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## Law Enforcement and Racial Profiling Among African Americans and Hispanics in the United States America

Jeremy Christopher Bell  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Health

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Jeremy C. Bell

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Walden University  
2022

Abstract

Law Enforcement and Racial Profiling Among African Americans and Hispanics in the

United States America

by

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M.S Walden University 2022

M.A. University of Tampa 2015

M.A. University of Phoenix 2014

B.A.S., St. Petersburg College 2011

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

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## Abstract

Racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics brings significant challenges to police conduct in providing police service to minority groups. Recent events of racial profiling committed by law enforcement officers bring negative perceptions toward police officers. African Americans and Hispanics are among the highest population groups arrested and mistreated by law enforcement officers. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the lived experience of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics against police officers. The research question for this study examined the lived experience of African Americans/ Hispanics over 18 who were racially profiled by police officers. Eight participants answered the survey (four African Americans, two Hispanic, and two White) and three of the African Americans agreed to be interviewed regarding their lived experience with racial profiling. The findings revealed that participants believed that they were discriminated against, treated like criminals, harassed, arrested, interrogated, and profiled by the police because of their race. Themes were identified from the data collection and analysis revealed that police officers contributed to racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics resulting in gun violence and police shooting. Recommendations based on this study included the development of new crime-fighting strategies which does not involve racial profiling, the creation of new federal and state laws which prohibit a police officer from practicing racial profiling, and the creation of awareness and education for all police officers and minority groups. These changes could create a positive social change impact.

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my entire Bell family and for all African Americans and Hispanics who experienced racial profile by a police officer. I truly appreciate my Heavenly Father, The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who allows me to receive my Ph.D. degree in Criminal Justice. Without the Lord, I will not be successful in my graduate education. I truly appreciate my family including all those who had help me to become very successful. Thank The Lord Jesus. The Lord has blessed us, and We give thanks to our Heavenly Father to make this happen. I would also like to dedicate my dissertation to all law enforcement officers around the world. I truly thank you for your sacrifice and putting your lives on the line to protect the community. Also, I would like to dedicate to all Men and Women who are currently serving, retired, veterans, or who died to serve our Country. My prayers go out to all family and friends who have lost their love ones during the war. Your sacrifice will never be forgotten. Finally, I would also dedicate my dissertation to families who lost their loved ones in police shootings. God is control, and he understands your pain.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and understand the emotional effects and life experiences among African Americans and Hispanics that were victims of racial profiling by law enforcement officers. As illustrated in the literature review, research has been done related topics on African Americans and Hispanics who were victims of racial profiling by law enforcement officers' unwanted traffic stops searches, arrests, investigations, and detainment. African Americans and Hispanics face challenges and life experiences in racial profiling by law enforcement regards to race groups (Lee, 2017). Racial profiling is a policing strategy used by a police officer which affects all cultures and races in the United States (Wilkins, 2009). Many racial and ethnic minority communities have had a difficult relationship with law enforcement since the incident of Rodney King in 1992 (Chaney, 2013). Racial profiling affects the relationship between people who are African Americans and Hispanics who have greater hatred towards police. From the early 1990s to the 20th century, many African Americans and Hispanics were victims of racial profiling result of police officers' use of excessive force and deadly force. From qualitative phenomenological research approach, I provided significant evidence that racial profiling exists in all states in the United States including the state of Florida.

### Background

The importance of this study was to explore the lack of peer-reviewed literature on racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County. A literature review indicated that African Americans

and Hispanics both have life experience and a high level of negative perspectives among police officers regards to racial profiling (see Kramer& Remster (2018). African Americans and Hispanics have experienced harassment, discrimination, and mistreatment by police officers because of the controversial policing strategy (Kamalu, 2016). African Americans and Hispanics are treated as criminals and profiled by police officers because of the color of their skin (Harris, 2018). African Americans and Hispanics are treated differently than other race groups because both race groups have fewer opportunities, such as education, employment, and housing (Harris, 2018).

Furthermore, African Americans are less educated, and many have low-income and live in disadvantaged communities (Brown, 2007). Brown (2007), referred to the term “racial profiling” as easy to describe when an individual is discriminated against, mistreated, or harassed based on skin color. Brown referred to the racial profiling of African Americans in terms of education and law enforcement. Racial profiling is a discriminatory practice by law enforcement officers of targeting people for suspicion of crime based on people’s race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin (Quattlebaum, 2018). Racial profiling is also used to determine which motorist to stop for minor traffic violations based on race. African Americans and Hispanics are victims of racial profiling because they are treated as a criminal-based race, and Africans and Hispanics committed more crimes than different race groups (Aliso.

Furthermore, Africans and Hispanics are victims at high rates of police shootings and, arrest (Charbonneau, 2017). High-profile deaths of unarmed African Americans at the hands of police officers, brings social attention that forms a group such as Black

Lives Matter (Chama, 2019). For instance, Tamir Rice was fatally shot by police in Washington, DC, in November 2014 (Behnke, 2017). Tamir Rice's death sparked widespread calls for police brutality and racial profiling. On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, in Ferguson, Missouri, was shot and killed by White police officer, Darren Wilson (Baldwin, 2018). Darren Wilson was never indicted, charged, or convicted for Michael Brown's death, which cause the city to riot for several days. Darren Wilson resigned as a police officer after he was acquitted of Michael Brown's death (Baldwin, 2018). Eric Garner died after a New York Police Officer applied a chokehold causing Garner to lose air (Foust, 2018). As a result of these deaths of African Americans and Hispanics, racial profiling is a significant problem among the Black community.

#### Problem Statement

The problem is that racial profiling continues to affect African Americans and Hispanics in law enforcement through police shootings, traffic stops, arrests, and investigations. For instance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2018) reported that African Americans are pulled over in traffic stops than Whites and Hispanics. Nine-point eight percent of African Americans pulled over in a traffic stop between the ages of 18 to 24 (Kamalu, 2016). Hispanic drivers are 92% more pulled over by police officers than Whites. African Americans (75%) and Hispanics (80%) predict traffic stops to be illegitimate compared to White drivers (Kamalu, 2016). The percentages of African Americans and Hispanics continue to increase social media attention of mistrust among African Americans and Hispanics. In 2017, a Dallas police officer, Amber Guyger, shot

Botham Shem Jean inside his apartment when an officer believed he has broken into her own home (Patterson, 2016). Amber Guyger was placed on administrative leave but was later charged with manslaughter several days later.

The relationship between race and police is a view through the lens of racial profiling. According to Allicock and Nadal (2017), Hispanics tend to suffer the stereotypes that portray them as illegal immigrants who cross the U.S. border legally. According to Davis et al. (2018), Hispanics indicated that they were 19% more dissatisfied with police officers than African Americans. Hispanics' experience with the criminal justice system remains unclear. African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to encounter a police officer during a traffic stop. According to Davis et al., Blacks (8%) and Hispanics (15%) receive a citation from a police officer. African Americans and Hispanics experienced the threat of use of force during their most recent contact with a white police officer. Davis et al. estimated that African Americans (60%) experience the use of force more often when compared to Whites (43%). With the gap of racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics by a police officer, there is a need for collective effect from legislators and Congress to engage in implementing laws to prevent racial profiling in the state of Florida. However, police must examine their relationships and interact with minorities to ensure African Americans and Hispanics are treated with respect. There is an opportunity for police officers in the state of Florida to embark on social change and create better policies to eliminate racial policing in law enforcement.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of qualitative phenomenological theory was to develop a phenomenal view of the life experience of African Americans and Hispanics in racial profiling. This study included African Americans and Hispanics who have suffered and experience racial profiling from law enforcement. I used the constructivist approach phenomenological theory in using semi structured interviews of 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics in the United States. Participants were African American or Hispanic men or women aged of 18 years and up who have had contact with police.

