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The Role of Organizational Socialization on the Ethical Orientation of Male Police Officers

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Megan Bessey

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

The Role of Organizational Socialization on the Ethical Orientation of Male Police

Officers

by

Megan Bessey

MS, Xavier University, 2008

BS, Hilbert College, 2006

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2021

Abstract

A gap in literature exists surrounding years of service, training, and ethical attitudes within the law enforcement industry. The proposed hypothesis was that years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to an officer's ethical attitudes as related to ethical orientation. The purpose of this study was to examine organizational socialization within the law enforcement profession, specifically as demonstrated through the interaction effects of factors relating to ethical orientation and scores measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire of male Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers. The major theoretical propositions for this study came from organizational socialization and ethics position theory. A sample of Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon certified male police officers who underwent minimum mandatory specified hours of annual training completed the Ethics Position Questionnaire. Multiple regression analysis examined the interaction effect of annual in-service training and years of service on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation while controlling for age, education level, and race. The results showed that the interaction effects did not relate to ethical orientation due to the multiple regression model yielding no statistical significance. This study's implications for positive social change are that it contributes to empirical research that can advance further studies in the field.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my daughter, Luciana, and my stepmother, Amy. Both of you light the fire underneath me in more ways than you could ever know.

Lucy, you are young and full of life. You have no idea how much time I crunched while I was pregnant through your toddler years. I raised you during the dissertation process and I hope this proves that strong females can do anything they put their minds to no matter the circumstances. I love you.

Amy, you are the strong female that raised me and taught me everything I know about taking the lead and prevailing no matter the circumstances, obstacles, or defeats. I cannot thank you enough for being the driving force behind my education and providing me with the confidence to reach the finish line. Thank you for laying the foundation for the strength within me so I can pass the torch to Lucy in the not so distant future.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my dissertation chair, Dr. Yu, and my committee member, Dr. Singh, for their guidance, patience, and expertise throughout this entire process. Also, I would like to thank my previous committee member, Dr. Telleria. Thank you.

Although I cannot directly thank the law enforcement agencies that participated due to confidentiality reasons, I would not be publishing this without all of their time, years of dedicated service, and faith that I can represent their answers for the law enforcement industry as a whole. Thank you and be safe.

I could not have completed this without the support from my family, friends, colleagues, coworkers, and babysitters. I must especially thank Rob B., Dr. Patrick, and the Boone County Library (Main). Thank you all.

The biggest shout-out goes to Seven Wells Winery (Greg and Doug) in California, Kentucky, for allowing me to utilize their beautiful establishment for many years and hours on end to complete this journey. The setting was absolutely glorious and the perfect ambiance to complete this research study. Thank you for your hospitality.

The biggest thank you of all goes to my dad, Jeff. Even though you repeatedly asked what I was doing, you always showered me with your support and mostly inquired when this paper would be done. After years and years, I am happy to say…Dad, it's done. I love you and thank you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Currently, public policy and administration are rooted deeply in professional

ethics, especially within the field of criminal justice (Manning, 2000) which is often

placed under heavy public scrutiny (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Police

misconduct is highlighted through media attention from an individual and organizational

standpoint (Meine & Dunn, 2012). Individual and organizational influences on ethical

behavior are evident throughout an officer's law enforcement career and socialization

process even from the initial entry into the profession (English, 2008).

Organizational influences, such as organizational socialization, impacted a police

officer's attitudes and experiences in the field (Donner et al., 2016; Reynolds & Helfers,

2018). Socialization and cultural influences are only two issues that may potentially

influence police conduct and ethical behavior (Vallmüür, 2016). Furthermore,

socialization is influential through informal (learning the ropes) and formal (training)

modes from organizational and professional aspects (Hunt, 1985). These modes not only

influence attitudes and behaviors but also impact different stages police officers

encounter throughout their careers (Cordner, 2017; Reynolds & Helfers, 2018). Other

issues include: laws and procedures, management, code of ethics, use of force, discretion,

corruption, accountability, and personal influences (Reiman, 1997). Additionally,

previous research has explored the concept of an ethical framework within law

enforcement as a means of addressing organizational influences on conduct (Mills, 2003)

and investigated the influence of additional continuous training at all levels of the

organization (Cox & Kirby, 2018; Smith, 2003).

In this study, I investigated if years of service and hours of annual in-service training were interactively related to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation by the administration of a questionnaire to Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers. A knowledge gap existed relating to the interaction effects of police officers' ethical orientation, organizational socialization, and training. By using the findings of this study, law enforcement agencies can develop evidence-based policies to enhance law enforcement effectiveness for potential positive social change. This chapter includes an overview of the background, problem statement, purpose, research questions, hypothesis, theoretical framework, nature, definitions, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and significance in detail to relate the study to the disparities in research that existed at the time of this research study surrounding the role of organizational socialization and ethical orientation among law enforcement personnel.

Background

Research literature related to the scope of this study was extant; however, a gap in the literature existed as to whether or not years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation. Forsyth (1980, 2011, 2017) began analyzing ethical positions in 1977 by applying a behavioral aspect rather than simply a psychological study. He developed a research instrument that separated the two ethical dimensions into relativism (where ethics differs from person to person) and idealism (where the concept of ethics is considered universal) but essentially incorporated four philosophies that give rise to different moral evaluations of individuals to include situationists, absolutists, subjectivists, and exceptionists (Forsyth, 1980, 2011, 2017).

In Forsyth's 1980 study, they found that organizational socialization may influence the ethical position of police officers. Based on Forsyth's (1980) findings, I expected that years of service and hours of in-service training were interactively related to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation in Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon certified police officers.

Researchers from different disciplines have utilized the research instrument in various ways to suggest ethical position is influential from a socialization aspect. Kour (2017) utilized Forsyth's questionnaire to determine ethical orientation among business students in India. Manzoor (2015) used the questionnaire to examine the ethical orientations of Pakistani managers. Giacalone et al. (2015) employed the questionnaire to determine an association between ethical orientation and individuals' well-being.

Catlin and Maupin (2004) utilized the questionnaire to measure ethical attitudes among law enforcement officers based on years of service which yielded the conclusion that new recruits leaned more toward idealism while more senior officers tend to lean more toward relativism. Catlin and Maupin (2004) found mixed findings relating to training and how it influences ethical position.

Hunt (1985) argued that a police officer's decision-making skills are based on formal and informal socialization factors. She explained formal socialization that occurs in academy is contradicted by the informal socialization process that is learned on the street. Therefore, the police subculture may influence the relativistic or the cultural morals ethics position. Doreian and Conti (2017) also suggested police subculture affects ethical orientation as officers progress through the socialization process. Hope (2017) suggested training over the course of an officer's socialization will reinforce positive

behaviors within the workplace and counteract the subculture influences. Cox and Kirby (2018) argued that police subculture is so influential that police training must be offered from initial employment and throughout all career stages to counteract its negative aspects.

Many researchers focused on socialization theories. Enneking and Kleiner (2015) suggested organizational socialization could potentially maximize employee behavior if it is positively reinforced. Danielson (2004) found such theories pertained to a successful organization if learning was among one of the formal socialization influences. Kraiger (2003) addressed professional training as an important part of organizational socialization, specifically its influence on attitudes and behaviors.

Training is considered an organization's way of socializing its members or employees. Literature has addressed the importance of training law enforcement (e.g. Cox & Kirby, 2018; Manning, 2000; Marché, 2009; Moon, 2006; Reiman, 1997; Smith, 2003). Hickman et al. (2016) stressed the importance of developing training at the onset of socialization and any agency changes that may take place throughout an officer's career. With the importance of training and socialization in mind, Meine and Dunn (2012) noted that the lack of training can lead to corruption.

Because research literature related to the scope of this study was extant, this study was necessary to contribute to further research relating to the interaction effects of years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation. This contribution can add value to future evidence-based policy and positive social change within the law enforcement industry.

Problem Statement

The interaction effects of years of service and hours of annual in-service training on the ethical orientation of male police officers had yet to be evaluated. As noted above, there appeared to be a gap in the literature surrounding years of service and hours of in-service training and their effects on ethical orientation within law enforcement socialization of police officers. Catlin and Maupin (2004) examined police officers' years of service concerning ethical orientation but did not examine hours of in-service training. Other researchers (e.g. Giacalone et al., 2015; Kour, 2017; Manzoor, 2015) used Forsyth's (1980) questionnaire to identify different variables that relate to ethical orientation; however, hours of training were absent. Researchers have implicated the need for law enforcement training to reinforce ethical orientation (e.g. Hickman et al., 2016; Manning, 2000; Marché, 2009; Meine & Dunn, 2012; Moon, 2006; Reiman, 1997; Smith, 2003).

If a general guideline of professional ethics for law enforcement existed, such an ethical framework would bridge the gap between organizational ethics and behavior in the field by creating a standard for law enforcement (International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.). Few studies have explored an overall ethical framework, and their findings on the relationship among ethics, training, and socialization were mixed (Catlin & Maupin, 2004).

Police agencies have developed training programs to provide a standard of ethical behavior for officers (Schlosser et al., 2015). For this study, law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the State of Oregon were among the participants. In the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Department of Criminal Justice Training (DOCJT)

was responsible for providing the foundation of multi-faceted training to certified peace officers that participated in this study. In addition, the DOCJT provided in-service training throughout the year amounting to a minimum of 40 hours annually to all certified peace officers within the Commonwealth (Department of Criminal Justice Training, 2018) which provided a formal socialization aspect influencing professional ethics. In the State of Oregon, the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) certified the participating police officers through specialized public safety training (Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, n.d.) and required a minimum of 84 hours every 3 years of in-service training; however, it was not uncommon for most jurisdictions to offer more than the minimum requirement (Barreda, 2020). The continual curriculum tailored to all levels of law enforcement needs was aimed to close the gap surrounding socialization, training, and ethical behavior (International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.).

Purpose of Study

In this quantitative study, I investigated the interaction effects of the amount of in-service training and years of service on officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation by a questionnaire administered to Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers. The questionnaire included questions regarding ethical orientation, hours of in-service training as a formal socialization indicator, years of service as an informal socialization indicator, and other variables such as age, education level, and race. The officers' ethical orientations were divided into idealism and relativism. Idealism represented universal ethics, reinforced through police training and continuous in-service training (Engram, 1997). Relativism represented cultural morals

and ethics that are acquired through the socialization process of an officer's career, which may lead to corruption or immoral conduct (McCartney & Parent, 2015). A correlational study was utilized to evaluate the interaction effects of the amount of annual in-service training and the years of service on Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officer's ethical orientation.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Question (RQ): How did years of service and hours of in-service training interactively relate to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientations relativism and idealism?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race.

The null hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training interactively had no significant effect on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

1. As years of service increased, informal socialization increased (police subculture) and canceled out the ethics learned in formal socialization (training).

2. Neither hours of in-service training nor years of service had a significant impact on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Organizational socialization theory was the main theoretical premise for this study in which I focused on organizational influences as well as individual influences and behaviors (Donner et al., 2016; Enneking & Kleiner, 2015). The conduct and behavior of an organization's members were dependent upon organizational influences, individual beliefs, morals, values, and environment (Shafritz, et al., 2016). Furthermore, morals and ethics were learned through cultural adaptation during socialization (Moon, 2006).

Chao (2012) explained that the importance of studying organizational socialization was to understand the influences that may need adjustment within an agency to better organizational success and ethical responsibility (Striefel, 2006). Training was one socialization influence that needed adjustment especially in the field of law enforcement since it influenced an officer's culture, morals, attitudes, and integrity (Cox & Kirby, 2018; Striefel, 2006). Continuous learning, the basis for the socialization process (Moon, 2006), must have occurred for socialization to have a positive and successful outcome for the organization (Cox & Kirby, 2018; Danielson, 2004).

Forsyth (1980, 2011, 2013) developed the rationale for the second theoretical basis of this study, which was ethics position theory. Ethics position theory was divided into idealism (universal ethics) and relativism (no universal ethics) according to Forsyth (1980, 2011, 2013) and utilized by researchers across multiple disciplines (e.g. Giacalone et al., 2015; Kour, 2017; Manzoor, 2015). Catlin and Maupin (2002, 2004) employed Forsyth's (1980) questionnaire to specifically explore the law enforcement industry. Sunayna and Kour (2016) stated Forsyth's "work is regarded as superior as he was able

to capture many conceptualizations of moral philosophy…" (p.50) and assess internal consistency and reliability among retests.

The first theoretical standpoint was tied into the second because of the fact that organizational socialization influences ethical orientations. Catlin and Maupin (2004) suggested new recruits leaned more toward idealism as the result of training, while senior officers were influenced by police subculture causing the shift toward relativism. By utilizing the two theoretical bases together, it was possible that continuous training may have reinforced positive organizational socialization as well as ethical behaviors and attitudes.

Nature of the Study

My goal for this quantitative study was to answer the research question through self-administered research instrument data, using a questionnaire with a sample of certified male police officers in Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon. Previous studies showed a gap in the literature which led to my rationale in studying the interaction effects of years of service and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation. I used a scale to find the scores for both ethical orientations. I replicated the research instrument as set out by Forsyth (1980, 2011, 2017) and Catlin and Maupin (2004). I conducted a multiple regression analysis and quantified the instrument's scores into an index to assess personal moral philosophy either on the idealism or relativism scale. I depicted the findings empirically by strength and relationships between variables that I explored through regression analysis. I also conducted interaction plots, which showed the interaction effects on the dependent variables. I used a quantitative correlational design to explore relationships between the

following independent variables and dependent variables, years of service, hours of in-service training, idealism scores, and relativism scores. Other variables that I controlled for in this study included age, education level, and race.

