exploration of officer cultural competency upon police-Hispanic interactions resulting in precise interpretations

of individual worldview experiences was best approached through an IPA research design and methodology.

Nine officers from four NWIPDs participated in this research. Data were collected from in-depth interviews with participants premised on the research questions, exploring officers' lived experiences and the effect of increased Hispanic populations on cultural competency presence in officers, and were analyzed for thematic constructs, serving to demonstrate how officers approach increasing cultural competency as a response from recognizing the place of cultural acumen in officer-Hispanic interactions. A greater explanation of the methodology employed in this research is presented in Chapter 3.

### **Definitions**

This qualitative phenomenological research was conducted to capture the lived experiences of suburban police officers and Hispanic citizens through a cultural competency lens. As such, clarifying, applicable definitions for terminology presented within this research are highlighted.

*Culture*: As constructively defined by Rosenjack Burcham (2002), "culture is a learned worldview or paradigm shared by a population or group and transmitted socially that influences values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors, and is reflected in the language, dress, food, materials, and social institutions of a group" (p. 7). In this research, culture refers to the practices, social norms, political influences, and language of Hispanic persons.

*Cultural awareness:* The comprehension of influences of one's culture on the development of beliefs toward another culture, serving to identify cultural parallels and individual distinctiveness (Rosenjack Burcham, 2002).

*Cultural competency:* Has multiple delineations of meaning encompassing numerous facets and dimensions that have not been clearly outlined (Benuto et al., 2018). Building off the research of Benuto et al. (2018), an applicable definition of cultural competency for this research is the individual's awareness and knowledge of a distinct culture and the capacity to effectively interact within the cultural climate. Additionally, cultural competency invokes the individual's recognition of limitations in comprehending the dimensions of cultural competency within a culture along with existing biases that exist. Cultural competency is "non-linear" and "ever-expanding" (Rosenjack Burcham, 2002, p.5), building on developing "cultural awareness, knowledge, understanding, sensitivity interaction and skill" (p. 10).

*Cultural interaction:* "The personal contact, communication, and exchanges that occur between individuals of different cultures" (p. 10) and the product of positive cultural interactions (Rosenjack Burcham, 2002).

*Cultural knowledge:* The acquisition of other's culture (Rosenjack Burcham, 2002).

*Cultural sensitivity:* Often inaccurately interchanged with cultural competency; cultural sensitivity is the result of recognizing and valuing another culture, which, when combined with an individuals' personal biases, directs positive interactions (Rosenjack Burcham, 2002).

*Culturally informed policing:* The application of unbiased police service to all members of society, recognizing the characteristics of individual ethnic groups, their difficulty with police mistrust, and incorporating practices encourage positive interactions and reduce racially profiled behavior.

*Hispanic/Latino:* The U.S. Office of Management and Budget uses the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* interchangeably, denoting either as “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018, para.1). Hispanics in this research comprise individuals from primarily Mexican and Puerto Rican backgrounds. Alcoff (2005) identified historical, social, geographical, and political factors that drive Hispanic or Latino terminology acceptance, but for this research’s location, the term *Hispanic* is preferred and will be used in this research.

*Police-citizen interaction:* Involves professional and personal engagement between an officer and a community member requiring police response and police-initiated resolution. Personal engagements include non-violations of law, citizen support, resource allocation, and other interactions in the performance of duty.

### **Assumptions**

For this research, several assumptions need articulation relative to existing research truths. My first assumption was that the police officer participants in this research would present themselves with true professionalism by providing honest, accurate representation of their personal experiences, with no attempt at bias manipulation. My second assumption relative to the participants was in the officers’ true

representation of all public service employees, and their participation represented a constructive and well-intentioned desire to serve the greater public servant profession. My third assumption was that any potential personal or interpretative researcher bias I possessed would be identified and addressed early and throughout the research to protect the legitimacy and integrity of the study. My fourth assumption addressed myself as the instrument of measurement and assumed that any interpretation and reporting of observations and participant responses represented a true presentation of the interpretation presented by the participants. In Chapter 3, the research methodology will address attempts to reduce potential bias and Chapter 4 will provide a meticulous description of the data collection and data analysis processes I employed in this research.

Each identified assumption is indicative of a qualitative phenomenological approach endeavoring to capture the “lived experiences of an individual” (Alase, 2017, p. 9). The acquisition of the truest representation of human interaction sought in this study is predicated upon an expectation of appropriate participant selection and their resulting ability to reflect accurately upon their interpretations of their lived experiences relative to the focus of this study.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

For this research, I chose a qualitative IPA to capture the true lived experience and essence of police officers involved in culturally diverse interactions, and how those officers effectively, through the development of cultural competency, approach such interactions. Objectively capturing the individual officers’ subjective experiences from their unique perspectives allows for the creation of original categories of factors affecting



officer development and application of cultural competency when serving minority populations.

One delimitation I identified was the location of participant populations in Northwest Indiana. This participant population was further restricted to departments recognized as suburban communities, which limited the generalization of results to all policing entities. While suburban regions across the U.S. have seen Hispanic population growth in recent years (Holloway, 2016), each region is presented with its unique criteria that may or may not reflect what is occurring in NWIPDs. This research is not intended to provide a generalization of results; however, the possibility of transferability of this research methodology to other suburban localities experiencing Hispanic population increases may yield similar experiences of officers.

A further delimitation was the restricting of participants to patrol officers and supervisors who maintain daily contact with the community. Restricting the research to these officers limited the totality view of all officers, further affecting the generalization of representative results of all officers.

### **Limitations**

A limitation of this research was the selection of suburban departments experiencing recent Hispanic population increases. Increasing minority populations possessing strong cultural identities stimulate officer adaptation to provide comprehensive service. Communities with established Hispanic populations over multiple years have seen their police officers adjust their service approach (Roles et al., 2016), suggesting cultural competency exists within the officer and may be reflected

within department policy. This component was mitigated in this study, but the results of this research allow for future research comparison.

Access to police officers during their on-duty assignments generated the potential for departmental distress due to loss of a workforce member and seeking to involve officers off duty can be difficult to family and additional employment requirements, a second research limitation; however, I did not find this to be the case. Rather, police administrative and supervisory gatekeepers presented a front to encourage their officers, suggesting that the potential for negative consequences to befall officer participating in the research was not present. I presented the department gatekeepers clear articulation of protection efforts for the participating officers. To promote a proactive rapport, I included my identification of prior law enforcement history to the gatekeepers who shared this knowledge to potential participants at their own accord.

A third limitation to this research was the access to and selection of police officers who have been most affected by the increase of the Hispanic population. The choice of soliciting frontline officers as participants served to explore the development and applications of cultural competency due to higher engagement opportunity, requiring officer adaptation to complete the interaction successfully. However, all officers engage in interactions with minority populations in varying degrees, resulting in viewing experiential cultural competency non-uniformly. Additionally, the randomness of frontline officer participant selection was insufficient to support a generalization of cultural competency interpretation across all police entities due to exposure variance to Hispanic and other minority populations through the police hierarchy. Finally, the

unexpected toll of the COVID-19 pandemic limited my solicitation of participants to electronic (email) processes.

Akin to the limitation of the participant officers' exposure to Hispanic populations is the factual interpretation of the police-citizen interaction. Police officers are cognizant of the provocative nature of police-citizen interactions and the current state of media inquiries exploring these engagements. As a result, officers may spin their cultural intuitiveness and interaction experience into a more favorable light. Officers possessing an inherent disputatious nature are particularly susceptible to modifying their accounts of interactions to improve their professional image. Moreover, professional, political, social, and legal ramifications further influence participant responses. Through my prior law enforcement background and knowledge of the police agencies chosen, I maintained a rapport with the departmental gatekeepers to promote honesty and integrity in the research, demonstrating to the participants the acceptance of accurate interpretation without fear of reprisal or consequence, mitigating manufactured responses, and garnering in-depth insights and interpretations. I promoted anonymity in the research to the department gatekeepers and the potential participant pool to facilitate participation. Police agencies from which participants were drawn were identified in codes referencing the individual in the study. A consent form written in plain language was presented to each participant preceding the interview and outlined the research focus, the voluntariness of participation, the participant's freedom to remove themselves at any time without consequence, and anonymity. Participant responses were identified in the research anonymously using codes (P01, P02, P03), and date and are kept on a password-

protected laptop with the laptop and any documents accessible only by me. The original recorded interviews and verbatim transcriptions are secured in a locked safe, accessible only by combination known to me. Additionally, interview transcripts were sent to NVivo, a reputable transcription and data coding service for coding, revealing no identifiable source from which the information was derived. All digital, audio, and paper records will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years as required by Walden University. Anonymity, confidentiality, and transparency will be expounded upon in Chapters 3 and 4.

This research was focused on capturing the experiences of police officers and their interactional experience with increased Hispanic populations interpreted through a cultural competency lens. While cultural competency training exists in police departments and has seen recent resurgence and priority incorporation within academy and continuous education training (Schlosser et al., 2015; Zimny, 2015), cultural competency training was not the singular focus of this study and resulted in limited exploration of cultural competency training effect on performance. Thus, additional research is needed exploring officer perceptions of cultural competency training, received through academy and continuing education, upon officer-Hispanic and other minority population interactions.

A final limitation that may suggest a biased effect of the research was my experience in law enforcement. As a practitioner of law enforcement serving as a patrol officer and supervisor, any expectation of a pro police preconception reflected during data collection and subsequent interpretation of participant response was addressed to

mitigate any potential bias. Chapters 4 and 5 provide a meticulous description of the data collection process, data analysis articulating the coding process and interpretation of the described experiences of officers, coupled with reflective researcher observations and rationale provides transparency of research bias while capturing the distilled substance and spirit of the participant's experience.

### **Significance of the Study**

With this research, I sought to further the limited existing knowledge within this study's focus and to stimulate positive social change in police-citizen relations. The improvement of police-citizen interactions to address the specific needs of culturally diverse populations effectively has seen little attention in the research literature, demonstrating a need to understand both sides of officer-citizen engagements. Police officers face cultural challenges when interacting with a Hispanic population, which has resulted in a need to examine cultural competency's effect on police-citizen interactions. Research has shown that a failure of officers to become culturally competent exacerbates negative citizen perspectives of police, leading to increased community tension, reduced services, and limited communication (Boyd-Swan & Molina, 2018). Existing research studies exploring police-minority relations and culture have been approached primarily from the citizen perspective (Lee, 2017; Madan & Nalla, 2015; Smith, 2005; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). An examination of cultural competency's effect on police-minority citizen interactions observed from the officer perspective is continually neglected in the research which leave a gap in the relational puzzle.

This qualitative study of cultural competency offers a little explored perspective on cultural competency's effect on the police-Hispanic citizen relational and interaction dynamic from the officers' experiences. Interactions require a minimum of two individuals, and by examining the unexplored officer, half of the equation, cultural competency's effect on police-citizen interactions can be holistically considered. Through a greater understanding of how officers identify, acquire, evolve, and employ cultural competency, administrators and key stakeholders will gain an understanding of how their officers adapt to serve effectively, glean information to promote and develop greater cultural competency acumen within existing officers. Identifying existing cultural awareness in police officers, along with demonstrating the effect cultural competency has on police-citizen interactions endorses the promotion of community-based training and partnerships to increase officer cultural competency, supporting officer efforts to effectively serve their community members, regardless of race or ethnicity.

### **Summary**

Police officers who accept a vow of service must learn to interact with all populations successfully. Recent increases in Hispanic populations in suburban Midwestern communities may cause officers serving in these communities to face increased challenges to effectively interact due to cultural barriers, personal biases, and a lack of mutual understanding between officers and Hispanic citizens. Extant studies conducted on officer-citizen interactions have centered on citizen perspectives, with few studies exploring police-citizen interactions. While cultural competency has been identified as a significant element in improving officer-Hispanic citizen interactions

(Baskir, 2009), the perceived impact of cultural competency on police-citizen interactions remains unknown (Moon et al., 2018). An exploration of officer perspectives of the lived experiences of police-Hispanic interactions through a cultural lens can help develop a holistic view of police-citizen interactions within a focused context.

In Chapter 1, I offered a synopsis of this qualitative research exploring the perspectives of police officers of cultural competency effects and officer-Hispanic populations is proffered. I identified the research's geographic and population scope, focusing on officers who have interacted with their community population daily over 5 years in communities experiencing the population change. Key terminology definitions were provided, along with the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with the study. Implications for reducing the research gap in officer perspectives on interacting with the police, along with the importance of cultural effect, additionally seeks to support policy in training and supporting officers in cultural education and promoting positive social change demonstrated in improved police-citizen relationships.

In Chapter 2, I present an exhaustive literature review on existing research on police-Hispanic interactions, officer perspectives of police-citizen interactions, and cultural competency in policing. Current research on the increased importance of cultural competency training in police cadet academies and continuing education programs will also be presented, identifying those entities that can extend the information gleaned for this research into education and policy. Additionally, I proffer a detailed exploration of ecological systems theory and the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. Additional topics relevant to this research include cultural competency's application in

various contexts and constructs, current policing expectations and efforts to promote cultural competency in officers, policing minority citizen perspectives of cultural competency and the overlapping relativity to police-citizen relations. In Chapter 3, I present this research's methodology, including the methods for data collection, sampling method and selection of participants, and process of analysis. Chapter 4 provides the results and findings of the research data. In Chapter 5, I discuss the research findings and overtones relative to the theoretical framework, cultural competency's effect on police officers engaged in police-Hispanic citizen interactions, and the social implications of improved police-minority citizen interactions resulting from officer's acquisition of a cultural competence.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Homogeneous cultural identity is no longer a mainstay in the demographic composition of suburban communities (Rice, 2007). Hispanics define the fastest minority growth in the U.S. and have led population growth over the last several decades (Baig et al., 2014; Burns et al., 2015; Johnson & Lichter, 2016; Parrado & Kandel, 2010). Suburban and rural Hispanic growth has shifted the community dynamic, resulting in non-urban police entities experiencing ever increasing ethnic diversity in citizen populations within the communities they serve (Lichter, 2012). Similar to the experiences of product consumers addressing increasing Hispanic population growth (Burns et al., 2015), suburban police officers are tasked with the proffering of service to Hispanic populations with competency. As a result of increased Hispanic populations, the ability of police to provide “culturally relevant and culturally responsive” service has become significant (Rice, 2007, p. 623).

Surprisingly, police cultural competency has seen little interest in the extant literature. Research examining police-citizen relationships, in general, is plentiful. However, a gap in the literature exists regarding the understanding of police cultural competency relative to minority-citizen relationships; few studies have focused on cultural competency’s effect on police behavior (Rollins, 2019). Explicitly, the current research literature holds limited information on police-citizen interactions other than police-African American citizen interactions. Researchers have found African American youth and adults maintain an increased negative view of officers (DeSoto, 2018;

Huggins, 2012; Wang et al., 2019), and other minority group's impressions of officers fall between those of African Americans and Caucasians, and are often assumed (Barbosa, 2012). Limited research on police-Hispanic interactions has demonstrated mistrust in the police (Roles et al., 2016). Meta-reviews exploring minority views on police shared the same negative perceptions, with Hispanics falling between African American and Caucasians (Peck, 2015). Moreover, much of the research on police-minority relations has been generated where constant police-citizen interactions occur (McNeeley & Grothoff, 2016; Trochmann & Gover, 2016; Wang et al., 2019). Little research has been conducted on police-citizen interaction among Hispanic populations and the effects of Hispanic migration to suburban settings on police cultural competency has not been demonstrated. Future studies focusing on cultural influence and competency effects on police-citizen relationships, police bias, and police-minority citizen interactions have been suggested in current research (Rosenbaum et al., 2015).

Most of the current police-citizen interaction research has been derived from citizens' perspectives, demonstrating a lack of exploring police-citizen interactions examined from the police perspective. Further, the cultural influence of officers and explorations of how officers adapt cultural awareness and sensitivity to service minority community populations is nearly bereft in the current research, although recent theses and dissertations have suggested a growing relevance to successful culturally influenced interactions. Cultural awareness and diversity training have experienced significant growth and importance in many police academy and continuing education training over the last few decades, demonstrating organizational awareness of cultural competency

development in officers (Fletcher et al., 2019), but presented with limited interest within the research realm. Officer cultural awareness understanding has been demonstrated to positively shape decision making and impact favorable resolutions when interacting with Hispanic populations (Roles et al., 2016). In this research study, I sought to address the existing gap in the literature on cultural competency acquisition in policing and the subsequent effect on police-Hispanic interactions from the police officers' points of view. Police perspectives of cultural competency development to serve Hispanic populations provide an impetus for future research focusing on an ethnic population rarely focused on in police-minority interaction studies.

Chapter 2 opens with the introduction and method of literature research review, along with a breakdown of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks applied to this study. Next, a literature review of the concepts of culture, competency, and cultures of cultural competency, and how each relates to officer development of cultural competency is provided. An examination of existing research on implementing and measuring cultural competence in other service providers, and the existing education and training in cultural competency in policing, particularly for frontline officers, follows. This review acknowledges identification of cultural competency research in policing. This chapter provides a synthesis review of studies of police-Hispanic relationships, identifying factors demonstrating the need for cultural competency acumen. Chapter 2 concludes with an examination of existing research on police-Hispanic relations and interactions approached from the police perspective, further suggesting the need for cultural competency.

### **Literature Research Strategy**

The literature included in this research study stems from a search of multiple sources beginning with the identification of multiple Boolean search terminologies. Search words and phrases included *cultural competence*, *cultural competency*, *cultural sensitivity*, *cultural sensitivity in policing*, *culturally competent policing*, *developmental model of intercultural sensitivity*, *ecological systems theory*, *police and culture*, *police bias*, *police-citizen interactions*, *police-citizen relationships*, *police-Hispanic relationships*, *policing Hispanic populations*, and *policing minorities*, with various word search iterations to be employed. Peer-reviewed research was sought using these words from the ProQuest Advanced and ProQuest Criminal Justice databases, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar searches. Many of the desired peer-reviewed articles appeared to overlap the search parameters but allowed for additional relevant information inclusion. The literature research selected was mostly published from January 1, 1995 to present, with a primary focus on peer-reviewed literature within the last 10 years. This was necessary due to the limited amount of existing literature on policing and cultural competency completed within the last 5 years. Additional articles before 1995 were included when addressing the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of this study. A concentration of the literature research emanated from peer-reviewed articles along with governmental and nonprofit research sites, including the Pew Research Center and the U.S. Census Bureau, dissertations and theses, published organizational information, texts, and seminal literature. Numerous relevant resources identified in the various searches were vetted for application to this study.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Taniguchi and Salvatore's (2018) study on organizational and environmental factors affecting police performance suggested that police officers acclimate to the environment where they serve, predicated by interactions with community members. As such, the importance of officers successfully interacting with citizens appears contingent on the officers' acclimation to citizens. Ethnic identity and cultural acumen provide the anchoring pillars from which to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity. Multiple theoretical perspectives have been used to examine the dynamics of police citizen-interactions, providing additional examination pillars from which to predicate better comprehension of negative police-citizen interaction, bias, prejudice, and racism, including critical race and cultural competency theories (Whitfield, 2019). Lacking in the research is the cultural complexity of police-minority interactions. The extant research has further demonstrated a lack of consideration for the dynamic of the police-citizen interaction equation by failing to consider the officers' perspective. The dearth of existing research examining cultural competency and police-Hispanic citizen interactions from the police viewpoint has suggested a fresh perspective is necessary to examine how officers develop cultural competency to serve their respective Hispanic populations. Theoretical perspectives applied to police behavior remain minimal in the current research literature (Shjarback, 2018).

Additionally, acceptable theoretical perspectives(s) explaining police cultural competency development are absent. As a result, theoretical perspectives applied to cultural competency research in other disciplines were considered to employ in exploring

police officer cultural competency. Thus, in this study, I adopted the ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner to examine police cultural competency in police-citizen interactions from the officer perspective.

EST derives from a conjoined organic-societal perspective of the ecological world (Epp, 2018). Biological and cultural development of individuals examined from familial and cultural pretexts prescribes the tenets of EST (Epp, 2018). Individuals interacting in a shared environment are affected by assumed expectations of behaviors, sharing cultural expectations parallel to environmental cohabitations that develop bi-laterally over time (Epp, 2018; Heinze et al., 2016).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) posited:

The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which, the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. (p. 21)

### **Systems of EST**

EST is comprised of concentric rings of systems interconnectedly situated within the next larger environmental plane (Becker et al., 2011). EST recognizes individual, relational, collective, and social constructs by examining intimate and social interactions relative to individuals' experience in their environment (Epp, 2018; Gordon et al., 2018; Henderson & Baffour, 2015). Researchers' interpretations of EST exist in the literature; however, the grounding tenets as defined below prevail.

EST's microsystem is a "pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22). This study's microsystem consisted of the police officer and the setting in which he was engaged, specifically Hispanic members of the community. The officers' descriptions of cultural and environmental experience were the nucleus of my research. The "phenomenological dimension of the individual" (Lau and Ng, 2014, p. 426), where individuals recurrently interact "face-to-face" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.22), are indicative of police-citizen engagement supporting the qualitative approach of my study.

EST's mesosystem incorporates multiple settings and recognizes the interconnection an individual creates between them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As an individual enters multiple unexplored settings, an integration of environmental distinctiveness develops through various levels of social engagement and communication, viewed in a phenomenological context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

EST's exosystem indirectly influences an individual through occurring events within settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Exploring environmental influences offers insight into officers' interpretations of their experiences. Interviewing officers entering into previously non experienced locations with cultural significance provides a pathway into understanding how cultural understanding develops.

EST's macrosystem recognizes cultural influence consistencies and variations relative to the previous systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), requiring comprehension of those systems influences effecting an individual's cultural climate experience (Lau & Ng,

2014). Officers working within Hispanic populations may encounter a strong Hispanic cultural identity not experienced previously. Officers' individual characteristics relative to EST's micro, meso, and ecosystem strengthen the understanding of the macrosystem cultural experiences, further supporting my study's exploration of officer cultural competency development.

The chronosystem, EST's fifth concentric plane added by Bronfenbrenner in 1994, measured a system's effect over a life course. Measuring cultural competency development and application by officers engaging in police-Hispanic interactions throughout their career offers additional research opportunity and is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Social interactions influence individual response behaviors and culturally inspired interactions influence individual interpretations (Henderson & Baffour, 2015). My study, which considered all system planes of EST, focused on the macrosystem where subcultural and cultural wholes compromise the more considerable relational influence between social groups. Each of the lower EST systems were also considered when exploring how officers' prelaw enforcement backgrounds influenced cultural competency development through an individual examination of the officer's biological and ecological stimuli influencing the development of interaction skills.

EST originated in Bronfenbrenner's exploration of psychology, exploring the cognitive development of primary school students from an environmental perspective (Gordon et al., 2018; Hong et al., 2016). Bronfenbrenner argued that understanding the expectation and values within each system allows for a rich understanding of child



psychology. When exploring officer development of cultural competency while engaging with Hispanic people, applying EST provides a fuller explanation of how officers' cultural competencies are individually affected by multiple biological and environmental factors.

### **Rationale for EST**

EST presented my research a viable theoretical framework when examining the complexities of police-citizen interactions, expanded by ethnic influence, personal bias, professional responsibility, and moral implication. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2013) argued EST offers a platform for all research methodological paradigms across multiple disciplines, explicitly providing for qualitative inferences relative to the phenomenon of interest. Researchers have employed EST in multiple discipline studies including healthcare (Bhan et al., 2017; Johanna et al., 2019; Siström et al., 2011), education and counseling (Baurhoo, 2017; Lau & Ng, 2014; Tekin, 2011), social justice (Hong et al., 2011), social marketing (Gordon et al., 2018), and behavioral sciences (Casanova et al., 2016), examining each level of biological and ecological influences in various relevant contexts and the level of interconnective strands of influence between individuals (Becker et al., 2011). EST, applied in a study on adolescent violence towards parents, provided a model for identifying factors influencing juvenile aggressive behavior towards parents stemming from various environmental and social interactions (Moulds and Day 2017). Research exploring minority contact with the criminal justice system (Henderson & Baffour, 2015) and Hispanic youth decision-making post-high school (Huerta, 2015) using EST, demonstrated individuals are independently influenced, suggesting cultural

competency development is also uniquely positioned within the individual interacting with a culturally dominant population. Smith's (2016) review of the depth of interpersonal violence (IPV) within the Jamaican population suggested the depth of IPV is engrained in each level of the EST framework, characterized through interactive connectivity. The application of EST in Smith's (2016) study also suggested that cultural competency can be explored through an understanding of officers' interactions with Hispanic populations. Accordingly, examining cultural competency development through the connectedness between engaging individuals was an appropriate component of my study.

Researchers have employed EST within qualitative research methodology to examine the complexities of interpersonal relationships deriving from the macro culturally influenced level and the consequent influences of the concentric levels (Henderson & Baffour, 2015). Officers individually fashion an awareness knowledge of the influences of the culture, exposing relative subtle and gross relational interactions between the officer and citizen (Henderson & Baffour, 2015). Researchers suggest that an individual's cultural exposure will be affected at some level within EST, further influencing all additional EST levels (Becker et al., 2011). Incorporating EST into this research framework further serves to direct the methodology and subsequent analysis of the qualitative data collected, exploring how officers entering into a culturally robust environment are affected by each construct of EST.

Researchers have employed EST when exploring cultural competency in various professional settings, in part, by examining the macrosystem plane's interrelational

effects, along with the other system's theory planes (Asurakkody, 2019; Casanova et al., 2016; Henderson & Baffour, 2015; Tissington, 2008). However, no research on cultural competency in policing using EST has been identified. My research sought to conceptualize cultural competency in officers through an EST perspective, exploring officers' interpretations of cultural competency definitions, comprehension, and applications serving Hispanic citizens. By applying EST when exploring cultural competency development in policing viewed from an officer's perspective, this research fills an existing literature gap.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Cultural competency is a complex dynamic of individual biases and prejudices, coupled with socialization expectations. Cultural competency comprises multiple elements, including cultural awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity, forming the framework for cultural interactions (Benuto et al., 2018). Multiple conceptualized models have been developed to ascertain individual cultural acumen in various disciplines and professions, incorporating the use of scales and survey methods indicative of quantitative methodologies. DMIS is a measurement method often employed in quantitative measures of cultural competency. Cultural sensitivity within individuals was "subjective" in nature, and a theoretical "phenomenology of training" consisting of individual experiences and interpretations of experiences guiding the development of cultural sensitivity training (Bennett, 1986, p. 179). Individuals derive their experiences through the personal significance they attach to the event (Bennett, 1986). Cultural sensitivity offers a measuring gauge of interactional cultural competency (Jain, 2013). Cultural uniqueness is

not isolated to a single population and requires nonculture related individuals to develop interactional skills predicated on developing new appreciations and acceptance. Skills necessary for developing cultural appreciation derive from new mindsets of “awareness,” “attitudes,” and appreciation (Bennett, 1986, p. 179). Cultural sensitivity can be measured by using a “phenomenological approach to training” (Bennett, 1986, p. 180).

### **Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**

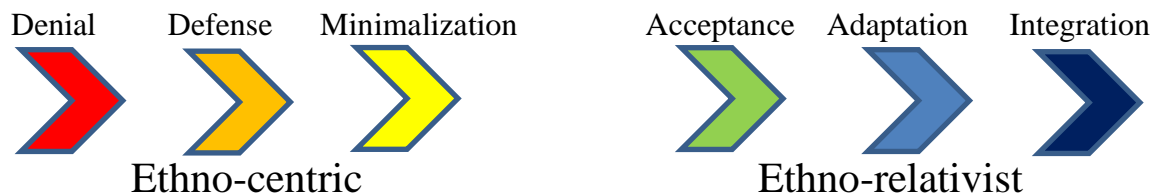
DMIS incorporates six levels of cultural sensitivity or “stages of development” (Bennett, 1986, p.181). An individual progressing through the DMIS stages in a linear right motion, shifts cultural sensitivity from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative position, each representing specific characteristics and demonstrating increased cultural sensitivity acumen (Bennett, 1986). The stages of ethnocentric positioning include denial, defense, and minimalization. Denial, or “denial of difference” forms when an individual lacks experience and interaction with a differing culturally significant group (Bennett, 1986, p. 182). Attributes of denial range from minimal cultural isolation and discrimination due to geographic locations to acute prejudicial discrimination towards a culture (Bennett, 1986). Defense occurs when an individual believes another culture compromises their cultural position socially. The resulting action incorporates condemnation of the perceived threatening culture through defamation and stigmatization of the entire culture population, or alternately a dominance of perceived supremacy (Bennett, 1986). Minimalization results when cultural differences are reduced to insignificance relative to cultural comparisons. Individual responses to cultural differences when interacting is reduced to an expectation of behavior between all individuals outside of cultural

adaptations. Minimalization affords limited cultural sensitivity acceptance (Bennett, 1986).