### Research Questions

Research questions for phenomenal theory reflect how to experience African Americans and Hispanics through racial profiling. The following research question guided my study:

RQ1: What is the lived experience of African Americans/ Hispanics over 18 who have been racially profiled by police officers in the State of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties?

### Importance of the Study

The issue of racial profiling is critical in the United States and brings negative effects among different race groups. The percentage of African Americans and Hispanics victims of racial profiling brings media attention among minority groups (Weltzer & Tuch, 2005). Many African Americans and Hispanics predict White police officers will treat African Americans and Hispanics as criminals (Weltzer & Touch, 2005). African Americans and Hispanics see help identify that racial profiling is a criminal act and



violates individual civil rights. This study is also essential to several stakeholder groups such as government officials, legislators, state governors, and public safety officials who continue to implement policy on racial profiling. This study also benefits an organization such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP has managed with recent cases involving African Americans and Hispanics' experience of racial profiling and changed their perspective on police officers. Criminal justice officials can also benefit from this study because many courts and criminal cases where African Americans and Hispanics do not receive a fair trial or treat differently compared to different race groups. Lastly, this study will benefit men and women to experience racial profiling and continue to affect them in their jobs, education, and home.

#### Theoretical Framework

The term "racial profiling" has been studied for decades. Racial profiling, as discussed in this research, refers to African Americans, and Hispanics discriminated because of their skin color. There are several published articles on why African Americans and Hispanics have experienced racial profiling from law enforcement officers. Several contemporary phenomenal experiences are mentioned here and further described in detail in Chapter 2.

Chalmers' (2012) theory of racial profiling occurs African Americans and Hispanics have experienced discrimination by police officers. African Americans and Hispanics have historically been characterized as suspicious or criminal race groups because of the high rate of African Americans and Hispanics arrested, received citations, or victims of police shootings (Matthews & Lyons, 2015). This phenomenological theory

is the focus of inquiry emotion like anger or experience of the victim of racism. African Americans and Hispanics experienced racial profiling among police officers who judge African Americans and Hispanics as criminals. Phenomenology was first introduced by German philosopher Husserl, who used this theory to study how people describe things and experience through their senses (Patton, 2019). Significant evidence from Higgins and Gabbideon (2017) revealed that findings of racial profiling that African Americans and Hispanics are two race groups that experienced racial profiling.

#### Nature of the Study

The nature of the study was a qualitative method. A phenomenology research approach was appropriate for this research study because victims in the state of Florida have experienced racial profiling, and racial profiling continues to impact lives among African Americans and Hispanics. The phenomenology is essential for this study for three reasons: (a) participants are African Americans and Hispanics experience or witness racial profiling by police officers, (b) racial profiling affects the community members who have experienced racial profiling by a police officer, and, (c) African Americans and Hispanics expressed their experiences or their opinions about law enforcement officers continuing to see African Americans and Hispanics are criminals based on race.

#### Overview of Research Design

A qualitative study performs by using the phenomenological theory. Phenomenological theory methodology is the best way to build theories because of the analysis in using the surveys to describe African Americans and Hispanics' experience in racial profiling. The phenomenological theory is a widely used and popular qualitative

research study across a wide range of African Americans and Hispanic individuals who experience racial profiling (Birzer, 2006). I sought to generate a phenomenological theory of racial profiling, using the ground theory approach for why African Americans and Hispanics are race groups experiencing racial profiling by police officers. In constructivism, multiple African Americans and Hispanics encounter racial profiling in their daily lives (Birzer, 2006). They have also been exposed to different treatment from police officers based on their race. The constructivist approach showed that African Americans and Hispanics have different perspectives on racial profiling caused by police officers. Data collection begins with interviews of African Americans and Hispanics from ages 18 and up.

The study sample drew from a population of African Americans and Hispanics from communities, schools, universities, organizations, and public safety organizations in Florida. The participants had experience types of racial profiling from police officers. For this study, I chose a sample of between 7 to 10 African Americans and Hispanic men and women. Participants are from different parts of cities in the Florida in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties.

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms define to provide the reader with an understanding of the context of each term of this research study.

*Discrimination:* Discrimination is a treatment consideration making the distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit (Hosein, 2018 p.3).

*Racial Profiling:* Racial profiling is when authorities are screening for potential criminals in a way that “relies on the race, ethnicity, or national origin and not merely on the behavior of an individual.” (Hosein, 2018, p.2). Racial profiling involves searching for any one type of group or people in criminal behavior.

*Racism:* Racism is defined as a “system of dominance, power, and privilege that is rooted in the historical oppression of subordinated groups that the dominant group views as inferior, deviant, or undesirable. The dominant group creates or maintains structures and ideology that preserve their power and privilege while excluding subjugated groups from power, status, and access to resources.” (Harrell, 2000, p.4).

*Traffic Stop:* Traffic stop refers to when a police officer stops a motor vehicle for violations of traffic laws.

### Assumptions

I assumed that data from the interviews and surveys distributed to African Americans, and Hispanics is accurate and that participants answered the questions honestly and completely. A recent study from Alpert (2007) revealed that police officers use excessive or deadly force when arresting African Americans and Hispanics in Florida.

### Scope and Limitation

The scope of this qualitative study was to conduct interviews of 8 African Americans, and Hispanics who believed racial profiling occurred when encountering a police officer in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties of Florida.

The limitation of this study was that participants in the research are African Americans, and Hispanics who have experienced discrimination and racism from police officers. Most African Americans families are victims of racism by police officers (Warren, 2011). Most victims were harassed by police officers during traffic stops or police officers on the streets. Most victims of racism and discrimination are African Americans and Hispanic males and females (Warren, 2011). Most African Americans and Hispanics have positive perceptions of police officers: whereas some have negative opinions about police officers (Warren, 2011). The findings of this study may show that African Americans and Hispanics are victims of racial profiling, where some African Americans and Hispanics feel that they have no negative perceptions of police officers. The literature review revealed that most African Americans and Hispanics are targeted by police officers based on race. The literature reviews show a high percentage of police shootings, and excessive use of force involves African Americans and Hispanics.

### Significance

The conclusion of the research study addressed a gap in the literature on racial profiling by focusing on the lived experiences of African Americans and Hispanics, ages 18 and older. The significance revealed that racial profiling occurs in the law enforcement field. My conclusion of this qualitative research study presents the opportunity for significant change in police strategy and for policymakers to create legislation to enforce law enforcement agencies prohibiting to use of racial profiling as a crime-fighting strategy. With this qualitative research study, the opinions and perspectives of ethnic minority communities view police officers as racist.

## Summary

In this study, I sought to understand African Americans, and Hispanics continue to face racial profiling by police officers. Previous studies revealed that racial profiling continues to bring negative perceptions among police officers (Weitzer 2005). There is a knowledge gap as to the reason why African Americans and Hispanics continue to face challenges in racial profiling and why African Americans and Hispanics experienced the threat of use of force, such as excessive use of force by police officers. Many police shooting involves unarmed African Americans, which bring negative media attention to the community (Fallik, 2019).