I obtained permission from the law enforcement agencies located in Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon through an initial email detailing the intent of the study. The informed consent for each participant as well as the survey link was within the initial email for the agency to copy and distribute to male officers. Once the agency administration distributed the informed consent email to the participants, I understood that they agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, I administered the survey through the agencies' email software online to avoid contact with participants. I specified a deadline for completion, at which time I extracted the data and entered them into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for empirical analysis.

The research design and rationale are further explained in Chapter 3. The literature review that I used to support this study is in Chapter 2 of this study. Previous research supported my findings of whether or not years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

Definitions

Age was a demographic that was measured based on the number of years the participant has lived.

Education level was a demographic that was measured based on the participant's attainment of a high school diploma, GED, and any advanced degrees.

Ethics Position Questionnaire referred to the instrument utilized in prior research that reported statistically the two dimensions of ethical orientations: idealism and relativism (Catlin & Maupin, 2004). A copy of the Ethics Position Questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Ethics position theory (EPT) referred to two ethical philosophies: idealism and relativism (Wang & Calvano, 2013).

Hours of in-service training was a demographic that was measured based on the total number of combined hours of law enforcement-related training received by the study's participants in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Southern Oregon.

Idealism was the idea that ethics are streamlined throughout cultures, thus creating universal ethical truths (McCartney & Parent, 2015).

Organizational socialization was a process of learned adaptation through an individual's role in an organization that fulfilled organizational and individual goals (Chao, 2012).

Professional socialization referred to what was learned before entering the profession and what was learned after entering the profession (Pitney, 2002).

Race was a demographic that was measured based on culture.

Relativism was defined by Catlin and Maupin (2004) as "there is no such thing as universal ethical truths and that ethical dimensions of right and wrong vary from person to person and culture to culture" (p. 290).

Scores on Ethics Position Questionnaire referred to the statistical result from the measurement tool that depicted the level of ethical position (Catlin & Maupin, 2004).

Years of service was the organizational socialization indicator that was measured based on years spent as a certified police officer and reflected the increase of in-service training hours obtained while employed as a certified police officer.

Assumptions

The overall issues facing quantitative research encompassed the ontology and epistemology of the study (Gelo et al., 2008). Underlying the quantitative research approach was positivism, a philosophical theory that knowledge was based on sensory experience. Positivism states that the single reality is measured through the methodology chosen and method used to study the single reality (Patel, 2017). Positivism is objectively explaining and predicting quantifiable findings through a hypothesis which is explained by theory (Business Research Methodology, n.d.). I utilized this in my methodology.

The single reality was the years of service and hours of in-service training may or may not have related to the ethical orientation of male officers. I measured this reality using a questionnaire to empirically depict results. I assumed that the variables and relationships measured what I intended to measure through the research study. My expectation was that years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to the ethical orientation of participating Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers.

I also assumed that participants within the sample answered the questionnaire truthfully based on their experiences. Since Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon officers underwent a minimum mandatory specified hours in-service training annually, I assumed that the officers scored high on the idealism scale of the questionnaire as they progressed through their years of employment.

Years of service was the informal socialization indicator that was represented in this study. Previous research indicated that informal socialization within law enforcement may have led to officers becoming subjected to police subculture. According to previous research, officers who had fallen into the police subculture scored higher on relativism. Therefore, regardless of years of service, I assumed that the officers within this study would score higher on the idealism scale of the questionnaire as the result of enduring training as a continual influence.

Scope and Delimitations

Delimitations of this study existed as a result of the futility of studying the entire police officer population. Therefore, I utilized the populations of Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon certified male police officers in creating an appropriate sample size that ensured reliable and valid empirical data.

Another delimitation that existed was the disproportionate number of female officers to male officers. According to the U.S. Department of Justice's (2018) Table 74 of the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, females comprised approximately 12.5% of the entire population group of law enforcement officers. In this study, I only examined male certified police officer responses due to the majority of police officers being male. Additional research could conceivably follow this research study to establish relationships between male and female officers' ethical orientations to depict gender differences.

Limitations

As with any questionnaire, limitations can be present regarding content, structure, format, and sequence. This study's research instrument was utilized in previous research

which substantiated the concerns since the same content, structure, format, and sequence were applied. Because the questionnaire was answered in response to experiences, another limitation could have been present if the experience was not recalled as it truly occurred and thus created bias.

Multiple influences may have influenced socialization other than years of service and hours of in-service training. Discretion, use of force, laws, procedures, codes, management, accountability, and other personal influences (Cordner, 2017; Reiman, 1997) could have limited this proposed study's findings. Unfortunately, all play a role in organizational socialization within policing and it was impossible to test for all known influences or variables.

Additionally, police subculture is influenced by years of service according to previous research. As years of service increased, the officers' ethical position scored higher on the relativism scale (Catlin & Maupin, 2004). The years of service and increased training hours potentially canceled each other out on the ethical position scale since continual training was not studied in this regard. It was also possible that regardless of training, the years of service influenced relativism scores.

Significance

This study contributed to evidence-based policy, which links academics and government to public policy by allowing new evidence and innovation through a research approach (Oliver, 2014). This study provided new evidence on years of service and hours of annual in-service training on ethical orientation within the law enforcement profession. A contribution to the research literature was made regarding organizational socialization, ethics position orientations, and training by reporting the findings. Previous research

indicated training increased idealism (Catlin & Maupin, 2004; Donner et al., 2016), which was possibly indicative of the male officers within this study. The significance of this study was to research whether or not years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation as measured by the research instrument throughout the organizational socialization process within the law enforcement industry. The results from this study can be utilized to further advance the field of law enforcement, specifically training and ethics position, which can contribute to positive social change.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

Currently, public policy and administration incorporates socialization and ethics within its domain. The field of criminal justice is just one facet of public policy in which ethical orientation can be studied. Police officers are under public scrutiny for their decision-making skills during the course of their careers.

Previous research indicated officers can be ranked according to their ethical positions. Other findings included various internal and external factors that occurred during socialization. At the time of this study, no universal ethical framework existed for police across agencies because there were too many factors that influenced the ethical decision-making process.

I investigated the relationship of years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation by using the research instrument as replicated from previous research. This chapter included an overview of the background, problem statement, purpose, research questions, hypothesis, theoretical framework, nature, definitions, assumptions, delimitations,

limitations, and significance in detail to relate the study to the gaps in research that

currently existed at the time of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This literature established the need for continued research and evidence-based policy development regarding field experience and in-service training as the principal ways of ethics socialization. Current events highlighting police misconduct have grabbed the public's attention and raised ethical concerns with police ethics. Universal ethical frameworks within the profession were nonexistent at the time of this study; therefore, agencies had explored professional development and training to positively reinforce ethical decision-making skills.

The topic of ethics had been a central feature in police academy training to help combat the issue of a lacking universal ethical framework within law enforcement. Recruits have been introduced to the core values of law enforcement this way. Annual training, however, has not been established in every police jurisdiction due to cost and resource constraints. Annual training may positively influence an officer's conduct. Deploying continuous in-service training is a new field of exploration in organizational socialization within the law enforcement industry, whereas the ethical orientation of police officers had been researched since the 1990s. Furthermore, annual training may influence ethical orientation of police officers.

The main theoretical framework of this dissertation was organizational socialization theory. The main emphasis of this theory is that cultural influences were learned continuously throughout the socialization process of the profession, including but not limited to such factors as ethics, subculture, and education. Empirical research rooted in this theory appears in the broader scope of professional socialization and is more

narrowly tied to police subculture in peer-reviewed journals and seminal work. I conducted a review of the literature digitally through electronic databases such as Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, ProQuest Criminal Justice, Oxford Handbooks Online, SAGE Premier, as well as through Walden University library's database. The list of search terms included *organizational socialization, police socialization, police ethics, ethics position, ethics position questionnaire, police subculture,* and *police training and development.* I obtained scholarly and peer-reviewed journal articles both digitally and in print form to further develop research for this study. I also reviewed books for further insight on organizational socialization theory and ethical orientation.

This chapter includes a review of the development of organizational socialization, specifically the factors that contributed to the continuous process of its promulgation. I reviewed ethical orientation as it related to organizational socialization and the police subculture in particular. This chapter includes a detailed discussion of research supporting and challenging the outcomes of these findings, as well as an explanation of the importance of past research and its role in the current study.

Organizational Socialization Theory

Organizational socialization theory was defined by Taormina (2008) as, "the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member" (pp.85-102). Van Maanen and Schein (1979) explained the theory as a cultural element revolving around rules, ideologies, experiences, standards, customs, prejudices, and social etiquette. The theory centralized

the concepts of a person transcending through the socialization process of his or her

organization and adapting to values, norms, and obligatory behavior along the way

(Battaglio & French, 2016; Schein, 1968/1977). Filstad (2011) argued organizational

socialization was dynamic as it blends learning, knowledge, skills, values, and behavior

into social roles within an organization.

According to Enneking and Kleiner (2015), "organizational socialization

(OS)…maximize[d] positive outcomes for employees and organizations" (p.60). Early

research only focused on organizational influences; however, later research incorporated

individual influences and behaviors (Enneking & Kleiner, 2015).

Within an organization, social controls bear influence on the conduct of its

members. The conduct and behavior of its members is dependent upon individual beliefs,

morals, values, and environment as well as the organization's influences on social

relations (Shafritz et al., 2016). These individual factors form from socialization include

goals, means, responsibilities, behaviors, and the maintenance of integrity within an

organization (Schein, 1968/1977).

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) analyzed six dimensions of organizational

socialization theory. The six dimensions the researchers examined were: collective versus

individual socialization, formal versus informal socialization, sequential versus random

steps, fixed versus variable factors, serial versus disjunctive factors, and investiture

versus divestiture. Collective versus individual socialization incorporated collective

group education and isolated individual experiences, while formal versus informal

socialization encompassed professional training and practical learning out in the field.

Sequential versus random steps included hierarchical boundaries, as well as a wide range

of other boundaries, and fixed versus variable referred to the timeframe within which a hierarchical boundary was reached whether during a known or unknown timeframe. Serial versus disjunctive encompassed mentorship and fissure among members and recruits, while investiture versus divestiture incorporated personal attributes that contributed to the organization and personal attributes that were taken away from an individual as a result of experiences (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

In general, organizational socialization is a continuous process throughout a member's professional journey whether formal or informal, on schedule or variable, hierarchical or varying, organizational or individual, and positive or negative concerning the socialization processes (Battaglio & French, 2016). According to Chao (2012), the journey is learned and adjusted along the way to meet both organizational and individual necessities which led to desirable socialization outcomes.

According to Enneking and Kleiner (2015), research began to shift in the 1980s toward individual factors such as previous experience, knowledge, self-efficacy, problem-solving skills, and management skills. Other influences included proactive behaviors and critical thinking skills. Such behaviors and characteristics facilitated productivity and successful organizational socialization. Formal training and learning helped facilitate the organizational socialization process more quickly as a support mechanism for employees (Enneking & Kleiner, 2015).

Danielson (2004) found extensive research on the socialization of individuals through their careers and how the organization influences such careers, but there was a lack of research on organizational socialization as influenced by the individual and specifically in terms of exploring the effects of individual differences, learning, and

socialization. This lack of research prompted Danielson's study and developed the necessity for more studies focusing on the evolution of socialization throughout the career from an individual and organizational standpoint (Danielson, 2004).

Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006) argued that organizational socialization has had little research since the 1990s and that the focus for further research should be on organizational success, specifically on new recruits, other coworkers, the organization as a whole, and learning. The primary focus of research in the 1980s encompassed individual differences such as knowledge, job performance, social integration, behavior, and personality which are variables that cannot be ignored. Furthermore, gender, age, and education also influenced the individual when taking organizational socialization into account (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). To place organizational socialization into a policing perspective, Yüksel and Tosun (2015) found organizational socialization involved an "evolution of existing attitudes, values, and behaviors" (p. 171).

Socialization

For an organization to be successful, the traditions must be carried on throughout the socialization process (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Socialization is a process that plays an important role in every organization by instilling ethics in on-the-job duties (Fogarty & Dirsmith, 2001). Danielson (2004) argued that "indicators of success for workplace socialization [included]…learning, adjustment, and culture acquisition" (p. 354). Knowledge, learning, and training were essential as part of the socialization process as well as cultural elements (Cox & Kirby, 2018; Danielson, 2004). According to Van Maanen and Schein (1979), indicators of a successful organization were a part of an

ongoing socialization process. Researchers focused on the socialization of police to further understand the behaviors and attitudes of officers (Yüksel & Tosun, 2015).

Fogarty and Dirsmith (2001) argued that socialization within an organizational setting has become institutionalized as the result of influences that directly impact the practices, controls, and structure, while research was limited to exploring institutional effects on the socialization process. Socialization encompassed an individual's profession, which is very dynamic in terms of socialization since a profession is based on the organization, its norms, its structure, and each individual's factors (Fogarty & Dirsmith, 2001). For a profession to be accepted within a society, the norms, beliefs, legitimacy, and expectations must be maintained and supported (Fogarty & Dirsmith, 2001). Fogarty and Dirsmith (2001) stated a gap in literature existed on the effectiveness of formal processes such as professional training on organizational socialization.