Ethnorelativism incorporates three stages of positive difference: acceptance, adaptation, and integration. An individual exhibiting acceptance recognizes cultural divisions without judgment or comparison, presenting the “process” of action evolving from a possessive tangible (Bennett, 1986, p.185). The physical and cultural value that defines a culture is given credence. Individuals demonstrating adaptation appreciate cultural differences, exemplified through a change of thought process which leads to a behavioral modification (Bennett, 1986). A significant element of adaptation is the development of empathy, demonstrated by an individual’s willingness to exist in the environment of another, to better understand the cultural nuances of their worldview (Bennett, 1986). An evolution into “cultural pluralism” presents another aspect of adaptation which allows an individual to enter another cultural worldview seamlessly (Bennett, 1986, p.185). An individual demonstrating integration removes the singular cultural identity, recognizes the processes of multiple cultures, and through adaptation, distinguish themselves as part of the cultural identity (Bennett, 1986). The DMIS theoretical perspective led to the development of the intercultural development inventory quantitative measurement tool (IDI) used in quantitative research (Fabregas Janeiro et al., 2014). My research examines the tenets of each DMIS progression when examining the research participant’s cultural sensitivity.

**Figure 1**

*Developmental Model Measurements for Intercultural Sensitivity. Concept developed by Bennett (1986).*



Researchers have employed DMIS in various methodologies to measure the growth of intercultural sensitivity within individuals, exemplified in a quantitative study of tourism professionals (Barron & Dasli, 2010) and a study of health students in a mixed methods research (Peiying et al., 2012). A qualitative methodological research by Çiftçi and Gürbüz (2019) exploring the Turkish English language teacher's opinions about learning in other countries, employed DMIS to identify the teacher's existing ethnocentric and ethnorelative positioning and created a model from which to understand culturally significant responses.

Researchers employing DMIS to study cultural competency of officers serving within minority populations has not been identified in the existing literature. As a result, applications of DMIS researched in other disciplines was employed within my newly explored research topic. The model elements outlined in Çiftçi and Gürbüz's (2019) study was considered in my study on officer cultural competencies similarly to gain insight on officers existing positions from which to extrapolate upon and allow for comparative and collective comprehension of officer cultural competency development working within a minority population. An understanding of how officers relate

experiences when interacting with Hispanic people, the focus of my research, was examined through the lens of DMIS not as a quantitative measure but as identifiers of existing cultural sensitivity elucidated by officers. This research provided a fresh approach to understanding officer interpretations of cultural effects experienced and allowing for a level of cultural competency to be informed.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Culture, Competency, and Cultural Competency**

The concept of *culture* has been similarly defined in multiple contexts as the effect of like individual group influence on societies in which they are situated. Culture possesses an interchangeable definition dependent upon the individual's viewpoint from which culture is examined, such as historical position, ethnicity, or language (Stead, 2004). Culture develops from learned behaviors derived from collective beliefs and expectations, mirrored in group networking and interaction (Bennett, 1993). However, no accepted singular definition of culture exists. Clare D'Souza et al. (2016) viewed culture from an "objective and subjective" lens (p. 907). Objectively, culture was observed with a statistical rigidity and personal detachment. Subjective culture, allowing for the collection interpretation of culture expressed in individual responses, sought to explore how officers viewed the minority populations they served and cultural distinctiveness impressed upon them (Clare D'Souza et al., 2016).

Stead (2004) defined culture from a constructivist viewpoint "as a social system of shared symbols, meanings, perspectives, and social actions that are mutually negotiated by people in their relationships with others" (p. 392). "Shared meanings and

perspectives” replaced hard and fast absolutes indicative of positivist viewpoints (Stead, 2004, p. 392). Carrizales et al. (2016) recognized cultural competency as a “continuum” with no defined ends of measure in achieving levels of competence (p. 128). Thus, culture can be viewed from an evolutionary perspective, understanding that competency is a developing process that incorporates influences along its trajectory that impacts development.

Rice (2007) identified that in the recent past, cultural identity and significance continued to see little weight in the current research on service providers. Culturally neutral service approaches and adopting a culturally neutral mentality of public service recipients have mitigated culturally competent development of service providers. Minimizing cultural significance has diminished beneficial culturally influenced service (Rice, 2007). Multiple disciplinary researches exploring cultural competency’s influence on service providers suggested a current focus on the importance of effective interaction resulting in services provided to the population served. The identification of cultural competency in policing has recently seen an increased awareness’s effect on service, resulting in increased cultural competency training interest. However, existing methods for understanding cultural competency in policing remains limited, requiring me to examine other professions and disciplines to comprehend cultural competency language and definition dimensions.

### ***The Pluralism of Cultural Competency Definitions***

As previously stated, cultural competency does not share a singular definition (Baig et al., 2014) and is demonstrated as a recurring theme in various service entities.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Minority Health (OHM) (2016) defined cultural competency as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations" (p. 1). OHM (2016) further differentiated culture and competence, defining culture as "integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups," and cultural competence as "the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities" (p. 1). Betancourt et al. (2003) attempted to construct a cultural competency definition in healthcare stemmed from existing healthcare literature recognizing:

The importance of social and cultural influences on patients' health beliefs and behaviors; considering how these factors interact at multiple levels of the health care delivery system (e.g., at the level of structural processes of care or clinical decision-making); and, finally, devising interventions that take these issues into account to assure quality health care delivery to diverse patient populations. (p. 297)

Multiple quantitative research studies on cultural competency in healthcare incorporate elements of Bentancourt et al.'s (2003) definition, focusing on cultural awareness and understanding when seeking to increase provider skills when servicing diverse populations (Daugherty & Kearney, 2017; Mi & Zhang, 2017). Foreman et al. (2012) characterized elements of cultural competency including "attitudes, skills and

knowledge” pertinent to service providers in health care (p. 29). Foreman et al.’s (2012) study was significant in recognizing the potential for covert agendas that may challenge the educational development of cultural competency. Law enforcement engagement with diverse populations shares similar complications resulting from political agendas that strain developing officer-minority engagements and suggesting a possible inhibition by officers to integrate into the minority population. My research sought clarity by identifying limited integration rationales held by officers that may have complicated officer-Hispanic citizen interactions and effective officer allocation of resources in minority settings.

Mixed method research methodologies have been employed in various cultural competency studies. Benuto et al.’s (2018) research explored the development of an acceptable definition of cultural competence to be incorporated in clinical psychology settings resulted in a conflicting identification of elements within the definition. Benuto et al.’s (2018) qualitative results identified a three-pronged framework of “awareness, knowledge, and skills” (p. 379), characteristics recognized by additional healthcare education improvement research (Behar-Horenstein & Feng, 2017). However, in their quantitative analysis, Benuto et al. (2018) suggested that awareness and knowledge were a singular entity which challenged established qualitative cultural competency pillars.

Qualitative studies offered yet another approach to defining the constructs of cultural competency and are influential to my study. In a 2016 study of cultural competency in social workers, Battle recognized Lum’s definition of cultural competency as "a set of knowledge and skills that a social worker must develop in order to be

effective with multicultural clients" (as cited in Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2012, p. 25). Nadan and Ben-Ari (2013) identified characteristic recurring themes of cultural competency as:

- (a) cultural awareness – referring to practitioners' self-awareness of their own cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, and emotional and cognitive processing of their cross-cultural encounters;
- (b) knowledge – the knowledge required for cultural competence usually concerns a specific cultural or ethnic group;
- and (c) skills – the skills inherent in cultural competence arise from the ability to combine awareness and knowledge in professional practice. (p. 1091)

A similarity of tenets, cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills, consistent among the various discipline definitions of cultural competency, offered a model for law enforcement to construct a uniform definition. Bentancourt et al.'s (2003) attempt to reduce the encumbrance of healthcare service through a universally recognized definition of cultural competence can be emulated in law enforcement through a singular cultural competency characterization. The concepts of cultural awareness, cultural bias, cultural knowledge, cultural interaction, and cultural sensitivity of which comprehension represents a significant component represents elements from which to explore officer cultural competency.

### ***Cultural Awareness***

Lee's (2015) study on cultural competency in sport and exercise psychology suggested cultural awareness interlinks knowledge and skills through multiple levels of awareness including awareness of personal bias, external cultures, and existing

“literature” definitions (p.281). Cultural awareness requires a comprehension of how others might interpret oneself (Kirkwood, 2001), and within those environments experienced (Shimray & Ramaiah, 2019). Cultural awareness was conceptualized by Rew et al. (2014) as the process of internal comprehension of self-culture facilitating cultural comparisons resulting in multicultural acceptance. Murphy and Zajonc (1993) suggested that awareness is cognitively biased and is facilitated by external stimulus and personal exposures to the environment. Police officers, newly exposed to culturally identified individuals, draw from personal knowledge experience leading to inaccurate and insufficient next steps in police-minority interactions. Zimny (2015) identified the importance of cultural awareness training recognizing officer mindsets are not quickly changed but take time to evolve. Schlosser et al. (2015) identified awareness of cultural self and inherent prejudices present a significant indicator of cultural awareness.

Additionally, Hasisi (2008) noted that officers must maintain a cultural awareness of the culture’s uniqueness and modify their behavior accordingly. Cultural awareness significance has been present in police training and community relations for decades (Blakemore et al., 1995). However, beyond the conceptual application of training under a cultural competency banner, understanding cultural awareness development of officers remains elusive.

### ***Cultural Bias***

The concept of bias possesses a multitude of definitions most notable in research methodologies and analysis (Delgado-Rodriguez & Llorica, 2004). Cultural bias draws upon an individual’s racial and ethnic significance in influencing interactional behavior.

Cultural bias retains a position in the development of police officer cultural awareness, eliciting an individual's preconceptions of individuals representing a cultural significance and the subsequent effect on their interactions. Racial bias holds a cultural application to an officer's view of culturally identified citizens affecting the officer's approach in police-minority interactions (DeSoto, 2018). Little research exists in biased policing and the existing research is focused from the citizen's perceptions (Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). The extant research interchanges the terms of cultural bias and racial bias, causing a differentiation between culture, race, and ethnicity (DeSoto, 2018). However, cultural influences marked by racial bias demonstrated negative influences in police-minority interactions in the existing literature.

Additionally, culturally and racially biased policing studies represented in the research literature are relegated to community-oriented policing and citizen perceptions of police. Police functions are strongly influenced by the confines and makeup of their environment (Lynch, 2018; Shjarback et al., 2017). Police culture creates an additional context from which officers develop a bias towards the population served (Kurtz & Upton, 2017). The existing literature has indicated that when responding to culturally different citizens, an officer's bias negatively affects the interaction (Meng, 2017; Schlosser et al., 2015). Cultural bias, believed to exist in all individuals to unknown degrees (Jackson, 2018), was not a focus of my research, but was identified as potentially affecting the development of cultural competency in officers.

### ***Cultural Knowledge***

Kitaoka (2005) conceptualized cultural knowledge in a culturally influenced worldview comprehension and effect on human action. Knowledge involves the acquisition of information that allows an individual to make informed decisions attained through training, education, or experience. Cultural knowledge imparts the cultural competency acquired by officers into actions to perform effectively in culturally significant populations (Fletcher et al., 2019). The existing studies exploring cultural knowledge in policing, prioritized police culture and related knowledge. The focus on culture knowledge can have a deleterious effect by influencing negative interpretations based upon assumptive and stereotypic expectations (Scerra, 2011). Further, Scerra's (2011) study on knowledge influence on serial murder and rape case clearances demonstrated police culture knowledge negatively affected investigative effectiveness. Moreover, victimization and stereotypical expectations of individuals without a cultural knowledge of the individual negatively informed officers, reducing criminal investigation effectiveness.

### ***Cultural Interaction***

Individuals engaging with others possessing a strong cultural identity demonstrate cultural interaction. An individual exposed to another culture over time may begin to assimilate characteristics of the new culture into their way of life. While researchers sought to explain historical manifestations of influences in human cultures with shared characteristics achieved over sometimes lengthy engagements, when no acculturation was deemed the result of cultural interaction, cultural interactions have led to multiculturalism

(Hoerder, 2008). In their study on cultural interaction in developing and implementing a software training program in a new, culturally identifiable environment, Russell et al. (2013) revealed 23 specific elements of cultural interaction influence spanning every element of the training process from creation to implementation. Community policing recognized the key construct of interaction in identifying solutions to community issues; however, what the interaction looks like is unknown (Somerville, 2009). The depth of cultural interaction elements between individuals suggested a continuous infusion of cultural identity between groups. Police officers engaged with culturally distinct populations further suggested each encounter presents potential cross-cultural contamination. In my study, the effect of cultural exposure on officer cultural competency development is explored.

### ***Cultural Sensitivity***

Cultural sensitivity studies are numerous in the research literature, and examine relational interactions in multiple disciplines on a world scale. When defining cultural sensitivity, a plethora of conceptual ideals circle the concept of individual changing viewpoints collected through exposure to another culture. Bock (2013) identified cultural sensitivity as an “ethical principle” that encourages an individual to “acknowledge and appreciate cultural difference and respect persons as members of particular cultures” (p. 579). Bock (2013) further defined cultural sensitivity through a social entanglement of individual beliefs and that other’s beliefs are deserving of the same level of acceptance as our own. Cultural sensitivity decries acceptance and equality, not an agreement of cultural perspectives (Bock, 2013).

Cultural sensitivity is often the catchphrase attached to police minority relationship development. Officers are inundated with the term *cultural sensitivity* when issues of minority bias and prejudice arise (Ruggs et al., 2016). Officers entering into culturally distinct settings are potentially confronted with the unknown expectations of the population served, suggesting an understanding of beliefs must occur to encourage productive interactions. Officers and citizens hold preconceived opinions of individuals that change over time (Stuart, 2016). Exposure to individuals over time has led to the renegotiation of personal beliefs and inferences, increasing cultural worldviews, and personal standpoints (Kim et al., 2015). Cultural sensitivity allows for greater social interaction exchange, which Kim et al. (2015) argued, reduces negative cultural stereotypes.

Psychological interests have manifested when assessing cultural sensitivity in officers. Ruggs et al. (2016) suggested that the use of physiologically based training may serve to promote continuous cultural sensitivity in officers. In a mixed methods study on public satisfaction with police, Cheng (2015) revealed that the current cultural awareness demonstrated by police suggested the need for increased cultural sensitivity training by officers. In a cognitive load perspective study by Mugford et al. (2013), cultural sensitivity learning occurs individually and non-systematically, furthering the idea that cultural sensitivity should not be expected in an isolated educational setting.

In summary, the elements of cultural competency expose a depth of nuances within cultural proficiency parameters. Officers must become aware of their cultural knowledge and recognize biases and prejudices that may affect their interpretations.



Officers functioning within established culturally demarcated community populations experience a significant opportunity for acclimation and assimilation. Rookie and veteran officers face influxes of cultural distinct populations, sometimes for the first time, and experience unfamiliar conditions when interacted with individuals. As a result, officer efficiency effectiveness becomes dependent upon a clear understanding of the components of cultural competency.

### **Cultural Competency Frameworks**

Cultural competency frameworks have been developed in various professional and educational settings promoting cultural competency while maintaining a level of structure, development, discipline, and accountability (Carrizales, 2019). A multitude of organizations exist specific to professional disciplines to promoting and encouraging through guidance cultural competency development. The Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPPA) promotes academic organizations to accounting for student cultural competency awareness and furthering effective cultural competency education (Carrizales, 2019). The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) maintains a collection of ten culturally influenced standards promoting ethical behavior, self-awareness, cross-cultural knowledge, and skills infused with education to serve a culturally diverse population (NASW, 2015).

Researchers have identified multiple factors promoting the importance of cultural competency in public service and provide a plethora of frameworks from which to engage cultural competency studies. Officers acquiring cultural competency necessitates a measurement method in which cultural competency can be assessed (Schlosser et al.,

2015); however, a consistent model assessing officer cultural competency does not exist.

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC); (n.d.) outlined a conceptual framework from which individual and organizational cultural competence assessment can be measured. These elements include the competency to

- appreciate the advantages of diversity,
- evaluate individual competency,
- function within multiple levels of diverseness,
- assimilate cultural awareness into organizational settings, and
- adapt and integrate into the cultural identity within the population.

Each assessment protocol identified by NCCC is adaptable to measuring cultural competency acumen in police officers, which is key to the integrity of cultural competency development and training at an organizational level. However, how officers' exposures to cultural competency awareness efforts are integrated into culturally competent behavior, and whether this incorporation is systematic of training received or the result of unique individual interpretations and experiences, remains unexplored.

Carrizales (2019) outlined a framework of four components of cultural competency accountability that integrate organizations and individual members in service provision. "Bureaucratic" addressed the foundation of existing rules that govern culturally competent practices, rooted in mission and vision and driven by promotion and culpability. "Legal" precepts maintain a uniform constraint on cultural competency accountability. "Professionalism" imparts a degree of autonomy upon individuals yet requires a level of culturally competent development and engagement. "Political"

incorporates citizen and community-based interactions that serve to govern cultural competency development (Carrizales, 2019, p. 44, 46).

Cultural competency frameworks centered on services provided imparts insight on individual officer performance, demonstrating cultural competency mindfulness. Rice (2007) highlighted four integral frameworks from which examining cultural competency in officers can be applied:

- Cultural competency allows the service provider to identify and comprehend the cultural elements confronted when providing service.
- A greater cultural acumen allows for a more comprehensive service, alleviating gaps resulting from incomplete cultural knowledge.
- Cultural comprehension by public service entities allows for the identification and allocation of applicable, available services.
- A cultural comprehension possessed by front-line providers provides the tools to deliver service.

The framework espoused by Rice (2007) intimates a method of measurement examining cultural competency in officer performance. Recognizing cultural competency importance in multiple disciplines and professional settings presented overlapping and common characteristic framework elements of cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills applicable to organizational mandates and service provision. Measuring cultural competency, discussed later in this chapter, explored the level of cultural competency possessed by the officer but failed to examine how officers acquire cultural competency.

## **Cultural Competency and Policing**

### ***Police Definition of Cultural Competency***

There is a wealth of research literature exploring competency in policing; however, most of the research explored the role of officers and measured police strategies, adherence to policy, and police culture. The absence of a mutually accepted cultural competency definition has left wide-ranging interpretations of cultural competency, many of which focus on individual encounters demonstrating unique circumstances (Scott, 2002). Cultural competency, defined in other professions (Rice, 2007), has been adapted to serve a useful definition in policing. Organizations possessing paralleling definitions of cultural competency applied to effective service provision exist across multiple cross social and community organizations including police organizations. As defined by Cross et al. (1988), “cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p.1). This definition can be applied to a fundamental police interpretation of cultural competency. Satterwhite and Teng (2007) identified cultural competency as “the knowledge, skills, and values to work effectively with diverse populations and to adapt institutional policies and professional practices to meet the unique needs of client populations” (p. 2). This definition emulates the organizational cultural competency identified by Cross et al. (1988).

### ***Cultural Competencies in Public Organizations***

Cultural competence has been recognized in professional and organizational environments to improve service to multiple culturally identified populations (Weimer & Zamrani, 2017). Cultural competency in public administrative organizations focused on service delivery from which Carrizales (2019) opined that cultural knowledge translates into higher levels of productive service. Rice and Matthews (2012) argued that effective service delivery requires the assemblage of knowledge, awareness, and skills of service delivery individuals into culturally attuned practices to provide appropriate services to culturally diverse populations. Rice (2007) noted cultural comprehension possessed by frontline providers affords tools to deliver service. As such, officers policing within culturally identified populations are required the same cultural recognition to achieve successful service delivery. Frontline officers' repetitive contact and interaction are the impetus first step in police assimilating into the community environment. A lesser measure of cultural competency in policing focused on creating a policy to regulate officer cultural competency development (Serini-Massinger & Bawden, 2015) exists in the literature. Ultimately, how cultural competency is understood by and developed within officers remained the focus of this research.

### ***Cultural Competency in Police Organizations***

Police organizational cultural competency has been researched from an organizational viewpoint recognizing that cultural competence in officers as a requirement, eliciting such mandates as statewide policies for implementation and evaluation of cultural competency training. Cultural competency in policing has existed

conceptually for over a century but has only seen significant interest in application over the last three decades (Carrizales, 2019). Cultural competency implementation and evaluation was demonstrated in California, considered to be a state forerunner in cultural competency training of officers (Baskir, 2009). Students in a Swedish police education training program assessed for competencies, including cultural diversity, indicated policy dictates training, thus affecting competency development and support (Kohlström et al., 2017). Consequently, research on cultural competency in officers indicated a scaffolding of culturally competent administration and organizational policy embracing cultural competency development and engagement support. Schlosser et al. (2015) examined a “diversity education program” in a midwestern police academy which revealed varied impressions of the value of cultural training by the recruits, further suggesting individual interpretations of cultural competency value in police-minority interactions interact with external influences (p. 115).

Individual officer cultural competency has been suggested to be organizationally influenced. Police departments possess a culture of their own which has been shown to develop individually (Cordner, 2017; Marier & Moule, 2019; Pajpachová & Nováková, 2016; Paoline et al., 2000). The research on police organizational culture suggested police organizations maintained a significant influential effect on officer behavior when interacting with the public (Cordner, 2017), including an “us versus them mentality” (Marier & Moule, 2019, p. 838). In one police organizational study, Cox and Kirby (2018) found that traditional police organizational culture exhibiting negative influences was detrimental to a developing officer further demonstrating the influences police

organization place on officers. Fletcher et al.'s (2019) qualitative study of cultural competency in college campus police chiefs intimated existing cultural competency awareness and development within subordinates, policy, and practice, leading to increased effectiveness in police service. Additionally, Boyd-Swan and Molina (2018) and Carrizales et al. (2016) recommend a top-down approach to increasing police cultural competency organizationally and individually, seeking and understanding of officers' performance within a culturally changing environment.

Recognizing police administration as a bridge to developing culturally competent frontline officers is recognized by the varied ethnic populations served. Rollins (2019) noted that public conviction in officers serving minority communities depends on cultural competency demonstrated in performance. Further, citizen perception of officer cultural competency was conducive to improved community relations and increased service efficiency. Citizen perceptions of police supports administrative cultural competency positioning of leading to increased culturally competent officer performances (Rollins, 2019).

### ***Cultural Awareness and Police Diversity Training***

Police officers wear many hats when serving their communities and the public maintains an expectation that officers serve each hat with professionalism and efficiency (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2015). Police training prepares officers to perform their duties effectively, but the complexities of social and racial reorganization created a need for officers to become culturally competent, resulting in cultural awareness training in police academies and continuing education courses. Cultural diversity training intensified as a

response to racial unrest occurring in the U.S. in the 1960s (Blakemore et al., 1995). Issues of racial bias unsuccessfully addressed the increasing social unrest and established the need for improving police-citizen engagement (Blakemore et al., 1995). Additionally, political awareness of cultural competency in policing has been represented in the passage of bills and acts. The Clay-Cohen Police Training and Independent Review Act of 2015 validated political awareness for the need for cultural sensitivity training demonstrating the appropriateness of cultural competency training in officers (Engelhardt, 2015).

Policing in diverse populations have resulted in department's implementing updated cultural diversity training (Schlosser et al., 2015). Nevertheless, cultural competency training receives little focus in traditional academy settings compared to functional components of policing (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). Lynch (2018) reported in a nationwide examination of police academy curricula that officers received only 12 hours of culturally based training, whereas they received over 50 hours of criminal law and over 70 hours of firearms training. The hours spent in those jurisdictions educating officers on cultural awareness, seeking to address implicit bias in officers as a component of the training, is essentially unknown (Lynch, 2018). Representative cultural awareness training broaches into cultural awareness definitions and familiar examples of officers' experiences but lacks substance in depth of cultural components and understanding of officer impressions and acclimation of information (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). In Indiana, cultural awareness training is relegated to three 1-hour sessions during an officer's basic academy training (In.gov, 2019). The instructional



process of culturally based programs in policing remains largely absent in the research literature (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017); however, what is known on cultural competency training in police academy curriculums does not demonstrate cultural awareness development as a priority in the educational regimen. Cultural competency development through academic and performance outlets may serve to develop cultural competency, as opined by Rice (2007).

Cultural sensitivity education in academic settings seek to provide officers an education on minority population characteristics while identifying personal cultural insights officers may possess (Ruggs et al., 2016; Zimny, 2015). Cultural competency education within academic settings further imparts individuals with the cultural knowledge necessary to routinely engage with culturally distinct individuals (Carrizales, 2019). Cultural competency assessments have seen growth in studies incorporating college policing entities but reveal an inconsistent pattern of cultural competency existing in individual officers and organizational focus (Fletcher et al., 2019).

Gould's (1997) implementation of a cultural diversity course to rookie and veteran officers demonstrated a resulting reduction in negative attitudes towards minority populations. Gould (1997) also revealed that a connection exists between influences by the police culture on officers and negative views of those served, indicating a negative correlation exists between longevity of service and cultural diversity competency. Additionally, Gould (1997) intimated cultural competency was one-sided and that citizens needed education in the function of policing to improve interactions.

Schlosser et al.'s (2015) exploration of a pilot program in police recruit training in a Midwest police academy demonstrated the key elements of cultural competency development employed in the training platform: awareness, knowledge, and skills. However, Schlosser et al. (2015) found that presenting cultural educational training failed to aid future officers with material and skills to use when engaging with minority populations. Zimny (2015), when reviewing the same academy training program, suggested increased cultural diversity and sensitivity was needed to improve police-citizen interactions (Zimny, 2015), demonstrating the need for appropriate officer-minority cultural awareness and interaction training.

Cultural competency development in public service providers has not received significant relevance in the research literature (Rice, 2007). Similarly, cultural competency in policing has received limited interest in the collective literature. While recent acknowledgment of cultural competency value in policing has been represented in limited academic, training, and continuing education research (Carrizales et al., 2016; Sabharwal et al., 2014; Serini-Massinger & Wood, 2016), a dearth of information exists on individual and collective officer cultural competency awareness development in education. Consequently, this research provides an impetus step into the officer's perspective of cultural competency understanding and adaptation.

### ***The Measure of Cultural Competency***

Measuring cultural competencies present numerous nuances, challenging to define, and service programs deficient in cultural wisdom (Weimer & Zemrani, 2017). Developing a cultural competence measurement is instrumental in developing

organizational and individual cultural competency (Weimer & Zemrani, 2017). Cultural competency measurements can represent a narrow individual interaction or large-scale entities eliciting differing definitions to represent cultural competency understanding, demonstrating the difficulty in measuring cultural competency employing a standard methodology (Scott, 2002).

Daugherty and Kearney's (2017) application of the inventory for assessing the process of cultural competency among health professional's student version (IAPCC-SV) after completing the U.S. Health and Human Service's OHM's cultural competency program revealed cultural competency acumen and development increased post education. Kohlbry's (2016) study measuring cultural competency in nursing students using the IAPCC-SV's version C and the cultural self-efficacy scale, established measurement tools for assessing cultural competency in healthcare, demonstrating scales and assessments for cultural competency have been developed in other service provider professions and disciplines to address the specific attributes of cultural competencies effects on service.

As previously stated, law enforcement inconsistently acknowledged the need to understand and encourage officer cultural competency development. Schlosser et al.'s (2015) research examined how police academies identified and measured police cadets' cultural competencies, revealing a consistent lack in initial cultural competency assessment, application of a universal cultural competency measurement tool, and of uniform cultural competency training regimen.

### *Issues With Cultural Competency Measurement Tools*

Multiple assessment and inventory tools developed to measure levels of cultural competency are often specific to a single profession but contain overarching commonalities of cultural competency concurrence. Campbell-Heider et al.'s (2006) study on cultural competence in nurse practitioner education curriculum revealed that generic measurement tools fall short in addressing the specific needs of the profession, which in turn identify an appropriate assessment that will address the organizational needs. Surveys and questionnaires that contain a section focusing on cultural competence can be extrapolated to examine cultural competency (Jaya et al., 2018). Cultural competency measurement assessments are prevalent in medical (Matteliano & Stone, 2014; McLennon et al., 2019), social (Buddington & Esmail, 2017; Pyles & Kim 2006), and educational (Fitzgerald et al., 2018; Smolcic & Arends, 2017) discipline research, but measuring cultural competence in active police officers has been limited in the literature (Fletcher et al., 2019). In policing, no universal standard of cultural competency method of measurement exists, and cultural competency measurement tools individualized by police organizations are adopted from other disciplines reflecting a similar cultural competency need (Fletcher et al., 2019).

Hammer et al.'s (2003) intercultural development inventory (IDI) offers an accepted quantitative measurement tool in which individuals can interpret their perceived and actual cultural competence based on a cultural competency continuum (Kruse et al., 2014). The IDI presents a single minded to a multicultural awareness mobility continuum across interculture development of an individual (Fitzgerald et al., 2018). The IDI stems

from a continuation of the DMIS scale serving as a formatted measurement of an individual's cultural identity and awareness and provides direction for additional cultural competency training. IDI assessments, used in multiple disciplines and study formats (Hammer et al., 2003), include pre- and post-testing around increased cultural training and experience. Offshoots of IDI include the intercultural conflict style inventory (ICS), which identifies potential areas of conflict across ethnic lines used by multiple governmental, corporate, nonprofit, and educational institutions in cultural conflict assessment (Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory, 2019). The adaptiveness of IDI to multiple disciplines (Fitzgerald et al., 2018) makes the measurement tool appropriate in evaluating cultural competency research; however, time and expense come with the use of measurement tools such as IDI, which can be limiting to organizational use.