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

There is substantial research on African Americans and non-Hispanics who are discriminated against by police officers based on race, and racial profiling continues to bring negative perceptions among police officers that treat African Americans and non-Hispanics in police service (Fallik, 2019; Kramer & Remster, 2018; Lee, 2017; Legewie, 2016). There are different current reasons for dealing with racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics. These various reasons include driving, shopping, traffic stops, questioning, and interrogations (Fallik, 2019; Kramer & Remster, 2018; Lee, 2017; Legewie, 2016). Previous studies have shown the negative perceptions among police officers that treat African Americans and non-Hispanics as criminals. There is limited research that exists with a high percentage of police shootings; motorist traffic stops, contact with police officers, and police service involving African Americans and Hispanics.

My goal with this literature review was to summarize the history of barriers of African Americans and non-Hispanics receiving negative socialization from police officers. There is a focused section on how African Americans and non-Hispanics are treated differently by police officers. There is another section that focuses on how racial profiling continues to increase the negative relations among police officers and African Americans. Also included in this discussion are some considerations from the literature that some African Americans and non-Hispanics predict that racial profiling does not exist among police officers because many believed police offices shows no sign of racism. Finally, I sought to determine a phenomenal theory in the framework of racial

profiling, a summary of racial profiling towards African Americans. This study reveals that racial profiling exists in many ways, and racial profiling exists in several states, including the state of Florida. The majority of Florida residents experienced racial profiling by police officers through traffic stops, search warrants, interaction with a police officer, or police service (Anwar & Fang, 2006).

### Search Strategy

The search strategy for this study began with establishing a literature review component outline, which guided the keywords used in search databases. Keywords which are included, but were not limited to *discrimination, racism, racial profiling, black, African Americans, Hispanics, police officers, use of force, deadly force, and Black Lives Matters*. The databases searched included Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Premier, Criminal Justice Abstracts, ProQuest Criminal Justice, ProQuest Dissertation, and Theses. ProQuest Research Library, Psychology, and Behavioral Science Collection, Psyc INFO, Social Sciences Citation Index. Sources of information include peer-reviewed journal articles, newspapers, dissertations, government statistics, Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Crime Survey, and theses. Most of the articles were published between 2015 and 2019.

American Criminal Justice In law enforcement, the United States criminal justice system has maintained a role to ensure the safety and protection among people, civil rights, and property (Nadal, 2017). Citizens expect that police officers act professionally in their job duties. Citizens expect police officers to protect and provide quality police service, which includes protection from crime. At the beginning of law enforcement,



police officers assumed a primary role as a protector, as opposed to enforcing laws in federal and state governments (Sierra, 2021). Police officers are the backbone of the law enforcement because they provide police service to the citizens; they protect every day. Earlier in police history, police officers spent their additional time patrolling the streets and communities (Sierra, 2021). City detectives spent their time investigating cases involving burglary, robbery, theft, homicide, child abuse, fraud, and arson. Law enforcement is known to provide community and education services. Police officers educate the public on crime awareness and prevention of crime. They also engage in conversation with business owners, government leaders, community leaders, and educators on the importance of crime prevention. However, law enforcement continues to face challenges that bring negative relations among minorities involving racial profiling (Blair, 2015).

#### Theoretical Foundation

Racial profiling between police officers and African Americans and Hispanics generates a significant number of challenges and social concerns in American law enforcement (Merino, 2015). Yet, there is substantial evidence to address the phenomenon of racial profiling, and many negative perspectives from African Americans and Hispanics believe that police officer discriminates against African Americans and Hispanics based on race. According to Din-Dzietham and Nembhard (2004), discrimination is an impact on the quality of life and health of African Americans and Hispanics. The nature of racial profiling in American society is a topic of interest since the incident of Rodney King (Wilson & Wolfer, 2020). The theoretical framework

guiding research involves racism. Phenomenology theory is essential to study, which I used to examine African Americans and Hispanics victims of racial profiling in Florida. Phenomenology theory explains the stages of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics, which include driving, shopping, stop-and-frisk, arrest, and interrogation.

### Riots Against Racial Profiling

Numerous incidents of police use of force have created rioting, burning, and looting (Wilson & Wolfer, 2020). In 1979, police officers from Miami, Florida beat to death African American Arthur McDuffie (Mageli, 2019). Officers were trying to cover up the incident and claimed that Arthur McDuffie was involved in a motorcycle accident. The event led minority citizens to file a complaint against the Miami Police Department (Mageli, 2019). The famous police riots include a Black motorist who was beaten to death by four White police officers in 1991 (Baade & Matheson, 2004). The Rodney King incident created a higher conflict of police officers using excessive force on an individual who is race. The conviction of Rodney King in 1991 led to a major riot in Los Angeles for 3 days (Baade & Matheson, 2004). The indicted officers were acquitted on 13 counts by a White jury in less than 3 hours (Baade & Matheson, 2004).

The incidents and the riots serve as a symbol of both hostile environment and racial profiling against minority groups. After the beating involving Rodney King and Arthur McDuffie, studies indicated that incidents involving minority groups involving White police officers caused people to doubt the integrity of the police (Milner, 2016). Most minority riots include African American leaders and the civil rights movement. For example, the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., a Black civil rights movement leader, led

African Americans to demonstrate hate towards White police officers (Milner, 2016). Since White police officers show violence towards African Americans fighting for equal opportunity, racial profiling becomes a national problem among African Americans and Hispanics, and they are experiencing bias by police officers (Milner, 2016). Research indicated that Hispanics find that police use of excessive force is a significant problem in Texas (Carter, 2016). Hispanics believes that racial profile exists when police officer use race to deter if Hispanics are immigrants crossing border illegal into United States. Hispanics 'negative encounters with police involve questions of immigration and documentation status (Barrick, 2014). In Barrick's (2014) study, Hispanics who are questioned about their immigration status feel less confident in the law. They also think that a police officer is more likely to use physical force against them or feel police contact involves immigration or employment problems. Some Hispanics fear that police officers believe they are illegal and crossed the border without citizen documentation. Some Hispanics experienced a high level of language barrier, where most police officers do not speak a second language to provide police service.

There have been different police incidents involving a riot. It is easy to blame these riots on the police officer assume these incidents included racial profiling, however a police-involved riot is not a definitive indication of racial profiling. According to Bale, (2004), these are the following is a list of events of riots throughout the United States starting the beginning in the 1960s that require police actions.

- 1964 Rochester, New York
- 1964 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 1964 Harlem, New York
- 1964 New Jersey City, New Jersey
- 1964 Paterson, New Jersey
- 1964 Elizabeth New Jersey
- 1965 Watts, Los Angeles, California
- 1966 Hough, Cleveland, Ohio
- 1966 Hunter's Point, San Francisco, California
- 1966 Division St Chicago, Illinois
- 1967 Newark, New Jersey
- 1967 12 Street, Detroit, Michigan
- 1967 Plainfield, New Jersey
- 1967 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 1967 North Side Riots; Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota
- 1968 Orangeburg massacre, Orangeburg, South Carolina
- 1970 Jackson, Mississippi
- 1980 Miami, Florida
- 1991 Overtown, Miami, Florida
- 1992 Los Angeles, California
- 1992 Harlem, Manhattan, New York City, New York
- 1996 St. Petersburg, Florida
- 2001 Cincinnati, Ohio

- 2003 Benton Harbor, Michigan

With these riots in the United States, African Americans and Hispanics built lawsuits against the state and the federal government (Pennix, 2016). During the growth of interest involving racial profiling, the court was entitled to change policy and monitor police data of racial profiling (Pennix, 2016).