Enneking and Kleiner (2015) found that productive employees are a product of new recruit socialization which is influential and culturally driven by external and internal factors that play a role in successful continuous socialization. Internal and individual factors need to reflect positive socialization and fit in with organizational culture (Enneking & Kleiner, 2015).

Formal vs. Informal Socialization

Mujtaba and Sims (2006) suggested socialization is more effective in producing ethical behavioral patterns from formal modes rather than informal modes. Formal socialization includes but is not limited to training and education while informal socialization includes field experience by learning from example (Cordner, 2017; Mujtaba & Sims, 2006). Mujtaba and Sims (2006) suggested formal socialization is more

effective because values were learned within weeks, unlike informal socialization that is learned over years. This may have explained why after the formal mode of police academy, officers leaned more toward idealism and after the informal mode of years of service, officers leaned more toward relativism (Catlin & Maupin, 2004).

Hunt (1985) suggested a differentiation between formal and informal organizational factors that weighed on a police officer's decision-making skills. Hunt (1985) further explained that formal socialization took place in academy but was later contradicted once the officer enters the informal socialization process on the street. The police profession is learned through field experience in which the officer learns through organizational socialization and the police subculture (Harris, 2014). Hunt (1985) stated, "[t]he police phrase 'it's not done on the street the way that it's taught at academy' underscored the perceived contradiction between the formal world of the police academy and the informal world of the street" (p. 318). Problematic interactions, observation, instruction, and peer approval in the field may have justified the decision-making process which outweighed the formal socialization learned in academy. Mujtaba and Sims (2006) suggested that during informal socialization, ethical behavior and values must be observed consistently for the socialization to have been effective on a professional and organizational level.

Reynolds and Helfers (2018) suggested organizational work experiences during the socialization process influenced attitudes and behaviors among police officers. The researchers outlined Barker's (1999) career stages that influenced attitudes during an officer's tenure: hitting the streets (initial training and learning basics), hitting their stride (next 5 to 7 years on the job which can negatively impact attitudes), hitting the wall (10-

year slump), regrouping (recognizing negative aspects and seeking improvement), and deciding to retire (period before the final retirement decision). Reynolds and Helfers (2018) suggested that the importance of Barker's (1999) research was to identify the potential differences among the phases. The beginning phase was reinforced with training while later phases were reinforced by negative organizational, professional, and on-the-job experiences (Reynolds & Helfers, 2018). This further supported the importance of formal and informal socialization on attitudes and behaviors of police officers.

Professional Socialization

During the socialization process, an officer not only learned the values and behaviors of the organization, but also the profession (Cox & Kirby, 2018; McClaren et al., 2010). Professional socialization encompassed what was learned before entering the profession and what was learned after entering the profession (Pitney, 2002). Pitney (2002) referred to what was learned after as organizational socialization, hence the overlap in terminology. Professional socialization was also broken down into formal (e.g. college education) and informal (e.g. field experience; Pitney, 2002). Both organizational and professional socialization influenced ethical position (McClaren et al., 2010).

Culture

Socialization takes place when culture is learned whether or not the culture is an organizationally wide concept or subculture segment (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). From an organizational standpoint, the culture defined how an individual member was required or expected to perform as a standard (Steyn & Mkhize, 2016; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The organization could have been responsible for behavioral concepts, but

the individual influences could not be completely disregarded (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Organizational culture is affected by socialization, behavior, values, and beliefs. Taormina (1994, revised 2004) utilized a 20-item organizational socialization inventory. Specific characteristics included training, understanding, support, and future prospects. Taormina's (1994, revised 2004) findings supported a strong significant positive correlation for organizational socialization and culture as well as for culture and training. A significant negative correlation occurred for culture and future prospects. These findings supported better incentives for employees and a better human resource workforce for a more positive cultural socialization process (Taormina, 2008).

Subculture

The social structure of an organization also gives rise to the subcultures formed as a result of influences that bring its members together as a whole (Shafritz et al., 2016). Subcultures were "organizational segments" that occurred from carrying out a specific role within an organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). In a bureaucratic organization, such as a police department, it is not uncommon for police officers to develop their own subculture based on their experiences and daily operations or functions (Steyn & Mkhize, 2016; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). According to Yüksel and Tosun (2015), the work environment influenced the socialization of police officers. Often, this can become problematic since officers assume this subculture in place of maintaining stability of the cultural elements within the department (Cordner, 2017; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

According to Sanders (2003), job performance is dependent upon personality traits; moreover, the organization and job environment directly affect the behavior of an officer. For police, stress and a difficult work environment may lead to situational behaviors related to police subculture (Sanders, 2003). Marché (2009) explained police subculture is both positive (doing the right thing and following the mission and ethics of the department) and negative (being unethical and ignoring misconduct). Marché (2009) proposed that unethical attitudes of police stem from officer discretion, the bureaucratic nature of the organization, and a lack of supervision all of which contribute to the making of such a subculture. Police subculture is learned through the socialization process from recruit to supervisory roles (Marché, 2009) and varies depending on an officer's task which ultimately proves to be more problematic in determining ethical shortcomings (Hickman et. al, 2016).

Sanders (2003) and Steyn and Mkhize (2016) further explained that the subculture influences those officers that exude individual personality traits fit for the profession. Therefore, socialization and subculture are both important aspects to consider in policing (Sanders, 2003; Steyn & Mkhize, 2016). Scholars often studied the impact of socialization, work environment, and job duties of police in regards to socialization as a whole (Yüksel & Tosun, 2015).

Values

The organization is dependent upon the norms that meld knowledge and mission of the organization together that create the values necessary for its survival (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Values are standards for specific conduct that are desirable, which could be moral, societal, personal, or social (Caldero & Larose, 2001). Values are

developed and learned over time, which influence attitudes and behaviors that require stability and cognitive responses (Dose, 1997).

Dose (1997) explained research is limited on what values actually are; however, beliefs, needs, goals, and attitudes seem to be recurring similarities in which culture, society, and individual personality play an influential role. Values are a concern throughout the organization's structure as a result of the fact that ethical values guide its employees through their actions at every level thereby promoting honesty, desirable behavior, security, creativity, achievement, leadership, corporate culture, desirable decision-making skills, success, satisfaction, and self-worth (Dose, 1997).

Dose (1997) found that shared values within the workplace can influence the overall values of an individual; therefore, organizational culture must be taken into consideration. Factors such as code of ethics, professional standards, individual differences, model values, and cognitive development are all attributes to consider when relating to organizational socialization and culture (Dose, 1997). With those factors in mind, Dose (1997) developed a framework dependent upon social influence and training that defined standards for what was right and acceptable overall to determine the standards for what was considered 'right' behavior within the organization.

Caldero and Larose (2001) found values and attitudes are dependent upon police socialization that is specifically influenced by formal training, years of experience, and organizational socialization. Caldero and Larose (2001) also found that age and gender are significant toward values and attitudes, but this was solely based on what value types were being researched. The researchers found gender to be significant because women bring higher levels of education to the organization; however, further research was

needed to show significance in the values of the organization as the result of women only being employed in the field since the 1960s (Caldero & Larose, 2001).

Caldero and Larose (2001) found higher levels of education were represented with a lower percentage, meaning further research is needed to explore the relationship between education and values. The researchers determined that further research in this regard may yield the conclusion that higher education levels of police lead to a more positive value system overall. Regardless, experience over time showed that the value system was acquired through organizational socialization (Caldero & Larose, 2001).

Research suggested individual values play a role in the moral decision-making process for police officers. Police work is multi-faceted concerning ethical, moral, and mental decision-making processes. According to Norberg (2013), "[p]olicing is not a technology or a bureaucracy but an ethical practice that occurs in a social order within a value framework. It includes ethics, morals, norms, and values" (p. 36).

Research of Ethics

The study of ethics examines the 'rights' and 'wrongs' that arise from the decision-making process of individuals within an organization at all levels (Poór et al., 2015). The organization is responsible for laying the foundation of ethical behavior by creating ethical principles such as mission statements, codes of conduct, personnel policies, standards, training, a specific hierarchy for reporting, subsequent accountability, and sanctions for disobedience (Poór et al., 2015).

Studies showed a direct correlation of an organization's characteristics and socialization processes with employees' ethical behavior (Sanders, 2003). In every profession, individuals face ethical dilemmas at work (Comunale et al., 2006). Ethics

influences decision-making behavior through moral duty and obligation (Dose, 1997).

Professionals' behavior is significantly influenced by the subculture of a professional

organization. According to Comunale et al. (2006), ethics is above and beyond the laws

and regulations of the organization and encompasses individuals' perceptions as they

navigate through the organizational and socialization processes. Prior research studied

organizational and professional socialization concepts through the utilization of

questionnaires to try and lessen the gap between ethics and individual factors (Dose,

1997).

Police make ethical decisions that are based on formal and informal

organizational socialization (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015). Law enforcement

agencies have increased mandatory ethics training because of the connection between

organizational, socialization, and individual influences on ethical decision-making skills

(Wyatt-Nichol & Franks, 2010). However, Sanders (2003) found through research that

officers are more ethical at the beginning of their careers than amid their careers with

longer time of service. This raised the question of how formal and informal socialization

at work impacted an officers' ethics orientation.

Training – Formal Socialization

Throughout the socialization process, training was a key element (Cox & Kirby,

2018; Schein, 1968/1977) and an important content area of professional socialization

(Taormina, 2004). Hung-Wen (2013) argued that organizational socialization molds

effective employees through knowledge and training. Training and education, in a

continuous fashion, influence the growth and the entire future of the organization (Cox &

Kirby, 2018; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Police training influences attitudes and

behaviors throughout the socialization process, which is used to dissolve the gap between the new and older officers as seen in earlier research studies (Yüksel & Tosun, 2015). According to Catlin and Maupin (2002), "[e]ducation is a significant factor in ethical orientation" (p. 491).

According to Kraiger (2003), "[t]raining and development refer[s] to systematic processes initiated by (or at the direction of) the organization resulting in the relatively permanent changes in the knowledge, skills, or attitudes of organizational members" (p. 171). Training includes activities, while development incorporates attributes and characteristics all of which can be applied to knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Kraiger, 2003). Research regarding training has taken place over the past 15 years that included changes, successes, alternatives, and issues. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) found organizations are investing more in continual training efforts to sustain successful organizational growth, socialization, and adaptation. (Kraiger, 2003).

As Kraiger (2003) discovered, previous research regarding instructional training focused on either general or specific methods which were administered to those learning on the job. Also, Kraiger (2003) found a need for assessing what worked most effectively to provide optimal knowledge, skill, retention, and design. From the 1960s through the 1980s, research focused on behavioral methods. At the time of Kraiger's (2003) study, research focused on effective training, which was measured by the quality of training and skills acquired including interpersonal, social, and structural skills which were evident on organizational, social, or individual levels. Another consideration was the premise that

when training is voluntary, job learners may have been more apt to retain information and skills acquired (Kraiger, 2003).

According to Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006), "learning is the core of organizational socialization" (p. 497). From this assumption, five models of organizational socialization focused on learning as developed over time: organizational socialization as task, role, social, and organization (1992); organizational socialization as people, politics, history, performance, language, goals, and values (1994); organizational socialization as training, understanding, supporting, and future expectations (1994, 2004); organizational socialization as role, social, interpersonal, and knowledge (2002); and organizational socialization as organization, group, and task (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). By comparing and contrasting the five models, the researchers concluded a major drawback was the lack of organizational socialization theory that incorporated variables that facilitated the process of socialization. The theories that were relied upon for research included those on newcomers' learning, social cognitive theory, and the learning process as a whole (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006).

Fogarty and Dirsmith (2001) explained research supports training as a means to maintain and support an organization's efforts toward a positive socialization experience through the learning process. This process creates overall organizational expectations for all to adhere to within a profession (Fogarty & Dirsmith, 2001). Fogarty and Dirsmith (2001) found a gap in literature existed on the effectiveness of formal processes, such as training.

Filstad (2011) explained learning is essential to understanding organizational socialization because learning integrates knowledge into the socialization process from

beginning to end. Filstad's (2011) study focused on the dimensions of formal training on socialization and found that too many factors exist to be able to reach a conclusion, mainly as a result of the fact that people learn from a multitude of resources. Filstad (2011) found a strong positive correlation between social dimensions and organizational commitment.

According to Kraiger (2003), motivation is a key factor achieved through cognitive skills, supervisory roles, learning readiness, training relevance, and environment. Kraiger (2003) further determined that other characteristics to consider are personality, age, attitudes, and education. Current research supports the need for emerging training and learning technologies (Kraiger, 2003). Research supported continuous learning that enhances the knowledge base (Cox & Kirby, 2018) and encourages the acquisition of skills (Kraiger, 2003). Organizational level training is only effective if transferred positively without hindrance (Kraiger, 2003). Organizations are focusing on training needs and retention to build a foundation for continuous learning to better serve the needs of the organization (Kraiger, 2003).

Danielson (2004) researched alternate theories of organizational socialization within a continuous learning spectrum and found the continuous socialization for organizational renewal based on socialization, knowledge, learning, and performance. Knowledge is part of socialization, especially in a continuous manner, as it promotes renewal (Danielson, 2004). Individuals may use knowledge that was already acquired to act on values and the vision of an organization but also may change attitudes and behaviors (Danielson, 2004). This change may have occur because of knowledge mobilization and absorption by those within an organization (Danielson, 2004).