Additionally, IDI, along with most other quantitative assessments, offers a brief snapshot into current cultural competency identified within the inventory parameters and fails to capture the essence of the participants' comprehension of cultural competency and how it affects their actions.

### **Increasing Hispanic Populations and Suburban Culturally Competent Policing**

#### ***Police-Hispanic Citizen Relationships-Police Perspective***

Limited research literature exists within the understanding of police and Hispanic citizen relationships. As suggested by Weitzer and Tuch (2005), Hispanic people are assumed to fall in line with other minority views of police and placed between African Americans and Caucasians, but the dearth of police-Hispanic interaction studies failed to support either position, possessing limited information on police-Hispanic citizen

interactions in any capacity. Weitzer and Tuch (2005) stated that demographic studies failed to consider how interactions affect actions and attitudes. Cultural influence on officers and exploring how they adapt to cultures to effectively service their community populations is nearly bereft in the current research. Additionally, the existing literature lacks exploration of police-citizen interactions approached from the police perspective.

The exploration of police-citizen interaction developed from divergent sometimes overlapping approaches. Law enforcement's approach stemmed from a traditionalist fundamentally legal precept, while citizen perceptions arise from the experiential engagement between officers and citizens. Meares et al.'s (2015) explored police-citizen interpretations of good policing and suggested citizens and police derive their maximum opinion of their citizen opposite during a moment the individual experiences the highest magnitude of personal significance. Officers may not be aware of disparities in their behavior while interacting with various races (Kramer & Renster, 2018). Officers engaging with Hispanic populations approach with a legal presence to achieve positive outcomes with little relational concerns, while Hispanic citizens view the legal interaction with apprehension (Roles et al., 2016), suggesting a less rigid interactional experience is desired. Jeffries and Hahn's (2011) study on police perceptions of Hispanics revealed that individual and organizational dynamics contributed to police attitudes and found that officers identified cultural awareness as significant in developing culturally competent police service. The existing literature outside of Jeffries and Han's study is limited in the exploration of police-Hispanic relational interactions approached from the police perspective.

### ***Police-Hispanic Citizen Relationships-Citizen Perspective***

An amalgam of research exists on police-minority interactions, but the extant literature possesses a critical caveat. Citizen perspectives of police research is dominated by police-African American engagement and lumps Hispanic people into a multicultural category positioned between African American and Caucasian citizens (Roles et al., 2016). Little research has positioned Hispanic and Latino populations within a singular racial category (Rennison, 2007; Roles et al., 2016), which is troubling because Hispanics encompass the fastest growing population in the U.S. (Jeffries & Hahn, 2011). Hispanics face additional social conditions such as immigration, which brings police and Hispanic people into conflict, affecting individual perceptions. The existing literature is dated, failing to consider the current trends and experiences of police and Hispanic citizen interactions. Additionally, the existing research that encompasses police and Hispanic citizen contacts are data driven descriptions of topics of interest (Rennison, 2007), and while offering structured comparative information for analysis, fail to incorporate individual perceptions based on experienced interactions, holding a higher research value when acquiring knowledge on the multitude of factors affecting police-Hispanic engagements.

Weitzer and Tuch (2005) intimated individual interactions affected citizen interactions with police. Familial and vicarious interaction experiences furthered the internalization of individual impressions of police (Weitzer & Tuch, 2005), leading to biased assumptions toward Hispanic people, the quickest growing ethnic U.S. population (Rennison, 2007). Studies of victimization of ethnic populations has seen Hispanic

populations included in the data, but as remarked by Rennison (2007), the reporting of has been marred by a lack of research interest. Rennison's (2007) study on Hispanic reporting suggested that each ethnic population possessed an identity that promoted the reporting of certain types of crimes, which supporting the need for police-Hispanic interaction research. A lack of understanding of the impression of officers by Hispanic citizens persists.

### **Summary**

The understanding of cultural competency in police officers is in its infancy, evidenced by the of lack of relative research. Research has shown that police devote untold hours in perfecting their professional persona, legal enforcement, and performance expectations, yet the research failed to explore how officers achieve their abilities to carry out their required duties when servicing various cultural populations. Performance competency has been researched in depth, yet little is known about how officers perceive cultural competency in general.

Officers who increasingly interact with multicultural populations have additional responsibilities to effectively deliver service while enforcing laws. Hispanic people, representing the fastest growing culturally defined population (McCluskey et al., 2008), bring issues of communication, legal status, and cultural expectations to officers serving their community. First generation Hispanic people interacting law enforcement in the U.S. are marred with the experiences of suggestive policing practices in their home country. The presumed police culture Hispanic people hold adds another layer to the challenges for officers engaging in police-Hispanic interactions.



To date, researchers have not addressed how officers working within culturally identified populations develop a competency to effectively interact. Cultural competency in delivery service positions has seen significant interest in the research literature including medical, educational, and organizational disciplines. Additionally, cultural competency has been identified as necessary in effective police-citizen interactions; however, the interest in cultural competency in officers is limited to the academic, initial academy training, and continuing education realms and remains unexplored. Little research exists on officers facing a growing culturally diverse population specific to culturally competent policing,

The existing literature fails to seek a better comprehension of police-Hispanic citizen interactions. While there is literature studying police-African American relations, police and Hispanic people have seen little focus regarding police-Hispanic citizen interactions. Research exploring police-minority relationships place Hispanic people in generic categories often encompassing additional ethnicities (McCluskey et al., 2008). Worse, the research literature assumes expectations of Hispanic viewpoints towards officers due to insufficient numbers of Hispanic participants (Weitzer, 2014).

Moreover, the research literature describes police-minority citizen interactions almost exclusively from the citizen viewpoint. While officers make up 50% of the relational equation, only recently has the viewpoint of officers been considered and is limited at best in the research.

I approached this research from the officer perspective exploring perceptions of cultural competence when interacting in a growing Hispanic population. In Chapter 3, I

present the methodology for this research. The resulting collection of officer responses increased the knowledge of officers' perceptions of cultural competency's relationship to performing their duties, in addition to presenting perspectives on officer-Hispanic citizen interactions and how officers acclimate themselves to fully serve Hispanic people.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

In this research study, I endeavored to capture the perceptions of police officers on their understanding of cultural competency and its impact of cultural competency on police-Hispanic citizen interactions. I used a qualitative IPA through interviews to explore officer perceptions and interpretations of cultural competency when interacting with Hispanic citizens. With this study, I sought to fill existing gaps in the research regarding police-Hispanic citizen interactions, cultural competency in policing, and officer perspectives of police-Hispanic citizen interactions. I explored the effects of cultural competency through the lived experiences of police officers in four NWIPD communities experiencing increasing Hispanic populations. The communities were identified through data collected from the demographic breakdowns of individual Northwest Indiana community populations, the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 survey and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Fact Finder online resource (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a). The limited existing literature – examined from a citizen perspective – has revealed that cultural competency improves police-citizen interactions (Fletcher et al., 2019). However, the literature lacks research from the officer perspective in addition to cultural competency in policing. If cultural competency improves police-citizen interactions and leads to effective service, then recognizing how officers internalize cultural competency can further increase positive engagement and foster proactive community relationships.

In Chapter 3, I present the methodology I used to explore individual officer perceptions of cultural competency when interacting with Hispanic populations, along with my rationale for this approach. The research methodology I selected was influenced by the literature review in Chapter 2, which demonstrated gaps in cultural competency in policing, police perspectives in police-citizen interactions, and police-Hispanic interaction research. In this chapter, I provide the research design describing the methodological approach employed and approached to participant sampling along with the specific data collection and analysis procedures used. The role of the researcher and my experience and potential influence and bias relative to the research subject are also identified and addressed. Additionally, the core elements of trustworthiness indicative of qualitative research including credibility, confirmability, dependability, transferability, and authenticity (Connelly, 2016), are addressed.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

In this research, I used a qualitative research approach and individual interviews to capture participant officers' perceptions of cultural competency and cultural competency's influences on police-Hispanic citizen interactions in suburban communities experiencing growth in Hispanic populations. An interpretative phenomenological methodological approach employed in this qualitative research allowed for further analysis of the life experience of the participant. Participant police officers were drawn from four NWIPDs where Hispanic populations in the community have increased. Participants were from patrol positions where regular citizen engagement occurs, presenting an opportunity for increased Hispanic citizen exposure. Additionally,

participants' exposure to cultural competency training and education were explored to determine any organizational influences on officer cultural competency development and subsequent implications in police-Hispanic interactions. Results from this research included similarities in participant responses of being culturally aware and developing cultural competence, thus revealing how the predictability of like responses demonstrate a relationship between cultural competency acumen and police-Hispanic citizen interaction. Expressly, this research sought to answer two research questions:

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population?

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

Qualitative research methodology falls solidly within the constructivist epistemological paradigm (Patton, 2015). Qualitative research methodologies differ from the data-driven quantitative methodology in that the lived experiences of the individual are captured in their worldview perceptions, seeking no definitive confirmatory conclusions (Sarma, 2015). Researchers seek an understanding of the unknown by using qualitative approaches, a precursor to other research methods (Donalik & Soldwisch, 2004). "Qualitative research is inductive, moving from the perspective of the individual or group to possible wider themes" (Donalik & Soldwisch, 2004, p. 354). The qualitative researcher views the research data through an environmental and cultural lens (Donalik & Soldwisch, 2004). Qualitative research, as posited by Simmons-Mackie and Damico (2003), seeks an understanding of human behavior and interaction occurring within the

social environment of the involved individuals. The existing literature on policing demonstrates a limitation of research incorporating current frontline officers experiencing multiple, daily, real-world exposures. Existing research that used frontline officers as participants employed a quantitative measure of an implemented training assessed through scenario responses (Regens et al., 2017) or a satisfaction scale (Can et al., 2016; Sahin et al., 2017). Qualitative research exploring police-citizen relationships offers a new perspective of exploration.

Studies involving police-citizen relationships (Lim, 2015; Madan & Nalla, 2015) and police-minority relationships (Lee, 2017; Peck, 2015; Posick & Hatfield, 2017; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004, 2005) have been approached almost exclusively from the citizen perspective. However, little information exists in the research on police-Hispanic relationships and interactions from any perspective. A cultural understanding of police and Hispanics may benefit other ethnic populations as well. Additionally, minimal studies have been conducted approaching police-minority interactions from the officer perspective (Jeffries & Hahn, 2011), demonstrating a limitation of understanding from one half of the equation. Cultural competency, additionally limited in the research when applied to police officers, suggests the value of a qualitative approach to this research. Existing research on cultural competency in policing employs rookie officers, academy cadets, college students seeking future employment in policework participating in police-oriented research topics, and police administration addressing research topics from an organizational level. Thus, exploring the perceptions and experiences of officers on

cultural competency and its value in police-Hispanic citizen interactions intimates a qualitative research method ideally.

An IPA situated within the qualitative methodology, was used to examine individual officers' perceptions of cultural competency's effects on police-Hispanic interactions. Phenomenological inquiry, predating the acceptance of the qualitative methodology as a recognized and accepted approach to a scientific study, seeks to understand the underlying meaning of a research focus (Chan et al., 2013).

Phenomenology – as defined by Alase (2017) as the study of the implication and value of an individual's environmental experience – originated in the works of Husserl. While multiple approaches to phenomenological research exist, Chan et al. (2013) identified “descriptive and hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology” (p. 1) as the prominent psychological methodologies.

IPA draws on the phenomenological underpinnings of Husserl and Heidegger's “descriptive and interpretive philosophies” (Snelgrove, 2014, p. 2) when exploring an individual's perceptions and experiences. Alase (2017) argues IPA's conceptual debarkation from the traditional phenomenological approaches stems from the work of Smith et al. (2009). IPA seeks not only an understanding of the experiences of individuals within the environment of the phenomenon but a greater understanding of how the perception of the experience formed (Alase, 2017). Critical to IPA is a researcher's positioning within the research, recognizing the influence of their imposition into the individual's world and the responsibility for articulating not only their assumptions, but the journey experienced in reaching their observations, crucial when assessing the data

collected (Alase, 2017). Thus, researcher reflexivity in IPA research is appropriately demonstrated (Wagstaff & Williams, 2014).

IPA represented an idyllic approach for my study's purpose and goals. I, as a former frontline officer, developed deep seated perceptions of citizens from my repeated interactions. My understanding exists in what frontline officers' experience and how perceptions and preconceived opinions of individuals and events are developed. IPA aided my exploring the processes of participants' individualized perceptions while providing clarity in my methods of perceptions.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I reviewed the collected perceptions of officer participants and drew observations of their experiences, maintaining an awareness of my influences effecting the responses of participants. In qualitative research, the researcher's reflexivity plays a significant role when articulating the researcher's position throughout the research process while conceptualizing what the researcher is aware of within the research topic (Jootun et al., 2009). Structured within this researcher's positioning is the ability to identify and collect the perceptions of the participants' responses within the phenomenon of interest; in essence, the researcher makes clear how the participants accounted for their perceptions within the phenomenon settings (Jootun et al., 2009). I addressed my collection of research data in this fashion while maintaining my awareness of any opportunity of my researcher bias stemming from my self-interpretation rather than from my objective collection of data.



I collected data from participants unfamiliar to me, except one who I knew but never worked with or had a personal association. My prior police experience provided a clear understanding of the environment from which my research data was collected. My longevity within the criminal justice field validated a familiarity with a real versus perceived and prescribed police behavior when I interacted with citizens. Additionally, cultural competency training I received during my police service was minimal. The current Indiana Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) training schedule demonstrates a similar lack of prioritizing cultural competency training, which I explored through participant experiences (IN.gov, 2019).

I understood the common language presented by officers because of my experience in policing. Communication through language – as Simmons-Mackie and Damico (2003) argued – are complexly intertwined within social interactions. Human language possesses an integrated complexity which is further affected by police cultural identity. The ability to comprehend officers' responses is benefited from a similarity of experiences and an understanding of policing protocols and expectations. However, I was aware of the potential for bias when collecting the officers' responses intended meaning versus assumed meaning and took care to use verbatim transcriptions of the collected interview responses that were member checked before data analysis to increase the research's trustworthiness validity (Candela, 2019).

My use of interviews supported my goal in collecting the data on the perceptions and lived experiences of officers' cultural competency engaged in police-Hispanic interactions, preserved accurately from the participant responses. In order to obtain the

desired number of participants, I became acquainted with the chiefs of police from the departments I chose for my research. I intended to establish a relationship, to facilitate any logistical requirements when conducting my interviews, which I would have preferred been conducted at a location chosen by the participant that allowed for privacy and comfort. The COVID-19 pandemic limited my meeting with department chiefs, curtailed my personal introductions to each department's potential pool of participants, and reduced my communication to emails and phone calls; however, I was able to meet once with chiefs from two departments, one on site and one at an offsite location. I strengthened my research's trustworthiness and the value of the data to support future research by obtaining knowledgeable responses with accurate interpretation from the participants, supported through member checking. My articulation of my data collection methods and analysis tools I incorporated including member checking, in vivo verbatim coding, and NVivo data coding software increased the level of trustworthiness in my research.

### **Methodology**

Police officers from 3 NWIPDs experiencing increased Hispanic population growth over the last 10 years were initially chosen to participate. Northwest Indiana possesses the highest number of municipal police entities in the state, and the local agencies have seen the Hispanic population grow in 10 years between 2000 and 2010 of 39.8% (U.S. Census, n.d.c). The U.S. census 2020 survey was not available to provide the 2010 to 2020 Hispanic population growth; however, the 2017 American community survey estimate indicated that Hispanic population increased in more than a dozen of the

suburban municipal jurisdictions in Northwest Indiana (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.b). The jurisdictions chosen for my research were in proximity to a large metropolitan city possessing a sizable Hispanic population, providing the means to increase the suburban Hispanic population due to ethnic migration.

### **Participant Selection**

As previously stated, I sought to obtain 18 participants randomly selected from three NWIPDs for this research. I sought participants from three additional departments due to low participation interest which is explained further in Chapter 4. Each NWIPD agency serves a different community population size, which also affects the number of officers in the department. The departments I selected represent communities experiencing Hispanic population increases in the last 5 to 10 years. The representation of NWIPDs align with suburban communities outside of Northwest Indiana experiencing increases in Hispanic populations, which allows for social and economic similarity when replicating the research parameters. Replicating this study would strengthen the trustworthiness of my research by developing a reference standard for assessing the existence and significance of cultural competency's influence on officer-Hispanic interactions as perceived by officers.

### **Identification of Participants**

I intended to meet with the chiefs of police to present my research and to seek permission to recruit participants from their departments. The COVID-19 pandemic affected my recruitment process and resulted in my recruiting of participants beginning with phone calls to the three NWIPD chiefs of police to present my research study and

seek permission to recruit participants from their departments. The NWIPDs that identified within the research parameters possessed individuals with knowledge and experience interacting with Hispanic citizens in communities that have seen an increase in Hispanic populations, but not every officer conducted these types of contacts regularly. Thus, it was essential to identify which individuals fit the research interest.

### **Sampling Method and Rationale**

Purposeful sampling of participants was employed to obtain the appropriate participants that possessed knowledge and experience supporting the research parameters. Purposeful sampling allows researchers to identify participants that possess a rich knowledge of the research interest (Palinkas et al., 2015; van Rijnsoever, 2017). When introducing my research to potential participants via email, a brief introduction of the research was accompanied by participants' inclusion parameters which required daily or near daily interactions with Hispanic citizens and a minimum of 5 years on street patrol. An offer to participate was presented to the entire road patrol populations of the three NWIPDs before I selected individuals demonstrating their professional experiences encompassing the parameters of the research focused and aligned with addressing the research questions through individual perceptions. Any officer interested in participating was asked to send an email acknowledging their interest. Viable research participants were confirmed upon my receiving the initial email response of participating interest.

Eighteen participants, six each from three NIWPDs were initially sought. Ultimately, nine officers from four NWIPDs participated in this research. In phenomenological research, a smaller participant pool is adequate to exhaust the

collection of all new concepts and themes but is best when data collected is “thick and rich” (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p.1409). Alase (2017) identified the ideal number of participants in phenomenological research lies “between 2 and 25” (p. 13). I anticipated reaching thick and rich data saturation with 18 participants but maintained the possibility of reaching data saturation with less or more participants. Due to low participation, additional officers from three additional NWIPDs, having met the parameters of the research, were solicited to participate in the research to reach data saturation with nine participants. I presented to the participants via email an informed consent to participate meeting the requirements of the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). While in person interviews are the accepted approach of qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2013), the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed my choice of interview style to a video or audio format which was stipulated by the IRB. Instead, I offered each chosen participant a phone interview, allowing the participant to secure a comfortable location to participate while allowing my choice of location to record the interview and minimize potential distraction, which was from home. I offered each participant their choice of day and time to complete the interview. Participants that were chosen to conduct the interview received a \$20.00 gift card for participation after completing their interview.

### **Instrumentation**

My data collection began with my identifying suburban police departments in Northwest Indiana that experienced an increase in Hispanic populations within the community over the last 10 years. I collected this data from the demographic breakdowns of individual Northwest Indiana community populations from the U.S. Census Bureau’s

2010 survey and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Fact Finder, which collects data from multiple censuses and survey resources including the 2017 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a).

I used semi structured interviews with questions I developed as the primary data collection method for my research. The use of interviews in qualitative research has been maintained is an accepted approach in data collection (Peters & Halcomb, 2015), that offers the opportunity to collect thick, meaningful data with explanation (Nelson et al., 2013). However, several structural approaches to interviews are accepted and the most appropriate format for my research was semi structured. Semi structured interviews, a less rigid approach than formal interviews, allowed for flexibility in the interview process by delving into participant responses in a meaningful way and to accurately capture the essence of the participant's response meaning (Mitchell, 2015). Semi structured interviews, presented with a limited set of predetermined open-ended questions (Mitchell, 2015) that allow for additional in-depth question exploration relative to the participant's initial response, offers researchers an enriching opportunity to delve into the participant's perceptions and experiences (Peters & Halcomb, 2015). By employing open-ended questions, I provided the participant the opportunity to respond to a neutrally presented prompt with little suggestive direction for the response.

Additionally, semi structured interviews employed in my study offered a conceptual exploration into the participant's unique understanding of the effects of their experience influencing interactions with Hispanic citizens. Each interview lasted between 27 and 49 minutes, minimizing the time participants spent away from their professional

or personal lives. I employed two recording devices to record each interview in full. Prior to the interview, I presented to each participant a short introduction to my research, reconfirmed their consent to participate, and asked for their understanding of their rights as participants. During the interview, I gave participants time to reflect on each question and respond fully and gave them time for final comments at the interview conclusion. The interviews were transcribed verbatim using NVivo transcription service and checked by me for verbatim response accuracy and a copy of the response transcript was sent to each participant for member checking. Each participant was given a 7-day time limit to respond to the transcript and present any edits for accuracy or changes in response. If I received no response within the 7-day time limit, then I assumed the transcript was an accurate representation of the interview and used for data analysis. All participant interviews were conducted over a 2-month period between September 9 and October 21, 2020.

I also made notations before and after each interview which provided an additional source of data. After each interview, I noted observations and comments from interviewing the participants, including my impressions and interpretations to demonstrate my neutrality and maintain data transparency throughout the data collection and analysis processes. I incorporated my collective notes and memos to further check for accuracy as well as triangulate my data. The use of bracketing of the researcher's predisposed concepts, impressions, and suppositions, when applying an IPA to extend rigor to qualitative research has been debated. Moustakas (1994) purported that the value of phenomenological research lied in the description of an individual's experiences as

opposed to the researcher's interpretation. As such, Moustakas (1994) conceptualized bracketing to separate the researcher's influences on the reported experiences. The contrasting views of Husserl to remove any preexisting impressions versus Heidegger's view that total removal of impressions is impossible due to the exposure of the researcher to the environment in which the research is conducted is debated (Snelgrove, 2014). In my research, I conducted reflexive bracketing of my presuppositions, along with my pre- and post-interview reflection, to provide an intuitive interpretative analysis. I used in vivo verbatim coding during data analysis to reduce my interpretation of responses to capture the actualized meaning and intent of the participant's response.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

I used NVivo data analysis software in the data analysis process. As I completed each interview transcript, I uploaded the recording to the NVivo transcription service and obtained a written transcript. I reviewed the transcript for verbatim word accuracy by listening to the original interview and identified any discrepancies that existed between the participant response and the NVivo transcription. I then sent the accurate copy to the participant and asked them to confirm the accuracy of the responses and make any necessary edits. Each participant was given 7 days to review their interview transcript. If I received no response from the participant in 7 days, I assumed the transcript was accurate. If I felt a participant in the research study appeared to be less than truthful in their response, then I would exclude the participant's responses from the research and report it in Chapter 4. I found no evidence of discrepancies and felt each participant was truthful in their interview responses.



I hand coded each interview using in vivo first cycle coding, followed by pattern coding to identify any duplication and commonality in the participants responses. I developed categories from the codes, then reduced the categories to initial themes. I then employed NVivo data analysis software to compare to my hand coding, identifying any new codes or categories and recurring themes in the participants' responses. I sought to explore each participant's perceptions of cultural competency and cultural competency's influence when interacting with Hispanic populations. I identified recurrent themes in the responses which offered insight into what social, organizational, and independent influences affected the development of cultural competency in officers. By identifying these influences, my research may improve cultural competency education and provide support to officers serving culturally prominent populations.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Any researcher must be confident in their research process and the authenticity of their research results. Quantitative researchers explore the validity and replicability of their research as a product of rigor in achieving the research findings (Claydon, 2015). Qualitative researchers validate their research, similarly, considering the research rigor through trustworthiness, demonstrating the certainty of the research protocols assuring the research quality (Connelly, 2016). Researchers demonstrate research trustworthiness by incorporating the elements of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Connelly, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), each presenting a specific context to strengthen the research process confidence. My research addressed each

element, assuring my research process and results were trustworthy and could be replicated in similar research studies.

### **Credibility**

A researcher's credibility advances "the truth of the study and therefore its findings" supported by incorporating a research methodology like other accepted studies (Connelly, 2016, p. 435). Research credibility is recognized as a critical component of qualitative research trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My research, grounded in the EST framework incorporated in many professional studies on cultural competency acquisition (Barron & Dasli, 2010; Fitzgerald et al., 2018; Tabatadze & Gorgadze, 2018), was applied to an underexplored profession of policing. My research also incorporated a DMIS conceptual framework, adapted from the quantitative survey measurement of police officer's cultural competency acumen (IDI) and the supporting intercultural development plan (IDP) discussed in Chapter 5, demonstrating the reflexiveness of DMIS and the potential for the use of IDI (IDI, LLC, 2020). While I did not use IDI in my qualitative research due to its limited capacity to obtain descriptive perceptions and experiences of the participant, I employed the conceptual cornerstone of DMIS, appropriate in interpreting cultural sensitivity in the participants' responses. I incorporated triangulation of responses from multiple participants from different police agencies (Belotto, 2018) and the aforementioned member checking of data collected from the participants' response for accuracy (Candela, 2019), maintaining the credibility of my research process.

**Dependability**

Connelly (2016) described dependability as a function of research stability relative to the research study dynamics. A researcher's dependability is reliant upon clearly articulating the research processes along with the researcher communicating the rationale for their research process choices, concerns, and variants that transpire unexpectedly or by design. I detailed all processes employed in my study to increase my research dependability. An audit trail of my research notes was maintained during the data collection and analysis process. Researcher audit trails confirm what research study processes were used, reporting any challenges or research deviations that may have arisen (Hadi & José Closs, 2016). Additionally, researchers maintaining audit trails provide a reflective history, limiting departures from the research parameters while allowing the reader to understand how the researcher arrived at their conclusions from developing their interpretation of the data (Hadi & José Closs, 2016).

**Confirmability**

A researcher's study confirmability possesses traits that support dependability to ensure the replication of the research can be achieved in a similar research setting. After I interviewed each participant, I reviewed each interview for verbatim response accuracy and submitted a copy via email to the participant for member checking and to make any edits or comments. A critical element of phenomenological research is to capture the participant's experiential essence of their experience since the accuracy of this verbiage and explanation is critical for truthful analysis. By allowing each participant to member check, confirmability is strengthened (Candela, 2019). I maintained memo notes as the

methodological processes of the research unfolded, identifying issues that might affect any research process concerns that could affect the authentication and verification of my analysis. My use of audit trails served to explore research conceptualizations of the data identified in my memos and field research notes, including any identified researcher biases and how they might affect the analysis. Triangulation of data was incorporated into this research study. A researcher's use of data triangulation strengthens the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the data (Ang et al., 2017). I established data triangulation in this research by incorporating participants from multiple NWIPDs working within a similar environment. Officers from the department included in my study experience unique organizational establishment of policy and procedures, and coupled with a diversification of population, the diversity of participants afforded a triangulation of data results (Ang et al., 2017; Flick, 2018). Finally, I incorporated theoretical and conceptual elements accepted in existing qualitative studies within my research which offered credence in the confirmability of my research design.

### **Transferability**

A central element of my research is the transferability of my research methods to other suburban communities experiencing similar Hispanic population expanses and the subsequent impact on officers. My research's transferability lies in its ability to resonate with individuals in comparable conditions (Connelly, 2016). By conducting this research, I sought to inform police organizations and administrations of the significance of cultural competency in officers impacting police Hispanic interactions. As with a research's dependability, the thick, rich explanation of the research methodology and rationale I

provided will aid in replicating this research in similar police and other professional settings that engage in professional-minority citizen interactions.

### **Authenticity**

Connelly (2016) identified an additional element of qualitative research trustworthiness as authenticity, which embodies the magnitude of truthfulness and completeness when capturing participants' lived experiences through accurate means. A generalization of findings is of lesser importance than the uniqueness of the individual experience. Connelly (2016) recognized the importance of this element as an "advantage of qualitative research to portray fully the deep meaning of a phenomenon to increase readers' understanding" (p. 436). My research's authenticity is supported by the elements of trustworthiness in providing appropriate research protocols, relevant research participants, and a "rich, detailed description" of the research data collection and analysis (Connelly, 2016, p. 436).

In summary, by incorporating the elements identified above in this research, achieving transparency and "systematicity" (Ballie, 2015, p.38) in presenting the data collection and analysis process, the trustworthiness of my research's results is elevated.

### **Ethical Considerations**

When conducting research with human participants, ethical considerations are of the highest priority. During my research, I sought to attain the highest level of ethical behavior, even at the sacrifice of collecting data. As aforementioned, my experience in the criminal justice field offered a familiarity with the profession, procedures, and general protocols associating with police work and police-citizen interactions. Nevertheless, my

familiarity of the policing profession and related processes was tempered with a lack of personal familiarity with each NWIPDs policies and procedures, as well as my limited familiarity, as previously discussed with the participants chosen for my research.