### Racial Profiling

There are many incidents involving racial profiling and, governments and legislators have long worked on defining the term (Behnke, 2017). Racial profiling is used as a principle of race or color by police officers for questioning, searching, stopping, or arresting someone without a “reasonable cause” for committing a crime (Behnke, 2017). The term racial profiling refers to bias-based policing (Behnke, 2017). Racial profiling has become a systemic part of the law enforcement environment. Law enforcement officers view racial profiling as a decision-making process for curtailing crime and criminal behavior (Pundik, 2017). From numerous police officials, police leaders view racial profiling as nothing more than misunderstandings due to society’s lack of understanding of policy strategies, procedures, techniques, and policy standards (Pundik, 2017).

Research has argued that bias-based policing involves the lack of confidence in police officers for treatment in minority communities (Lee, 2017). For many African Americans, the term “racial profiling” is the symbolization of “Driving While Black” and a method to stop-and-frisk African Americans and Hispanics because of their race. The media attention and coverage of racial profiling have provided a generally negative

perception of African Americans and Hispanics as criminals, with media coverage of crimes for which African Americans and Hispanics are subject than others to arrest. For example, Jackson (2016) revealed that several high-profile cases brought national media attention involving racial profiling in police brutality and shooting. The police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, represents the victims of racial profiling because of their skin. Michael Brown was shot and killed by a former police officer, Darren Wilson, in 2014. Eric Garner is another victim of racial profiling after a White police officer applied a chokehold causing Garner's death (Johnson, 2016). The White police officers responsible for the deaths of Brown and Garner were both acquitted (Johnson, 2016). The two high-profile cases raised the Black community concerns about how White police officers treated African Americans when compared to different race groups. Racial profiling of African American and Hispanic men and women by white police officers puts new phrases into minority's vocabulary such as "driving while Black", "walking while Black", and "shopping while Black". A former Dallas police officer, Amber Guyer, was charged for shooting and killing an unarmed African American male, Botham Jean, when she mistakenly thought he was in her apartment. Amber Guyer received a 10-year prison sentencing instead of 28 years in prison (Knowles & Nevins, 2019).

Throughout history, involving racial minorities, Africans and Hispanics, are victims of racial profiling, the use of excessive force by police officers, and stops and searches by law enforcement officers, especially in New York City (Legewie, 2016). In New York City, the use of force and racial profiling has increased the number of police

officers shooting against unarmed African Americans (Legewie, 2016). Legewie's (2016) study shows that New York City has increased racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics. From 1998-to 1998, New York City has an estimated 16.5% of traffic stops involving excessive force against African Americans and Hispanics (Legewie, 2016). White police officers stopped African Americans, and Hispanics compare to different race groups. Recent research from Coviello and Persico (2013) shows that African Americans are viewed as criminals and killed more white police officers from different race groups. For example, On July 9, 2007, in New York City, two African American males and a Hispanic male shot and killed two New York police officers after they were pulled over for traffic violations (Legewie,2016). The death of the two New York City police officers sparked media attention and police concerns among African Americans and Hispanics. The shooting of New York police officers by African Americans between 2007 and 2011 has increased the use of excessive force by police officers against African Americans and Hispanics. The rate of police shootings has increased the number of stops and frisks among African Americans and Hispanics. For example, between 2002 thru 2012, 54% of African Americans and 32% of Hispanics were stopped and frisked by police officers (Coviello and Persico 2013). From this perspective, the killings by Africans and Hispanics raise concerns and tensions between the police and minority communities that minority groups are a threat to personal safety among police officers. Racial profiling had become the practice used in law enforcement, especially in the late 1990s, when the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) utilized racial profiling in apprehension in drug dealers against Africa Americans. (Alpert, 2007).

### Unarmed African Americans and Police Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents

Among the issue of racial profiling, there are previous literature reviews has examined and study finds that unarmed African Americans are more likely to be shot by police officer compared to white civilians (Kramer & Remster, 2018). For instance, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Keith Scott, and Terence Crutcher were killed by white police officers. Many of these victims were unarmed, and multiple high-profile shooting of unarmed African Americans has created a movement called “Black Lives Matter”, which symbolizes African Americans were racially profiled and treated differently because of race. The Black Matter Movement continues to bring black communities together to stop the violence against white police officers shooting unarmed African Americans (Bemak, Chung, Talleyrand & Williams, 2018). A traffic stop is considered a police route practice in law enforcement; however, there has been a growing concern over police officers are stopping racial minorities compared to the non-minority group.

### Racial Profiling Perceptions in Traffic Stops Among Africans-Americans and Hispanics

Literature reviews and studies estimated that African Americans and Hispanics are stopped and frisked by police officers based on their race. For example, Fallik (2019) studies estimated that the police officer’s decision-making points that the driver’s race operating a vehicle is subject to stop and frisk. When a minority driver is stopped by a police officer, the officer’s decision-makes result in a motorist’s vehicle search for illegal drugs or contraband. If African American motorists are found to operate a vehicle in high crime neighborhoods, the motorist has stopped by police officers and questions for



criminal activity. For African Americans and Hispanics living in a low-class community, they receive less fair treatment from police officers (Engel & Calnon, 2004). Most studies on police searches of African Americans and Hispanics have included a strong measurement of the individual race. For instance, quantitative data reveals that 25.8% of African Americans and 41.9% Hispanics reported being stopped by police officers (Fallik, 2019). These result in the negative perceptions of African Americans and Hispanics against police officers.

#### Predictions of African Americans and Hispanics Youths Are Stopped and Question by Police Officers

There is a long history of disagreement or conflict perspective that immigrants and African American youths are stopped and searched by police due to their race instead of criminal behavior. When a black or Hispanic teen is stopped by a police officer, a police officer's decision-making thinks that an individual has may commit an illegal act or behavior (Anthony, Grossi, & Higgins, 2018). When African Americans or Hispanics encounter a police officer, they predict that the officer is racially biased because of his or her race. For minority groups living in high crime neighborhoods or communities, the police indicate that African Americans and Hispanics are subject to commit criminal activity or view them as criminals. Research shows that African American and Hispanics has a negative perspective among police officer based on the treatment they receive from police officers. The majority of African Americans and Hispanics view police officers are racist because African Americans and Hispanics questioned, stopped, investigated, and arrested based on their skin color. African Americans and Hispanics view police officers

as violating their civil rights, and supporters of police discrimination against minorities are found in violation of civil rights (Fallik, 2019).

Many young African Americans and Hispanics in the U.S. experience violence, victims, witness, or perpetrator in police violence and brutality. Between 2016 to 2018, African Americans and Hispanics between the ages of 18 and 50 were five times as likely as white men to be killed by a police officer involving police confrontation (Brady, Calvert & Webb, 2018). Brady, Calvert, and Webb's (2018) study show unarmed African American men killed involved in a confrontation with a police officer during a stop. When a minority group argues or ignores police officer authority, the police officer uses deadly or excessive force because the officer feels threatened or dangerous to citizens. With the killing of unarmed men of African Americans, the issue of violent encounters between a police officer and African Americans becomes more considerable national media attention. The increase of violence between police officers and minorities continues to increase public health issues, disclosures among businesses and shops in minority neighborhoods. Schools and organization employees experience the emotional among African Americans, and Hispanics kill, harass, or physical abuse by police officers. Many police agencies are facing discrimination from African Americans and Hispanics because of mistrust of police officers protecting citizens from crime. For instance, the Los Angeles Police Department experience racism because of the mistrial of Rodney King when three white police officers were found not guilty of excessive use of force.