Therefore, individuals could be institutionalized within an organization in which a subculture was formed (Danielson, 2004), further indicating a need for continual renewal (Cox & Kirby, 2018).

Danielson (2004) argued that socialization is a process from a renewal standpoint and contributes to an organization's success. Personal behavior is influenced by continuous socialization through learning and training, which is ultimately internalized and portrayed through actions (Danielson, 2004). As a result of the influential nature of knowledge and learning on the socialization renewal process, training should be conducted at all levels to ensure internalization occurs (Danielson, 2004).

For law enforcement personnel, effective training reinforces behaviors within the workplace that create long-lasting impacts for learning, advancement, and growth opportunities within the organization (Hope, 2017). Hope (2017) stated, "over the course of training, police employees are subjected to an intense degree of resocialization" (p.4). Therefore, training is important to counteract the police subculture influences that exist during organizational and professional socialization (Cox & Kirby, 2018).

Ethics training is incorporated throughout police training and integrated within the curriculum. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) conducted research over a 2 year timeline dedicated to ethics training in law enforcement. A survey was conducted from a diverse research perspective that was completed by members of the IACP. The study reported a high percentage of ethics training was reported during both academy and professional development opportunities throughout departments. It also suggested increased ethics in the departmental code of honor, specific ethics training as opposed to universal, enhanced ethics curricula, development of a training style,

reinforcement through continuous training, the provision of strong ethics in recruit academies, strong ethics training in Field Training Officer (FTO) training, and the offering of continual in-service training as professional development (International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.). According to the IACP, "[t]raining bridges the gap between written integrity and ethics guidance and direction in the form of policy and procedure to behavior change in the performance of duties and responsibilities in police agencies" (International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d., p. 10).

De Schrijver and Maesschalck (2015) found ethics training is embedded mostly during academy training as a means to ingrain moral reasoning in new recruits. According to Marché (2009), upon entry into the police culture training of personnel is rich in ethical content; however, as the socialization process increases, the degree of ethics training decreases.

De Schrijver and Maesschalck (2015) found limited research exists in the areas of ethics, morals, and integrity as learned by police and the impact over time of socialization for each. Divergent results were reported on the effectiveness of integrity training that yielded positive significant results versus no effect or significance (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015).

De Schrijver and Maesschalck (2015) researched ethical decision-making skills and moral dilemmas faced by officers and the relationship of training on character and morals. The researchers found training influences socialization, morals, and police culture. They also discovered that police culture turns negative if moral dilemmas take an unethical turn. Little research exists that supports ethical decision-making skills concerning socialization (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015).

For De Schrijver and Maesschalck's (2015) study, they too showed mixed results after researching different police academies. These researchers found police training should be part of the socialization process and continuing throughout officers' careers. Their study yielded the conclusion that both theory and practice are necessary components of instilling ethics through training (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015).

Measure of Ethics Position

Ethics Position Theory (EPT) is a theory that explains moral decision-making skills and personal ethics positions as a continuum of relativism or idealism that is influenced by individual, cultural, and organizational factors (Dion, 2010). Forsyth (2013) suggested individual factors measure morals. Forsyth (2011) recommended a classification based on relativistic and idealistic dimensions made up of four philosophies: situationists are those that were highly relativistic or highly idealistic and believe each situation gives rise to a different moral outcome, absolutists are idealistic but not relativistic because they believe in absolutes and code of ethics, subjectivists do not believe in moral absolutes and base their ethical evaluation on individual judgments; therefore, low on the idealism scale, and exceptionists make exceptions to moral rules; therefore, are low on both idealism and relativism scales.

Guided by ethics position theory, Forsyth (2011) developed a 20-question research instrument to measure an individual's ethics position: relativism or idealism. The instrument is called the Ethics Position Questionnaire. Forsyth (2011) placed the degrees of these four philosophies by measuring an individual's ethical evaluation in terms of relativism and idealism scales where "high scorers on the idealism subscale of the Ethics Position Questionnaire more strongly endorse items that reflect a fundamental

concern for the welfare of others, whereas those who receive high scores on the relativism subscale of the Ethics Position Questionnaire tend to espouse a personal moral philosophy based on rejection of moral universals" (Forsyth, 2011). Therefore, relativism refers to ethics that differed from culture to culture, while idealism refers to universal ethics (McCartney & Parent, 2015). According to Catlin and Maupin (2002), relativism is much like skepticism since it is not believed to be an overall moral code whereas idealism is a universal code.

Catlin and Maupin (2002) first researched the ethical orientations of police by administering the Ethics Position Questionnaire to a group of new recruits in 1999 and a group of state police officers with one year served. Catlin and Maupin's (2002) early research was aimed at finding training strategies that would positively influence the ethical orientations of police officers. On the two ethical dimensions of relativism and idealism, no statistically significant correlation was reported. The distribution of respondents resulted in a large percent of recruits leaned toward idealism and a large percent of the one-year served leaned toward relativism. The researchers controlled for rank, education, and age of the officers.

When Catlin and Maupin (2002) used idealism as the dependent variable, rank was statistically significant. New recruits scored higher on the idealism scale than the officers who served one year. When relativism was the dependent variable, rank, education, and age were statistically significant. As age and education increased, the relativistic score lowered. However, the officers who served one-year had higher relativistic scores than new recruits. Catlin and Maupin (2002) also found the relativism score declined as education increases. The R^2 ranged from .092 to .055 which indicated to

the researchers that a large portion of the varying ethical orientations was not portrayed (Catlin & Maupin, 2002).

From Catlin and Maupin's (2002) initial study on police officers, speculation arose from their findings such as questioning whether training and socialization would influence ethical orientation during different stages of the police career. Also, speculation arose surrounding whether ethical principles erode from longer service on the force or from learning the on-the-job. The researchers concluded an implication for training is necessary because there are clear challenges to one's ethical orientation (Catlin & Maupin, 2002).

Catlin and Maupin (2004) followed up with their initial study by utilizing the Ethics Position Questionnaire to measure two cohorts. The first cohort was measured during academy and again after one year of service and the second cohort was measured at one year of service and again after two years. Again, the researchers were interested in the impact of training and socialization on police officers' values. The first cohort showed a statistical significance as new recruits leaned more toward idealism while older officers tended to lean toward relativism. The second cohort did not show statistical significance as a decline occurred for idealism and relativism scores. However, the change indicated the police subculture may have influenced the change. Catlin and Maupin (2004) suggested that socialization influences beliefs, attitudes, and values causing a decline on the idealism scale.

Ethnicity, education, and age were used by the researchers as variables of which idealism was significant for ethnicity and education (Catlin & Maupin, 2004). They found officers with higher education leaned more toward idealism. The study reported

lower idealism with experience most likely as the result of socialization and/or attrition (fewer respondents over time). Police subculture and training could also play a role in lower idealism (Catlin & Maupin, 2004). From Catlin and Maupin's (2004) study, it is evident that professional socialization is a factor for law enforcement ethics. Further research is needed in deciphering individual and socialization changes as well as the period at which they occurred over time (Catlin & Maupin, 2004).

Relativism plays a role in policing socialization, as this theory explained the reason police officers empathize with the community and the reason officers begin to form a police subculture different than the overall ethics in society (McCartney & Parent, 2015). When relativism is studied among officers, consideration is given to personality, culture, and situations; however, both differences in culture and individual differences are often overlooked which gives rise to the subculture (McCartney & Parent, 2015).

The Ethics Position Questionnaire is well established in other professions as well. Kour (2017) employed Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire to determine the ethical orientation of 160 business students in India concerning gender. The Cronbach's alpha for Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire reported 0.779 for idealism and 0.786 for relativism which indicated acceptable reliability and consistency for both scales. Kour's (2017) findings were consistent with previous research in that Ethics Position Questionnaire factors did account for gender differences where women were more idealistic than men but were not statistically significant.

Manzoor (2016) used Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire to examine the ethical orientation of 201 Pakistani managers to explore findings in a non-western developing country. The Cronbach's alpha for Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position

Questionnaire reported 0.75 for idealism and 0.684 for relativism which indicated

acceptable reliability and consistency for both scales. Manzoor's (2016) findings were

consistent with previous research in that Ethics Position Questionnaire factors suggest

Western countries scored higher on the idealism scale.

Giacalone et al. (2015) employed a shortened version of Forsyth's (1980) Ethics

Position Questionnaire to examine the ethical orientation of 206 business students' levels

of well-being as measured by moral identity and attentiveness. They found strong

evidence (R^2 values varying from 0.05 to 0.10) that moral identity and attentiveness were

significantly related to ethical orientation. The researchers conducted a second study

using the Ethics Position Questionnaire on 254 business students by adding integrity into

the regression analysis. Giacalone et al. (2015) found (R^2 values varying from 0.01 to

0.04) each variable to be significant; therefore, associations exist between ethical

orientations and well-being.

Davis et al. (2001) utilized Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire to

examine the construct validity of this instrument on two studies that measured the

individual differences between relativism and idealism. Their purpose was to investigate

the convergent, discriminant, and nomological validity of the Ethics Position

Questionnaire to substantiate whether or not it was useful in the quest for individual

difference variables required in decision-making processes. The first study employed the

Ethics Position Questionnaire instrument on 285 business students of a large public

university in the South. The Cronbach's alpha for Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position

Questionnaire reported 0.80 for idealism and 0.73 for relativism. They summed up their

findings by reporting the empirical findings of the relationship between Ethics Position

Questionnaire factors. The scale reliabilities for idealism were 0.83 and 0.81 for

relativism displaying acceptable internal consistency. Their findings were consistent with

previous research in that Ethics Position Questionnaire factors did account for individual

difference variables required in the decision-making process (R^2=0.05) (Davis et al.,

2001).

Davis et al.'s (2001) second study of the Ethics Position Questionnaire sampled

196 graduate business students with the same intent to substantiate its usefulness on

different factors. The scale reliabilities for idealism were 0.87 and 0.85 for relativism

which displayed acceptable internal consistency. Relativism and idealism were not

significantly correlated as reported in the previous study. Both studies yielded promising

reliability, validity, high internal consistency, and no correlation between idealism and

relativism. The correlations, or lack thereof, provided nomological validity to Forsyth's

(1980, 2011, 2013) theory. Therefore, the Ethics Position Questionnaire was found to be

a reliable instrument for researching divergent variables in ethical decision-making

processes (Davis et al., 2001).

Redfern and Crawford (2004) utilized the Ethics Position Questionnaire to

explore individual ethics positions across countries and cultures, specifically China. Their

research was based on previous studies conducted by various researchers such as Davis et

al. (2001), which employed the Ethics Position Questionnaire in a business context. Since

the internal consistency, construct validity, and predictive validity was established in

previous research, they validated their use of the Ethics Position Questionnaire

instrument for their study. According to their factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha for

idealism was 0.86 and 0.70 for relativism, which was consistent with Forsyth's (1980) findings (Redfern & Crawford, 2004).

Wang and Calvano (2013) examined personal ethical orientation through the utilization of Forsyth's (1980, 2011, 2013) ethics position theory to explain the individual factors that differ based on ethical behavior and moral judgment. The research explored the dimensions of idealism and relativism of business students that included multiple hypotheses regarding the impact of ethics education on their population. The posttest-only study consisted of business students enrolled at an east coast public university that were placed in treatment and control groups that reflected those who have undergone ethics training as opposed to those who did not yet receive such training. The treatment group consisted of the business students currently enrolled in business ethics and completed the Ethics Position Questionnaire instrument the eleventh week of their class. The control group consisted of business students that were not enrolled in business ethics; however, these students were also administered the Ethics Position Questionnaire instrument during the same time frame as the treatment group (Wang & Calvano, 2013).

The Ethics Position Questionnaire developed by Forsyth (1980) was utilized to measure idealism and relativism of both groups. The validity constructs were checked by reliability tests and confirmatory factor analysis yielding idealism's Cronbach's alpha of 0.866 and relativism's Cronbach's alpha of 0.743. Convergent and discriminant validity were appropriate. An Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was utilized with idealism as a dependent variable while gender and business ethics education were independent variables. Demographic covariates included age and grade point average (GPA). The results yielded gender differences and age were significant; however, business ethics

education and GPA were not significant for idealism. ANCOVA was utilized with relativism as a dependent variable on the same independent variables and covariates yielding gender, and business ethics education were not significant while age and GPA were significant. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine correlations and found correlations with age and GPA, while negative correlations were found between GPA and relativism. The research suggested those with higher GPAs had lower relativism scores, people with higher relativism scores were less ethical, and older students had lower relativism scores. The findings coincided with previous research findings (Wang & Calvano, 2013).

The Ethics Position Questionnaire was validated as an acceptable instrument in determining ethics position according to Forsyth's (1980) theory. As a result of its acceptance, the Ethics Position Questionnaire instrument is utilized across professions and countries to determine differences in ethical orientations as well as individual, demographic, organizational, or cultural variables.