### **Access to Participants**

As a researcher, I maintained strict compliance with all of the university IRB requirements throughout the research process, beginning with my submission of IRB's Form A (Walden University, 2020). My prior review of IRB's Form A highlighted a significant element of my research that no vulnerable populations would be recruited for research participation. I completed all additional requirements and modifications to the proposed research as required by IRB and received research approval (07-30-20-0746498) before beginning my data collection.

As stated previously, the COVID-19 pandemic eliminated presenting my research study to the participants in person. My request to meet in person with the chiefs of police of the selected NWIPDs was modified to a description of the research presented in a phone call followed with an email including the research introduction, the recruitment letter, and the IRB approved consent form (one NWIPD chief informed he was not interested in his department participating). Any officer expressing participation interest was asked to send an email or phone text indicating their interest. Once I received the interest notification, I sent the participant a copy of the IRB compliant consent form which contained a further description of my research study. In the consent, the participant was reminded they could stop or refuse to respond to a question if they felt compelled. The consents were printed and stored in a locked safe. I again informed each participant

that participation was strictly voluntary and anonymous as stipulated in the consent form at the time of the interview. Each participant included in my study was initially given a code identifying to this researcher the participant's department and participation number (P1D1, P1D2, P2D4) to maintain anonymity. This code was further reduced in Chapter 4 to eliminate the department identifier (P01, P02, P03). All electronic correspondence to and from the research participants will be deleted from my password protected computer upon completion of the dissertation.

### **Interview Data Collection**

The COVID-19 pandemic altered my plan of in person interviews and resulted in IRB requiring the interviews be conducted through video or audio. I chose to conduct interviews via phone to reduce the burden on the participants of finding a private location and having technology to conduct a video interview. Prior to the interview, I again presented the participant an introduction to the research and reconfirmed their consent to participate. During the interview, I maintained appropriate language, tone, and volume when presenting the research questions. Each interview was completed within a 45-minute window as identified before beginning, with additional time required and approved by one participant. Upon completion of the interview, I advised the participant that a verbatim copy of their interview will be sent via email and they were asked to confirm the accuracy of their responses and make any edits necessary. I informed each participant they had seven days to respond by email with any corrections or response edits and advised if no response was offered, I would assume that the response data collected was accurate. I coded each electronic copy of the interview, which was stored

on my password protected computer. Each participant received a \$20.00 Visa gift card for their time spent in conducting the interview that I delivered to their department. The remuneration was not demonstrated as an incentive by any participant to participate, as several participants advised it was not necessary or expected. While I intended to replace any participant who elected at any time to withdraw from the research study with one of the other participating departments described in Chapter 4, no replacement participants were required.

I sent the audio recording of the interview electronically to NVivo transcription for a written transcript. All information collected in electronic form was stored on my password protected laptop computer. During the data collection and analysis no paper copies of the interview transcripts were made. All digital and hard copies of the data and participant consents will be stored for a minimum of 5 years as required by the university and then destroyed by shredding and burning.

### **Summary**

My qualitative study explored how cultural competency affects the perceptions and experiences of police officers in three suburban community police departments experiencing increasing Hispanic populations. I chose an interpretative phenomenological application to delve into the essence of the experience of the officer captured in semi structured interviews of officers from NWIPDs experiencing similar Hispanic population increases and maintained trustworthiness within my research methodology. My research interviews were conducted in compliance with IRB guidelines to protect the participants from harm. I maintained interviewing and anonymity



safeguards for the protection of the participants participating in the interviews. Issues of trustworthiness, including the protection of data, transparency of my researcher role and potential bias, and transferability employed by my research data collection and analysis are presented in detail in Chapter 4.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore individual officer perceptions of culture, cultural competency, and cultural competency effects when interacting with an increasing Hispanic population in NWIPDs. I applied an IPA approach to capture the essence of the meaning of the experience relative to the world experience of the occurrence (Alase, 2017; Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015) using the authentic verbiage of the participants (Pringle et al., 2011). The theoretical approach to this research was grounded within Bronfenbrenner's (1977, 1979) EST, which posits that individuals are influenced in their development through interactions with other individuals and the changing properties of the environment in which the interactions occur. The influences of each concentric EST ring, with a particular interest on the macrosystem's effect evolving an officer's cultural competency, is where this research was situated. I also employed Bennet's (1986) DMIS scale, identifying participants' cultural competency ranging from ethnocentric to ethnorelative positions within a linear progression template.

I solicited six NWIPDs and obtained nine participants. Twenty-eight open-ended and follow-up probing questions exploring the officers' perceptions of and experiences in culture and cultural competency and the influence of Hispanics in the community were presented in a semi structured interview format. Data were collected through individual officer phone interviews from several NWIPDs. In Chapter 4 I discuss the research setting, participant demographics, the data collection process, data analysis, and the

resulting data themes in-depth. Additionally, I address the various tenets of trustworthiness and data findings and present a final summary.

In this research I sought to gain insight for the following research questions:

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population?

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

### **Research Setting**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the requirements IRB placed limitations on my intended in-person recruitment and data collection methods. COVID-19 resulted in the NWIPDs limiting in-person access, including complete lockdown from public access. Participant recruitment was initiated through email and phone calls to the department chiefs or assistant chiefs as directed.

Initially, I identified three suburban NWIPDs as appropriate for my study due to the increase in the Hispanic population of approximately 10% since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a, n.d.c). Upon receiving IRB approval (07-30-20-0746498), I contacted three department chiefs by phone and email beginning on August 17, 2020, presenting the study and the recruitment letter for dispersal to the officers. Participant recruitment proceeded slowly. One police department elected not to participate in any research. Three additional NWIPDs demonstrating Hispanic population growths over 7.5% since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a, n.d.c) were added. Recruitment continued with follow-up calls and emails, culminating in 30 phone calls and 23 emails sent between August 17

and October 27, 2020. Eighty-six participants from 150 potential participants (patrol officers and supervisors on the road) from the five departments comprised the participant pool identified through purposive sampling those officers with at least 5 years of daily patrol interaction experience in an NWIPD and day-to-day interactions with citizens. Each chief or assistant chief forwarded the recruitment letter a minimum of four times to their officers.

I sought to obtain 18 officers for this research, but nine officers from four NWIPDs responded to participate between September 5, 2020, and October 22, 2020. In qualitative research, the number of participants is significantly lower than in quantitative research analysis. Phenomenological research acknowledges that the desired participant number "can be between 2 and 25" (Alase, 2017, p. 13). Participants providing "thick and rich" (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p.1409) responses increases data saturation. Snowball sampling was attempted as a secondary recruitment method; however, no participating officers recruiting other officers occurred. All nine officers (n = 9) met the participation criteria and were accepted. Two participants had not completed a 5-year tour at their current department but met the 5-year requirement for patrol in a suburban NWIPD in the same county. While I entertained adding additional participants during the analysis phase, no additional participants presented themselves. Further potential reasons for the low participant turnout are discussed in Chapter 5.

### **Participant Demographics**

Each participant was assigned a coded pseudonym to maintain their anonymity while keeping their department of employment clear. A second code identifying the

participant was assigned to increase anonymity (P01, P02, P03...). All nine participants identified themselves as male (the combined total of potential participant female patrol officers in the five departments was eight). Five participants identified as Caucasian, two participants identified as Hispanic, and two identified as African American or Black. The participants' age ranged between 28 and 50. The participants' patrol time ranged from 5 to 30 years. Two participants were patrol supervisors, three participants split assignment time between patrol and school resource officer, and four participants were assigned only patrol duties.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection commenced on September 9, 2020 and the final interview was completed on October 30, 2020. Once I received either a text or email of interest, I emailed each participant the IRB approved consent form along with the interview questions (Appendix B) to preview before the interview. Each participant emailed the signed consent form or provided an email stating their consent to participate. Nine officers from four departments responded between September 5 and October 22, 2020.

### **Interviews**

I chose to conduct the interviews by phone call. I preferred conducting in-person interviews; however, the university's IRB restricted interviewing to a distance format due to COVID-19. I chose to forgo video interviews such as Zoom based on the officers' availability to interview, access to a private location, the technology to participate in a video interview, and the officers' time constraints. Each research participant agreed to conducting a phone interview. Interviews were completed on a day and time mutually

agreed upon. Before starting the interview, I presented a scripted short background and purpose for the research. I also reconfirmed that each participant was participating voluntarily and confirming their consent to participate and record the interview. Each participant received the same questions, with additional probing or confirmatory questions added when applicable. I used a Sony ICD-PX470 stereo digital voice recorder with a SanDisk Ultra Plus Micro SDHC UHS-1 card as the primary source for recording the phone interviews and the subsequent transcription. I also employed an Onn cassette recorder with Groove Onn 90-minute cassette tapes for a back-up recording. Paper notes were also taken during the interview. All interviews were completed in one session, with eight interviews completed without interruption. One interview was interrupted twice by the call being dropped on the participant's side, and an immediate call back was made. Each interview lasted between 27 and 49 minutes, totaling 305 minutes (5 hours, 5 minutes).

Once completed, I uploaded each interview from the micro-S.D. card to NVivo's transcription service online on my password protected MacBook Air laptop. Next, I edited the NVivo transcription by listening to the tape and digital recordings to ensure the verbatim response accuracy, adding such utterances as "uh," "um," and "okay." I emailed participants their edited interview transcription for member-checking, allowing them 7 calendar days to respond with any corrections or edits. Five participants responded, advising no revisions were needed. After 7 calendar days, I assumed all transcripts were accurate, as stipulated in the email. Each participant received a \$20.00 Visa gift card, that I delivered to each officer's department.

## **Data Analysis**

A researcher's entrenched immersion into the collected data is a mandate in qualitative studies that demonstrates a sound research approach coupled with a researcher's imaginative, interpretative flair (Maher et al., 2018). I began my data analysis by transferring 108 total pages of interview script data to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to aid in the hand coding of the data. Excel provided a simple data management tool for maintaining the response data while coding, allowing me to identify like responses and developing themes. During the transfer of data, I identified two questions I failed to present to one participant. I emailed the questions to the participant, an IRB approved action outlined in the consent form, and the participant emailed completed responses. I completed the data transfer onto the Excel spreadsheet on November 4, 2020.

## **Data Coding**

I began initial coding on November 6, 2020. In qualitative research a standard coding process is not identified, allowing the researcher their choice of coding style and approach (Belotto, 2018). I considered various hand coding methods and chose in vivo coding to complete first cycle coding. In vivo coding is appropriate for phenomenological research, allowing the researcher to present the participants' lived experiences given in their exact verbiage (Adams, 2019; Saldaña, 2016). Verbatim participant responses increase the capacity to acquire the responses' essence, immersing the researcher in the response (Adams, 2019; Saldaña, 2016). I read each participants' responses multiple times, highlighting significant words or phrases.

I employed a mix of splitting, assigning a code to every line, and lumping, assigning a code every several lines, as I developed the in vivo codes (Saldaña, 2016). The identified codes were entered into an adjacent column to the participants' responses on the Excel spreadsheet. Next, I created a Word document collecting the identified codes. My first cycle coding generated a combined 1,093 in vivo codes from the nine participants' responses requiring 15 hours over 2 days to complete. I then clustered the codes into smaller hunks to improve the manageability of the data. I completed a second cycle coding using pattern coding which helps the researcher identify repeating code frequencies and reduces repetitive codes into smaller, more manageable amounts of data to conceptualize categories (Saldaña, 2016). As the coding process progressed, I recognized several recurrent themes emerging. Once I identified the themes, I highlighted key participants' responses, exemplifying the themes noted.

After I completed hand coding the participants' responses, I employed NVivo 12 data analysis software to analyze the data further. Researchers using qualitative data analysis software are provided various tools to identify codes and capture emerging categories and themes presented in qualitative data that may be overlooked from traditional hand-coding methods, which increases the research's credibility (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2016). Using NVivo, I completed a word frequency analysis of the participants' transcripts identifying the 35 most recurrent words appearing in the combined nine interviews. These words included *knows, culture, Hispanic, okay, like, interactions, just, understanding, community, feel, trainings, competent, great, officer, changed, one, experiences, personal, population, police, different, mean, way, think,*



*going, kind, things, get, time, Spanish, right, trying, people, lot, and works.* I performed a similar word frequency query on the hand coded in vivo first cycle code list and identified the top 35 words which included, in order of frequency, *cultures, understand, Hispanic, training, different, Spanish, community, personal, know, learn, experiences, way, officer, interact, language, speak, treat, one, respect, police, trying, changes, get, people, law, barrier, things, positive, communicate, enforcement, group, job, professional, and successful.* I created a word cloud and word tree for the recurrent words using NVivo which are provided in Appendix C and D.

Next, I completed an NVivo auto coding of each transcript, not to code the participants' responses, but to identify any commonality between my hand coding and NVivo code to confirm coding validity. I identified 513 codes from the combined nine interviews. When I analyzed the codes collectively through NVivo, 294 shared codes were identified. The 15 recurring codes identified on the shared code list include, in order of frequency, *culture, training, cultural competency, interaction, community, population, Hispanic population, police, Hispanic culture, Hispanic citizen, position, officer, and approach.* I reviewed the NVivo codes with the prior frequency lists to highlight any recurrent themes, demonstrating the thematic analysis (TA) of my data analysis process. I examined the identified themes to determine the research questions were answered. I completed coding and theme development on November 18, 2020.

### **Codes, Categories, and Themes**

As previously stated, the first round of in vivo coding produced 1,093 codes which was reduced to 148 in the second round. Second cycle pattern coding resulted in

the data reduction to 14 categories. I cross referenced the NVivo common word lists for shared words and concepts to deepen categorical accuracy. The identified categories included *population, comprehension, cultural identity, behavior, viewpoint, life experience, education and training, self-reflection, motivation, job performance, engagement, communication, and cultural acumen*. I extrapolated three themes from the categories that participants' impressions, perceptions, and comprehensions when interacting with Hispanic citizens, addressing the research question's crux to explore officers' perceptions of experiences and interactions with Hispanic citizens: (a) Theme 1, the influence of increased Hispanic migration into suburban communities on policing is underrecognized and under addressed; (b) Theme 2, cultural competency in officers is developed through a lifetime of experiences; and (c) Theme 3, successful individual engagement with Hispanic citizens are reflective individually in officers' motivations to become culturally competent. Descriptive subthemes supplemented with participant responses are embedded within each theme to further enhance participants' perceptions and experiences.

### **DMIS Scale**

During the data analysis, I employed the DMIS scale to position each participant based on my perception of their cultural competency based on participants' responses. I employed no formal measuring tool, such as IDI used to measure cultural competency in an individual (Hammer et al., 2003) due to the IDI being used for quantitative data analysis. Exploring the participants' perceptions of culture and cultural competency, presented in their words allowed me to conceptualize their position on the DMIS scale.

**Data Analysis Discrepancies**

The codes, categories, and themes presented in my research reflected each participant's impressions that was authenticated and presented in their verbatim words. I did not identify any data analysis discrepancies in this research.

**Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Connelly (2016) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) recognized the value of qualitative research rigor through the viewpoint of trustworthiness. Qualitative research trustworthiness includes elements parallel to quantitative research validity, including credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity) (Guba, 1981a, as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I employed several strategies to increase my research's trustworthiness and reduce the potential for researcher bias by focusing on providing thick, rich descriptions in participants' responses and member checked for correctness.

**Credibility**

The credibility of any research is based on the study's truthfulness of the study's outcome (Connelly, 2016). My research's credibility was anchored in the meticulously described processes I incorporated in my research study. Additionally, my research's credibility was supported through member checking. I sent each participant a verbatim transcription of their original interview to be checked for accuracy, edit where needed, and add any additional information relative to the research topic (Candela, 2019). Table 1 provides the timeline for interview, transcription, and member checking by the participants.

**Table 1*****Interview and Member-Checking Timeline***

Participant	Interview date	Transcribe (NVivo)	Verbatim transcription (researcher)	Transcription member-checked	Revision needed
P01	9-09-2020	9-16-2020	9-17-2020	7 days-no response	No
P02	9-14-2020	9-16-2020	9-18-2020	7 days-no response *	No
P03	9-14-2020	9-16-2020	9-22-2020	7 days-no response	No
P04	9-30-2020	10-01-2020	10-02-2020	10-05-2020	No
P05	10-02-2020	10-02-2020	10-05-2020	10-06-2020	No
P06	10-08-2020	10-09-2020	10-14-2020	10-15-2020	No
P07	10-20-2020	10-20-2020	10-21-2020	7 days, no response	No
P08	10-21-2020	10-21-2020	10-22-2020	10-23-2020	No
P09	10-30-2020	10-30-2020	11-01-2020	11-04-2020	No

*Note: Participants were advised that if there was no response by the seventh day of receiving the transcription, an assumption of accuracy presides.*

*\*Two questions that were not presented in the original interview were emailed on October 7, 2020.*

*Responses received on October 18, 2020.*

**Dependability**

The dependability of my research was achieved through a thick, meticulous explanation of the research approach, including the unexpected modifications and challenges I faced, primarily acquiring participants. My use of purposive sampling revealed that every participant, acquired through the approved IRB process, met the research criteria. I attempted to use snowball sampling to gain additional participants with zero results. My interview process, from the initial contact through the final edit of the participants' transcript, and my data analysis processes described above, were explained in detail. I maintained a document recording all electronic and phone contacts, along with any reflexive prompts identified from the interviews. Additionally, I noted

reflections throughout the data collection and analysis process and any researcher reflections relevant to the research findings were assimilated into my research study.

### **Confirmability**

Lincoln and Guba (1981) posit that confirmability is best achieved through an audit trail of the researcher's processes and subsequent reflections, assumptions, and inferences to the data. I established an audit trail to explain my interview development, interview implementation, data collection, data accuracy, and data analysis preparation. Further, by developing the Excel data spreadsheet for recording the initial hand coding of data provided the basis for developing categories and themes compared to the codes identified by NVivo software, strengthening the confirmability of the results. Finally, the themes I identified through data analysis were supported by the research's theoretical and conceptual anchors grounded in existing research exploring cultural awareness and cultural competency development in other professional settings.

### **Transferability**

The transferability of any research study depends on the research's ability to resonate with individuals in different areas facing similar constructs (Connelly, 2016). I used a thick, rich description of the research focus, participant selection, and data collection and analysis to provide research transferability. I collected responses from officer participants serving in four NWIPDs experiencing a Hispanic population increase of a minimum of 7% over the last 10 years (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a, n.d.c). Unexpectedly, officer participation was not as forthcoming as I anticipated, which

required me to solicit additional departments meeting the population increase criteria to obtain enough participants to reach data saturation within the identified themes.

### **Authenticity**

As Connelly (2016) identified, qualitative research authenticity depends on the degree of truthfulness and totality in which the participants' lived experiences are accurately presented. To this end, I captured each of the participants' lived experiences in their verbatim responses, member checked for accuracy, and which were maintained within in vivo coding during the initial coding sequence to capture any culturally indigenous language (Saldaña, 2016).

African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic officers participated in my study, conveyed their experiential interpretations in a language comfortable to their own background. Additionally, the influences of each officer's evolving community makeup, length of service, and policing subculture may have been demonstrated in their responses. I identified noteworthy participant responses addressing the defined themes which are presented in the verbatim quotes in Appendix F. I remained mindful to avoid assumptions when collected the participants' responses and relied upon their explanations of how they interpreted their experiences instead of any natural inclinations to assume I understood their position. As I reviewed the transcripts, I was surprised to find on two occasions, the participant asked if I understood what their response meant, and I acknowledged I did to elicit further descriptive responses; however, the participant's responses were highly detailed and required no interpretation of their perception of their experience.

## Data Results

In my research, I sought answers to the following questions:

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population?

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

The interview questions posed to the participants explored the following tenets: culture and cultural competency definition and comprehension, police department training, education, and cultural development support, Hispanic interactional experiences in the community, community positioning, and Hispanic influences impacting interaction approach experienced, presented in the interview script in Appendix 2. Each participant's cultural interaction experiences prior to their policing careers differed, yet there were cultural interactional similarities present in their policing experiences.

When codifying the themes by categorizing the participants' response codes, the responses addressing the two research questions became less clearly defined and presented more of a shared experiential influence of culture and cultural competency developed through interactional engagement. The constructs of culture, cultural awareness, and cultural competency shared varying levels of significance in each participant which was predicated by early familial and community influences, progressing through police culture and training into professional interactions with Hispanic citizens. I identified common threads of culture and cultural competency comprehension that equated to positively influence community interactions which

suggested that officer self-motivation was the leading factor to improving police-Hispanic interactions. Questions I posed to the participants revealed their perceptions of culture and cultural competency experienced when engaging with Hispanic citizens.

When looking at officer perceptions of culture and cultural competency and how an increasing Hispanic community might affect their perceptions, a consideration must be given to the participant's prior exposure to Hispanic influences. The nine participants came from urban, suburban, and rural community upbringing in their formative years. Three participants (33%) identified themselves as growing up in a mixed-race community with Hispanic and African American populations comprising the other primary races, three participants (33%) identified an increasing mix of cultures in their communities over time, and three participants (33%) identified growing up in a primarily Caucasian community culture.

### **Theme 1: The Influence of Increased Hispanic Migration Into Suburban Communities on Policing Is Underrecognized and Under Addressed**

The questions reflected in developing this theme include: (a) During your years of service at this department, have you experienced a change in the Hispanic population; (b) What training in Hispanic culture have you received as an officer; (c) How has cultural training changed with the increase of the Hispanic population; (d) How is cultural competency measured in your department; and (e) How is cultural competency encouraged in your department?

All nine participants (100%) worked in a diverse cultural community their entire police careers, in their current or combined current and prior department. A disparity



exists in the participants' perceived increase in the Hispanic population in their community. Five participants (56%) stated they saw an increase of Hispanic people in the community and four participants (44%) did not recognize or felt there was no Hispanic growth.

All participants stated that formal training on Hispanic culture as nonexistent. As expressed by P04, "Um, (chuckle), that's a good question. Uh, I'm going to say minimal. Uh, actually, I wouldn't even say training." Similarly, P07 responded, "In Hispanic culture? Me, personally, none. Um, most of our training is in general. For example, domestic violence situations, which transcends all culture in races. Um, but for the most part, um, most-my department and most departments I would say, uh, there isn't a group specific-a cultural specific training." Five participants (55%) received cultural diversity, implicit bias training, and survival Spanish courses. Four participants (44%) identified that they received some or no activity engagement to promote a general cultural awareness not focused on Hispanic culture. Eight participants (89%) viewed the existing training as "poor," "almost zero," and "non-existent." None of the participants (0%) recognized any change in Hispanic culture training resulting from an increase in their community's Hispanic population. Additionally, none of the participants (0%) recognized any formal means of measuring officers' cultural competency in their department. As reflected by P03, "I don't think there is a measurement for it. I don't know how it would be measured, but I, I, I would say that it is not currently measured." One participant (11%) indicated that he evaluated an officer engaging in a Hispanic interaction performance was based on the interaction outcome and he offered follow up training after

debriefing the officer to address any interaction shortcomings. Another participant (11%) believed that measuring cultural competency used a "common sense" approach to judge the officer's cultural acumen.

The participants' responses revealed a disparity existed in administrations promoting cultural competency development in officers. Four participants (44%) identified receiving a mixed level of encouragement by their administration to participate in cultural awareness training and culturally influenced community engagement. As stated by P02: "Our chief of police is very, um, culturally aware, I should say, um and he engages our officers to get out in the community, to know the people in the community, um, and with knowing the people clearly is to understand the different cultures that are within our community." Two participants (22%) reported receiving community interaction encouragement by their chiefs of police. One participant (11%) felt that individual officers' motivations drove them to seek cultural development training, and two participants (22%) identified receiving no departmental or administrative encouragement for community interaction. As P04 stated, "No true encouragement comes from the administration. It's pretty much at the shift level amongst your, your local peers, and your immediate supervisors."

## **Theme 2: Cultural Competency in Officers Is Developed Through a Lifetime of Influences**

The questions reflected in developing this theme include: (a) How do you define culture; (b) How do you define cultural competency; and (c) How have you developed an understanding of cultural competency?

The participants' definitions of cultural competency were mixed, but all nine participants (100%) recognized that familial influence played a role in defining cultural awareness. Participants identified additional cultural competency attributes including norms, customs, traits, beliefs, history, and traditional beliefs within a defined group, passed down over time. As expressed by eight participants (89%), cultural competency is developed through a willingness to understand another culture. As P02 proffered, "I have developed an understanding of cultural competency by educating myself on different cultures that are a part of the community in which I serve. I know that I have to have an understanding of these different cultures to better serve them." Seven participants (77%) stated that on the job experience improved their cultural competency understanding.

The participants responses revealed that officer cultural knowledge is achieved in multiple ways. All nine participants (100%) credited their knowledge of culture stemmed initially from family influences. Community cultural makeup, religious exposure, self-education, and some training, as identified by one participant (11%), comprised the elements that developed the officer's cultural competency. Three participants (33%) credited their job experiences in furthering their cultural competency development. As explained by P07, "Uh, through my experiences on the job, and I had-I understand that dealing with certain cultures and that, uh, you have to approach them in different ways."

When participants offered examples of engagement with Hispanic individuals, education and life experiences were identified as influential in improving police-Hispanic citizens interactions. Communication, specifically a language barrier, was a recurring

tenet within the experiences described by all nine participants (100%). Three participants (33%) informed that they used a translating device such as Babble, while two participants (22%) admitted to deferring to a Spanish speaking officer for assistance.

### **Theme 3: Successful Engagement With Hispanic Citizens Is Reflective in Individual Officer Motivations to Become Culturally Competent**

The questions reflected in developing this theme include: (a) Do you feel culture matters when interacting with a culturally identified individual; (b) How has your perception of the effect of cultural competency changed when interacting with Hispanic citizens during your career; (c) As an officer experiencing/engaging in Hispanic interactions, how would you identify yourself positioned in the Hispanic culture?

Eight participants (88%) stated that mattered when interacting with a culturally identified individual, with four participants (44%) stating an emphatic "absolutely." As explained by P03, "Oh, it completely matters. You have to be—you have to be able to somewhat recognize their culture and figure out how to resolve the issue. Um, the way you interact with one culture may not be the same way you interact with another culture to resolve the same issue." Conversely, P01 felt culture did not matter because everyone was treated equally: "Uh, I would say no, because like I said again, I go back to you treat whoever you're dealing with, with dignity and respect than that's all that really matters. Whatever their culture is shouldn't matter because I still believe that everyone, once again, should be treated with dignity and respect." All nine participants (100%) expressed support for the need for cultural awareness and competency gleaned through experienced interactions. Legal status, Hispanic familial expectations, communication, officer legality

to enforce laws, and policing quality in their country of origin were also recognized by the participants as negatively affecting officer-Hispanic interactions.

The effect of the increasing Hispanic population on police-Hispanic interactions was not recognized equally by all the participants. Five participants (55%) felt their interaction approach with Hispanic citizens had not changed over their career. Two participants (55%) expressed that their communication skills had improved. One participant (11%) identified he felt more "outgoing" when communicating with Hispanic people, and 1 participant (11%) felt that their engagement with Hispanics was minimal, so little focus was addressed on improving their interaction engagement.

Participant perceptions of their position within the Hispanic culture were individualized as well. Five participants (55%) stated that their position within the Hispanic community formed a combined personal and professional identity, three participants (33%) perceived a personal position, and one participant (11%) viewed himself in a professional position. Two participants (22%) felt removed from the Hispanic culture, four participants (44%) felt "comfortable" and "accepted," and two participants (22%) felt they were being judged.

Individual motivations for improving Hispanic engagement were clearly defined by the participants but maintained a limited focus on cultural competency change. All participants desired proper job performance when interacting with Hispanic citizens. All nine participants (100%) repeatedly demonstrated their goal to perform their job correctly and successfully. Two participants (22%) reflected upon discretion in performing their duties when interacting with Hispanic individuals, explaining that actions deemed

inappropriate in this country may not be in their home country. Three participants (33%) identified that familial practices and expectations were influential in taking discretionary actions. Two participants (22%) acknowledged the importance of their reputations which they felt was exemplified by successful Hispanic and other cultural interactions. Three participants (33%) reflected on having pride when they successfully engaged with Hispanic citizens, and one participant (11%) felt "accomplished" because of a successful culturally influenced interaction. All nine participants (100%) identified that respect was a prerequisite behavior when interacting with citizens and eight participants (89%) felt a willingness to learn and understand an individual's culture was deemed necessary.

Communication, while not within my research's focus, was a repetitive theme within the participants' responses. All nine participants (100%) stated offers needed to possess practical communication skills in speaking and understanding Spanish. Three participants (33%) admitted to seeking out or being sought themselves as a Spanish speaking officer to assist another officer when interacting with a Hispanic citizen, four participants (44%) attempted to learn Spanish, and two participants (22%) indicated they "worked through it."