Upon implementing policing involving racial profiling, police departments continue to face challenges among minorities group who believe they are racist. Also, police agencies face the challenge of a black police officer who does not receive fair treatment in job opportunities and promotions. Since the late 1900s, studies reveal that racial bias involving stop-and-frisk occur between African Americans and Hispanics (Blair, 2015).

### Stop-and-Frisk and Racial Profiling

In previous years, law enforcement agencies developed a program called “Stop-and-Frisk” (SQF) to combat crime and maintain order within the community. During the mid-1900s, the SQF became a primary strategy for the New York Police Department and became a severe illegal search (Fradella, Morrow, and White, 2017). The New York Police Department made over 680,000 stops in 2011 and 175,000 stops in 2012, giving the New York State Attorney General officials a reasonable suspicion on racial profiling among minority groups. The stop and frisk represent police authority to search and frisk an individual who may commit a crime. There has been an increase of African Americans, and Hispanics being stopped and frisked by police officers in Detroit, Baltimore, and Chicago (White & Fradella, 2016). In 2016, Chicago Police Department stopped 72% of African Americans, and 17% were Hispanics (White & Fradella, 2016). From 2008 to 2013, the Miami Police Department stopped 65,328 African Americans for a minor offense (Brennan & Lieberman, 2014). The number of stops and frisks against African Americans and Hispanics influence a police officer’s decision to use force.

The controversy of using the stop-and-frisk program became a significant issue in the City of New York, and the stop-and frisk program became a harmful impact against African Americans and Hispanics. In 2008, the second suit of *Floyd v. The city of New York* that the New York Police Department violated and engaged in racial profiling against minority citizens (Jones-Brown, 2010). A federal lawsuit was filed against the New York Police Department in 2002 involving a case *Daniel v. City of New York*, where serious incidents involving racial profiling. The New York Police Department Stop-and-Frisk Program became a significant problem in different jurisdictions across the United States. For instance, the Philadelphia Police Department was engaging in racial profiling after a lawsuit was filed against them in June 2011. The U.S. District Court in Pennsylvania found that African Americans and Hispanics were experiencing racial profiling by white police officers because of their race. Other cities were experiencing racial profiling, such as ad Baltimore, Detroit, Miami, and Chicago (Bolger & Lytle, 2018).

Studies showed that police officers were eight times to shoot and kill African Americans compared to White citizens (Walker, Spohn, & Delone, 2012). Other significant studies show that more police shootings involve African Americans shot and killed unarmed. Between 2014 and 2016, victims such as Eric Garner, Walter Scott, Samuel Dubose, and a few others were unarmed and fatally shot by police officers. Some researchers believe that race on police officer use of force did not influence an officer's decision making to use force or deadly force. Terrill and Reisig (2003) study found that police officers' use of force against African Americans and Hispanics does not influence

race. Other research shows that race or ethnicity has no relation to the use of force by a police officer.

### Conclusion

Does racial profiling exist in law enforcement? Does racial profiling occur in the State of Florida and the State of South Carolina? What are the consequences of being black and Hispanic? Are African Americans and Hispanics safe streets on the streets against police officers? Police officers use their discretion to determine if an individual goes to jail because of his or her race. The American Revolution War and Civil War did not end the violence between minority groups of African Americans and Hispanics. The nation continues to see an increase in violence between minority groups and white police officers. African Americans and Hispanics are visual as criminals because minority groups commit violent crimes compared to different race groups. The prison population of Hispanics and African Americans continues to increase, and minority people do not always receive a fair trial. Numerous riots occur in significant cities involving police violence against African Americans and Hispanics. The nation has witnessed the killings and racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics, and police officers are continuing to use deadly and excessive force on minority citizens. The nation has witnessed the killing and racial profiling from various states, including New York, Chicago, Georgia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Many studies and research conclude that racial profiling exists against African Americans and Hispanics. Some studies find that racial profiling does not occur because race does not influence the police officer's decision to arrest, detain, stop-and-frisk, question, or investigate a minority citizen. As

police administrators and policymakers continue to discuss the phenomenon of racial profiling, there are still studies that address the impact of negative and positive influence on police officers' decision to stop-and-frisk, arrest, investigate an individual based on his or her race. The government does not protect many citizens, including African Americans and Hispanics, for equality and freedom. Racial profiling should not exist in law enforcement; especially, the people placed to protect citizens in times of trouble.

In the following chapter, the researcher will address the methodology and discuss the research question of how African Americans and Hispanics experience racial profiling among police officers. I will describe the sample and sampling procedures, as well as the instrument to collect the data.

### Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to examine the lived experience of African Americans and Hispanics who experienced racial profiling by police officers. My goal was to understand the impact and life changes caused by racial profiling and determine if racial profiling has changed the behaviors, opinions, and outlooks concerning public policing. I sought to determine whether racial profiling is an appropriate in policing tactics in deterring crime. In this chapter, I discuss the detail of the rationale for the selection of the chosen methodology, sampling strategy, the instrumentation, the research questions, as well as process for collecting, organizing, and interpreting the results. In this chapter, I discuss the ethical concerns surrounding the research stud, and how I addressed these issues.

#### Research Methodology and Design

The following research question guided my study: What is the lived experience of African Americans/ Hispanics over 18 who have been racially profiled by police officers in the United States?

The concept of the study of this research concluded that 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties in the state of Florida who experience racial profiling by a police officer at some point in their lives. Furthermore, the I interviewed 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics who experience racial profiling and their opinions, demeanors, and outlooks on a police officer.

I selected the qualitative research method for this study. According to Rudestam and Newton (2015), qualitative research involves a narrative or storytelling perspective of

a phenomenon, and the phenomenon is opposing to the analysis of statistical data in a quantitative research inquiry. Rudestam and Newton explained that qualitative research study involves the perspective of sampling, instrumentation, and data analysis of the opposing perspective by individuals who experience racial profiling. According to Patton (2005), qualitative research contributes to three kinds of qualitative data: interpersonal interviews, fieldwork observation, and documentation. In an interpersonal interview, the researcher can ask open-ended questions and receive an in-depth response about an individual's experience, perception, opinions, feelings, and knowledge. Qualitative research can also allow the research to conduct a fieldwork observation (Patton, 2005). In fieldwork observation, the researcher can observe an individual's activities, behaviors, actions, conversations, or observe aspects of the human experience. Documentation allows the researcher to review social media, written material, program records, personal diaries, letters, photographs, or written responses to open-ended surveys (Patton, 2005, p36). According to Rudestam and Newton, there are five different qualitative research inquiry designs: narrative, ground theory, ethnography, case study, and phenomenology. For this research purpose, I used the phenomenology design.

The rational qualitative research method is phenomenological. According to Patton (2015), phenomenology is a live research experience exploring how individuals make sense of knowledge and transform experiences into consciousness. This phenomenon is a methodology method for how people perceive, describe, feel about, judge, remember, or talk about their life experiences involving racial profiling. Rudestam and Newton (2015) explained that the phenomenological approach captures the essence



of participants 'lived experiences. Phenomenology is also a study of an individuals' conscious knowledge of their lifeworld (Schram, 2003). Van Manen described "phenomenology is the way of access to the world as we experience it perfectly." (p55). Irreflective experience is the everyday experience that we live in and that we live through for most, if not all, of our day-to-day existence." (Van Manen, p.28). My goal was to capture the perspectives and lived experiences of African Americans and Hispanic victims of racial profiling in Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County.

#### Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is to collect information from the participants within the study, find answers to the research question, and be a good listener (Yin, 2016). Yin explained that a qualitative researcher possesses qualities and knowledge in conducting the study that involves listening, understanding the topic of the study, asking the right questions, and caring about the data. According to Ravitch (2016), the role of the researcher is the researcher's identity in qualitative research design. There are two central components of the researcher to identify positionality and social location. Positionality is the multitude of roles and relationships involve that exist between the researcher and the participants within the relations of the research topic, setting, and broader contexts that shape (Ravitch, 2016). I engaged in a reflexive process that the layers of beliefs, biases, and assumptions. Ravitch mentioned that a researcher also understands the meaning of the research project, including positionality, social location, experiences, beliefs, ideologies, prior knowledge, and the overall perspective on the world. As a researcher, it is important to never give up until the research is complete. During my study, I have

experienced several different challenges during my study. First, I experienced some participants refusing to participate in the study because of fear of retaliation. I also experienced the pandemic, which prevents me from conducting face-to-face interviews. I had also experienced the deployments during my study. I was stationed in South Korea, which limits my ability to travel into the United States to conduct face-to-face interviews. Lastly, there were previous incidents involving police shootings and the killing of unarmed African Americans from 2020 through 2022, especially the recent event involving the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020.

#### Ethical Concerns

Whenever a researcher partakes in qualitative research involving racial profiling, multiple ethical concerns are considered before starting the study. For example, the participants were victims of racial profiling or have had colleagues who were victims of racial profiling. Another ethical concern is that I have prior law enforcement experience working with local police departments. I have worked 2 years with a local police agency and understand how African Americans and Hispanics experience racial profiling in Pinellas County. I am an African American male and have worked with several different officers within the Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. I have no life experience involving racial profiling, but know individuals who have a negative experience with a police officer. I am not biased towards the research topic nor have experience involved in racial profiling. I know some police departments have some negative experiences with African American and Hispanic communities. Some African Americans and Hispanics have a negative experience with police officers which affects their life experience.

involving a police officer. Another area of ethical concern is the confidentiality of the research study. According to Patton (2015), “Confidentiality involves with obligated to protect the participants’ identify, the place of location of the research” (p.343). I will keep the participants’ identities confidential, and no personal information will be shared with the public. For the interview process, I used a secure Internet connection to prevent the loss of personal information of the research participant expose to the public.

### Methodology

In this research study, I used a qualitative research strategy to describe the experience of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics in Florida. I used two different data collection tools: questionnaires and interviews with African Americans and Hispanics, 18 and older, who reside in United States. The questionnaires were distributed among schools, universities, churches, neighborhoods, and businesses that have a contact police officer in United States. The population for this qualitative research study is 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics who experienced racial profiling in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough. According to Patton (2015), there are no rules exists of regarding sample size in the qualitative research study. The sample size allows the researcher to attempt to discover the problem for why the topic is important. The sample size allows the researcher to understand what they need to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what is useful, and what needs to be done with the available time and resources (Patton, 2015 p.311.). For qualitative research, I used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling method used to analyze the lived experiences of small samples of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon

(Patton, 2015). Purposive sampling is appropriate because it can perceive to reduce bias and can be studied with the available time and resources. According to Rudestam and Newton (2015), “the participants are the experts on the phenomenon being studied. This means that the sample probably would not be randomly drawn from a group of college students or any other “convenience sample” (p.123). I can use criterion sampling by selecting participants who match the criteria of the study. I sought participants to contribute to understanding the research question or topic by the study. To add creditability to the research study, there were no limitations regards the participants’ level of education, sexual orientation, gender, or religious beliefs. The criteria that research participants of research study had to meet the following: 18 years of age or older, identify themselves as African American or Hispanic, reside in the state of Florida in Pinellas or Hillsborough County, and believe they have been subject to racial profiling by a police officer.

### Research Method

For this study, I used a qualitative phenomenological research study to examine the lived experience 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics been victims of racial profiling in the state of Florida. I had chosen to conduct an interview, and I sought a complimentary interview method consisting of several questions. According to Ravitch (2016), an interview is a social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee sharing information and constructing a story. A qualitative interview is a significant data source for qualitative research. Weiss (1994) provides highlights the critical reasons for conducting a qualitative interview. According to Weiss (1994), a qualitative interview

gives the researcher to develop a full, detailed, and contextualize description of experiences. The qualitative interview is also a perspective, describe processes and skills in depth, develop a holistic story of perspectives, realities, experiences, and phenomena; and bridge intersubjectivity between researcher and study participant. These qualities and values of qualitative interviews are essential for the researcher to consider different variables, which can shape the research.

### Reflexivity

The term "reflexivity" is the central aspect of a qualitative research study. Ravi (2008) explains that researcher reflexivity is "an active and ongoing awareness and monitoring of your role and significant, ongoing influence on the research." (p386). Reflexivity is recommended in a study to promote the credibility and trustworthiness of the researcher by revealing background information that may jeopardize their study. During the qualitative research process, researchers often find themselves pondering about how the research may have touched, affect, and transform as a professional. Reavy (2007, p. 611) argues that reflexivity is giving an honest account of the research process in illustrating the position of the researcher concerning the study.

### Research Participants.

I used a variety of social media to identify a minimum of 7 to 10 research participants that meet the researcher's criteria of being 18 years or older, identify themselves as African Americans or Hispanics who experience racial profiling by a police officer. I used several media outlets such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Messenger, and Instagram to identify the participants for the research. I had also able to locate my

participants in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County by using Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, or contacting several people who have friends or colleagues who experience racial profiling. I used the same approach on LinkedIn and Instagram to locate the 10 participants for this research. After I located my participants, I contacted my participants via email to inform them that they have been selected to participate in a research study. I used monetary stipends to pay the participants such as gift cards, and I explained to each of my participant the significant impact in the development of new racial profiling legislation in the state of Florida. I was successfully seeks to identify 8 participants who meet the criteria for being eligible to participate in the study. The participants must live in different parts of Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties in the state of Florida who are subject to racial profiling by the police.

#### Instrumentation

In qualitative research using the phenomenological approach, I am the instrument to ask questions, listen, observe and take notes. The research instrument choice for the qualitative researcher is the human observer. I sought to use the purposeful sampling for qualitative research. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to provide detailed accounts of specific populations and locations for the analysis (Patton 2015). Purposeful sampling is appropriate for the qualitative study because it enables the researcher to select participants to have the ability to answer the research study (Patton, 2015). The sample will be selected from a population in the state of Florida who has contact with a police officer. The sample obtains from secondary data from different colleges, universities, community centers, and neighborhoods in the state of Florida. The data

collection procedure began by scheduling a meeting with several African Americans and Hispanics living in Florida. By using the U.S. Census Bureau, the demographic population in Florida shows 2,335,505 (14.6%) of black or African Americans, 2,682,715 (16.8%), and 13, 299,663 (83.2%) of non-Hispanic residents in Florida. Florida is the third-most populous state in the United States. Many non-Hispanics and Hispanics are currently residents in the city of Miami, holding the largest population of Hispanic residents within the community. The ages among the sample population are 18, and up the researcher uses two types of qualitative data collection: interviews and surveys. In-state of Florida, I had selected participants from select cities in Pinellas County, such as Clearwater and St. Petersburg thru Facebook, LinkedIn, or Instagram. I had also selected some participants who lives outside the state of Florida such as Atlanta, Georgia. I had sought to chose participants in Hillsborough County in Tampa and Brandon. For example, 2 participants are African Americans in Clearwater; 2 participants are Hispanics in St. Petersburg, 2 participants are African Americans in Tampa, and 2 participants are Hispanics in Brandon, which gives a total of 8 participants in the state of Florida. The target organizations are colleges, universities, neighborhoods, and businesses such as Hillsborough Community College Tampa, Fl; The University of Tampa in Tampa, Florida; St. Petersburg College in Clearwater, Florida; and the University of South Florida in St. Petersburg.