Ethical Erosion

The field of law enforcement is constantly exposed to society's scrutiny of its professionalism and ethical problems (Harris, 2014); it is important to understand how organizational and professional socialization interactively shape officers' ethics orientation. Challenges that weaken professional ethics result in ethical erosion (Rana, 2014). Morgan et al. (2000) suggested ethical erosion is a result of occupational factors and lack of training. Informal socialization, for example, is not in alignment with formal socialization or may even counteract the impact of formal socialization, which leads to ethical erosion or weakening universal ethics (Vaidyanathan, 2015).

Rana (2014) argued ethics learned on a societal, professional, and educational level play an important role in choosing right from wrong. Certain safeguards can be implemented to ensure ethical culture and behaviors are preserved such as ethical leadership, mentoring, and training (Rana, 2014). Cognitive development and moral reasoning are results of learned universal principles offered through education and training which combats ethical erosion in law enforcement officers (Morgan et al., 2000).

Summary

Literature showed that law enforcement had mainly relied on years of service and continued in-service training for socializing and shaping ethical orientations of police officers. Continued research and evidence-based policy can give rise to developments in an ethical framework for law enforcement agencies regarding ethics and organizational socialization. Since I utilized organizational socialization and ethics position theory as the theoretical framework, the findings contributed to the field of exploration of the effects of years of service and continuous annual training on ethical orientations.

This chapter provided a review of the development of organizational socialization, ethical orientation, and police subculture within law enforcement. This chapter also included a detailed discussion of empirical research supporting and challenging the outcomes of the findings, as well as including an explanation of the importance of past research and its role in this current study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

I examined the interaction effects of years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation while controlling for age, education level, and race. I used the research instrument, the Ethics Position Questionnaire, to collect data of self-reported scores for ethical orientation.

This chapter provides an overview of my study's research design that included the operationalization of the variables and their measurement, study population, sampling method and procedures, research instrument, the procedure of data collection, and research ethics.

Research Design and Rationale

Previous disparities in research findings led me to create this study, using a multiple regression analysis of how the years of service and the amount of in-service training of police officers interactively predicted their ethical orientation. The analysis included age, education level, and race as additional variables.

I created a cross-sectional/correlational design, which was consistently employed in previous studies of ethical orientations. Cross-sectional designs are predominantly used with social sciences studies that are conducted to determine the attitudes or opinions of participants (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). It was appropriate for examining the interaction effects of years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes that relate to ethical orientation while controlling for age, education level, and race.

The dependent variable, ethical orientation, represented a person's core beliefs and values. I created a sample survey which collected data of ethical orientation through the respondent's judgment on a relativism-idealism scale in the survey instrument. A sample survey has the advantage of internal validity.

Methodology

Population

The study population was made up of 680 certified male police officers within Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon local police departments. For the Northern Kentucky officers, each certified officer had undergone police academy training at DOCJT located in Richmond, Kentucky, which was established by the Peace Officer Professional Standards and Kentucky Law Enforcement Council (Department of Criminal Justice Training, 2018). Additionally, each participating officer had obtained a minimum of 40 hours annually in continuing education but may have undergone additional in-service training. For the Southern Oregon officers, each certified officer had undergone police academy training at DPSST located in Salem, Oregon, and all were required to obtain a minimum of 84 hours every three years of in-service training (Department of Public Safety Standards Training, n.d.).

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

I invited 680 Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers to participate in the study. Cohen (1977) suggested the determination of medium effect size within the power primer to be ideal when previous research was limited on the effect of years of service and hours of in-service training on ethical orientation. I used Cohen's (1992) statistical power analysis to determine the power necessary for this study.

For multiple regression with five predictors, not including the dependent variables (years of service, hours of in-service training, age, education level, and race) to detect a medium effect size with a power of at least .80 and $\alpha = .05$, the study required at least 91 participants from this population (Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers) who all voluntarily agreed to participate in the study, had undergone academy as well as annual training and had documented years of service.

The 91 participants represented 95% of the total population since $\alpha = .05$. I considered a sample size of 100 participants which allowed for participants that were dismissed from the study for various reasons.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I sent an initial email with the informed consent to the Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police departments' lead administration personnel to seek permission to administer the Ethics Position Questionnaire via Survey Monkey through their departmental email emphasizing voluntariness, confidentiality, and anonymity of its participants. The initial email to each agency required in advance that the number of in-service hours accumulated to date must be reported within the questionnaire by the participant which ensured the accuracy of the responses matched personnel file data. I sent a follow-up email to all agencies that was used to generate more responses until I acquired the required amount for my study. A copy of the follow-up email can be found in Appendix B.

The participants in the study were certified male police officers employed by a jurisdiction within Northern Kentucky or Southern Oregon with varying years of service and hours of in-service training. All Northern Kentucky participants had undergone

training at DOCJT, located in Richmond, Kentucky, for police academy requirements at the onset of their employment within the Commonwealth of Kentucky and were considered sworn peace officers within the state. All Southern Oregon participants had undergone training at DPSST, located in Salem, Oregon, for police academy and were considered sworn peace officers within the state. Before employment, officers were required to have a high school diploma or GED which established attainment of education and technological skills necessary to complete the Ethics Position Questionnaire for this research study.

Since the questionnaire was administered online through a Survey Monkey link provided in an email by their administration, there was no personal contact between me and questionnaire participants. The identity of these agencies and individual officers remained and will remain confidential. An informed consent email indicated to each participant that the study was voluntary and could have been ended at any time. The email also contained instructions for the questionnaire such as background information, procedures to include what was asked of the participant and sample questions, risks and benefits, payment information, privacy information, and contact information. The informed consent email preceded the Survey Monkey link. Therefore, once the link was entered, it was said that the participant agreed to continue voluntarily.

Once the Ethics Position Questionnaire was completed by the participating officers before the specified deadline that was given, I extract the data and entered the data into SPSS for empirical analysis utilizing multiple regression. I identified interaction effects. I backed up the data on the drive with password protection and retained all data

for a minimum of 5 years. I will dispose of the data when it is no longer necessary by erasing electronic files and destroying any paper files generated from my research.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

I replicated this study from the previous taxonomy of ethical ideologies study as set out by Forsyth (1980) in which the ethical orientation scales of idealism and relativism yielded Cronbach's alpha ranging from .73 to .84 and test-retest reliabilities of .67 and .66, respectively (Forsyth, 1980, 2011, 2017). The research instrument developed by Forsyth (1980), the Ethics Position Questionnaire, evaluated ethical orientation by the degree of agreement on a 9-point Likert scale ranging from *completely disagree* (1) to *completely agree* (9). Likert scales measure attitudes to determine appropriate statistical power and reliability (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The full Ethics Position Questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The 20 Ethics Position Questionnaire questions varied in terms of relativism and idealism. I summed the responses to questions 8–17 and created a composite idealism scale, while the sum of the responses to questions 18–27 I used as a composite scale of relativism. Idealism represented the portion of no moral absolutes and relativism represented no moral right and wrong which indicated a fundamental concern for the welfare of others (Catlin & Maupin, 2004). The participants scored anywhere from 10–90 on the composite scale. For this study, the idealism questions were questions 8–17 and the relativism questions were questions 18–27 because the demographic questions preceded the Ethics Position Questionnaire questions.

I utilized Forsyth's (1980) existing instrument, where previous research reported Cronbach's alpha to have been .779 and .786 (Kour, 2017), .75 and .684 (Manzoor,

2015), .92 and .89 (Giacalone et al., 2015), .83 and .81 (Davis, Anderson, & Curtis, 2001), .86 and .70 (Redfern & Crawford, 2004) and .866 and .743 (Wang & Calvano, 2013) for idealism and relativism respectively which displayed acceptable internal consistency and reliability.

Content, empirical, and construct validity were important measures to consider within this research that ensured the study's credibility. Content validity depends upon how the questionnaire was constructed (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The questions and responses must measure what the study intends to measure, which depict the idealism and relativism that is quantified accordingly. Even if the questionnaire is constructed perfectly, it is impossible to consider all conceivable variables a police officer encounters.

Empirical validity is established through the relationship of the instrument and outcomes (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The threat lies within how the questions are phrased. In that regard, I included nine choices for each question to ensure more precise responses. I minimized any detrimental effects to the participants by studying attitudes rather than actual unethical practices.

Construct validity relates the instrument to the theoretical framework within the field of this research (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The Ethics Position Questionnaire was employed previously in multiple fields of interest (Catlin & Maupin, 2002, 2004; Davis et al., 2001; Giacalone et al., 2015; Kour, 2017; Manzoor, 2016; Redfern & Crawford, 2004; Wang & Calvano, 2013) and each study further confirmed reliability and validity as mentioned in Chapter 2 of this study. Previous research suggested ethical behaviors of police officers were impacted by internal individual

influences (Giacalone et al., 2015; Manzoor, 2015; Schafer, 2010), external factors (Mills, 2003), and socialization (Catlin & Maupin, 2004; Cox & Kirby, 2018; Donner et al., 2016; Steyn & Mkhize, 2016; Vallmüür, 2016), further suggesting training increased ethical behavior (Hickman et al., 2016; Meine & Dunn, 2012) and moral reasoning (Morgan, et. al., 2000). With the support of prior research and my findings, it was determined whether or not years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation as reported by the Ethics Position Questionnaire scores.

Operationalization

As stated above, the purpose of my study was to analyze how the years of service and the amount of in-service training, the independent variables, interactively predicted the idealism and relativism ethical orientation of male law enforcement officers, the dependent variables. I statistically examined the relationships between the variables in a multiple regression model.

The Independent Variables

I measured the independent variables by the years of service and hours of in-service training that the male officers accrued to date of the administered questionnaire. I utilized years of service as the socialization indicator for this study because it measured the time employed as a police officer while subjected to police culture, ethical dilemmas, moral judgment, and education. This independent variable was appropriate for this study because previous research (as mentioned in Chapter 2) indicated organizational socialization impacted years of service.

The hours of in-service training referred to the total combined hours an officer participated throughout his entire years of service. The hours of each male officer's in-service training accumulated annually were recorded in the personnel file. The annual in-service training of police officers was mandated to a minimum of 40 hours in the Commonwealth of Kentucky which became prevalent in 1972 when the Kentucky Law Enforcement Foundation Program Fund (KLEFPF) was initiated by statute (Department of Criminal Justice Training, 2018). KLEFPF was a federally funded initiative in which Kentucky became nationally recognized for its training and education program through Eastern Kentucky University (Bizzack, 2015). Therefore, an officer could have elected to participate in more than the required hours of in-service training per year if the budget allowed. If an officer transferred to a Kentucky police department from a different state, the officer may not have had the accumulated hours of in-service training commensurate with total years of service since other states did not require the same training parameters at the time of this study.

In Oregon, DPSST certified police officers through specialized training (Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, n.d.) and required a minimum of 84 hours every 3 years of in-service training. If within the budget, jurisdictions may have offered more than the minimum requirement (Barreda, 2020).

The total hours of training were significantly influenced by the years an officer had served in law enforcement. In-service training hours increased as years of service increased. Therefore, I studied years of service and training hours independently of each other as independent variables which evaluated the effects on ethical attitudes of officers. I measured the years of service and hours of in-service training at the interval level.

The Additional Variables

I observed the effect of the training hours by controlling the following variables: age, education level, and race. The demographic variables also contributed to the socialization process and may have impacted relationships within this study. Age was measured at the interval level. I measured race at the nominal level and education level at the ordinal level.

The Dependent Variables

I measured the ethics position by the 20 questions in Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire, which was developed to measure an individual's ethical orientation in two distinctions: ethical idealism and ethical relativism.

I used ordinal level to rank the Ethics Position Questionnaire responses into the proper ethics position, and idealism and relativism scores were reported. I replicated Forsyth's (2013) and Catlin and Maupin's (2004) methodology by calculating the scores of ethics position orientation and reporting the significance and relationship, if any, of the multiple variables which included years of service, hours of in-service training, age, education level, race, and the idealism scores and relativism scores on the Ethics Position Questionnaire.

Data Analysis Plan

I investigated the interaction effects of factors relating to ethical orientation and scores as measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire. I designed a correlational study soliciting male police officers within Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon jurisdictions so raw data on demographic variables and Ethics Position Questionnaire

could be downloaded to my password protected personal laptop. To further provide

anonymity, I coded the data to ensure the participants' identities were unknown.

I utilized multiple regression to explore the interaction effects of years of service

in law enforcement and hours of in-service training on male officers' ethical attitudes

relating to idealism scores and relativism scores by entering the data extracted from

Survey Monkey into SPSS. The dependent variable scores were depicted by the Ethics

Position Questionnaire scores for both idealism and relativism according to Forsyth's

(1980, 2011, 2017) scale. I entered the remaining variables (age, education level, and

race) into the regression model simultaneously to determine if statistical significance or

other relationships existed. Once I calculated the regression through SPSS, I reported the

descriptive statistics followed by inferential statistics and interaction plots. I reported all

relationships, if any, based on the data that were collected.

The research question I developed was as follows:

RQ: How did years of service and hours of in-service training interactively relate

to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to the ethical orientations relativism and idealism?

The hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

H_a: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were

interactively related to officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after

controlling for age, education level, and race.

The null hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

H_0: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training

interactively had no significant effect on officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical

orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

1. As years of service increased, informal socialization increased (police subculture) and canceled out the ethics learned in formal socialization (training).