The Hispanic population effect on the police-Hispanic interaction approaches was not equally recognized by all the participants' responses. Five participants (55%) felt that they did not change their interaction approach with Hispanic citizens, two participants (22%) felt that their communication skills had improved, one participant (11%) identified he felt more "outgoing" when communicating with Hispanic citizens, and one participant (11%) felt their engagement with Hispanic citizens was minimal, so they did not change

their interaction style. The composite verbatim response data of the nine participants, analyzed in the construction of the research themes, is presented in Tables F1 to F11 in Appendix F.

### **DMIS and Participants' Cultural Positioning**

The evolution of the themes I derived from my data analysis reflected the commonalities and discords within the participants' responses. As a result, I positioned each participant on the DMIS scale based on the characteristic definitions as defined by Bennett (1986).

#### ***Ethnocentric Denial***

I positioned no participants under ethnocentric denial on the DMIS scale.

#### ***Ethnocentric Defense/Reversal***

I positioned no participants under ethnocentric defense/reversal on the DMIS Scale.

#### ***Ethnocentric Minimalization***

I positioned P01, P04, P05, and P06, representing three NWIPDs, under minimalization, as defined by expressing a one for all approach under which professional overtones over cultural identity influences interaction. Three of the participants under minimalization experienced a singular cultural influence during their formative years. Three participants experienced minimal training with one participant acknowledging regular cultural diversity training; however, none of the participants received training specific to a distinct culture. The participants that were positioned under minimalization indicated they valued professional performance expectations equally practiced

superseded culturally influenced interactional approaches. As expressed by P01, "Um, personally I'm, I'm,—maybe this is, uh, ignorance on my part, but I never really tried to understand another culture, but other cultures don't bother me. I just get by. I'm just kind of them, and they're kind of me. I can be kind to them and vice versa. Um, and I just understand that know they have different beliefs or acts and possibly act a different way." P05 stated, "I don't look at it as a culturally based thing. I try to put people into that basic category. Either they're—they're decent people, or they're questionable people, you know?" A similarity of equal treatment with no reflection of cultural differentiation was expressed by P04. P06 reflected this similarity in his response, "My mom raised me to be respectful; respect for everybody, like to treat everybody alike, and it sounds cliché, but it's completely true."

### ***Ethnorelative Acceptance***

Based on their responses, I positioned P03, P08, and P09, representing two NWIPDs, under acceptance on the DMIS scale. The three participants' self-motivations reflected acceptance propensities to gain cultural knowledge which stemmed from familial and environmental influences. Participants in the acceptance position experienced different cultural dynamics in their community during their early years. Each participant acknowledged receiving little to no cultural training. Cultural acceptance was presented nonjudgmentally through the participants' definitions and explanations of cultural competency. As defined by P03, "I would describe it (cultural competency) as being able to understand and adapt to someone else's culture. I think you just have to be self-aware and know that your ideas and norms and behaviors and actions might not align



with somebody that comes from a different background." Distinguishing cultural significance when interacting with citizens was expressed by three participants, under acceptance, as summarized in P08's statement, "You have to be-you have to be able to somewhat recognize their culture and figure out how to resolve the issue. Um, the way you interact with one culture may not be the same way you interact with another culture to resolve the same issue." Additionally, P09's response to understanding cultural competency was in recognized "why a certain group of people would do a certain thing," also expressed by P03 and P08.

### *Ethnorelative Adaptation*

I positioned P02 and P07, representing two NWIPDs, under adaptation in the DMIS scale. Both participants who reflected adaptive tendencies in their responses identified experiencing some level of multicultural influences during their formative years. P02 and P07 identified cultural training was nonexistent or inadequately and irregularly attended. Extensive familial exposure to cultural diversity appeared to have predicated P02 and P07's cultural awareness, which was furthered by cultural exposure through military and life experiences outside the U.S. P02 and P07 expressed ambition to explore educational opportunities on culture and reflected respect and equality for all cultures. When I asked P02 if possessing cultural competency was necessary to identify his position within the Hispanic community, he remarked, "Um, absolutely. I mean, you know, professionally, um, having an understanding, um, and, you know, being a part of that community, you know, its-you can be just going out there and, you know, engaging them to just learn, to make it work. Um, and personally, you know, um, it's, you know,

me having an understanding of the community because I want to be a part of that. Is this positioning important? Absolutely." P07's definitions of culture and cultural competency reflected an awareness of the depth of culture in his seeking to be culturally competent, "Culture to me would be, uh, traditions passed down from generations, ancestors. Every family has their own tradition. Multiple families have similar traditions. Um, so, to me, culture is a traditional way of doing things from the old country. Regionally, uh, culture can be described as, as traditions that a group you adhere to. I guess competency would be having that basic knowledge of a different group's social norms to where you, you know, not to cross certain lines, to offend uh, groups and to gain their trust."

### ***Ethnorelative Integration***

I positioned no participants under ethnorelative integration on the DMIS scale. The participants' positions on the DMIS scale are depicted in Appendix E.

### **Summary**

In Chapter 4, I presented the data analysis process I employed in my research study exploring NWIPD police officers' perceptions and cultural competency experiences when interacting with Hispanic citizens. I described the research setting, participant demographics, and my data collection and analysis process. I identified three themes resonating in the data that addressed the research questions and supported the EST theoretical and DMIS conceptual frameworks of this research reflecting neutrality from overt and inferred researcher bias: (a) Theme 1, the influence of increased Hispanic migration into suburban communities on policing, is underrecognized and under addressed; (b) Theme 2, cultural competency in officers is developed through a lifetime

of experiences; and (c) Theme 3, successful individual engagement with Hispanic citizens are reflective individually in officer motivations.

Recurrent concepts in the participants' responses indicated that data saturation in my research was achieved, which signified that acquiring additional responses would reveal no new ideas (Fusch & Ness, 2015). My research's limitations, trustworthiness, and the unexpected effects of COVID-19 were also addressed in this chapter.

### **Research Questions Answered**

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population? In response to RQ1, the increase of Hispanic populations in the NWIPD communities showed no impact on affecting their department's policy to develop or measure cultural competency in their officers. Little change has occurred to cultural training, explicit training on Hispanic culture, Spanish language learning, and exploring cultural similarities within Hispanic populations. Individual officer's motivations to develop cultural competency was predicated by officers increasingly engaging with Hispanic citizens. No formal cultural competency measurement tool was identified within any of the NWIPDs. Departmental administrative encouragement of officers to integrate into the community was inconsistently expressed and while the Hispanic influence demonstrated that cultural competency played a role in police-Hispanic citizen interactions in most cases, the rise in police-Hispanic interaction was not consistently recognized by participants.

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing? In response

to RQ2, the need to possess cultural competency awareness was recognized by all participants. Communication, familial structure, and cultural construct knowledge facilitated successful police-Hispanic citizen interactions. Most of the participants demonstrated a personal drive to become culturally competent which was predicated on respect, compassion, and equality behavior officers maintained during police-Hispanic citizen interactions. As stated in RQ1, officers demonstrated self-initiated efforts to become Hispanic culturally aware which resulted in competent culturally influenced police-Hispanic citizen interactions and demonstrating the policing profession's need to improve officer cultural competency.

The DMIS scale, applied to the participants' responses, revealed officers' cultural competency could be improved. In Chapter 5, I offer an interpretation of my research findings and consider the implications of my conclusions impacting public policy and promoting positive social change in police-Hispanic interactions.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological qualitative study was to explore NWIPD police officer perceptions of culture and cultural competency's effects when interacting with a growing suburban Hispanic population. Officers face multiple challenges when interacting with Hispanic citizens (Martinez, 2010; Weitzer, 2014), yet the existing research demonstrates a lack of exploration from the officer perspective (Jeffries & Han, 2011). Additionally, a dearth of research exists on police-Hispanic citizen interactions (Body-Swan & Molina, 2018) and what role culture and cultural competency play in police-Hispanic citizen interactions. In their research viewed from the police perspective, Jeffries and Han (2010) revealed that officers supported cultural awareness and cultural competency when interacting with Hispanic citizens.

Nine officer participants were interviewed from four NWIPDs experiencing at least a 7% increase Hispanic population in the last 10 years. During the phone interviews, the participants provided explanations and interpretations of their experiences which were in vivo hand-coded and analyzed through NVivo software. Themes extrapolated from the research, consistent with the research focus and questions posed, demonstrated cultural competency plays a role in police-Hispanic interactions, individually developed and with little organizational support. In this chapter, I consider the identified themes and their interpretations. I also characterize the study's limitations, pose recommendations for expanding studies stemming from this research, and discuss the possible implications for social change from the study results.

## **Interpretations of the Findings**

### **Interpretation of Participant Responses to Research Questions**

In this research I sought to explore the lived experiences of officer interactions in NWIPDs undergoing a Hispanic population increase and how cultural competency plays a role if any. Two research questions driving this research query were:

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population, and

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

Little empirical research exists exploring cultural and cultural competency influences on police officers, suggesting that officers' cultural competency development is not a priority in the profession. Weitzer (2014) affirmed that the lack of research on police and Hispanic citizens has resulted in an imparity in cognizing police-citizen interaction experience. This research supports Weitzer's position by revealing a consistent lack of interest in the police perspective of cultural competency's role in culturally influenced interactions. Themes extrapolated from this research recognize the influence of increased Hispanic migration into suburban communities on policing is underrecognized and under addressed, cultural competency in officers is developed through a lifetime of experiences, and successful officer-Hispanic engagement with Hispanic citizens is reflective in individual officer motivations to become culturally competent.

### **Population Change Influence**

Police officer awareness of increased Hispanic populations in the suburban communities they serve varied. The inconsistency of awareness suggests that not all officers interact with Hispanic citizens regularly. Officers seek out legal violations (protect) and assist citizens as the need arises (serve) but may not choose to engage in interactions with Hispanic people, electing to defer to another officer to avoid limited service or an awkward interaction with the citizen. In doing so, officers lose the opportunity to gain insight into a culture unfamiliar to them. Most of the participants described having an awkward interaction that motivated them to seek additional knowledge on the Hispanic culture through family, friends, coworkers, additional training, or self-initiated research. Ultimately, all officers sought to perform their jobs effectively and correctly.

### **Training and Education**

Police training and education on cultural diversity have not changed in response to increasing suburban Hispanic populations. Limited academy and inconsistent continual education training (Schlosser et al., 2015) generically addressing cultural diversity, implicit bias, and survival Spanish demonstrated that officer training reflecting their communities' cultural makeup was not considered a priority. Situational cultural training has occurred in response to negative media exposure to avoid duplicating another department's negative police-citizen interaction, but it has not been a long-term educational effort. Administrative encouragement of officers to become culturally competent left the tools officers needed to each officer's devices and individualized goals.

Effective communication with all citizens, an element incorporated in policing training and education, plays a significant role in cultural competency development. All participants broached the language barrier and admitted to seeking a Spanish speaking officer when engaged in an interaction, using technology including Babble and Google Translate, learning Spanish, or just “getting through it.” “Survival Spanish” training present in early policing training was not continued, sought out, or attended, again suggesting that individual motivations, not organizational or professional encouragement, influenced officers acquiring Spanish language knowledge and speaking skill. Additional research is needed to explore whether individual or organizational motivations affect officers seeking to acquire Spanish speaking skills.

### **Cultural Competency Measurement**

With the lack of cultural competency measurement in policing, I was compelled to explore cultural competency's influence in other professions. Cultural competency is measured in medical, education, and business employees employing qualitative measurement tools such as Bennett's (1986) DMIS scale and quantitatively using Hammer et al.'s (2003) IDI. Bennett's (1986) DMIS has been adapted to measure cultural competency in multiple disciplines, as exemplified in Çiftçi and Gürbüz's (2019) study exploring teachers' impressions of learning in foreign countries.

Currently, no formal measurement of cultural competency has been performed in the NWIPDs participating in this research. Participants were unaware of how or if cultural competency could be measured or in what manner to measure it. One participant,



a supervisor, advised that cultural competency was measured at the immediate supervisor's interaction level, applying remedial training in cultural awareness as needed.

### **Culture and Cultural Competence Comprehension**

The cultural influence of Hispanic migration into suburban NWIPD communities has presented a mixed cultural competency conception in the officers. Culture and cultural competence do not share consistent standard definitions in police officers consistently. The participants presented individualized definitions of culture and cultural competency, evolved from personal experiences derived from familial and life experience exposures and “some” education. All the participants' definitions were independent of a professional policing influence, further suggesting individual cultural experiences and personal motivations drive individualized approaches to police-Hispanic interactions. This observation contradicts Cross et al. (1988), who defined cultural competence as “a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p.1). Police organizational precepts of culture and cultural competency did not present in participants' explanations, suggesting a clear construct of the definition ideologies may not exist or are not encouraged within organizations or cross-organizationally.

Culture, cultural awareness, and cultural competency are a life-long process, which plays a significant role in police-citizen interactions, expressed in all the participants' responses. Metaphorically, cultural acumen is a product germinating within familial influences and cultivated through continuous cultural, social experiences. The

participants credited their familial backgrounds in establishing their cultural knowledge and cultural identity. Individual cultural competency was developed through multiple cultural interactions, predicated on their family's conceptualized interpretations and awakenings either an acceptance of those interpretations or presenting challenges to their validity.

All participants in this research expressed the absolute need for, and the benefits of, possessing cultural competency in policing. Culturally competency in policing has been suggested in the literature, reflected as a professionalism component in policing performance and reputation, and viewed as “proper” or “professional” when executing their duties (Fletcher et al., 2019; Rice, 2007; Roles et al., 2016; Rosenbaum et al., 2015). Respect was identified as a priority to be present in all police-citizen interactions by officers and the community. The transition to reputation is reflected in a community’s acknowledgment of respect and plays an essential role in motivating officers' professionalism. Confidence and “feeling good” followed a successful cultural interaction and resolution that is reflected in citizen safety and service provided. Cultural competence was demonstrated by officers understanding of who they were dealing with, be it a zero generation, first generation, or “Americanized” Hispanic individual.

Moon et al. (2018) suggested, “intercultural experiences are interpreted differently by different individuals based on subjective self-other templates, worldview assumptions, and contextual influences” (p. 345). Moon et al.'s (2018) interpretation of how intercultural experiences developed a cultural competency resonated throughout my research and was exemplified in the participant’s expressed individual acquisition and

deprivation of cultural competency constructs. Individual motivations and experiences, not departmental, organizational, or professional influences, inspired officers to become culturally competent to improve interactional encounters with Hispanic citizens. Cultural competency holds an influential place in policing. As such, police administrators are tasked with identifying, promoting, educating, and evaluating cultural competency within all officers individually and organizationally across the profession.

### **Findings Analyzed Through EST and DMIS**

I employed EST as the theoretical foundation in my research which provided the foundational underpinnings for understanding individual development and the environmental and social influences that educate that development (Epp, 2018). Bronfenbrenner (1979) explored the development of “progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which, the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded” (p.21). EST shares a historical prominence in multiple professional applications when examining biological and ecological influences relevant to the level of interconnective strands of influence between individuals (Becker et al., 2011), as exemplified in Chapter 2.

Applying EST to my research was appropriate to provide a model employing the constructs of EST to identify the influences on officers’ developments and perceptions of cultural competency. Each concentric circle of EST demonstrated an influence on each participant's perception of their cultural competency development, revealing a strong

interconnection of influences that continually flowed between the EST systems. The microsystem, the most concise and immediate influence on cultural awareness (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), identified that the participant's family shaped their initial understanding of cultural awareness, which set the tone for the officer's cultural comprehension supported by familial interaction experiences. Participants who identified themselves as Hispanic and African American/Black presented a richer family cultural identity and acknowledged awareness and appreciation of cultural differences, but all participants felt that early familial influences were the cornerstone of their cultural awareness introduction.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified that the mesosystem increases an individual's awareness of the interconnection identity as interpreted by an individual through multiple exposures to new and unexplored interactions and settings. Officers initiated into their policing careers encounter a plethora of new relationships, biases, expectations, and assumptions, enhanced among the vast array of conditions, and increased cultural contact levels. In my research, the officers' training and education on Hispanic culture was lacking, which suggested the participants' cultural competency may be affected by the police department's social climate and warrants consideration. Definitions of culture and cultural competency presented by officers when interacting with citizens suggested that officers' cultural competency is individually driven and not significantly impacted by department policy or environment.

As defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979), the exosystem indirectly influences individuals through recurring environmental exposures. Participants' intimated that their

cultural competency resulted from clarity and comprehension through repeated exposure to Hispanic citizens. “Experience” was the keyword when explaining cultural competency development, suggesting yet again that individual interactional experiences with Hispanic citizens drives cultural competency development.

The macrosystem, Bronfenbrenner’s identified fourth ring of EST, was of most interest in this research. Bronfenbrenner (1979) detailed the macrosystem as a position where individuals conceptualize their immediate surroundings' cultural climate, comprehending the links and cross-connections of all EST systems' influences and experiences into a cultural understanding. In my research, an inconsistent understanding of how officers perceived the growing Hispanic population’s impact in their community suggested that the Hispanic population spread into the NWIPD communities was not fully realized.

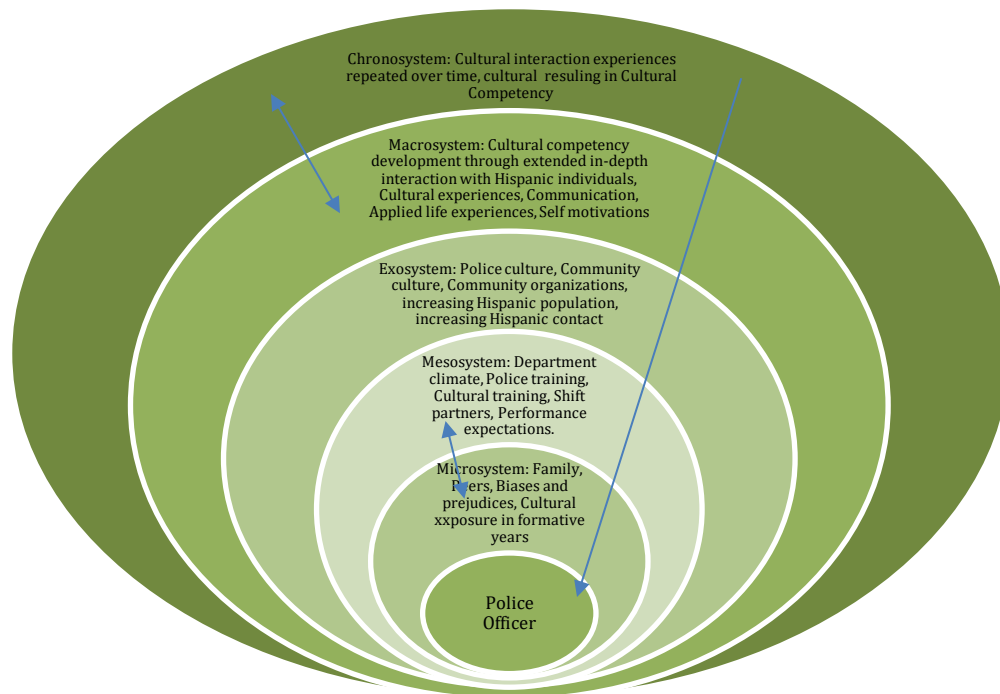
Officers’ service longevity resulted in a greater Hispanic awareness, which suggested time coupled with Hispanic interactions increased cultural competency and is indicative of Bronfenbrenner's (1994) fifth component of EST, the chronosystem which measures the effect of exposure during the life course of an individual. Older participants with extended time in their departments provided a richer presentation of their cultural comprehension, development, experience, and their perceived positioning within their community's Hispanic population.

EST has not been conceptualized when exploring cultural competency in policing but has shared a depth of research other disciplines, including social studies (Onwuegbuzie, 2013) and education (Kathleen et al., 2018; Kitchen, et al., 2019).

Officers' perceptions of their cultural competency development, incorporated into EST tenets, are conceptualized in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*EST Applied to Police Cultural Competency Development*



I employed Bennett's (1986) DMIS scale in my research analysis to demonstrate the perceived cultural competency of the research participants. DMIS provided a scale from which an individual's cultural sensitivity can be predicted. Bennett (1986) suggested that individual cultural sensitivity and awareness were individualized, and through the study of an individual's life experiences, cultural sensitivity training could be conceptualized. Tools such as IDI (Hammer et al., 2003) could be employed to measure the effectiveness of a cultural training presented to officers. As explained by Bennett (2020):

The IDI is simply a measurement that might be useful to show effectiveness of a program. The actual idea that could be use with law enforcement is the underlying model, the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (this is what the IDI measures). That model is meant to guide training towards “intercultural sensitivity,” which is an alternative (and more effective, for many people) approach to lowering prejudice and improving understanding across racial and cultural lines. (Bennett, personal communication, October 16)

The IDI was not incorporated in this research. However, employing the IDI to assess cultural training effectiveness offers a next step approach to police administrators developing culturally driven training.

The tenets of DMIS are presented in a linear right progression, moving from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative stage of cultural sensitivity (Figure 1). No participant in my research demonstrated an ethnocentric denial or ethnocentric defense positioning. Likewise, no participant demonstrated ethnorelative integration positioning. The participants’ cultural sensitivity was identified on the DMIS scale between an ethnocentric denial/minimalization and ethnorelative adaptation levels, with one participant approaching ethnorelative integration (Appendix E). As such, the participant’s positioning on the DMIS scale by this researcher was subjective and was not intended as a full measure of the participant's cultural competency, but rather another piece in considering cultural competency’s influence in police-Hispanic citizen interactions. The participants’ positioning on the DMIS scale suggested that the officers possessed some degree of cultural awareness, but their cultural competency required further development.

The purpose of my research was to explore officer perceptions on the influence of increasing Hispanics in NWIPDs communities and the need for cultural competency in police-Hispanic citizen interactions. Future research targeting officers' cultural identity, the specific conceptions perceived by police officers on Hispanics and Hispanic culture, and officers' cultural competency measurement is warranted.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Several expected and surprising limitations affected my qualitative research study which explored NWIPD officers' perceptions and cultural competency experiences when interacting with Hispanic citizens. COVID-19's impact altered my intended recruitment and interviewing methods, and snowball sampling led to no additional participants. The participants' responses or lack of responses to particularly recall an interaction with a Hispanic individual added limitations to my study. Consequently, the volume of data collected was constrained to what was limited to the participants' responses. However, the recurring consistency in multiple participant responses indicated that data saturation was present.

### **COVID-19, Procuring Participants, and the Interview Process**

My research was affected by COVID-19 which resulted in the university's IRB setting limitations to my participant recruitment and data collection process. Initially, I planned on meeting with each NWIPD's chief of police in person to present the research focus and answer any questions, to be followed by my presenting to the patrol officers my research interest, an invitation to participate, and answer any additional questions. COVID-19 resulted in some NWIPDs maintaining a public lockdown status, which



limited my communication with the chiefs of police and participants to phone calls and emails. Additionally, I intended to conduct the interviews in person. In person interviews, which are considered the highest standard in qualitative research (Krouwel et al., 2019), opened the possibility of exploring participant responses further when recognizing nonverbal cues resulting before, during, and after their reply. The persisting advancement of COVID-19 resulted in the university's IRB excluding in person interviews. Visual interviews such as Zoom were possible, but I chose against the stress of obligating the officer to locate a private location and possess the technology needed to conduct an interview. I received responses that were “thick and rich” (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p.1409), but it is possible that some nonverbal, and even verbal cues, were missed.

### **Participants**

Initially, I sought 18 total officers from three NWIPDs experiencing significant Hispanic population increases occurring in their communities. I was aware of the current social climate that police officers exist within and understood the social negativity that might influence an officer's participation. As a prior police officer, I was keenly aware of the police culture's reclusive nature and recognized that officers self-isolate from the public to attempt to avoid exposing themselves to any perceived negativity. Regardless of my assertion of anonymity to the participants and to present the officers with a voice when exploring police-citizen interactions in this research, the participants' recruitment process proved difficult. Nine officers from a potential pool of 86 representing four NWIPD ultimately participated. There were eight potential female officer participants available in the combined five NWIPDs, but none offered to participate in my study. I

attempted snowball sampling to obtain more participants but received no additional participants through employing the recruitment strategy.

The limited number of officers acknowledging interest to participate was benefited by each participant meeting the research parameters which resulted in my accepting every respondent. While I found each officer's background appropriate for my study, I accepted two participants that possessed the required minimum years of service in NWIPDs but not all in their current department. I recognized that the participant pool's robustness was low; however, the participants' responses were presented with depth and meaning, capturing the essence of the officer's legitimate experience in detail.

### **Interview and Data Collection**

The phone interviews were not difficult, but I anticipated that I may have missed capturing nonverbal cues presented during in person interviews. When interviewing in person, I experience a sense of intimacy and trust between myself and the interviewee that results in rich responses. I anticipated addressing this limitation by emailing the participants copies of the interview questions before the interview. I was surprised to find relatively few of the participants' responses were incomplete or drifted from the research focus. When appropriate, I added probing questions during the interview to strengthen the participants' responses. One question I failed to ask the participants was their level of education. While I did not see this question's value initially, I realized that an individual's educational background could affect cultural competency relative to training and education received.

After analyzing the data, I adapted the participants' descriptive responses into EST and entered their perceived cultural competency level into the DMIS scale (Appendix E), predicated on my perceptions. The possibility exists that another researcher might review the same data and perceive a participant's cultural competency differently. EST allowed me to place cultural competence influences of participant's in a less constrained positioning. Similarly, the DMIS scale allowed me to place each participant within a perceived range of their cultural competency and not within a finite category. Future research exploring similar cultural competency constructs may benefit from a second observer's interpretation to increase data analysis reliability.

Notwithstanding the limitations discussed above, I feel data saturation was attained, satisfying the questions posed and presenting an accurate depiction of each participants' conceptions of culture and cultural competency and how culture and cultural competency affects their interactions with Hispanic citizens. My data collection processes remained consistent and transparent, and any potential bias on study trustworthiness was addressed in Chapter 4.

### **Recommendations**

The need for improving cultural competency in officers that police multicultural communities exist to improve police-citizen relationships and increase officer credibility (Boyd-Swan and Molina, 2018). How an officer views their interactions with Hispanic citizens, and how culture and cultural competency plays a role in officer-Hispanic interactions remains elusive in the research literature. My research presents an initial step when exploring officer's perceptions of the effects of increasing Hispanic populations in

NWIPD communities and the need for cultural competency for successful police-Hispanic citizen interactions. Moon et al. (2018) suggested, “intercultural experiences are interpreted differently by different individuals based on subjective self-other templates, worldview assumptions, and contextual influences” (p. 345). By utilizing EST and DMIS, my research provided an examination of culture and cultural competency in policing and an examined police-Hispanic citizen interaction as perceived by officers. By applying EST in my research, I identified the multitude of influences that drive an officer's cultural competency development, but the depth of influences of cultural competency remains unmeasured.

Additional studies on cultural competency in policing are warranted on several fronts. The policing profession has acknowledged that cultural training is necessary for officers (Ruggs et al., 2016; Zimny, 2015), to be initially implemented at the academy and included in subsequent continuing education made available to officers (Schlosser et al., 2015). Contrary to this, as demonstrated in my research, officers reported receiving little or no cultural training on the Hispanic culture. Schlosser et al.'s (2015) review of a program piloted in a Midwest police academy lacked the materials necessary to successfully engage in cultural influenced interactions. Additionally, Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) warn that officers' cultural training is limited to cursory cultural identification and commonplace officer interaction but fails to explore how officers internalize the information. While my research did not examine the depth and quality of officers' cultural training, additional research exploring how officers receive and interpret

the training, coupled with pre- and post-training culturally influenced assessments, is suggested.

Additionally, I did not explore police culture and how administrative and supervisors promote cultural competency in officers. However, I did explore cultural competency in my research identifying its development was individualized and primarily influenced by environmental conditions unique to the individual with little police culture or supervisory influence. Additional research exploring the administrative front line officer relationship and how supervisors stimulate and reinforce cultural competency growth in front line officers would deepen the understanding of the organizational and leadership affecting officers' cultural competence.

COVID-19 has parasitized itself into every facet of humanity and has negatively affected all social interactions and law enforcement is no exception. The data collection process of my research, as highlighted earlier, also experienced COVID-19 impact in obtaining departmental access, the soliciting officer participation, and the manner I chose to conduct my interviews, which required modification to my original methodology required by the university's IRB. As I conducted interviews, I began to wonder what effects COVID-19 had on officer-Hispanic citizen interactions from both sides. While this phenomenon was not explored in my research, exploring COVID-19's effects on officers' cultural competency development and subsequent officer-Hispanic citizen interaction is warranted.

The longevity of an officer engaging with Hispanic citizens in their community was also not addressed in this study; however, the indications of the time participants

spent reflecting on cultural competency development were present. Gould (1997) suggested that cultural competency development mitigated by extended exposure to police culture created a negative correlation, resulting in negative views by the citizens served. Future research on time spent exploring the time officers interact with Hispanic populations must also consider the police culture's effect on officer cultural competency development since the two are inexorably linked. The degree of influence is unknown, which suggest another research opportunity.