The purpose of interviewing is to allow the interviewer to capture the perspective of program participants and other associates within the program. I used the in-depth interview to speak 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics who are over the ages of 18 and

perceived experience of racial profiling with a police officer or made contact with a police officer within the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County. The interview process begins with a consent letter sent through email, and the consent letter explains the purpose of the research involving racial profiling. Once I had receive a consent letter back from the interviewee, the I conducted a phone interview for individuals who experienced racial profiling or made contact with a police officer. The interview process lasts from 30 to 45 minutes and involves 15 questions. Due to travel expenses, I used the telephone interview process. I had also used a tape recorder during the interview process for data collection. Most of the interaction with the participants took place on the phone and via email-the internet, the interview was conducted over the phone/ or video teleconference by using Skype or Facebook. The interview is a useful communication tool for people who are hard for each other or unwilling to talk publicly (Rubin, 2012). Rubin (2012) addresses that internet interviews are private and give the interviewer more time to think about the answer. Internet interviews also allow the participants to hide their emotional responses; internet interviews are slow, and the interviewer can ask one question at a time. During the interview process, I used tape recorder to record the participants' responses by using a tape recorder. The participants are tape-recorded and transcribed, and I had completed the interview within 2 months. I sought not disclose any information that jeopardizes the identity, and all conversation is confidential. I used the following interview questions were asked to each participant about their lived experience involving racial profiling among police officers.

1. What city and state do you reside in?



2. Describe the neighborhood you reside in?
3. Please describe your encounter with a police officer that led you to believe that you experience or believe a victim of racial profiling or discrimination? (Time of day or year, were you walking, shopping, or driving, were you with someone or alone)
4. How do you feel when a police officer approaches you or stopped for a traffic violation, investigating, or questioning?
5. Please describe your relationship with a white police officer.
6. How often is time you see a police officer racially profile an African American or Hispanic?
7. What type of police activity have you witnessed, observed, or experienced in your community?
8. What changes affect you when you encounter a police officer?
9. What is your perspective of the police?
10. How would you describe the relationship between African Americans and Hispanics and police in your county? (Describe in full detail)
11. How does racial profiling have a negative effect among African Americans Hispanics?
12. How will you improve the relationship between African Americans/Hispanics and police officers in your community?
13. Can you describe the location or neighborhood when encountering a police officer?

14. Describe an incident when you were racially profiled by a police officer?
15. What do you think or how did you react when a police officer discriminates against you based on your skin color?

I conducted a series of interviews that consist of 15 open-ended questions that allows me the opportunity to ask questions for each interview. Each participant receives an email with a list of interview questions before being contacted. Each participant will receive 30 to 45 minutes during the interview. I kept the data secured in a personal home computer-protected password using the Internet security software McAfee Internet Security.

#### Data Analysis

I used the coding method in the order of the interviews conducted and allow the researcher to reflect the interviewee's experience in racial profiling. I used the coding method to understand the perspective of the participants, and the researcher has analyzed the data into the interviewee's experiences. For my search study, I sought used two types of coding: According to Saldana (2016), descriptive coding summarizes a word or short phase in a sentence. Descriptive coding allows the researcher to summarize the interviewees' comments, and descriptive coding is essential for documenting and analyzing physical products or interviews (Saldana 2016). Descriptive coding enables the researcher to learn how to code data and studies in a variety of data forms (interview transcripts, field notes, journals documentations, diaries, artifacts, and video.) Descriptive coding is not for a case study or small group interview transcripts, but the researcher will use descriptive coding for data analysis when interviewing each individual.

I had also used the emotion coding. According to Goleman (1995), emotion coding is a feeling and distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states. For qualitative research study, I sought to use the emotion coding because emotion coding is a universal human experience. Emotion coding is a deep insight into the participants' perspectives, worldviews, and life conditions (Goleman, 1995). Emotion coding reveals the inner workings of an individual, but emotional coding involves the underlying mood and tone of a society.

Overall, I used the descriptive and emotion coding to focus the interview analysis on the life experience of the participants involving racial profiling. I also used a coding software program called "NVivo." I used the "NVivo," a qualitative software program because I was able to organize the quality text-based information, including multimedia, into one data. The software program uses to query keywords for comparison with manually coded categories and themes. NVivo helps me to organize and analyze information, examine relationships in the data, and combine analysis with linking, shaping, searching, and modeling. NVivo is a useful software tool program for literature reviews, phenomenology, and mixed-method.

#### Issues of Trustworthiness

There are limitations and ethical concerns during this research process. I had encountered several challenges to interview 4 of African Americans and 2 Hispanics in the state of Florida. Since racial profiling is a hot topic and issue among African Americans and Hispanics, some participants may refuse to participate in the research process. I had explained the process to participants before the interview begins. Some

participants feel uncomfortable giving their perspective, or life experience involve with racial profiling. Some participants are victims of racial profiling and refuse to participate in the research study. I found participants made contact with police and have no negative perspective on the issue of racial profiling. The research ensured ethics remains the top priority throughout the study. The informed consent form is read and explained to each participant before the interview. The participants remain anonymous, and comments remain confidential. All recorded materials erase after receiving the final approval by the research committee and ease all materials once the research study is complete. Validity is a central component of qualitative research design. According to Ravitch (2016), validity is a researcher can affirm that his or her findings are faithful to participants' experience. There are two approaches to validity: transactional validity and transformation validity. Ravitch (2016) describes transactional validity as a "technique and attempts to achieve a higher level of accuracy and consensus using revisiting the facts, feelings, experiences, and values or beliefs collected and interpreted." (p. 187). Transformation validity is the emancipatory process leading toward social change, which means the deeper and empathetic understanding of the researcher. I tend to draw meaningful influence from the participants such as culture, religion, race, and community engagement, and I was able manage to achieve transferability during the study.

Credibility is an essential part of critical research design. Ravitch (2016) describes credibility as the researcher's ability to take into account all the complexities present in the study. I had established credibility based on experience in the research topic. I developed credibility among becoming an expert on the subject. I used my prior expertise

in racial profiling because the I had witnessed several racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics in the state of Florida. I had also previous work with local law enforcement in Florida and understands how African Americans and Hispanics treat by police officers.

Transferability involves qualitative research that can be transferable or applicable to other contexts of the study. Transferability allows the readers or the participants to transfer aspects of the study design and findings to another research (Ravitch, 2016). I intend to use transferability in this study by gaining a description of the data itself. Furthermore, I had also tended to use the transferability approach so the readers and researcher audience can make a comparison of transfer aspects of a study design and findings involving racial profiling. Researchers can also take into consideration that racial profiling exists in different states and cities.

Ravitch (2016) discusses that triangulation involves taking different perspectives or examining the conclusion from one vantage point. There are various forms of triangulation including methodological triangulation, data triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. For this research purpose, I used data triangulation because I collect data using by interviewing different participants in various cities in Pinellas and Hillsborough County. I also used the triangulation, transferability, confirmability, credibility, and validity research study, especially using confirmability.

Rudestam and Newton (2015) explain that confidentiality refers to the fair treatment of information when a participant discloses in a relationship of trust, expectations, and keeping the participant's identity will be preserved by the researcher.