2. Neither hours of in-service training nor years of service had a significant impact on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

Threats to Validity

External validity is the effect of variables on a total generalized population and in other settings (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). It was impossible for me to survey the entire police officer population and consider all factors that may have influenced ethical orientations, which decreased external validity. However, I used a target population to generalize the population. I created an opportunity to study ethical variables that may otherwise prove impossible to study, which increased external validity (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). External validity was accomplished in a natural setting, which increased external validity (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

To establish internal validity, the changes in the independent variables must have occurred because of the dependent variables (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). I utilized a sample of Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers because a random sample was impossible, which may have decreased internal validity. Another possibility to lower internal validity was self-reporting. Self-reporting

causes an uncertainty in observations because they could be due to changes in variables or other factors (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

Construct validity is the relationship between the theory and the instrument used in the research study (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The theory of organizational socialization sought to explain cultural influences and socialization that included ethics, education, and training, therefore grounded my research in public policy and administration.

I emphasized confidentiality and anonymity to the participants while administering the Ethics Position Questionnaire, which strengthen the reliability of responses. I further strengthened reliability by administering the Ethics Position Questionnaire to participants with an intellectual level in comparison to the instrument being administered. I formulated clear and concise instructions, as well as questions and responses, which also safeguarded overall reliability.

I was only able to research a sample from an entire population of police officers which created a delimitation. The sample population was made up of Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male police officers, which depicted certified officers who underwent training and ethical decision-making processes. An appropriate sample size was represented from this population to ensure the empirical data found was reliable and valid.

Ethical Procedures

The Ethics Position Questionnaire instrument was in questionnaire form, which I administered via an online platform. Such objectiveness ensured confidentiality and anonymity by removing me from the process of delivery altogether which provided

responses that naturally occurred. I structured the questions that comprised the Ethics

Position Questionnaire to encourage honest responses based on personal or professional

experience. The empirical data that supported the findings lessened the assumptions and

limitations of the study (Forsyth, 1980, 2011, 2017; Catlin & Maupin, 2004). I compiled

the data from the officers' responses that reflected how they would react in their natural

professional setting regarding their ethical decision-making processes.

Content, structure, format, and sequence of the questionnaire could have posed

ethical limitations or dilemmas; however, the Ethics Position Questionnaire was utilized

successfully in previous research (Forsyth, 1980, 2011, 2017; Catlin & Maupin, 2004).

Since I administered the survey with confidentiality and anonymity, the reported

experiences were answered based on closed-ended and non-leading questions which were

more likely to gain honest answers. Prior to taking the survey, the officers were required

to complete a consent form via email which depicted the background, procedure,

voluntariness, risks, benefits, and privacy. In the informed consent email, I stated that

personal information gathered would not be disclosed. I stored all data on a password-

protected laptop only accessed by me.

Summary

Prior research showed a relationship between ethical behavior and socialization

(Sanders, 2003), which influenced ethical decision-making skills depicted through the

utilization of questionnaires (Dose, 1997). Forsyth (2017) developed the Ethics Position

Questionnaire 20 item behavioral approach questionnaire to measure idealism and

relativism. I replicated Forsyth's (2017) questionnaire and used the Likert scale format

for responses. I calculated the responses into the appropriate ethical position that depicted the significance of the interpreted scores.

Prior research found a relationship between ethical decision-making skills and organizational socialization (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015). Ethical decision-making skills were more prevalent at the onset of one's professional career versus following socialization (Sanders, 2003). New recruits leaned more toward idealism while older officers leaned more toward relativism (Catlin and Maupin, 2004). Mixed results, as well as statistically significant results, were reported based on the variables studied in previous research.

I replicated this study from the previous study as set out by Forsyth (1980, 2011, 2017) and Catlin and Maupin (2004) to report the findings empirically. Previous research set the precedent for the basis of the current research and findings. I safeguarded credibility, reliability, and validity by utilizing the Ethics Position Questionnaire and ensuring ethical procedures were in place and adhered to fully.

This chapter provided an overview of the research design and rationale concerning the research question. The population, sampling procedures, data collection, instrumentation, operationalization, and ethical procedures were explained to relate the advanced knowledge to disparities in research that existed at the time I conducted my study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter includes the following sections: Introduction, Data Collection, Results, and Summary of this study's findings. The results of the statistical analyses are represented in this chapter. I examined the organizational socialization within the law enforcement profession as demonstrated through the interaction effects of factors relating to ethical orientation and scores measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire of male Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers.

I utilized Forsyth's Ethics Position Questionnaire (1980) to obtain the officers' ethics position, idealism and relativism. The independent variables were the years of service and the amount of in-service training of police officers. The dependent variables were the ethical orientation, both relativism and idealism. I analyzed demographic information which included additional variables such as age, education level, and race.

The research question of this study was as follows:

RQ: How did years of service (IV) and hours of in-service training (IV) interactively relate to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to the ethical orientations, relativism (DV) and idealism (DV)?

H_a: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race.

H_0: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training interactively had no significant effect on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical

orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

Data Collection

I invited 680 Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male certified police officers to participate in the study. I chose this population because both states require minimum mandatory specified hours of annual training for their police officers.

I created an online consent form and sent it to the departments within each region. The consent form explained the intent of the study as well as the inclusion of sample survey questions with the online Survey Monkey link. When the participants clicked on the link, it was said consent was given. The participants could opt out of the survey at any time and their identity remained anonymous. According to Cohen (1992), to detect a medium effect size with a power of at least .80 and $\alpha = .05$, I needed a minimum of 91 participants.

Originally, I sent the survey in November 2019 and was going to leave it open for 1 month to participants. I was realized quickly that the responses were taking longer than anticipated to collect. After receiving only five responses within that timeframe, I sent a follow-up email (see Appendix B) in January 2020. In late February 2020, 3 weeks after administering the initial follow-up surveys, the COVID-19 pandemic became a serious issue throughout the world. This proved detrimental to the original timeframe of data collection. Even though the survey was administered online with no contact, the times were uncertain, and the focus of the officers turned to a global pandemic rather than completing surveys. In July 2020, I included another region/state, Southern Oregon, to obtain the remaining number of participants needed. Unfortunately, responses decreased

a few weeks after the initiation of surveys to that region due to unexpected wildfires. Officers were pulled from their positions to aid in the creation of firelines.

After close to a year, I was successful with a final push that was made among the initial law enforcement agencies within Northern Kentucky by resending the follow-up email (see Appendix B) to obtain the remaining responses. Originally, the online survey was going to close at 100 participants; however, three more officers responded before the closing of the survey occurred.

Data collection occurred over the course of 1 year and 1 month, from November 2019 through December 2020. A total of 103 police officers from a combination of Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon responded by December 2020 and the survey was closed. Three women responded and two surveys yielded incomplete responses. I discarded these five participants from the overall data since the study was focused on male police officers and missing responses would have skewed the dependent variable scores needed for analysis.

I coded the variables in SPSS before running the multiple regression analysis. Questions 8–17 provided the individuals' ethical idealism scores and questions 18–27 provided the individuals' ethical relativism scores. The answers were coded from 1 to 9 (1 = *completely disagree*, 9 = *completely agree*). I created a composite variable from the sum of each scale to represent the idealism scores and relativism scores.

I recoded race into two categories, White and non-White, because it was a categorical variable. I created a dummy variable, race/White, for the analysis. Only one variable was needed since the reference group, non-White, is represented by the constant in the model.

Demographic Characteristics

I sorted the surveys by batches, Northern Kentucky (Batch 1) and Southern Oregon (Batch 2), for a total of 97 respondents. 58 (59.8%) respondents represented Northern Kentucky male police officers and 39 (40.2%) respondents represented Southern Oregon male police officers. Of the 97 respondents, 74 (76.3%) were employed in operations roles within their departments while 23 (23.7%) served administration positions. The total percentage of White respondents was 94 (96.9%). On average, most respondents were age 35–44 (34%), had obtained a college degree (73%), had 10 years or more years of service (67%), and had acquired more than 600 hours (50%).

For this scale within the survey, 10 questions (Questions 8–17) were asked of the participants about their idealism scores. The remaining 10 questions (Questions 18–27) were asked of the participants about their relativism scores. Cronbach's alphas for the 10 idealism and 10 relativism items were .879 and .800, respectively. Both scales were also consistent with the reliability tests and re-tests by previous researchers.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

I utilized descriptive statistics to analyze the data. *N* represents the 97 total respondents. The mean scores for idealism and relativism were 59.46 and 47.72 respectively meaning the respondents in this study scored higher on the ethical orientation of idealism. The median scores for idealism and relativism (60 and 50 respectively) were similar to the mean scores which indicated that the data for the scores were symmetric. On average, most respondents scored within 17.070 and 14.328 points of the mean according to the standard deviations for idealism and relativism respectively.

Table 1 presents the level of skewness for the continuous variables: age, years of service, and hours of in-service training. Skewness is the measure of the distribution symmetry and kurtosis is the measure of the presence of outliers. A normal distribution is considered when both measures together equal zero. For this study, skewness was normal for the following variables (since skewness between ± 1): hours of in-service training (-.357) and age (-.032). The variable, years of service (-1.697), was negatively skewed which indicates that the mean was skewed to the left of the typical center of data. The kurtosis showed a skewed distribution for years of service (28.895) and hours of in-service training (-1.619). The variable, age (-.626), was closer to normality.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon Male Police Officers

	N	M	SD	Skewness
Age	97	3.18	0.990	-0.032
Years of Service	97	4.46	0.890	-1.697
In-Service Training Hours	97	4.89	2.291	-0.357

Table 2 presents Pearson correlations between all continuous variables for the analysis in this study. Pearson correlation measures the linear association between two variables where negative one was a perfect negative correlation, closer to zero was a weak correlation, zero was a complete absence of correlation, and positive one was a perfect positive correlation. For the variables in this study, only the following variables were statistically significant by running a two-tailed test $p < .05$): the correlation of years of service and in-service training hours ($r = .399$; $p=.000$), age and in-service training hours ($r = .455$; $p =.000$), and age and years of service ($r = .711$; $p=.000$). The correlation of years of service and in-service training hours ($r =.399$) was moderate, as well as the

correlation of age and in-service training hours (r =.455). The correlation of age and years of service was relatively strong (r = .711).

The remainder of the variable combinations were not statistically significant, and the data failed to reject the null hypothesis (see Table 2). Regardless of the remainder of the variables not yielding statistical significance, there was a weak positive correlation between idealism and relativism scores (r = .186) and a weak negative correlation between in-service training hours and idealism scores (r =.180).

Table 2

Matrix of Correlations for Continuous Variables

Continuous Variables	Idealism Score	Relativism Score	Age	Years of Service	In-Service Training Hours
Idealism Score					
Relativism Score	0.186				
Age	-0.087	-0.038			
Years of Service	-0.126	-0.031	.711[**]		
In-Service Training Hours	-0.180	0.095	.455[**]	.399[**]	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple regression was used as well to answer the research question:

RQ: How did years of service and hours of in-service training interactively relate to an officer's ethical attitudes relating to the ethical orientations, relativism and idealism?

The hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

H_a: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race.

The null hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

H_0: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training interactively had no significant effect on officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

1. As years of service increased, informal socialization increased (police subculture) and canceled out the ethics learned in formal socialization (training).

2. Neither hours of in-service training nor years of service had a significant impact on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

To answer the research question of how years of service and hours of in-service training were interactively related to officers' ethical attitudes, I conducted two multiple linear regression models. Idealism scores and relativism scores were the dependent variables respectively for each model. The five independent variables in each model were years of service, hours of in-service training, age, race, and education. As depicted in Table 3 below, the summary of the multiple regressions for both idealism and relativism on the independent and additional variables included the coefficients as well as the R^2, adj. R^2, and statistical significance. The analysis also showed overall fit and the contribution to the total variance. R, simply stated is the amount of variance in the dependent variable (idealism or relativism in this case) that was explained by the other variables. The adj. R^2 is based on the number of variables in the model.

Idealism

The multiple regression predicting idealism by years of service and hours of in-service training was not statistically significant ($p > .05$). The two predictors had an

extremely small effect on idealism (adj. R^2 = 0.036). That is, years of service and hours of in-service training accounted for 3.6% of the variance in idealism; 96.4% of the variation in idealism could not be explained by this model.

With age, race, and education added to the regression model, results were not significant either (adj. R^2 = 0.039, p > .05) All five predictors accounted for 3.9% of the variance in idealism, or 96.1% variation in idealism, were not explained by the model (see Table 3).

Relativism

The multiple regression model predicting relativism by years of service and hours of in-service training was not statistically significant (p >.05). Additionally, the predictors had an extremely small effect on relativism (adj. R^2 = 0.015). That is, years of service and hours of in-service training accounted for 1.5% of the variance in relativism, or 98.5% of the variation in relativism could not be explained by the model.

When age, race, and education were added to the model, results were not statistically significant either (adj. R^2 = 0.036, p > .05). Regression coefficients showed none of the predictors were significant (see Table 3).