Acquiring a comprehension of the environmental influences affecting officer cultural competency development would be mute without exploring the depth of cultural competency in an officer. My research sought to explore the perceptions of cultural competency and its effects on police-Hispanic citizen interactions. I applied the DMIS scale to this research to gauge the individual officer's cultural sensitivity as appreciating (ethnorelative) or depreciating (ethnocentric). However, a richer exploration of each individual officers' cultural sensitivity and overall competency would benefit from a purposeful cultural competence measurement tool such as the IDI. Additional measurement tools such as the ICS (Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory, 2019), a product devised from the IDI, presents a measurement tool that distinguishes, among other cultural development influences, potential racial conflicts within an individual. Research exploring cultural competency measurement tools, their implementation, efficacy, and the effect on officer cultural competency development is suggested.

A final research area I suggest would explore the influx of the Hispanic population to suburban communities similar to Northwest Indiana. The U.S. Midwest has

experienced an increasing Hispanic population growth since 2000 (Flores et al., 2019), and Lake County, Indiana has experienced a 40% Hispanic population growth since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a). A countrywide Hispanic population growth of 40% since 2000 (Flores et al., 2019) suggests other suburban communities are experiencing Hispanic increases. Replicating this research in suburban communities outside the Midwest would provide a clearer picture of the Hispanic influence on other suburban officers' cultural competency development in their communities.

### **Research Implications**

#### **Positive Social Change: Culturally Competent Policing**

Policing has taken a significant step back within the public perception, which affects police-citizen relationships at the professional, organizational, and individual levels. Efforts to promote positive perceptions of the policing profession inevitably are reduced to the essential officer-citizen interaction. Thus, officers in the policing profession endeavor to improve police-citizen engagements and expand collaboration in community partnerships to improve protection and service (Rice, 2007). As a result, positive social change encompassing all community citizens, police officers, and the policing profession can be achieved.

In this research, I sought to inspire positive social change within the police community interaction, while addressing existing gaps in the research literature by providing new insight into the police perspective of police-citizen interactions, policing in Hispanic communities, and the influence of cultural competency in policing. Each facet of cultural competency I addressed in this research, provided evidence for

additional research direction and afforded educational information for various affected stakeholders by informing and suggesting directions to improve police-Hispanic citizen interaction.

As expressed by every participant in this research, the elements for success included being professional, serving their community, and doing a good job. Cultural competency was identified as a process piece in achieving a positive social change. In conjunction with the officer's desire to serve effectively is mirrored by the citizens expectation of the police to understand their needs and expectations (Van Damme, 2017). Studies conducted by Nuño (2018) and Roles et al. (2016) revealed officer failure in comprehending the Hispanic culture increased negative police-Hispanic citizen interaction experience. Successful police-citizen interactions lie at the crux of these expectations and understanding the qualities necessary to improve police-citizen interactions also improve police community relationships and service. As a result, positive social change becomes a reward for achieving improved police-citizen interactions.

### **Methodological Approaches to Achieve Positive Social Change**

The application of EST in this research demonstrated the officers' desires to develop cultural competence to serve all citizens in the community. However, the research participants demonstrated that cultural competency developed individually with little influences from administrative policy, supervision, training, or formal cultural competency measurement. As one participant described his role as supervisor required that he evaluate an officer's performance and if any questionable culturally influenced



interaction occurred, he would perform appropriate remedial training immediately. Police administrations may benefit from recognizing the need to support their officers' cultural competence in developing and evaluating officers' existing cultural competency. The DMIS scale (Bennet, 1986) presents a conceptual impetus implement to recognize current officers' existing cultural competency positioning and used in conjunction with the IDI (Hammer et al., 2003) would define changes in individual officer cultural sensitivity that resulted from cultural training could be identified and provide direction for further educational opportunities to improve officer cultural competency. Thus, an officers' increased cultural competency could transition into improved culturally influenced interactions which supports additional positive social change.

In this research, I recognized the potential when employing methods to measure officers' cultural competencies, which results in improved police-citizen interactions. Implementing the IDI regularly would provide a consistent measure of an officer's cultural competency over time and allow administrators and supervisors the time to devise strategies for addressing any officer cultural awareness shortcomings. Cultural competency training could be multifaceted, developed through partnerships with community members and organizations with strong cultural identities, while continuing to address the needs of the officer.

### **Benefits to Stakeholders**

The most significant positive social change benefit, I identified from this research is the improved officer-citizen interaction relationship. As previously stated, citizens expect the officers serving them are aware of their needs and expectations (Van Damme,

2017). Officers that demonstrate cultural competency extend a positive interaction beyond any language barrier and seek to comprehend, adapt, and integrate themselves into the populations' cultural. Officers motivated to integrate themselves into the community results in improved service, along with citizens viewing those officers positively and improves the policing profession's identity. Rollins (2019) remarked that citizens; recognition of officers possessing a cultural competency brought about improved community relationships and police service.

Frontline officers benefit from positive social recognition and increased professional respect from their community, which results in reduced complaints, increased completion of calls for service without incident, and improved partnering with community stakeholders. Individually, officers may experience an increased level of confidence by possessing cultural competency, which may translate to increased officer patience when dealing with interacting with individuals and seeking alternative solutions to resolve situations.

Police administrators may also benefit from improved police-citizen interactions with reduced complaints alleging improper police practices, with reduced disciplinary actions, and less stress placed on officers. Administrator support for cultural competency training is currently limited compared to other police training programs (Lynch, 2018), and reflects that specific cultures within the community can be developed through community partnerships. Administrators implementing policies requiring cultural competency assessment tools during the hiring processes would help identify deficiencies in recruits' cultural competencies, including potential problematic cultural biases and

prejudices, improving officer selection, and reducing future opportunities for negative culturally influenced interactions.

### **Conclusion**

The increase of Hispanic populations into suburban communities, the extent of increased Hispanic populations on suburban officers, and the impact of cultural competency in officer-Hispanic citizen interactions remains underexplored. In this research, I employed a qualitative IPA research design and explored the perceived role of cultural competency through the experiences of NWIPD officers increasing engagement in police-Hispanic citizen interactions. I employed Bronfenbrenner's (1979) EST and Bennett's (1986) DMIS scale, to address the research's questions that explored how the increase of Hispanic culture influenced officers' experiences and how the Hispanic increase has changed officer perceptions of the need for cultural competency. Semi structured interview was presented to the participants who expressed cultural awareness was influenced by individual experiences with family, personal ideations, life experiences, and culturally influences community interactions within their professional alignment. The participants' responses demonstrated a lack of any significant professional or organizational influences, culturally specific training, and a means of measuring cultural competency in officers, suggesting the need for increased cultural competency recognition by police administrators and the policing profession. Increasing cultural competency in police officers can be achieved by implementing culturally specific training, supported with cultural competency measurement pre- and post-

training, additional encouragement through community partnerships and professional support, promoting positive police-citizen social change.

The police mission's bottom line is simple and undeniable: to protect and serve. The protect side of the mission coin is there; officers know how to enforce laws and safeguard the community. The serve side of the mission coin is not complete. Officers serving in communities experiencing increased Hispanic growth, face challenges to effectively serve this population with cultural competency. This research offers evidence for the need of cultural competency in policing and demonstrates the influence of cultural competency as perceived by officers to engage in effective police-citizen interactions and service.

## References

- Adams, J. L. (2019). "I almost quit": Exploring the prevalence of the Ferguson effect in two small sized law enforcement agencies in rural southcentral Virginia. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(7), 1747-1764.  
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol24/iss7/15>
- Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, 5(2), 9-19.  
<http://journals.aiac.org.au/index.php/IJELS/article/view/3400/2797>
- Alcoff, L. M. (2005). Latino vs. Hispanic: The politics of ethnic names. *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 31(4), 395-407. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453705052972>
- Allwood, C. M. (2012). The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methods is problematic. *Quality and Quantity*, 46(5), 1417-1429.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-011-9455-8>
- Ang, C. K., Embi, M. A., & Yunus, M. M. (2016). Enhancing the quality of the findings of a longitudinal case study: Reviewing trustworthiness via ATLAS.ti. *The Qualitative Report*, 21(10), 1855-1867.  
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol21/iss10/7/>
- Asurakkody, T. A. (2019). Predictors for transcultural self-efficacy of nursing students: Application of ecological model. *Health Science Journal*, 13(1), 1-7.  
<https://doi.org/10.21767/1791-809X.1000625>

- Baig, A. A., Benitez, A., Locklin, C. A., Campbell, A., Schaefer, C. T., Heuer, L. J., Lee, S. M., Solomon, M. C., Quin, M. T., Bumet D. L., Chin, M. H. (2014). Community health center provider and staff's Spanish language ability and cultural awareness. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 25(2), 527-45. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2014.0086>
- Baillie, L. (2015). Promoting and evaluating scientific rigour in qualitative research. *Nursing Standard (2014+)*, 29(46), 36. <https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.46.36.e8830>
- Barboza, G. E. (2012). Group consciousness, identity and perceptions of unfair police treatment among Mexican Americans. *Policing*, 35(3), 505-527. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511211250776>
- Barboza, G., Dominguez, S., Siller, L., & Montalva, M. (2017). Citizenship, fear, and support for the criminalization of immigration. *Policing*, 40(2), 197-213. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-03-2016-0041>
- Barrick, K. (2014). Latino confidence in the police: The role of immigration enforcement, assimilation, and immigration status. *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice*, 12(4), 289-307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377938.2014.893218>
- Barron, P., & Dasli, M. (2010). Towards an understanding of integration amongst hospitality and tourism students using Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism Education (Pre-2012)*, 9(2), 77-88. <https://doi.org/10.3794/johlste.92.311>

- Baskir, C. E. (2009). Fostering cultural competence in justice system "gatekeepers." *Judicature*, 92(5), 232-237.
- Battle, S. (2016). A qualitative study of BSW students' cultural competence preparedness to uphold client dignity. *Field Educator*, 6(2), 1-17.  
<http://www2.simmons.edu/ssw/fe/i/16-108.pdf>
- Baurhoo, N. G. (2017). An autoethnographic exploration of disability discourses: Transforming science education and research for students with learning disabilities. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 6(2), 115-132.  
<https://doi.org/10.17159/2221-4070/2017/v6i2a8>
- Becker, F., Bonaiuto, M., Bilotta, E., & Bonnes, M. (2011). Integrated healthscape strategies: An ecological approach to evidence-based design. *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal*, 4(4), 114-29.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/193758671100400409>
- Beckett, K., & Evans, H. (2015). Crimmigration at the local level: Criminal justice processes in the shadow of deportation. *Law & Society Review*, 49(1), 241-277.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12120>
- Behar-Horenstein, L., & Feng, X. (2017). Enhancing cultural competence among dental students through active teaching and experiential learning. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(4), 1169-1185.  
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol22/iss4/14/>
- Belotto, M. J. (2018). Data analysis methods for qualitative research: Managing the challenges of coding, interrater reliability, and thematic analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2622-2633. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol23/iss11/2>

Bennett, M. (1986). A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity.

*International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, 179-196.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(86\)90005-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(86)90005-2).

Bennett, M. (1993). "Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity." In R.M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, (pp. 21-71). Intercultural Press, Inc.

Bennett, M. J. (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. In J.S. Wurzel (Ed.) *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education* (pp. 21-71). Intercultural Resource Corporation.

Benuto, L. T., Singer, J., Casas, J., González, F., & Ruork, A. (2018). The evolving definition of cultural competency: A mixed methods study. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 18(3), 371-384.

<https://www.ijpsy.com/volumen18/num3/502.html>

Betancourt, J. R., Green, A. R., Carrillo, J. E., & Ananeh-Firempong, O. (2003).

Defining cultural competence: A practical framework for addressing racial/ethnic disparities in health and healthcare. *Public Health Reports*, 118(4), 293-302.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0033-3549\(04\)50253-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0033-3549(04)50253-4)

Bhan, N., Madhira, P., Muralidharan, A., Kulkarni, B., Murthy, G., Basu, S., & Kinra, S.

(2017). Health needs, access to healthcare, and perceptions of ageing in an urbanizing community in India: A qualitative study. *BMC Geriatrics*, 17.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-017-0544-y>



- Blakemore, J. L., Barlow, D., & Padgett, D. L. (1995). From the classroom to the community: Introducing process in police diversity training. *Police Studies, 18*(1), 71-83. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000004470>
- Bock, G. L. (2013). Cultural sensitivity in paediatrics. *Journal of Medical Ethics, 39*(9), 579. <https://doi.org/10.1136/medethics-2012-100716>
- Boyd-Swan, C., & Molina, A. D. (2018). Cultural competence & citizen-administrator value congruence. *Public Administration Quarterly, 42*(4), 427-465. <https://paq.spaef.org/article/1852/Cultural-Competence-Citizen-Administrator-Value-Congruence>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*, 513-530. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.32.7.513>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., pp. 1643–1647). Elsevier Science.
- Buddington, S. A., & Esmail, A. M. (2017). Ethnicity: Cultural competence and social work practice among college and university students. *Race, Gender & Class, 24*(1), 160-171.
- Burns, D., Mary, C. D., & Manolis, C. (2015). Shopping environment preferences of Hispanic consumers in the U.S. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 43*(3), 261-275. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-10-2012-0088>

- Campbell, S. (2014). What is qualitative research? *Clinical Laboratory Science*, 27(1), 3.  
<https://doi.org/10.29074/ascls.27.1.3>
- Campbell-Heider, N., Karol, P. R., Austin-Ketch, T., Sackett, K., Feeley, T. H. & Wilk, N.C. (2006). Measuring cultural competence in a family nurse practitioner curriculum. *Journal of Multicultural Nursing & Health*, 12(3), 24-34.
- Can, S. H., Holt, W., & Hendy, H. M. (2016). Patrol officer job satisfaction scale (POJSS). *Policing*, 39(4), 710-722. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-11-2015-0129>
- Candela, A. G. (2019). Exploring the function of member checking. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(3), 619-628. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol24/iss3/14/>
- Carrizales, T., Zahradnik, A., & Silverio, M. (2016). Organizational advocacy of cultural competency initiatives: Lessons for public administration. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 40(1), 126-155. <https://paq.spaef.org/article/1642/Organizational-Advocacy-of-Cultural-Competency-Initiatives-Lessons-for-Public-Administration>
- Carrizales, T. (2019). Cultural competency: Administrative accountability and responsibility. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 43(1), 28-51.  
<https://paq.spaef.org/article/1869/Cultural-Competency-Administrative-Accountability-and-Responsibility>
- Casanova, S., O'connor, B. H., & Anthony-stevens, V. (2016). Ecologies of adaptation for Mexican indigenous immigrant children and families in the united states: Implications for Latino studies. *Latino Studies*, 14(2), 192-213.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/lst.2016.4>

- Chan, Z. C. Y., Fung, Y., & Chien, W. (2013). Bracketing in phenomenology: Only undertaken in the data collection and analysis process? *The Qualitative Report*, 18(30), 1-9. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol18/iss30/1/>
- Cheng, H. (2015). Factors influencing public satisfaction with the local police: A study in Saskatoon, Canada. *Policing*, 38(4), 690-704. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-11-2014-0125>
- Çiftçi, E. Y., & Gürbüz, N. (2019). Intercultural sensitivity orientations prior to short-term study abroad: A qualitative study on prospective English language teachers. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(6), 1319-1337. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol24/iss6Z9>
- Clare D'Souza, C., Singaraju, S., Halimi, T., & Mort, G. S. (2016). Examination of cultural shock, inter-cultural sensitivity and willingness to adapt. *Education & Training*, 58(9), 906-925. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-09-2015-0087>
- Claydon, L. S. (2015). Rigour in quantitative research. *Nursing Standard* (2014+), 29(47), 43. <https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.47.43.e8820>
- Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg Nursing*, 25(6), 435-436. <http://medsurgnursing.net/archives/16nov/435.pdf>
- Coon, M. (2017). Local immigration enforcement and arrests of the Hispanic population. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 5(3), 645-665. <https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241700500305>

- Cordner, G. (2017). Police culture: Individual and organizational differences in police officer perspectives. *Policing*, 40(1), 11-25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-07-2016-0116>
- Cox, C., & Kirby, S. (2018). Can higher education reduce the negative consequences of police occupational culture amongst new recruits? *Policing*, 41(5), 550-562. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-10-2016-0154>
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Cross, T., Bazron, B., Dennis, K., and Isaacs, M. (1988). *Toward a culturally competent system of care: A monograph on effective services for minority children who are severely emotionally disturbed*. p.13-21. <https://spu.edu/~media/academics/school-of-education/Cultural%20Diversity/Towards%20a%20Culturally%20Competent%20System%20of%20Care%20Abridged.ashx>
- Cruz, R. F., & Tantia, J. F. (2017). Reading and understanding qualitative research. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 39(1), 79-92. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10465-016-9219-z>
- Daugherty, H. N., & Kearney, R. C. (2017). Measuring the impact of cultural competence training for dental hygiene students. *Journal of Dental Hygiene (Online)*, 91(5), 48-54. <https://jdh.adha.org/content/91/5/48>
- Delgado-Rodriguez, M., & Llorca, J. (2004). Bias. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 58(8), 635. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2003.008466>

- De Soto, W. (2018). Do police officers in the USA protect and serve all citizens equally? *Social Sciences*, 7(10), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7100190>
- Donalek, J. G., & Soldwisch, S. (2004). An introduction to qualitative research methods. *Urologic Nursing*, 24(4), 354-354, 356. <https://www.sun.org/download/members/unjarticles/2004/04aug/354.pdf>
- Engelhardt, S. (2015). *Clay-Cohen police training and independent review act would require all officers to receive specialized sensitivity training, bill also encourages independent investigations in all cases where police use deadly force.* <https://lacyclay.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/clay-cohen-police-training-and-independent-review-act-would-require-all>
- Epp, A. (2018). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as a sensitization and examination pattern for empirical analyzes. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 19 (1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-19.1.2725>
- Fabregas Janeiro, M. G., Fabre, R. L., & Nuño de, I. P. (2014). Building intercultural competence through intercultural competency certification of undergraduate students. *Journal of International Education Research*, 10(1), 15-22. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v10i1.8345>
- Fitzgerald, E. A., Marzalik, P. R., & Kue, J. (2018). Assessing intercultural development pre- and post-education abroad. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 57(12), 747-750. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20181119-08>
- Fletcher, M., Burnside, R., & Pink-Harper, S. (2019). Determining the level of cultural competence of college police departments: A study of three different

campuses. *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy*, 26(1), 73-88.

<https://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/jpmsp/vol26/iss1/6/>

Flick, U. (2018). Triangulation in data collection. In Flick, U. *The sage handbook of qualitative data collection* (pp. 527-544). <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526416070>

Flores, A., Lopez, M. H., & Krogstad, J. M. (2019). U.S. Hispanic population reached new high in 2018, but growth has slowed. *Pew Research Center*.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/08/u-s-hispanic-population-reached-new-high-in-2018-but-growth-has-slowed/>

Foreman, J. S., Hark, L. A., & DeLisser, H. M. (2012). Case writing as a vehicle for promoting cultural competency: A retrospective, descriptive qualitative analysis. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 104(1), 29-37.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684\(15\)30128-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684(15)30128-0)

Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9), 1408-1416.

<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss9/3/>

Goertzen, M. J. (2017). Introduction to quantitative research and data. *Library Technology Reports*, 53(4), 12-18, 2.

Gordon, R., Butler, K., Cooper, P., Waitt, G., & Magee, C. (2018). Look before you LIEEP: Practicalities of using ecological systems social marketing to improve thermal comfort. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 8(1), 99-119.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-04-2016-0017>

- Gould, L. A. (1997). Can an old dog be taught new tricks? teaching cultural diversity to police officers. *Policing*, 20(2), 339. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639519710169171>
- Hadi, M. A., & José Closs, S. (2016). Ensuring rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research in clinical pharmacy. *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*, 38(3), 641-646. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11096-015-0237-6>
- Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27, 421-443. <https://idiinventory.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/IDI-2003-measuring-IJIR.pdf>
- Hasisi, B. (2008). Police, politics, and culture in a deeply divided society. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 98(3), 1119-1145. <https://doi.org/10.1201/b19313-9>
- Heinze, J. E., Reischl, T. M., Bai, M., Roche, J. S., Morrel-Samuels, S., Cunningham, R. M., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2016). A comprehensive prevention approach to reducing assault offenses and assault injuries among youth. *Prevention Science*, 17(2), 167-176. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-015-0616-1>
- Henderson, D. X., & Baffour, T. D. (2015). Applying a socio-ecological framework to thematic analysis using a statewide assessment of disproportionate minority contact in the united states. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(12), 1960-1973. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss12/2/>

- Hoerder, D. (2008). Migration and cultural interaction across the centuries: German history in a European perspective. *German Politics and Society*, 26(2), 1-23,114. <https://doi.org/10.3167/gps.2008.260201>
- Holloway, A. M. (2016). Suburban safety net service providers and the Latino community. *Latino Studies*, 14(3), 384-405. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41276-016-0008-0>
- Hong, J. S., Algood, C. L., Chiu, Y., & Lee, S. A. (2011). An ecological understanding of kinship foster care in the united states. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 20(6), 863-872. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-011-9454-3>
- Hong, J. S., Woodford, M. R., Long, L. D., & Renn, K. A. (2016). Ecological covariates of subtle and blatant heterosexist discrimination among LGBQ college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 45(1), 117-131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-015-0362-5>
- Huerta, A. H. (2015). "I didn't want my life to be like that": Gangs, college, or the military for Latino male high school students. *The Journal of Latino - Latin American Studies*, 7(2), 119-132. <https://doi.org/10.18085/1549-9502-7.2.119>
- Huggins, C. M. (2012). Traffic stop encounters: Officer and citizen race and perceptions of police propriety. *American Journal of Criminal Justice: AJCJ*, 37(1), 92-110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-010-9097-8>
- IDI, LLC. (2020). *The roadmap to intercultural competency using IDI*. <https://idiinventory.com/>
- In.gov. (2019). *Indiana law enforcement academy: Basic course schedules (tier one)*.



<https://www.in.gov/ilea/files/Basic%20Course%20Schedule%202019%20Final.pdf>

Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory. (2019). Resolving conflict across cultural boundaries using the intercultural conflict style inventory.

<https://icsinventory.com/>

Jackson, J. L. (2018). The non-performativity of implicit bias training. *Radical Teacher*, (112), 46-54. <https://doi.org/10.5195/rt.2018.497>

Jain, S. (2013). Experiential training for enhancing intercultural sensitivity. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 20(1), 15-20.

Jaya, A., Harris, D., Hairong, H., Wright, C. S., & Higginbotham, E. (2018). Measuring organizational cultural competence to promote diversity in academic healthcare organizations. *Health Equity*, 2(1), 316-320.

<https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2018.0007>

Jeffries, J. L., & Hahn, H. (2011). Police perceptions of Latinos: Insights from front-line officers in a mid-size urban area. *Urbana: Urban Affairs and Public Policy*, (12), 1-33. <https://www.urbanauapp.org/fall-2011-volume-xii/>

Johanna, v. K., Semb, O., Fahlström, M., & Lehti, A. (2019). “It is through body language and looks, but it is also a feeling” - a qualitative study on medical interns’ experience of empathy. *BMC Medical Education*, 19 (333), 1-8.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1770-0>

Johnson, K. M., & Lichter, D. T. (2016). Diverging demography: Hispanic and non-Hispanic contributions to U.S. population redistribution and diversity. *Population*

*Research and Policy Review*, 35(5), 705-725. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-016-9403-3>

Jootun, D., McGhee, G., & Marland, G. R. (2009). Reflexivity: Promoting rigour in qualitative research. *Nursing Standard (through 2013)*, 23(23), 42-6.

<https://doi.org/10.7748/ns2009.02.23.23.42.c6800>

Kahn, K. B., Lee, J. K., Renauer, B., Henning, K. R., & Stewart, G. (2017). The effects of perceived phenotypic racial stereotypicality and social identity threat on racial minorities' attitudes about police. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 157(4), 416-

428. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2016.1215967>

Kathleen, M. R., Snyder, K. E., Levinson, H., & Adelson, J. L. (2018). Systems view of school climate: A theoretical framework for research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 30(1), 35-60.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-017-9401-y>

Kim, J., Heo, J., Lee, I. H., Suh, W., & Kim, H. (2015). The contribution of organized activity to cultural sensitivity and personal and social development: A structural equation model. *Social Indicators Research*, 120(2), 499-513.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0593-y>

Kirkwood, T.F. (2001). Our global age requires global education: Clarifying definitional ambiguities: A journal for readers, students and teachers of history. *The Social Studies*, 92(1), 10-15.

Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hull, G., Jr. (2012). *Understanding generalist practice* (6th ed.).

Cengage9

- Kitchen, J. A., Hallett, R. E., Perez, R. J., & Rivera, G. J. (2019). Advancing the use of ecological systems theory in college student research: The ecological systems interview tool. *Journal of College Student Development, 60*(4), 381-400.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2019.0043>
- Kitoaka, S. K. I. (2005). Multicultural counseling competencies: Lessons from assessment. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 33*(1), 37-47.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2005.tb00003.x>
- Kohlbry, P. W. (2016). The impact of international service-learning on nursing students' cultural competency. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 48*(3), 303-311.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jnu.12209>
- Kohlström, K., Rantatalo, O., Karp, S., & Padyab, M. (2017). Policy ideals for a reformed education. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 29*(7), 524-536.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-09-2016-0082>
- Kramer, R., & Remster, B. (2018). Stop, frisk, and assault? racial disparities in police use of force during investigatory stops. *Law & Society Review, 52*(4), 960.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12366>
- Krouwel, M., Jolly, K., & Greenfield, S. (2019). Comparing Skype (video calling) and in-person qualitative interview modes in a study of people with irritable bowel syndrome – an exploratory comparative analysis. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 19*, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0867-9>

- Kruse, J. A., Didion, J., & Perzynski, K. (2014). Utilizing the intercultural development inventory to develop intercultural competence. *Springer Plus*, 3(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-3-334>
- Kurtz, D. L., & Upton, L. (2017). War stories and occupying soldiers: A narrative approach to understanding police culture and community conflict. *Critical Criminology*, 25(4), 539-558. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-017-9369-4>
- Lau, J., & Ng, K. (2014). Conceptualizing the counseling training environment using Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 36(4), 423-439. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-014-9220-5>
- Lee, J. (2017). Of course the cops are racist: Procedural justice, the perception of racial profiling, and citizen satisfaction with law enforcement. *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society*, 18(2), 80-92. <https://ccjls.scholasticahq.com/article/1993-of-course-the-cops-are-racist-procedural-justice-the-perception-of-racial-profiling-and-citizen-satisfaction-with-law-enforcement>
- Lee, B. A., & Hughes, L. A. (2015). Bucking the trend: Is ethnoracial diversity declining in American communities? *Population Research and Policy Review*, 34(1), 113-139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-014-9343-8>
- Lichter, D. T. (2012). Immigration and the new racial diversity in rural America. *Rural Sociology*, 77(1), 3. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1549-0831.2012.00070.x>
- Liederbach, J., Fritsch, E. J., Carter, D. L., & Bannister, A. (2008). Exploring the limits of collaboration in community policing: A direct comparison of police and citizen views. *Policing*, 31(2), 271-291. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639510810878721>

- Lim, H. (2015). Social modeling effects on perception of the police. *Policing*, 38(4), 675-689. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-02-2015-0018>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Lumb, R. C. (1995). Policing culturally diverse groups: Continuing professional development programs for police. *Police Studies*, 18(1), 23-45. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000004468>
- Lynch, C. (2018). You have the right to remain violent: Police academy curricula and the facilitation of police overreach. *Social Justice*, 45(2), 75-91, 200.
- Madan, M., & Nalla, M. K. (2015). Exploring citizen satisfaction with police in India. *Policing*, 38(1), 86-101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-06-2014-0063>
- Maher, C., Hadfield, M., Hutchings, M., & de, E. A. (2018). Ensuring rigor in qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918786362>
- Marier, C. J., & Moule, R. K., Jr. (2019). Feeling blue: Officer perceptions of public antipathy predict police occupational norms. *American Journal of Criminal Justice: AJCJ*, 44(5), 836-857. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-018-9459-1>
- Martinez, R. (2010). Revisiting the role of Latinos and immigrants into policing research. In S. K. Rice and M. D. White (Eds.), *Race, ethnicity, and policing: New and essential readings* (pp. 435-449). New York University Press.
- Matteliano, Mary A, & Stone, J. H. (2014). Cultural competence education in university rehabilitation programs. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 21(3), 112-8.

- Matua, G. A., & Van Der Wal, D. M. (2015). Differentiating between descriptive and interpretive phenomenological research approaches. *Nurse Researcher* (2014+), 22(6), 22. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.6.22.e1344>
- McCluskey, J. D., McCluskey, C. P., & Enriquez, R. (2008). A comparison of Latino and white satisfaction with police. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36, 471-477. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2008.09.012>
- McLennon, S. M., Rogers, T. L., & Davis, A. (2019). Predictors of hospital nurses' cultural competence: The value of diversity training. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 50(10), 469-474. <https://doi.org/10.3928/00220124-20190917-09>
- McNeeley, S., & Grothoff, G. (2016). A multilevel examination of the relationship between racial tension and attitudes toward the police. *American Journal of Criminal Justice: AJCJ*, 41(3), 383-401. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-015-9318-2>
- Mearns, T. L., Tyler, T. R., & Gardener, J. (2015). Lawful or fair? How cops and laypeople perceive good policing. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 105(2), 297-343. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2116645>
- Meng, Y. (2017). Profiling minorities: Police stop and search practices in Toronto, Canada. *Human Geographies*, 11(1), 5-23. <https://doi.org/10.5719/hgeo.2017.111.1>

- Mi, M. & Zhang, Y. (2017). Culturally competent library services and related factors among health sciences librarians: An exploratory study. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 105(2), 132-139. <https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2017.203>
- Mitchell, G. (2015). Use of interviews in nursing research. *Nursing Standard* (2014+), 29(43), 44. <https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.43.44.e8905>
- Moon, S. H., Morgan, T., & Sandage, S. J. (2018). The need for intercultural competence assessment and training among police officers. *Journal of Forensic Psychology Research and Practice*, 18(5), 337-351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24732850.2018.1510274>
- Moulds, L. G., & Day, A. (2017). Characteristics of adolescent violence towards parents – a rapid evidence assessment. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 9(3), 195-209. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-11-2016-0260>
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mugford, R., Corey, S., & Bennell, C. (2013). Improving police training from a cognitive load perspective. *Policing*, 36(2), 312-337. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511311329723>
- Murphy, S. T. & Zajonc, R. B. (1993). Affect, cognition, and awareness: Affective priming with optimal and suboptimal stimulus exposures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64(5), 723-739. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.64.5.723>

- Nadan, Y., & Ben-Ari, A. (2013). What can we learn from rethinking 'multiculturalism' in social work education? *Social Work Education, 32* (8), 1089-1102.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2012.723686>
- National Association of Social Workers. (2015). *Standards and indicators for cultural competence in social work practice*, 1-60.  
<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7dVckZAYUmk%3d&portalid=0>
- National Center for Cultural Competence. (n.d.). *Foundations: Tools and processes for self-assessment*. 1. <https://nccc.georgetown.edu/foundations/assessment.php>
- Nelson, J. A., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Wines, L. A., & Frels, R. K. (2013). The therapeutic interview process in qualitative research studies. *The Qualitative Report, 18*(40), 1-17. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol18/iss40/1/>
- Nuño, L. E. (2018) Hispanics' perceived procedural justice, legitimacy, and willingness to cooperate with the police. *Police Practice and Research, 19*(2), 153-167.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15614263.2018.1418160>
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Collins, K. M. T., & Frels, R. K. (2013). Forward: Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to frame quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, 7*(1), 2-8. <https://doi.org/10.5172/mra.2013.7.1.2>
- Pajpachová, M., & Nováková, I. (2016). Understanding police culture through the use of the OCAI method. *Internal Security, 8*(2), 97-121.  
<https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0010.2273>



- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533-544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Paoline, E. A., Myers, S. M., & Worden, R. E. (2000). Police culture, individualism, and community policing: Evidence from two police departments. *Justice Quarterly: JQ*, 17(3), 575-605. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418820000094671>
- Parrado, E. A., & Kandel, W. A. (2010). Hispanic population growth and rural income inequality. *Social Forces*, 88(3), 1421-1450. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.0.0291>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage.
- Peck, J. H. (2015). Minority perceptions of the police: A state-of-the-art review. *Policing*, 38(1), 173-203. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-01-2015-0001>
- Peiyong, N., Goddard, T., Gribble, N., & Pickard, C. P. (2012). International placements increase the cultural sensitivity and competency of professional health students: A quantitative and qualitative study. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 26(1), 61-68. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00001416-201210000-00011>
- Peters, K., & Halcomb, E. (2015). Interviews in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher* (2014+), 22(4), 6. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.4.6.s2>
- Pickett, J. T. (2016). On the social foundations for crimmigration: Latino threat and support for expanded police powers. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 32(1), 103-132. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-015-9256-7>

- Posick, C., & Hatfield, H. (2017). Putting H.E.A.R.T. into policing: A 21st century model for effective and fair policing. *Policing*, 40(1), 128-140.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-07-2016-0113>
- Pringle, J. Drummond, J. McLafferty, E. & Hendry, C. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: A discussion and critique. *Nurse Researcher (through 2013)*, 18(3), 20-24. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2011.04.18.3.20.c8459>
- Pyles, L., & Kim, K. M. (2006). A multilevel approach to cultural competence: A study of the community response to underserved domestic violence victims. *Families in Society*, 87(2), 221-229,158. <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.3515>
- Regens, J. L., Mould, N., Jensen, C. J., I., II, Edger, D. N., Cid, D., & Graves, M. (2017). Effect of intelligence collection training on suspicious activity recognition by front line police officers. *Security Journal*, 30(3), 951-962.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2015.10>
- Rennison, C. M., PhD. (2007). Reporting to the police by Hispanic victims of violence. *Violence and Victims*, 22(6), 754-72.  
<https://doi.org/10.1891/088667007782793110>
- Rew, L., Becker, H., Chontichachalalauk, J., & Lee, H. Y. (2014). Cultural diversity among nursing students: Reanalysis of the cultural awareness scale. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 53(2), 71-6. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20140122-01>
- Rice, M. F. (2007). A post-modern cultural competency framework for public administration and public service delivery. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 20(7), 622-637. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513550710823524>

- Rice, M. F. & Mathews, A. L. (2012). In K. A. Norman-Major & S. T. Gooden (Eds.), *Cultural competency for public administrators* (p.19-31). Sharpe.
- Roger, K., Bone, T., Heinonen, T., Schwartz, K., Slater, J., & Thakrar, S. (2018). Exploring identity: What we do as qualitative researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(3), 532-546. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol23/iss3/3/>
- Roles, R., Moak, S. C., & Ten Bensel, T. (2016). Perceptions of police among Hispanic immigrants of Mexican origin in the southeast United States. *American Journal of Criminal Justice: AJCJ*, 41(2), 202-219. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-015-9299-1>
- Rollins, A. C., Jr. (2019). Assessment of public sector service quality: Gauging experiences and perceptions of racial profiling. *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy*, 26(1), 59-72.
- Rosenbaum, D. P., & Lawrence, D. S. (2017). Teaching procedural justice and communication skills during police-community encounters: Results of a randomized control trial with police recruits. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 13(3), 293-319. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-017-9293-3>
- Rosenbaum, D. P., Lawrence, D. S., Hartnett, S. M., Mcdevitt, J., & Posick, C. (2015). Measuring procedural justice and legitimacy at the local level: The police-community interaction survey. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 11(3), 335-366. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-015-9228-9>
- Rosenjack Burcham, J. L. (2002). Cultural competence: An evolutionary perspective. *Nursing Forum*, 37(4), 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6198.2002.tb01287.x>

- Ruggs, E. N., Hebl, M. R., Rabelo, V. C., Weaver, K. B., Kovacs, J., & Kemp, A. S. (2016). Baltimore is burning: Can I-O psychologists help extinguish the flames? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 9*(3), 525-547. <https://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2016.5>
- Russell, L. R., Kinuthia, W. L., Lokey-vega, A., Tsang-kosma, W., & Madathany, R. (2013). Identifying complex cultural interactions in the instructional design process: A case study of a cross-border, cross-sector training for innovation program. *Educational Technology, Research and Development, 61*(4), 707-732. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-013-9291-8>
- Sabharwal, M., Hijal-Moghrabi, I., & Royster, M. (2014). Preparing future public servants: Role of diversity in public administration. *Public Administration Quarterly, 38*(2), 206-245. <https://spaef.org/article/1497/Preparing-Future-Public-Servants:-Role-of-Diversity-in-Public-Administration>
- Sahin, N., Braga, A. A., Apel, R., & Brunson, R. K. (2017). The impact of procedurally-just policing on citizen perceptions of police during traffic stops: The Adana randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology, 33*(4), 701-726. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-016-9308-7>
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
- Salmona, M., & Kaczynski, D. (2016). Don't blame the software: Using qualitative data analysis software successfully in doctoral research. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 17*(3). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-17.3.2505>

- Sarma, S. K. (2015). Qualitative research: Examining the misconceptions. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 22(3), 176-191.
- Satterwhite, F. J. O., & Teng, S. (2007). Culturally based capacity building: An approach to working in communities of color for social change. *Organizational development and capacity in cultural competence*, 1-31.  
[https://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/documents/Satterwhite\\_full.pdf](https://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/documents/Satterwhite_full.pdf)
- Scerra, N. (2011). Impact of police cultural knowledge on violent serial crime investigation. *Policing*, 34(1), 83-96. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511111106623>
- Schlosser, M. D., Cha-Jua, S., Valgoi, M. J., & Neville, H. A. (2015). Improving policing in a multiracial society in the united states: A new approach. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*, 10(1), 115-121.  
<http://www.sascv.org/ijcjs/pdfs/schlosseretalijs2015vol10issue1.pdf>
- Scott, M. G. (2002). Cultural competency: How is it measured? does it make a difference? *Generations*, 26(3), 39-45.  
<https://diversityofficermagazine.com/cultural-competence/what-is-cultural-competence-how-is-it-measured-2/>
- Sereni-Massinger, C., & Bawden, J. (2015). Policy point-counterpoint: Mandating law enforcement to receive annual certification in cultural diversity through critical thinking. *International Social Science Review (Online)*, 91(2), 0-1, 1-7.  
<http://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1141&context=issr>

- Serini-Massinger, C., & Wood, N. (2016). Improving law enforcement cross cultural competencies through continuing education. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 5(2), 258-264. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v5n2p258>
- Shimray, S. R., & Ramaiah, C. K. (2019). Cultural heritage awareness among students of Pondicherry University: A study. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 2516, 1-10.
- Shjarback, J. (2018). "Neighborhood" influence on police use of force: State-of-the-art review. *Policing*, 41(6), 859-872. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-07-2017-0087>
- Shjarback, J., Decker, S., Rojek, J. J., & Brunson, R. K. (2017). Minority representation in policing and racial profiling. *Policing*, 40(4), 748-767. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-09-2016-0145>
- Simmons-Mackie, N., & Damico, J. S. (2003). Contributions of qualitative research to the knowledge base of normal communication. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 12(2), 144-54. [https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360\(2003/061\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360(2003/061))
- Sistrom, M. Gilson., Zeigen, L., Jones, M., Durham, K. F., & Boudrot, T. (2011). Integrated methods for teaching population health. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 50(1), 35-39. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20101029-02>
- Smith, B. W. (2005). Ethno-racial political transition and citizen satisfaction with police. *Policing*, 28(2), 242-254. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639510510597889>
- Smith, D. E. (2016). Prevalence of intimate partner violence in Jamaica: Implications for prevention and intervention. *International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies*, 7(3-4), 343-363. <https://doi.org/10.18357/ijcyfs73-4201616089>

- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Sage
- Smolcic, E., & Arends, J. (2017). Building teacher interculturality: Student partnerships in university classrooms. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 44(4), 51-73.  
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1157418>
- Snelgrove, S. R. (2014). Conducting qualitative longitudinal research using interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Nurse Researcher (2014+)*, 22(1), 20.  
<https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.1.20.e1277>
- Somerville, P. (2009). Understanding community policing. *Policing*, 32(2), 261-277.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/13639510910958172>
- Stead, G. B. (2004). Culture and career psychology: A social constructionist perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 64(3), 389-406.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2003.12.006>
- Stuart, F. (2016). Becoming "copwise": Policing, culture, and the collateral consequences of street-level criminalization. *Law & Society Review*, 50(2), 279-313.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12201>
- Tabatadze, S., & Gorgadze, N. (2018). Selective intercultural sensitivity to different sources of cultural identity. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 12(1), 35-49.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-11-2016-0059>
- Taniguchi, T. A., & Salvatore, C. (2018). Policing a negotiated world: A partial test of Klinger's ecological theory of policing. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 34(2), 345-366. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-017-9337-x>

- Tekin, A. K. (2011). Parent involvement revisited: Background, theories, and models. *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies*, 11(1), 1-13.
- Tissington, L. D. (2008). A Bronfenbrenner ecological perspective on the transition to teaching for alternative certification. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 35(1), 106-110.
- Trochmann, M. B., & Gover, A. (2016). Measuring the impact of police representativeness on communities. *Policing*, 39(4), 773-790.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-02-2016-0026>
- United States Census Bureau. (2018). *Hispanic origin-about Hispanic origin*.  
<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/hispanic-origin/about.html>
- United States Census Bureau. (n.d.-a). *American community survey*.  
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>
- United States Census Bureau (n.d.-b). *American FactFinder*.  
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- United States Census Bureau. (n.d.-c). *Quick Facts: Lake County, Indiana; United States*.  
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lakecountyindiana,US/RHI725218>
- United States Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Minority Health. (2016). *What is cultural competency?*  
<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lv152&lvIID511>
- Van Damme, A. (2017). How to measure procedurally (un)just behavior during police-citizen interactions. *Policing*, 40(3), 587-600. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-09-2016-0140>



- van Rijnsoever, F. J. (2017). (I can't get no) saturation: A simulation and guidelines for sample sizes in qualitative research. *PLoS One*, *12*(7), 1-17.  
<https://doi.org/0.1371/journal.pone.0181689>
- Wagstaff, C., & Williams, B. (2014). Specific design features of an interpretative phenomenological analysis study. *Nurse Researcher (2014+)*, *21*(3), 8-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2014.01.21.3.8.e1226>
- Walden University. (2020). *Research ethics and compliance: Research ethics review process*. <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec/application>
- Wang, X., Ready, J., & Davies, G. (2019). Race, ethnicity, and perceived minority police presence: Examining perceptions of criminal injustice among Los Angeles residents. *Law & Society Review*, *53*(3), 706-739.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12423>
- Weimer, N., & Zemrani, A. (2017). Assessing the level of cultural competencies in public organizations. *Public Administration Quarterly*, *41*(2), 273-296.  
<https://paq.spaef.org/article/1763/Assessing-the-Level-of-Cultural-Competencies-in-Public-Organizations>
- Weitzer, R. (2014). The puzzling neglect of Hispanic Americans in research on police-citizen relations. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(11), 1995-2013.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.790984>
- Weitzer, R., & Tuch, S. A. (2004). Reforming the police: Racial differences in public support for change\*. *Criminology*, *42*(2), 391-416. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2004.tb00524.x>

- Weitzer, R., & Tuch, S. A. (2005). Racially biased policing: Determinants of citizen perceptions\*. *Social Forces*, 83(3), 1009-1030.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2005.0050>
- Whitfield, M. (2019). *Influence of implicit-bias training on the cultural competency of police officers* (Order No. 13899710). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ Walden University. (2247183901).
- Wright, V., & Unah, I. (2017). Media exposure and racialized perceptions of inequities in criminal justice. *Social Sciences*, 6(3)-67, 1-22.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci6030067>
- Wu, Y. (2014). Race/ethnicity and perceptions of the police: a comparison of White, Black, Asian and Hispanic Americans, *Policing and Society*, 24(2), 135-157.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2013.784288>
- Zimny, K. (2015). Racial attitudes of police recruits at the United States Midwest police academy: A second examination. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*, 10(1), 91-101.  
<http://www.sascv.org/ijcjs/pdfs/zimnyijcjs2015vol10issue1.pdf>

## Appendix A: Hispanic Population in Lake County Municipalities, 2010-2017

Municipality	2000 Census	2010 Census	2017 Survey Estimate
Cedar Lake	3.5	6.2	5.6
Crown Point	4.8	8.6	11.3
Dyer	4.9	9.6	12.9
East Chicago	51.6	50.9	57.0
Gary	6.7	6.0	8.2
Griffith	8.2	13.4	15.4
Hammond	16.6	29.3	28.6
Highland	6.0	12.8	15.5
Hobart	9.1	14.9	13.3
Lake Station	21.7	28.4	32.8
Lowell	3.1	5.8	6.1
Merrillville	9.4	12.6	13.4
Munster	4.9	10.2	14.5
Saint John	4.0	8.0	9.2
Schererville	5.7	10.2	8.4
Schneider	0.4	3.5	0.4
Whiting	19.7	38.1	36.5

*Note:* Data collected from US Census Bureau-2000 general demographic characteristics, 2010 general housing and population characteristics, 2017 American community survey-demographic and housing estimates.  
Insert appendix here.

## Appendix B: Interview Script and Questions

### Interview Guide

RQ1: How have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population?

RQ2: How has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

**Interview Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Introduction

Good morning/Good Evening!

Before we begin, I want to thank you for your agreement to participate in this interview. My name is Joseph W. Swanson, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in criminal justice at Walden University. Before proceeding further, I want to review the process for this interview. This interview is strictly voluntary and will be completed within the time frame stated on the consent. However, if for an unknown reason we cannot finish and you agreed to proceed until completion, we will do so. If we are unable to complete the interview on time and you wish to continue at a later date and time, I will re-schedule a time convenient for you.

I have previously provided you via email the informed consent to participate in the interview, and you have responded via email your consent to participate. I would like to confirm your consent to participate and you will participate in the interview. Do you consent? Thank you. Your consent form for the interview, in addition to the information you provide, will be kept confidential and secured in a locked location with only my access. You will be issued a code that will not identify you or your department in any way outside of Northwest Indiana.

As identified earlier, the interview is scheduled to last approximately 30-45 minutes. We may go over a little on time if that is ok with you. If not, I will honor the time you have agreed to. During the interview, if you should choose to stop or not answer a question, that is ok. If you need to leave for any reason, we can stop and re-schedule at a later time. Also, as explained earlier, I will be tape recording the interview so as to not miss any valuable information you provide and would like your permission to do so.

During the interview I will also be taking a few notes but will keep them to a minimum so as to not distract you while you complete the interview. Upon completing the interview, the recording will be transcribed, and a copy will be sent to you via email to be reviewed for accuracy. Is that acceptable to you?

Thank you for your time in completing this interview preparation. I would now like to present a brief explanation for the purpose of this research. I am seeking to better understand officer perspectives through experiences when working within ethnic, specifically Hispanic communities, of the influences of culture and cultural competency effects on police-Hispanic citizen interactions. As defined by Rosenjack Burcham (2002), “culture is a learned worldview or paradigm shared by a population or group and transmitted socially that influences values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors, and is reflected in the language, dress, food, materials, and social institutions of a group” (p. 7). Cultural competency does not share a common definition, thus creating a void in understanding how individual groups perceive cultural competency through individual worldviews and application in interactions. As such, a qualitative research approach allows for the collection of individual participant perceptions and interpretations of cultural competency and its effect on serving culturally distinct populations, specifically Hispanic populations.

In conducting my literature review, the existing research literature offers limited information on factors affecting police-Hispanic interactions, and what literature exists is derived primarily from the citizen perspective. Cultural competency effects on interactions with ethnic populations has been demonstrated in multiple professional fields, yet an understanding of cultural competency’s interpreted presence in policing remains elusive (Boyd-Swan & Molina, 2018; Carrizales et al., 2016). Officer perceptions of culture, cultural competency, and cultural competency effects on increasing Hispanic populations served are the focus of this research.

As a participant, you have been identified as a law enforcement individual who has experienced an increase in service to Hispanic populations and have at least five years as a road officer serving this increasing population. Possessing a cultural awareness and competency in the education and medical professions is expressively significant in improving interactions and service. As a result, my research seeks to explore cultural competency in policing, as police seek to provide a critical service equally to all community members. I am seeking to answer include: how have changes in culture impacted the experiences of officers in suburban police departments serving an increasing Hispanic population? Additionally, how has the increase of Hispanic populations in suburban communities affected officer perspectives on the need for cultural competency in policing?

As we are about to begin the interview, I would like to present a few guidelines:

1. Please turn off (if possible) your radio and cell phone during the interview.
2. As a reminder, this interview is recorded, so please speak clearly.

3. You may end this interview at any time or choose to not answer a question without reprisal.
4. There are no right or wrong responses when answering, so please answer honestly.
5. As a final reminder, your identity is protected by the use of a code/pseudonym to identify you as a participant, and in no way can be traced back to you or your department, which is also coded. Please do not refer to yourself or department by name when responding.
6. This research study will be published and may be provided to police leadership and presented in professional settings such as conferences, but your identity will remain anonymous. Once the interview is complete and the information is transcribed, the original recording will be kept under lock and key in a secure location until the work is completed. Once completed, all information collected in the interviews will be destroyed by shredding and burning after reaching the mandatory minimum five-year retention as required by Walden University.

Do you have any questions before beginning the interview? If you are ready to begin, then we will proceed. (Recording On)

### **Interview Script and Questions**

I would like to begin with a little background information, including your age, race (if willing), and identified gender:

#### **Demographics:**

1. *What is:*
  - a. *your current age?*
  - b. *your gender?*
  - c. *your race?*

Next, I would like to know a little about your background growing up:

2. *What type of community did you grow up in? Urban, suburban, rural...?*
3. *Was the community of one culture/race or multiple cultures/races?*
4. *Was one culture/race dominant or were the cultural/racial populations more equal?*

Thank you for the information. I would next like to explore your professional policing background:

5. *What is your overall length of police service?*

6. *How long have you served as an officer at this (your current) department?*
7. *What is your current assignment and your primary daily duties?*
8. *During your years of service at this department, have you experienced a change in the Hispanic population?*
  - a. *If so, what change have you experienced? (R1).*

Thank you for sharing your policing background. I would like to now explore your perception of the concepts of culture and cultural competency.

**Defining Culture and Cultural Competency:**

9. *How do you define culture?*
10. *How have you developed an understanding of culture?*
  - a. *What has influenced you? Please explain.*
11. *How do you define cultural competency?*
12. *How have you developed an understanding of cultural competency?*
  - a. *What has influenced you? Please explain.*

Thank you for sharing your definition and explanation of culture and cultural competency. I would now like to explore how culture and cultural competency is identified and measured in your agency.

**Police Cultural Competency Training:**

13. *What training in Hispanic culture have you received as a police officer?*
  - a. *(Probing) Is it a singular event or repeated? How is the training presented? Does it vary? How?*
14. *How do you view your training experience in Hispanic culture? (R1)*
15. *How has cultural training changed with the increase of the Hispanic population? (R2)*
16. *How is the cultural competency of officers measured in your department?*
17. *How is developing a cultural competency encouraged in your agency?*
18. *How has your perception of cultural competency as a result of training or education influenced your interaction approach with Hispanic citizens?*
  - a. *Can you remember an experience where training in culture has influenced your interaction approach?*

*b. How did you feel about the knowledge of culture after the experience?*

Thank you for the detailed descriptions you have provided. You have been describing your experience in policing in general and how culture and cultural competency is addressed in your agency. This next set of questions are about your experiences working within a Hispanic community.

**Culture and Policing:**

*19. As an officer, how long have you worked within a culturally diverse community?*

*20. Do you feel culture matters when interacting with a culturally identified individual? Can you explain further?*

*21. How has your understanding of culture affected your police interactions with the Hispanic population? Can you talk a little more about that?*

*22. Can you tell me about an interaction experience with a Hispanic individual where culture was an influence? How did your experience make you feel about your understanding of culture?*

*23. As an officer experiencing/engaging in Hispanic interactions, how would you identify yourself positioned in the Hispanic culture? Is this a personal or professional positioning? Can you explain further? If one (personal or professional), what is your other position, or is there is difference? Can you define each?*

Thank you for the examples and explanations your provided in your responses. I would like to address how the increase of Hispanics in the community population has affected your approach to policing, and how you recognize any changes you have made in dealing with Hispanic individuals as a result.

**Hispanic Growth and Culturally Influenced interactions:**

*24. How do you view the increase of Hispanic population has changed your interaction approach to Hispanic citizens? Please share your thoughts.*

*25. Can you share a specific interaction experience where you changed your approach? Can you remember how changing your approach made you feel? Please tell me about that.*

*26. In what way do you feel your perception of the Hispanic culture has affected your change in interacting with Hispanic citizens?*

*27. Can you offer an experience where your perception of cultural competency influenced your interaction approach? Can you remember how you felt as a result? Please share.*



28. *Has your perception of the effect of cultural competency changed when interacting with Hispanic citizens during your career?*

*a. Can you explain?*

*b. Do you remember how recognizing the change made you feel?*

*c. Did this change affect how you positioned yourself within the Hispanic culture?*

*d. Can you elaborate?*

You have provided a detailed description of your experiences working within Hispanic population and how culture and cultural competency have influenced your policing practices.

29. *Is there anything else you would like to share at this time?*

You have provided me with a wealth of information that I will be able to analyze and apply to the research. Thank you for participating in this interview.

-----End of Interview-----

(Recording off)

The interview is now completed. Is there anything else you would like to discuss at this time?

### **Closing**

This interview has covered a number of concepts and you have provided an invaluable perspective and insight. Thank you for offering your limited time and participating in this interview. My next steps in this research, once completing the interview is to transcribe the interview recording. Once I have confirmed the interview is correctly transcribed and in verbatim, I will send you a copy of the transcript and any notes taken via email for you to read over and check for accuracy. You are free to add or explain in further detail any response you feel does not cover the intended response. I respectfully request you review and return the transcript with any adjustments (if needed) within seven calendar days if possible. If I do not receive any response, I will assume that the transcript is correct. Once again, as I begin to analyze the information you provided, a pseudonym will be assigned. No person other than this researcher will know your identity as the participant providing the information or the name of the agency you work for. Once the data is analyzed, any information included in the research, including any direct quotes you have made, will be presented under a pseudonym. This research study may be published, provided to police leadership and administration, and presented in professional settings such as conferences, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential. Once the interview is complete and the information is transcribed, and the original recording will be kept under lock and key in a secure location.

Finally, as a token of appreciation of your time in participating, I would like to send you a small gift card for participating. Would dropping it off or sending it to your department in care of you be acceptable, or would you prefer it be sent to a different location? If a different location, can you please provide me with the address?

Thank you once again for participating. Have a nice day.

## Appendix C: NVivo Word Cloud and Word Tree for Participants Top 35

knows	5	754	3.77%
culture	7	644	3.22%
hispanic	8	407	2.04%
okay	4	353	1.77%
like	4	323	1.62%
interactions	12	187	0.94%
just	4	179	0.90%
understanding	13	177	0.89%
community	9	165	0.83%
feel	4	154	0.77%
trainings	9	147	0.74%
competent	9	142	0.71%
great	5	140	0.70%
officer	7	137	0.69%
changed	7	136	0.68%
one	3	131	0.66%
experiences	11	130	0.65%
personal	8	127	0.64%
population	10	126	0.63%
police	6	124	0.62%
different	9	121	0.61%
mean	4	117	0.59%
way	3	109	0.55%
think	5	108	0.54%
going	5	103	0.52%
kind	4	100	0.50%
things	6	100	0.50%
get	3	99	0.50%
time	4	99	0.50%
spanish	7	96	0.48%
right	5	96	0.48%
trying	6	95	0.48%
people	6	92	0.46%
lot	3	92	0.46%
works	5	91	0.46%

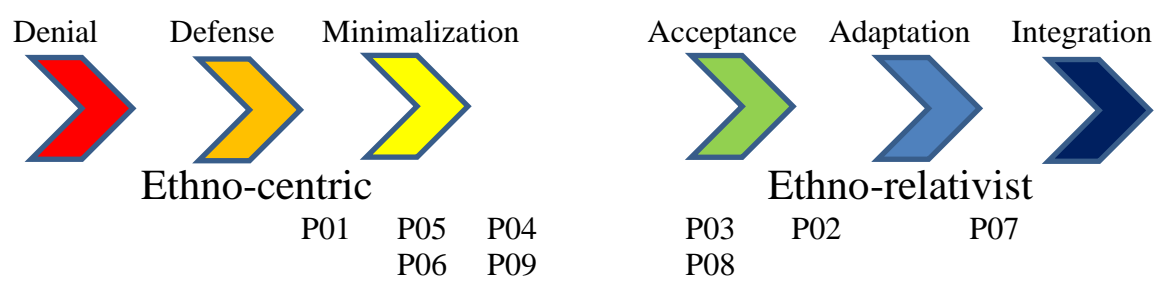


## Appendix D: NVivo Word Cloud and Word Tree for First Cycle Coding Top 35

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage
cultures	8	130	4.91%
understand	10	66	2.49%
hispanic	8	62	2.34%
training	8	54	2.04%
different	9	47	1.77%
spanish	7	42	1.59%
community	9	38	1.44%
personal	8	34	1.28%
know	4	33	1.25%
learn	5	32	1.21%
experiences	11	27	1.02%
way	3	27	1.02%
officer	7	26	0.98%
interact	8	25	0.94%
language	8	25	0.94%
speak	5	25	0.94%
treat	5	22	0.83%
one	3	21	0.79%
respect	7	20	0.76%
police	6	19	0.72%
trying	6	18	0.68%
changed	7	17	0.64%
get	3	17	0.64%
people	6	16	0.60%
family	6	15	0.57%
law	3	15	0.57%
barrier	7	14	0.53%
positive	8	14	0.53%
things	6	14	0.53%
communicate	11	13	0.49%
enforcement	11	13	0.49%
group	5	12	0.45%
job	3	12	0.45%
professional	12	12	0.45%
successful	10	12	0.45%



## Appendix E: Participant's Perceived Placement on Bennett's DMIS Scale.



## Appendix F: Key Participant Responses to Theme Development

### F1: During your years of service at this department, have you experienced a change in the Hispanic Population?

Participant	Answer
P01	"Absolutely. Um, we keep getting more Hispanic and, um, a bigger Black population."
P03	"Um, I believe that there's been an increase in the Hispanic population, but I do not have any facts or numbers to verify that." I would say that our call volume, uh, has changed from uh, or has increased, ah, along with the Hispanic population. Um, we have several calls now where a Spanish speaking officer is requested, uh which seems to be, um increasing, uh, as time goes on."
P04	"In the, the number of Hispanics living in the city has increased. It seems that, um, the population is coming from different areas and not just from within the current migration itself. We've had a lot of, um, Hispanics moving into the area from outside the area."
P07	"Ah, yes, there is a steady rise of Hispanics in the community, um, along with other minorities."
P08	"Um, I would say generally stayed the same level within the community. I know the greater area has seen a larger increase. I do not see a huge increase, no."