Table 3

Summary of Multiple Regression Models of Idealism Scores and Relativism Scores on Years of Service and In-Service Training Hours along with Additional Variables (N = 97)

Variables	Idealism					Relativism				
	B	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*
Model 1										
Years of Service	-1.233	2.117	-0.064	-0.582	0.562	-1.312	1.796	-.082	-.730	0.467
In-Service Training Hours	-1.153	0.823	-0.155	-1.401	0.165	0.799	0.698	0.128	1.144	0.256
R^2			.036					.015		
ΔR^2			.036					.015		
F			1.755					.699		
Model 2										
Years of Service	-1.183	2.835	-.062	-.417	.677	.469	2.410	.029	.194	.846
In-Service Training Hours	-1.632	.877	-.219	-1.862	.066	.786	.745	.126	1.055	.294
Age	0.867	2.632	0.050	0.330	0.743	-1.980	2.238	-0.137	-0.885	0.379
Race/White	-17.447	10.208	-.178	-1.709	.091	-4.373	8.681	-.053	-.504	.616
Education	-1.102	1.235	-.093	-.892	.375	-1.799	1.050	-.180	-1.712	.090
R^2			0.075					.051		
ΔR^2			0.039					.036		
F			1.480					0.975		

Note. This shows the model summaries for both dependent variables, idealism and relativism respectively.

Figure 1 presents a normal probability plot of regression standardized residual on the dependent variable, idealism, which showed no drastic variations. However, deviations were evident toward the middle. The data closely followed normal distribution; therefore, normality was found within the expected cumulative probability and the observed cumulative probability.

Figure 1

*Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual on the Dependent Variable,
Idealism*
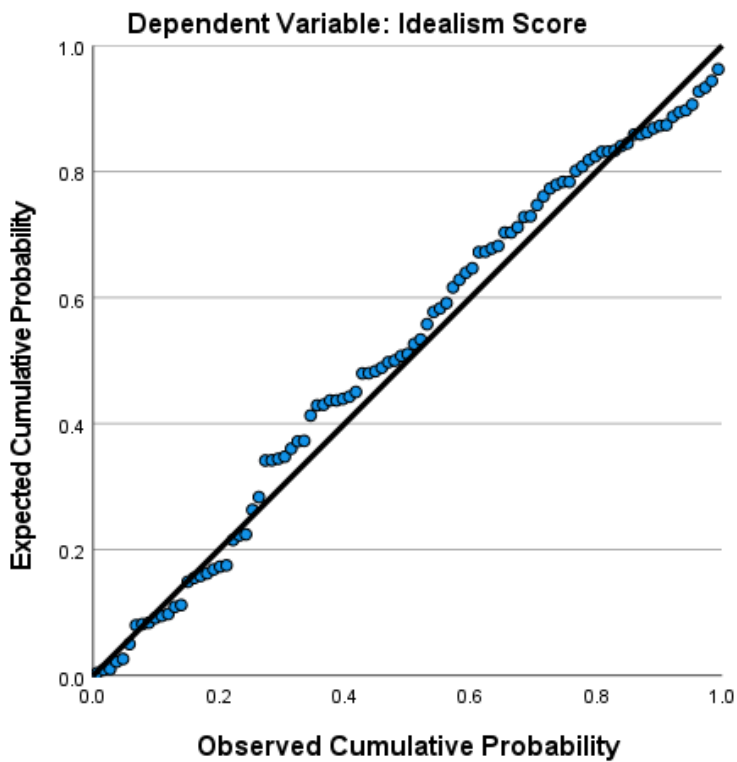
Note. This figure shows normality with no drastic variations with a minor deviation

toward the middle.

Figure 2 presents a scatterplot for idealism with outliers present to the far left and

far right with a cluster toward the center. This scatterplot checked for homoscedasticity

which showed a cluster pattern toward the middle. This pattern indicated an unequal

distribution along the axes.

Figure 2

Scatterplot of Regression Residuals on the Dependent Variable, Idealism
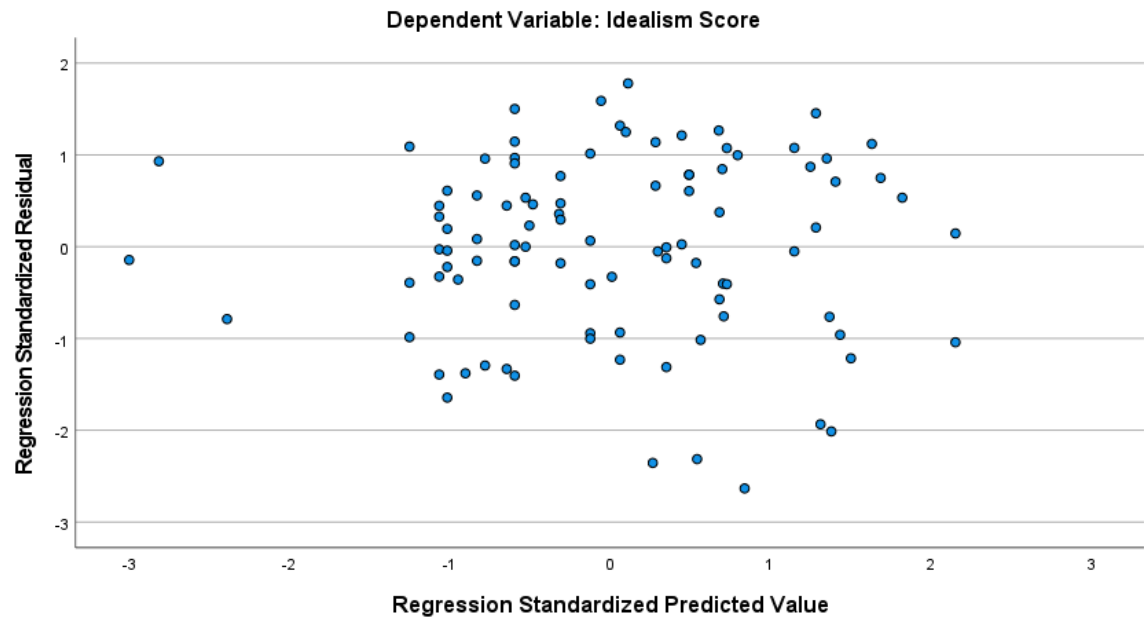
Note. This scatterplot shows extreme outliers present to the far left and far right with a cluster toward the center which shows some violation of homoscedasticity.

Table 4 showed moderate multicollinearity for all variables to include years of service, in-service training hours, age, race/ethnicity, and education. Moderate multicollinearity was present when the variation inflation factor (VIF) values were greater than one, which indicated the assumption had not been met.

Table 4

*Moderate Multicollinearity in Independent and Additional Variables on Idealism*

	Collinearity Statistics
Variables	VIF
Model 1	
Years of Service	1.189
In-Service Training Hours	1.189
Model 2	
Years of Service	2.152
In-Service Training Hours	1.362
Age	2.292
Race/White	1.066
Education	1.062

a. Dependent Variable: Idealism

Figure 3 below depicted a normal probability plot of regression standardized residual on the dependent variable, relativism. The data points had no drastic variations; however, minor deviations appeared above and below. These deviations still showed that the data closely follows normal distribution; therefore, normality was found within the expected cumulative probability and the observed cumulative probability.

Figure 3

*Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual on the Dependent Variable, Relativism*
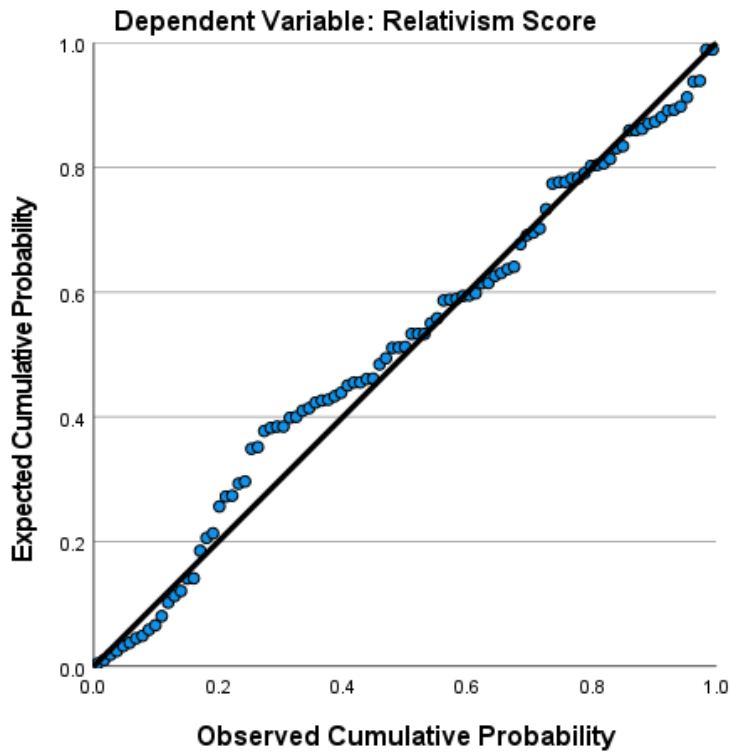
Note. This figure shows normality with no drastic variations with minor deviations.

Figure 4 depicts a scatterplot with one outlying individual far left. This scatterplot checked for homoscedasticity by showing an obvious cluster pattern toward the right, which indicated an unequal distribution along the axes.

Figure 4

Scatterplot of Regression Residuals on the Dependent Variable, Relativism
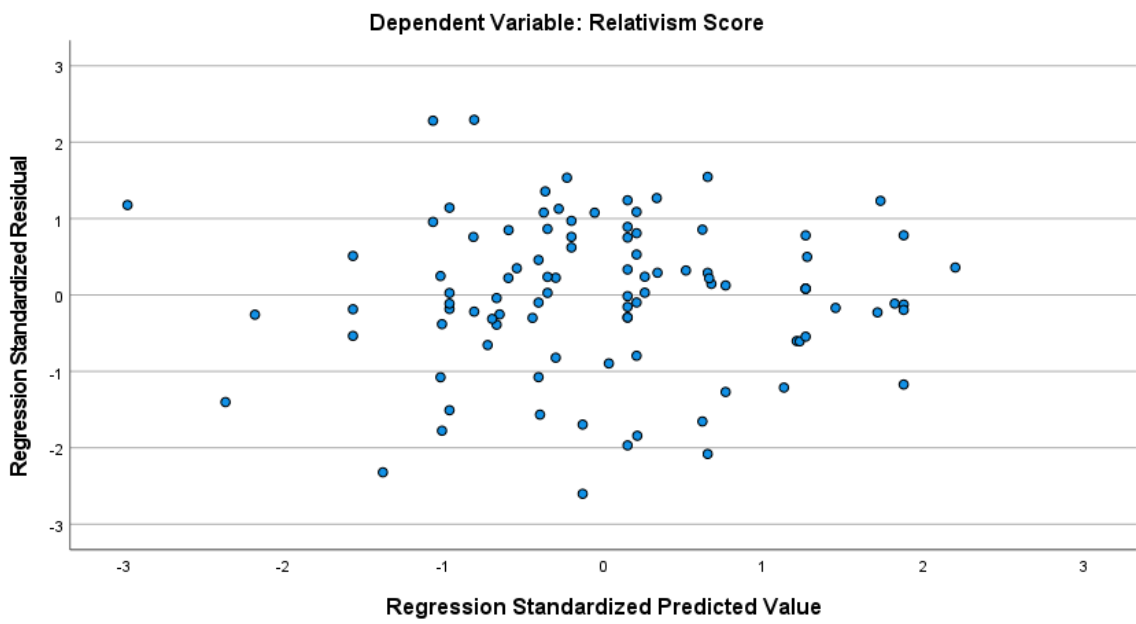
Note. This scatterplot shows one extreme outlier present to the far left as well as a cluster to the far right which shows some violation of homoscedasticity.

Table 5 illustrates moderate multicollinearity for all variables to include years of service, in-service training hours, age, race/ethnicity, and education. Moderate multicollinearity was present when the variation inflation factor (VIF) values are greater than one, which indicates the assumption has not been met.

Table 5

Moderate Multicollinearity in Independent and Additional Variables on Relativism

	Collinearity Statistics
Variables	VIF
Model 1	
Years of Service	1.189
In-Service Training Hours	1.189
Model 2	
Years of Service	2.152
In-Service Training Hours	1.362
Age	2.292
Race/White	1.066
Education	1.062

a. Dependent Variable: Relativism

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine organizational socialization within the law enforcement profession as demonstrated through the interaction effects of factors relating to ethical orientation and scores measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire of male Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers. I designed the survey to obtain the ethics position of the male police officer respondents, as well as obtain demographic data such as age, education, race, years of service, and hours of in-service training.

The results showed that the interaction effects did not relate to ethical orientation due to the multiple regression model yielding statistical insignificance, which indicated that the study failed to reject the null hypothesis:

H_0: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training interactively had no significant effect on officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

1. As years of service increased, informal socialization increased (police subculture) and canceled out the ethics learned in formal socialization (training).

2. Neither hours of in-service training nor years of service had a significant impact on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

However, the scatterplots showed some violation of homoscedasticity by showing obvious cluster patterns and few outliers, which indicated an unequal distribution along the axes. There was also moderate multicollinearity which indicated the assumption was not met.

Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of my study was to examine organizational socialization within the law enforcement profession through the interaction effects of factors relating to ethical orientation and scores measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire of male Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers. I based this study on two major theoretical propositions: organizational socialization and ethics position theory. Organizational socialization influences a police officer's ethical attitudes. Prior research has indicated a connection, as well as varied findings, between years of service, training, and increased ethical attitudes. A gap in literature and knowledge existed relating to the interaction effects of police officers' ethical orientation, organizational socialization, and training.