### F2: What training in Hispanic culture have you received as a police officer?

Participant	Answer
P01	"I would say we've, we've never typically been trained on how to deal with a Hispanic person as, as more of just a broad, um, teaching of dealing with different cultures."
P03	"I would say none, curtailed to Hispanic. Um, we have had a few, um, different folks come into the PD and, and, uh, try to raise, I guess, raise our cultural awareness and uh, do some activities and things with us to help open our minds. But as far as, uh, Hispanic specific, I would say that we haven't had any training or any kind of, um, anything to help aid or or, or, or help us understand uh, what, what defines their culture or what, what motivates them or, or what would be any different from what we would, what we should experience or what we would experience."
P07	"In Hispanic culture? Me personally, none. Um, most of our training is in general. For example, domestic violence situations, which transcends all culture in races... Um, but for the most part, um, Most-my department and most departments I would say, uh, there isn't a group specific – a cultural-specific training. There are groups of specific trainings, i.e., mental health, Alzheimer's, elderly, but that-that group transcends all cultures and races. The-there's no specific cultural training."
P08	"Very minimal. Uh, we've done some implicit bias training, uh, but actually like detailed toward the Hispanic culture, very minimal."
P09	"Um, (chuckle) that's a good question. Uh, I'm going to say minimal. Uh, actually, I wouldn't even say training."

### F3: How has cultural training changed with the increase of the Hispanic population?

Participant	Answer
P01	"I mean, we've never really had the specific cultural training on Hispanic people."
P03	"I would say that it hasn't. I would say that we have treated our, uh, training the same way as we always have now. Um now, our training always gets better. I'm not saying that it, uh, that the training itself is old and outdated or anything like that, but that to address the Hispanic, the rising Hispanic population, uh, that hasn't been touched on, I would say."
P05	"I-I don't think the training itself has changed any, I guess."
P06	"Um, you-you know, I-I haven't really noticed a change, to be honest with you. Um, they haven't-it-there's never been a moment where somebody came out and they were like, "Hey, you know, the population, uh, the Hispanic population has risen, and we need to do some more training in regarding the culture of Hispanics." And I-I've never heard anything like that before. Um, I mean, if anything, it's not just-it's never just geared right towards the Hispanic population. If anything, um any sort of training is involved with all races, whether it be, you know, even, you know, white, Hispanic and Black, you know, Asian. Um, you know, it's it's-the- it's never targeting one race. It's always across the board."
P07	"Uh, uh, really it hasn't. We haven't had any, uh, culturally specific training."



P09	“No sir, it hasn’t. Uh, that was something I would like to see change, uh, because, you know, in this line of work you-I think that you have to adapt to your community that you police, you know, so that way there where there, there is no disconnect, you know. You’re able to-be able to interact with the different citizens you come into contact within your community.”
-----	--

#### F4: How is cultural competency measured in your department?

Participant	Answer
P01	“I’ve never, even tried to measure it, I guess, I mean...”
P02	“Um, so, I mean, again, that’s something I couldn’t comment on because it’s not measured.”
P03	“I don’t think there is a measurement for it. I don’t know how it would be measured, but I, I, I would say that it is not currently measured.”
P04	(Chuckle) “There’s really no, there’s really no standards. There’s no measures other than what a supervisors as myself can, can realize how myself to best to support my officers, how they would react or be able to deal with or accomplish, uh, if it’s having a call or making an arrest or doing an investigation how, as individuals, how they would be able to accomplish that goal.”
P05	“Mm. I don’t believe that it’s measured. I think that’s probably a, a common-sense approach by the supervisor and your peers. Um, not-I don’t know that’s, that that’s entirely a measurable thing, Uh, but uh, you know I would just say, you know, part of it’s a learning experience or if you, you run across, let’s say, a newer officer that have less exposure, taking the time to explain that to them. You know, usually it’s after the fact. It’s reactive, not proactive.”
P06	“Um...I mean, there is no standard. There is no, I guess, guideline of how competent an officer is with various cultures. It’s just kind of like an understood of all respect, everyone’s religions, culture, creed, race, sexual orientation. And we try to exercise our, uh, police powers in accordance to the law. But there is no guideline in our department that says this officer knows more about the Asian community, Hispanic community, uh, the Muslim community, and so on and so forth.”
P07	“I honestly do not know.”
P08	“I do not know.”
P09	“Um, it, it’s-I will look at it, more of your actual personal interaction skills, uh, you know, how you talk and speak to an individual. And just in your different, you know, when you go on, your different calls for service, you know, how are you’re able to establish a rapport with the individual, whether they’re the complainant or an offender or a victim, you know? How you’re able to interact with that individual? That’s how I feel that’s kind of gauged, you know, your competency. No sir, no formal tool.”

#### F5: How is developing a cultural competency encouraged in your department?

Participant	Answer
P01	“Ahh, I mean, the only way we’re encouraged or get any training on it is 99 percent of the time through the Police One training. Uh, other than that, it’s really not talked about.”
P03	“Uh, we do have a diverse, uh, agency. There’s, there’s people of all different backgrounds. Um, but as far as each individual officer being encouraged to uh, research and understand culture differences.um, I, I haven’t seen it.”
P04	“(Sigh) No true encouragement comes from the administration. It’s pretty much at the shift level amongst your, your local peers and your immediate supervisors. That’s where it seems to be where the biggest push comes from knowing that as, as a crew you work together daily. You know, the object is for everyone to go home at the end of the day and we want to be able to do the best we can for the citizens in the city. You see deficiencies, and if somebody on your crew, you know, we can address those usually fairly easy, fairly quickly, and to make sure that hey, the next time we present ourselves that we, that we’re all are successful. Um, so that’s the goal we all have, is to make sure we get the job correctly and get it done right. So, I think it comes from more on down the ladder. I just don’t see a lot of it coming from an administrative perspective.”
P05	“Uh, I-other than through the, the training, you know, as far as the formal training and, uh, the review of certain encounters, I don’t think it necessarily pushed one way or another.”
P07	“Um, we do basic training and really any other training the officers go to, to when it’s highlighted. Um, we’ve never really had any specific training for this.”

## F6: How do you define Culture?

Participant	Answer
P02	"I would define culture as the customs and achievements of a particular nation and groups of people."
P03	"A set of norms, ideas, or behaviors that are dictated by their families, um, or a group's beliefs and actions."
P04	"Culture-I think, it revolves around it could be ideas, could be the way one is raised. It could be, um, art, music, holidays, things that are specific, um, to a religion, to, um, a race, to be to a country, or to a specific group of people."
P05	"Umm. Well, I believe culture has a lot to do with-I mean, I guess there's different types of cultures. Whether it's within a church community or even a, you know, the demographics of another country and things of that nature, culture would be just-I guess you could call it customs and practices, things that they believe are socially acceptable or, or their basic belief systems. Ah, they often inherit their heritage and traditions and things that are passed by and they go into that, too."
P07	"Culture to me would be, uh, traditions passed down from generations, ancestors. Every family has their own tradition. Multiple families have similar traditions. Um, so, to me, culture is, is a traditional way of doing things from the old country. Um, I'm thinking of international cultures. Uh, for instance, we have different, uh, behaviors and in the Mexican culture that other cultures uh, mirror or, uh, don't have. But I feel like regionally, uh, culture can be described as, as traditions that a group you adhere to."
P08	"Culture is like, the way you're raised, the beliefs of your community, the beliefs of your family and your, uh, religion."

## F7: How do you define Cultural Competency?

Participant	Answer
P01	"(Sigh). I think it's impossible to understand another culture or a way of life unless you lived it no matter how much you study it. Um... (pause) but to coexist with someone of a different culture, I think is very easy as long as you're want, want to listen and to be kind."
P02	"Um, cultural competency. So, for me, I would say that an understanding of cultures that are different from yours and another someone."
P03	"Um, I would describe it as being able to understand and adapt, uh, to someone else's culture. Um, I think you just have to be self-aware and know that your ideas and norms and behaviors and actions might not align with somebody that comes from a different background."
P04	"That's the ability to interact with others of a different culture. Understanding, communicating, being able to cross those, um, what's the word I'm looking for-how to cross those borders or those, uh, not walls but being able to, yeah, being able to communicate, understand, and interact with another culture."
P05	"My understanding of that, that word is basically cultural competency. Competency would be your understanding and I guess maybe you could say tolerance of another, another culture, ah culture. Um, I mean, I guess how well you're familiar with. I guess that's my term, I guess I put it customs and practices and, you know, things that are socially acceptable within that culture."
P07	"I guess competency would be having that basic knowledge of a different group's social norms to where you, you know, not to cross certain lines, to offend uh, groups and to gain their trust."
P08	"So, then that would be the understanding they're not viewing me, understand the different ways that people interact with from their background, how they react. So, like certain, certain, uh, when you're dealing with like the authority side of it, like the law enforcement side of it, certain, uh, cultures and that don't make eye contact. Certain cultures, uh, uh, they don't, like I say make eye contact. Then you have like ones that are always, more open. Uh, yeah, it's just the way person interacts."
P09	"Um, I guess, you know, try to understand, uh, you know, why a certain group of people would do certain thing. You know, whether it's, you know, learned behavior or like I said, I mean, I guess a lot of times you do use the word culture. Maybe in a sense you might not even-you might not even understand why. And that seems to be like a safe haven as far as, you know, maybe there's culture, you know. It's been-because you might not have the opportunity to ask or maybe even do any type of research to understand why, you know. So, they always seem-you're always seeming to fall back to, you know maybe it's culture."

### F8: How have you developed an understanding of cultural competency?

Participant	Answer
P01	“I would say definitely growing up. Um, um I grew up in a city that I work for now. Um, so growing up there was mostly a white community with, I don’t know, 10 percent being Hispanic and even, um, growing in a school. I remember one black family, so I really didn’t understand anything about the African American or black culture, but growing up, I, um, growing up, so I identify and look Hispanic, but no one in my family speaks Spanish or, or any other language for that matter, except for English. Um. So, I really don’t understand or know anything about Hispanic culture until I started going to school and I learn by the coming of age. And so, I think going to school and just being around them and going to a Hispanic friend’s house and seeing how they celebrate holiday’s or stuff like that.”
P02	“I have developed an understanding for cultural competency by educating myself on different cultures that are a part of the community in which I serve. I know that I have to have an understanding of these different cultures to better serve them. What has influenced my understanding is knowing that being in public service I have to serve every one of every walk of life and even those of different cultures. To successfully serve the public I have to have an understanding of different cultures.”
P03	“Um, Again, I would have to say that my family background, my upbringing, um, going to church services, going to other religious events with, uh, friends that were Hispanic or Puerto Rican, uh, having-dinner with their family, um you know, having spent time with them. Uh, also, we HAVE had some training at the PD with, uh, culture diversity. Not one necessarily um, not Hispanic, not African American, not anything, but just, uh, being prepared or trying to be prepared to, uh, you know, appreciate their backgrounds uh, without any bias.”
P04	“A lot of it-(sigh) it does come from having family and through on the job experience, and then through formalized, uh, training, through law enforcement.”
P05	“Uh, I guess that goes back into my explanation of what I’ve been exposed to over my lifetime. Um, and it’s just keeping an open mind. Um, being patient-taking the time to understand somebody. You have to not, uh, look at everything through just your own eyes or your own opinion. Um, if you really want to bridge that gap or come to a conclusion, especially if you’re in a, a crisis situation, you need to really kind of understand, uh, where they’re coming from.”
P07	“Um, I guess you can say the way my parents raised me. Um, respect your neighbor, respect other people. People of different, people may act different, people may eat different. Uh, you know, who are we to judge? It’s best to get to know someone and, and learn from them... Also, reading, reading a little bit.”
P08	“Uh, through my experiences on the job, and I had-I understand that dealing with certain cultures and that, uh, you have to approach them in different ways. Um, if you’re dealing with a domestic, you definitely have to insert a culture that moves people away from each other. Especially the males and females to understand and be able to get, um, both sides to open up where with others you don’t have to. Um, and then you have the ones that are very religious so you have to be cautious about how you uh, may or may not offend their religious beliefs.”
P09	“I do have, like, you know, personal Hispanic friends. And there’s been times I’ve, you know, in passing. I’m like hey, you know, I’ve -I’ve dealt with this situation, you know. To you-do you have any type of background knowledge or any idea why this?” you know, without giving away any type of personal information, you know. But just to try to see, you know, different views or thoughts or opinions on the matter.”

### F9: Do you feel culture matters when interacting with a culturally identified individual?

Participant	Answer
P01	“Uh, I would say no, because like I said again, I go back to you treat whoever you’re dealing with, with dignity and respect, then that’s all that really matters. Whatever their culture is shouldn’t matter because I still believe that everyone, once again, should be treated with dignity and respect.”
P02	“Absolutely. Um, so for me, um, I’ve, like I said, I have a lot of Hispanic friends, and I’ve been on several calls where you go to a family dispute and no one wants to talk to the police. Um, and I always asked by Spanish friends, um, I have some friends that are Mexican and some of them are actually were from Mexico, and I ask them, “why don’t they want to talk to us?” you know, and their thing is in the Hispanic culture, we have to keep everything in-house. We don’t want to have our people be on our problems and a lot of that comes from trusting the police in Mexico. Out of a lot of corruption in the police forces of Mexico. So, when we come over here, we expect the same thing, and we don’t want to involve us. So, having that kind of understanding will kind of help you when you go into a situation that is stressful right now. When acting when they’re trying to get information from somebody and the they close the door and don’t want to talk to you. Then, you know, sometimes somebody that’s maybe hot-tempered that will make things elevate when it’s already elevated. You have that understanding that “Hey, this culture doesn’t really want to talk to the police. They want to keep things in-house.” You can use it and try to, you know, say, “Hey listen. I understand you want to keep this in-house, but we were called here, so, you know, if you

- guys want to talk to us, if you don't want us to get anything done, if you feel safe here, then we'll get out of your hair. But if you need us, we're here for you."
- P03 "I do. Um, you have to be able to relate, uh, to the subject that you're speaking. And if you can't relate or understand where one another is coming from, it's going to be very difficult to articulate what it is that you want from them or what they want from you. Um, a lot of times you find that the, you know, the younger, the younger, younger, younger Hispanic population associates with, you know, like more of the more American norms where you'll have older Hispanic population that participates more with the way things were done in the past and where they come from."
- P04 "Absolutely, um, especially if they can explain the one the way one views could be my presence as a law enforcement officer. I can understand why it may be a good experience, could be a bad experience based on nothing I've done right or wrong, but maybe based on previous-the way they were brought up, raised, if things happen in a different country. Um, it just gives you that idea where you, you may have to have a plan B, or plan C on how you would handle those situations or going into, you know, um, the traditional way you may approach something may not work. You have to do something else because the ultimate goal is, um, you want to have a successful interaction. If it's to help out a victim of crime um, if you have to interview a witness to help solve a crime, what he is doing as someone who is going to be arrested. You still need to have, um, um, a successful solution to that problem."
- P05 "Absolutely. Absolutely. Ah, it, it-if you don't understand where these people are coming from-the things that make them like, for example, I, I think family is strong in the, uh, Caucasian community, but even within the Hispanic community you have some elements that is-the sense of family and loyalty is even that much stronger in some cases, I think, um, where the family unit, you know, is less likely to split in some cases, that's kind of what I think anyway. Uh, but understanding them-I mean-you, you have to again go back to what I said previously, that you have to understand their customs and practices, you know because that's what they're used to. So, you might have somebody who's upset you doesn't make any sense, but you have to understand, you know, where they were coming from and why it does make sense, why they are so upset. So somewhere you have to find that middle ground for them to understand how you're viewing it as well. And you hope to find that middle ground where you can bring things down a little bit more peacefully and help them to understand to. It can't be a-sometimes it ends up being a compromise. It can't be all our way or our perception. No."
- P06 "Ah, yeah, uh, because you know, like I-my mom raised me to be respectful respect for everybody, like to treat everybody alike and it sounds cliché, but it's completely true. Um my mom was a teacher and she very respectful person and she, she taught us to treat everybody like a brother or your sister or your grandmother, you know, things like that. And to-and that affected my culture, like growing up and having her culture. And so now when I go over to talk to somebody who has maybe a different culture or who, you know, might have grown up, uh, with a pre, uh, pre-preconceived, you know, notion of, of any of, uh, you know, a white officer. Um, I can try to use the same things that I've been taught to try to change the person's mind. Um, you know, I've had-I've had many people, uh, and I'm very proud of this, and it'll be "I used to never trust cops. I used to never trust them. But because of you, now I give them a chance before I start getting disrespectful because I know that, you know, at least with them, they'd be like you, so to speak." And so, you know, I, I-so I really take pride in that."
- P07 "I-I believe it does for the fact that, um, if you working a case that's an investigation and you need answers, and you're questioning an individual, uh, not in an interrogation, but you ae just questioning an individual on street, I believe that if we do have their cultural competency, you are able to connect with that individual and gain their trust. Um, I know there is a large distrust between the Hispanic community and law enforcement for fear of immigration and deportation. Therefore, uh, a lot of Hispanic, uh, victims don't report crimes for fear of having their legal status checked. So, I feel like if-if more officers were trained and that's just in Hispanic communities but all cultures that are of immigrant descent, if we had their training, uh, that was demographically specific to our area of work, I think we'd be able to have that connection, and then the community would have more confidence and reporting crimes."
- P08 "Oh, it completely matters. You have to be-you have to be able to somewhat recognize their culture and figure out how to resolve the issue. Um, the way you interact with one culture may not be the same way you interact with another culture to resolve the same issue."
- P09 "Yes, because, I feel that in, in that, um, a, a person would never feel like their- it'd be, it'd be more of a respect type of, uh, interaction to where he wouldn't be in so many words like putting down or disrespectful to the individual's culture or way of life. If you knew who it was that you were dealing with or had knowledge of, you know, the history. Or that you would know whether make eye contact when talking with an individual or, you know, using 'yes, sir, no, sir. yes, ma'am, no, ma'am,' you know, So, I think that's a lot that play a part in going with it."
-

### F10: How has your perception of the effect of cultural competency changed when interacting with Hispanic citizens during your career?

Participant	Answer
P01	“Well, I don’t -I don’t think so. I mean, again I go back to treat everyone with respect and dignity no matter what, no matter what, and I think you can work through most of your problems.”
P02	“Um, (pause) not really. Like I said, you know, um, it’s our job to, you know, give everybody exceptional police service and have that understanding that hey, there’s going to be some people that don’t know it, um, and it may or may not be your fault, you know. They could have tried to learn English and they couldn’t. Um, or they, you know, refused to learn English and they’re like, hey, this is my culture, and this is what I want to do. I left my country, or, you know, my family is from there and this is the language that we speak and this the language we’re gonna speak. Um, so my perception of, in that aspect of culture hasn’t really changed. Um I know that, you know, it’s going to be there, and I have to work through it., you know? Um, and I wish that more officers had that view of hey, you know, it’s not, this is our country, speak English. Its hey, maybe we should try to understand their culture more so that we can not only be better officers, but we can better serve the community in which we serve.”
P03	“I, I believe there is a need to have it. And I believe that I have grown as an individual over the 13 years uh, for better. I think you have to be able to...know what it is that, uh, what they value. Now is every Hispanic going value the same thing? I would say no. I mean everybody is going to have their own sets of values and ideas. Um, I think culture is a good way to-to start to understand what I mean, I’m sure. Just like my family it’s, it’s very diverse and there’s tons of different ideas and not everybody is going to agree on everything. So uh, I would say it’s like a salesman approach. You know, you get your foot in the door and you got, you know, he, or you can have a little, little background. But not everybody is going to be the same.”
P04	“Yes. It’s, it’s important for law enforcement to be successful in our jobs. The more successful that means the general population is, is safe. They’re happy with the service that are being provided. Having the ability to relate to the Hispanic population just increases those odds of having that successful interaction. And through my career, when you see situations that didn’t go very well, and then you see that investigation or a call for service that went well and then you get feedback from that maybe a year later or sometime later where you maybe run into that person again and you get that, you get that handshake or you get that hey-you get that comments of hey, I appreciate how you handled it, you know, getting involved with my family, or maybe my kids, or how you talk to us. I really appreciate that. That meant a lot. And that’s when the lightbulb goes off and you realize okay, you’re doing the right things for the right reasons. Because the Hispanic population, they live here, and this is important as everybody else. And making them feel they are part of the community. Uh, their, their concerns or what’s happened to them-that’s just as important as the next person on the block is. And when they, when they truly feel that, then hey, well, you know, we’re on even par with everyone else. That’s a win-win for everybody.”
P05	“I mean I, there’s things over the years that have, uh, I’ve grown in, but I don’t think there’s anything that’s really changed. You know, I’ve always tried to remain open-minded and things. There might be a little details or things there that you learn or get better at along the way. Um, so I guess the only change I can say is maybe improvement, but that there wasn’t like a, you know, a paradigm shift or something where all of a sudden, I’m having an epiphany.”
P07	“It has. It has, because, um, when people use the term Hispanic community, it is a very diverse community, no different than if I were to say the European community. You have Germans, you have Italians, you have Dutch you have English, you have Welsh. It-it it’s so rich in history and language and culture that it’s hard to put one big group in, say, the European community. While the Germans might not like that, the Italian’s might not like that (chuckle). You know every, every group has their own. So, it’s-Even though I grew up Hispanic-Mexican, it’s-you constantly learn different stuff about different groups, how Cubans, uh, like this type of food or how Puerto Ricans like this type of, of alcoholic beverage or how this and I mean, and then you have a subclass of every person is their own person. So, you know, Mexicans like spicy stuff, but not that Mexican. This Mexican doesn’t like any spicy stuff, you know. So, it’s its-you’re constantly learning, and you have to, me as an officer, has to understand that our, our community in general, The Hispanic community-we’re very diverse, multiple skin colors, different hair colors, different eye colors, different religions, everything that bonds us together was the Spanish language. The Spaniards came and invaded. That’s one of the few things we have in common is just the language. So, I’ve learned to, uh, pay attention, to learn, to pick up different words, how to say hello, how to say goodbye. Uh, Puerto Ricans don’t say Hello, how you doing? They give you a blessing, (Puerto Rican blessing) and then if you say, if you greet someone and give them the proper greeting that their cultures, uh, how they treat each other, you’ll get a positive response. Or they might even ask you-I’ve been asked many times “are you Puerto Rican?” “No, I’m not Puerto Rican. I’m Mexican.” “Well how do you know?” “Because I have friends.” Uh, but, it-it is, I mean, I know for the sake of this study you have to bundle the Hispanic community as one. But it’s very, uh, very large community, and everyday I’m learning something about, you know, even my own country here and in Mexico, you know, it’s so big.
P08	“Yes. I mean it has because I’m just more aware. I am more, um, well-rounded person compared to when I came out of the academy in (redacted).”

P09 “Yes, it-it has to where it- there’s more of a positive, uh, you know, you have to hold each individual on their own accord so as not a thing of where I’ve dealt with this male group, you know, in the past, you know. I’ll assume this group was gonna do the same. X, Y, Z. So, no, I can’t, you know. Every interaction is going to be different. And in-in that made for a lot more of a positive outcome.”

**F11: As an officer experiencing/engaging in Hispanic interactions, how would you identify yourself positioned in the Hispanic culture?**

Participant	Answer
P01	“Umm, what-I feel like they judge me a lot. A Hispanic person might judge me because, I mean, I look Hispanic, but I don’t, I can’t understand what they’re saying half the time, most of the time when they’re speaking Spanish. Uh... (pause). Definitely outside of their culture.”
P02	“I would say um, kind of both professional and personal. Um, when I said a little while back, I can relate to their culture a little bit, um, and I have like I said, a lot of Hispanic friends from not only the Mexican, um, Mexicans but also Puerto Ricans. Um, and experiencing you know, personal things you know with, you know, my personal relationship with my friends and also relates to, you know, when I come in contact with people at work.”
P03	“How would I-a visitor? I would say more, more of an outsider. Uh, I am not, I am not one that is currently surrounded by, uh, Hispanic culture and norms and ways, um, but...I do have family that are more, but- that are, that are Hispanic. But I would say they’re probably on the side of Americanized, and than, than still practicing their um, Mexican, uh, norms, uh, that they would experience in Mexico. Um, But I would consider-I, I would consider myself an outsider.”
P04	“Fair and understanding. The Hispanic population in the city here is very, uh, spread out. So, we don’t have the traditional neighborhoods or subdivisions that would be primarily Hispanic. Um, maybe something that the larger cities, larger urban cities may experience where those of the same culture may live together. So, a lot of Hispanic population in the city is spread out. So, there’s no real formal, no formal or cultural linears you can rely on where you can go hey, how are we doing? How, how are the police doing with interacting with Hispanics? But individually, when I approach a family or deal with someone, um, if I get the feedback of hey, you know, we felt good talking to you, you are very receptive to our um, uh to our needs, to our wants, uh, we came to a successful, uh, conclusion that’s we’re very happy it will happen then it’s a one-on-one personal relationship. I know what I’m doing the right thing.”
P05	“Oh, within my Hispanic interactions, I think I’m accepted well. Um, then again, for something I don’t understand. I’ll try to ask and get them to explain it to me. But most of the time I don’t really have any-other than a language barrier when it’s there-I don’t really have any obstacles that have gotten in the way of being able to successfully manage a situation.”
P06	“Um, I-I think that, um, a have very good reputation, um, especially with, uh, the students, their community, um you know, graduated and, and current. Um, it’s um, something that I take very-I take my reputation extremely, extremely, um, seriously. Um, people who know me and went to jail and somebody say to somebody oh, you know it- you know, something, something negative towards me or my reputation I’m very-I, I’m the first one to stand up and fight back on it. No that’s not true at all, because I worked so hard on my reputation and that includes the Hispanic population.”
P07	“I mean, I view my role mainly as, as one dealing with, with Hispanic-the Hispanic community being that I am of the Hispanic community. Almost, as I mentioned earlier, almost as a teacher of Hey, you can’t drive like that here. Hey, you can’t do that here. That might be allowed back home, but here we don’t do that, or we don’t do this, or questions. Anytime they see me, and they see my nameplate, they see it’s a Hispanic last name. They’ll come to me first and start talking to me in Spanish, asking questions. Where-where can I find this? What does the law say about that? I get phone calls from people that know friends of the family and know I’m a police officer, and I’m of their Hispanic community and asked me, hey, this happened, this happened, this happened. What can I do?” Basic, you know, if-if it was done to me and you, we’d be, “Oh, it’s a no brainer. You call the cops.” But it’s-it’s kind of like, I view myself as, as, as a teacher a lot of the times when I’m dealing with the Hispanic community because a lot of them came here to this country legally, illegally, however, they got here and that’s about as much education that they had was whatever they came from, from back home. A lot of them won’t speak English. I lot of them don’t, ah, get-go to school out here. They, they come here to work and feed their families, and feel like a lot of them are in the dark and don’t know much about, uh, our society in our culture. And, I mean, I-I find myself constantly helping, teaching, instructing people in the Hispanic community on basic stuff-how to get a license, how to go about making a police report. How about going and getting a copy of a police report, uh, how to buy a car, with a title. Just basic stuff that, you know, we would know. But I mean, we were born here and raised here, so...”
P08	“Uh, most of my-most of my interactions. I would say they probably view me in a positive role. I mean, you always has issues and that and you’re not always going to appease everybody. Um, But I would say my overall view of the citizens I interact with is a positive, uh, positioning.”

P09           “Um, well, that's a good question. Um. Let me see. Um, I mean, I-I feel that I'm more at a comfortable level right now. I don't feel so much as a beginner, uh, so I feel that I can interact very um, let's say-let me see-I could do it to where I don't feel, you know, like timid. You know, I-I could do it with confidence knowing that I won't-it won't be any type of disrespect. I only know that-just a small amount that I do understand is enough to get me through, but I would have to still continue to build upon that and get a lot better at it.”

---