My goal was to provide further empirical research contributing to evidence-based policy relating to the ethical orientation of male police officers. The implications for positive social change were evident through this contribution derived from this study to advance law enforcement organizations, ethics, training, and decision-making processes. The interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion will be included within this chapter.

Interpretation of the Findings

I developed the research question to investigate the interactive effects of years of service and hours of in-service training on male police officers' ethical attitudes to develop a hypothesis of:

H_a: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training were interactively related to male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race.

The null hypothesis I developed from the above research question was:

H_0: Years of service in law enforcement and hours of in-service training interactively had no significant effect on male officers' ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation after controlling for age, education level, and race but for two possible reasons:

1. As years of service increased, informal socialization increased (police subculture) and canceled out the ethics learned in formal socialization (training).

2. Neither hours of in-service training nor years of service had a significant impact on an officer's ethical attitudes relating to ethical orientation.

I addressed the previous literature surrounding the topics of organizational socialization theory and ethics position theory within Chapter 2. Because previous literature was extant regarding police training and ethical attitudes, I replicated Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire that also included questions relating to the officers' years of service and hours of in-service training. The male participants in the study from Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon law enforcement agencies answered these questions anonymously through an online platform. The questions were previously created by Forsyth (1980) to elicit ethical rationale based upon the idealism and relativism scales. I extracted the quantitative data from the survey which I coded for multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression models yielded no statistical

significance for either dependent variable, idealism or relativism, and failed to reject the null hypothesis. According to Amrhein et al. (2019), researchers should report all uncertainties, justify exceptions, and consider why findings are not statistically significant based on design, quality, and content. Even though this study's model was not significant, conclusions can still be drawn from this study's findings to explain the uncertainties.

All respondents of this study were males from Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon law enforcement agencies. I found that the majority of the 97 male respondents were in operations roles, White, within the age range of 35 to 56 years, with a college background, with more than 10 years of service, and over 600 in-service training hours. I also found that most respondents scored higher on the idealism scale versus the relativism scale.

The significant correlations, or the presence of relationships regarding their direction and strength, between the following variables are worth noting: years of service and in-service training hours, age and years of service, and age and in-service training hours. The correlation of age and years of service was relatively strong. Two combinations of variables showed a moderately positive correlation; years of service and in-service training hours as well as age and in-service training hours. These sizable correlations can be expected between age, years of service, and in-service training; they all increase with an officer's tenure. However, the question remained how they interactively influenced the officer's ethical orientation scores.

The other variables in this study were not statistically correlated. The two dependent variables, idealism and relativism, had a weak positive correlation. The

direction of the correlation was not explainable. I expected a negative correlation since the idealism and relativism scales were two separate ends of an ethics continuum. To further explain this expectation, the scale for idealism was based on the sum of questions 8–17 and the scale for relativism was based on the sum of questions 18–27. A respondent would then score higher on the idealism or relativism continuum and lower on the other producing a negative correlation.

It is important to note that on average, respondents scored higher on the idealism scale. The expectation was that officers who served a longer tenure would have a higher relativism score. Most of the officers served more than 10 years yet this study did not reflect a higher relativism score. A possible explanation was that the ethical orientation based on years of service was canceled out by the fact that most respondents also had a college degree and over 600 training hours. The expectation for a higher education and more training hours was that the idealism scores would be higher. It could have been a possibility that those two scores canceled out the relativism scores based on years of service alone.

Even though the multiple regression models were not statistically significant, the regression coefficients could be interpreted. A negative association existed between in-service training hours and idealism scores even though the multiple regression models were not statistically significant. The negative association contradicts this study's alternative hypothesis that as in-service training hours increased, the idealism scores increased. The association could not be explained, which could be due to the small sample size used. Rahi et al. (2019) stated sample size strongly affects multiple regression models.

Although not statistically significant, this study suggested an association that as age increased, idealism scores increased. However, age naturally increases during a police officer's tenure, so the expectation would have been that officers would score higher on the relativism scale. Unfortunately, there is no other explanation for this phenomenon other than this sample was made up of respondents with an abundance of training hours and education which could have provided a higher idealism score.

Even though the results were not statistically significant, the study extended knowledge in the discipline in comparison to what was reported within prior research. However, further studies are warranted to take into consideration other factors that may have contributed to such a high variation percentage that cannot be explained.

Limitations of the Study

The most apparent limitation to this study was the relatively small sample size for this analysis. Quantitative studies are known for their ease of administration at low cost and ease of obtaining data from a large sample size. This study, however, occurred during the global COVID-19 pandemic; acquiring data from a larger sample of highly stressed officers became challenging. If a larger sample was acquired, this study could yield different data and outcomes that could further contribute to the research literature on this topic. Regardless, not every police officer nationwide can be expected to participate in studies such as this; therefore, another limitation existed in that only a sample can be drawn from the entire population. For this study, the sample size was 97 and possibly too small of a generic representation.

The limitation of a small sample was also possibly evident from the Pearson correlation results. The possibility of weak correlations could have been due to chance or

the limitations of the small sample. According to Forsyth (2017), the two ethical dimensions of idealism and relativism are independent of each other, and previous studies have tried to test their interaction. However, these studies have failed to further study this interaction in more detail. D. Forsyth (personal communication, May 13, 2021) stated in an email that "[t]he two subscales of the EPQ are usually not significantly correlated with each other—in some studies with a large number of participants, the correlation is usually negligible." Additionally, Catlin and Maupin (2004) also found in their previous research that idealism and relativism scores yielded no statistically significant correlation. Again, for this study, the results could have been due to chance or a small sample.

Another limitation of this study was that multiple influences could have influenced socialization other than the variables accounted for in this study. This was evident in the high percentages of variance resulting from the regression models. Other influences that played a role in organizational socialization within policing that were not accounted for were discretion, use of force, laws, procedures, codes, management, accountability, and other personal influences (Cordner, 2017; Reiman, 1997). Unfortunately, it was impossible to test for all known influences or variables associated with this study. It was also possible that regardless of training, the years of service could still influence relativism scores. Again, this is due to multiple factors playing a role in ethical positions.

Limitations of questionnaires were present in content, structure, format, and sequence. However, because the research instrument was utilized in previous research, concerns surrounding content, structure, format, and sequence were lessened. In this

study, the questionnaire was answered based on individual experiences which could also pose a limitation if the decision-making event was not truly recalled as it happened.

The fact that hours of in-service training could be acquired largely at different years within an officer's career was not taken into consideration during this study. Therefore, if this research was duplicated, I would suggest focusing on general information questions based upon when the in-service training hours were obtained throughout the respondents' careers. This may also contribute to the ethical position because if the bulk of the training was acquired at the beginning of their 15-year career per se, relativism may still increase because of the lack of training during more recent years.

Recommendations

Police culture, which includes organizational culture, is a popular concept to study and most often the most scrutinized concept within research (Paesen et al., 2019). Previous research regarding idealism and relativism suggested those variables could be predictors of ethical attitudes (Zaikauskaite, et. al., 2020) that are reinforced within various timeframes within an officer's career, both positively and negatively. Further research is necessary on this topic; however, this study may be replicated if a larger sample is acquired that is more conducive to a quantitative multiple regression study such as this.

If further research was conducted, it may be possible to follow a similar model like Sharkey and Gash's (2020) study which yielded Cronbach's alpha for the idealism scale over 0.90 and for the relativism scale 0.85 in which participants were divided into high idealism and high relativism. This approach may produce better comparisons

relating to hours of in-service training and years of service while controlling for the additional variables.

If additional research was conducted, it may be possible to follow a similar model like Kour's (2018) study which utilized Forsyth's (1980) ethical taxonomy (explained in Chapter 2) to further divide the levels of idealism and relativism into situationists, absolutists, subjectivists, and exceptionists. This may be beneficial since a sample could score on both idealism and relativism scales.

I analyzed responses taken at one given time during an officer's career. It may be beneficial in the future to conduct a longitudinal study. This type of study would offer more insight into the differences in tenure.

I only analyzed responses from male respondents since most of the police population is comprised of males. It may benefit future research to compare the ethical positions of women in comparison to men or separately. Prior research suggested women are generally more ethical than their male counterparts (U.S. Department of Justice, 2018). A similar study could be used to address this phenomenon.

The results of this study even though insignificant, showed correlations and associations in the variables that both reiterated and conflicted with prior research. These findings can offer future researchers an avenue to replicate or incorporate this study's findings into future research to enhance the field of law enforcement.

Implications

The potential impact for positive social change arising from this study included furthering research literature, reinforcing continual training within the policing field, reinforcing ethical decision-making and orientation among law enforcement officers,

lessening the effects of the police subculture tied to the years of service, and standardizing mandated training. All these implications can positively play a role within the field of policing through policy administration and/or change.

The results of this study furthered research literature regarding organizational socialization and ethics position theories. Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon police officers were educated and well-trained according to the results of this study. They were more likely to have higher idealism scores, which showed that regardless of most respondents having more than ten years of service, they were more ethical in their decision-making. Although other factors may play a role in this phenomenon, only additional research, or replication of this study with a larger sample could yield the results to help justify this study's results. Regardless, this study has added to the research literature positively by providing recommendations for further research in the field.

Continual training within the field of policing is currently mandated throughout certain states including the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the State of Oregon. Most states require or mandate police standards and training (Schlosser et al., 2015). For instance, Kentucky requires a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training annually and Oregon requires 84 hours of in-service training every three years. This study can be further researched to understand the relationship between continual training and the ethical orientation of police officers to possibly create a standard for training and policy in the future.

The study's results reinforced the importance of ethical decision-making and orientation among law enforcement officers. Ethics is a driving principle within the organization and field as a whole. The social change implications of this concept can

assist agencies in creating a standardization of policy centered on ethics and ethical decision-making for police.

Lastly, the positive social change from this study also included lessening the impact of the police subculture tied to longer years of service by standardizing mandated training. The possibility of all states mandating training to help combat the negative stigma of police subculture that builds over an officer's career could reshape the industry as reiterated in Chapter 2 of this study.

Conclusion

Even though this study was not statistically significant, the findings still explained phenomena regarding organizational socialization and ethics position within the law enforcement profession. Through multiple regression analysis, I found that there was a relationship present between years of service and in-service training hours, as well as age and years of service, and age and in-service training hours. I also found variations in the data that were reinforced by prior research and some variations that could not be explained.

Overall, Northern Kentucky and Southern Oregon male police officers scored higher on the idealism scale implicating stronger ethical decision-making skills regardless if years of service for the majority were over ten years on the force. Further studies are necessary to fully investigate the interactive effects of years of service and hours of in-service training on male police officers' ethical attitudes.

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Appendix A

The Ethics Position Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. About how many total annual in-service training hours have you obtained to date? This should reflect your total combined hours overall.

At least 1 hour but less than 40 hours
At least 40 hours but less than 120 hours
At least 120 hours but less than 240 hours
At least 240 hours but less than 360 hours
At least 360 hours but less than 480 hours
At least 480 hours but less than 600 hours
Equal to more than 600 hours

2. What is your gender?

Male
Female

3. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?

American Indian or Alaskan Native
Hispanic
Asian/Pacific Islander
White/Caucasian
Black or African American
Multiple ethnicity/other (please specify)

4. What is your role within the agency? Choose the one that represents majority of your current duties.

Operations (patrol, specialized units, etc.)
Administration

5. What is your age?

18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74

75 or older

6. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

High school diploma or equivalent
Some university/college, no degree
Postsecondary non-degree award/certificate
Associate's degree
Bachelor's degree
Post-graduate degree

7. About how many years have you been employed as a sworn police officer?

Less than 1 year
At least 1 year but less than 3 years
At least 3 years but less than 5 years
At least 5 years but less than 10 years
10 years or more

For questions 8-27, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your reaction to such matters of opinion. Select the statement that best represents your reaction for each statement:

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

8. People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree

Largely agree
Completely agree

9. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective
of how small the risks might be.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

10. The existence of potential harm to others is always
wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

11. One should never psychologically or physically harm
another person.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

12. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

13. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

14. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

15. The dignity and welfare of the people should be the most important concern in any society.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree

Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

16. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

17. Moral behaviors are actions that closely match ideals of
the most "perfect" action.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

18. There are no ethical principles that are so important
that they should be a part of any code of ethics.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

19. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

20. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

21. Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

22. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.

Completely disagree

Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

23. Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate
how a person should behave, and are not be applied in
making judgments of others.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

24. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so
complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate
their own individual codes.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

25. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents
certain types of actions could stand in the way of better
human relations and adjustment.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

26. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie
is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon
the situation.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

27. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends
upon the circumstances surrounding the action.

Completely disagree
Largely disagree
Moderately disagree
Slightly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Slightly agree
Moderately agree
Largely agree
Completely agree

Appendix B

Follow-Up Email

Dear [Recipient]:

As a doctoral student in the Public Policy and Administration Department in Criminal Justice at Walden University, I am conducting research to better understand the interaction effects of police socialization and ethical orientation. On [date] an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to please forward the consent/survey link below to male police officers within your agency if you and your agency would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is [date].

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to answer 27 multiple choice questions. It should take approximately 20 minutes for you to complete the survey below. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be required as part of your participation and will remain confidential.

To participate, please copy and forward the informed consent information to include the survey link to all male certified police officers/deputies within your organization via your organization's email.

The informed consent document contains additional information about my research, which can be viewed below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Megan Bessey
Doctoral Student
Walden University