The goal of confirmability confirm data and acknowledge no bias or misrepresentation of data. To maintain credibility, I reviewed all peer reviews and consultations used to identify potential bias during the research.

#### Ethical Procedures.

Before conducting research for the study, I used the proper procedures and submit the proposal to the Instructional Review Board (IRB) with a complete IRB application for consideration for approval. Once I receives approval from the IRB at Walden University, I begin contact several universities in the state of Florida to receive permission from Petersburg College and the University of Tampa. I sent emails to individuals who are African Americans and Hispanics enroll in universities. If I did not receive approval from the IRB from Walden University, I will distribute a consent letter to businesses and residents who are living in counties of Pinellas and Hillsborough in the state of Florida. I sent a consent letter to the interviewees before scheduling an interview. Informed consent requires for each participant before participating in the interview process.

#### Summary

The qualitative study examines the lived experience of 7 to 10 African Americans and Hispanics who experience racial profiling by a police officer. The goal of this chapter is to outline the research method and describe how data is collected and analyzed. All study participants contributed to this research study and shared their experience in racial profiling. A discussion procedure has outlined how participants are selected, data collection, and interviews outlined. I used various media outlets such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to locate and interviewed 4 African Americans and 2Hispanics

who are victims of racial profiling. My strategy is to find the research participants in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County.

The main goal of Chapter IV is to provide the research results and demonstrate the methodology described in Chapter III. In Chapter 4, the research reveals the results for each step of the qualitative research study that includes each participants' demographic information, the number of participants selected to participate in the study; how I collected data and records categories, and the results of each interview questions that support my findings.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics who were racially profiled by law enforcement Hispanics because of their skin color and discover the impact of the demeanors, outlooks, and opinions concerning the police. Prior researchers have focused on how racial profile impacts African Americans and Hispanics and how African Americans and Hispanics continue to experience the effects of racial profile by a police officer. I sought to fill the gap in the literature by focusing on the life experience of individuals from different states and communities and victims' family members who have been racially profiled by a police officer on different occasions. I focused on the perceptions of African Americans and Hispanics about police officers who racially profile without reason. In this chapter, I provide the results of this study on how some African Americans and Hispanics believe police officers continue racial profiling based on race. Participants' demographics, data collection, and analysis information on the research setting and evidence of trustworthiness are also provided.

I sought to identify the participants from state of Florida in different counties including Hillsborough and Pinellas to discover the lived experiences of African Americans and Hispanics who were victims of racial profiling and have some negative perceptions among law enforcement officers. The participants were contacted through social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. I also posted participants' flyers in different locations such as schools, churches, and community centers. I reached out to several colleges and received permission from the school director to have my flyers



posted for recruitment. I use social media such as Facebook and Twitter to pose the participant flyer. I only had eight people volunteer for the study: two Hispanics females, two African American females, two African American men, one White male and White female. Both the White male and White female participated in the survey study but did not participate in the interview process. Since my study involved African Americans and Hispanics, the White volunteers were not included in the final study or collection data. One African American female possessed a doctorate in education, and she described how her son was racially profiled by a police officer. One African American male possessed a bachelor's degree, and he described his life experience of racial profiling by a police officer. One African American female possessed a bachelor's degree and currently working for the federal government. This individual shared her life experience when racially profiled by a police officer. This individual was pulled over during a minor traffic stop, and she described how she was racially profiled by a police officer who continues to pull her over. The ages between the individuals who volunteered for the survey and interview were between the ages of 20-29 and 30-50 years of age. All participants were from the United States and have similar incidents by a police officer who racially profile.

I collected data through video teleconference interviews by using an Internet secure website. One-on-one interviews were conducted in a private area, and surveys were completed online from written feedback to the questions emails. I also use a website called, "Survey Monkey", an online survey website. Participants were instructed to take a 5-minute survey and schedule a private interview using the web-teleconference such as

Skype, Facebook, or Microsoft Teams. The survey has a total of 22 questions related to racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics. The survey consisted of “true or false” and “yes or no” questions. The participants who completed the survey remain confidential, and surveys were secured by using a username and password for security. The first five questions are demographic questions. The sub questions were

1. What is your gender
2. What is your age?
3. What is your race?
4. What state do you reside in?
5. What city are you resident in in your state?

I used these survey questions as a guide to the description of the participants taking the survey. I want to make sure that my participants were African American and Hispanics of males and females. I also use these questions to describe the participant’s incident with a police officer where he or she was racial profile. The participants for this research study were 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanic males and females of the community from different states who were racially profiled by a police officer. From the survey, Questions 6 thru 22 described the participant’s relations and experience as a police officer. These questions describe the life experience of African Americans and Hispanics experience their encounter with police officers.

### **Interviewing Setting**

After completing the survey, the participants scheduled an interview with me. The interviews took place on March 9, 2021, March 13, 2021, and July 23, 2021. I was only able to get three participants to participate in the interview process: one African American male and two African American females. I did try to interview several Hispanics, but the participants refused to participate in the interview process. One participant received an interview thru WhatsApp and lasted 46 minutes. The data were collected by using a tape recorder, and I received consent from the participant to record the interview. The second interview was a video teleconference using Messenger. For this purpose, the second interview was conducted by using the teleconference which was approved by Walden University IRB on December 23, 2020. The second interview lasted 24 minutes and 49 seconds. The third interview was conducted on July 23, 2021, in South Korea. Since I was stationed in South Korea, the third interview was conducted face-to-face in a private facility. The third interview lasted 25 minutes and was the participant was able to answer all the questions during the interview process.

### **Demographics**

Upon receiving approval from the Walden IRB to collect data beginning in December 2020, I had already identified the potential participants who have been racially profiled by a police officer. The first step was to send my flyers and social media outlets on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. From January thru February, I had difficulties recruiting participants for my dissertation. I reach out to St. Petersburg College, St. Petersburg Florida to get approval to send my flyers to participate in my research study.

After receiving approval from the research director at St. Petersburg, my flyers were distributed to the students at St. Petersburg College including students from the University of Tampa. I also sent out my consent letter along with my participation flyer. In my consent letter, participants are asked to read the consent letter before taking the survey. After reading the consent letter, if the participants wish to participate in my research study, they are asked to complete a 5-minute online survey before scheduling an interview. After several months, I receive a total of eight participants who completed the online survey. The respondents were African Americans and Hispanics from different gender between the ages of 18 and older. A total of four blacks or African Americans, two Hispanics, and two White responded to the survey. A total of three males and five females responded to the survey. None of the participants worked in law enforcement. However, some participants did not give their state of residence of the incident racial profile took place. As described above, I was only able to interview three participants who completed the survey. The other five participants chose not to participate in the interview process.

#### Data Collection

The instrumentation for the study was a 30-to-45-minute researcher developed interview questionnaire to describe the life experience of racial profile among African Americans and Hispanics by police officers. By collecting data, I used the tape recorder during the interview process and using notetaking. I collected all the surveys and printed out the results of the respondent's survey. For the interview questions, the interview questions were participants' perceptions about African Americans and Hispanic racial

profiles by a police officer. The data was collected via handwritten notes, from recorded interviews with one audio recording device. The recording device used was an Olympus digital recorder. The participants were informed about the information for the audio recorder is confidential and were offered to receive a copy of the transcript once the dissertation is complete. For those who requested to receive the information, the audio recorder was emailed along with the hand note-taking of the interview. The participants were asked to listen to the audio recorder after the interview for accuracy.

### Data Analysis

The interview questions were analyzed and carefully categorized of each of the interview questions. The interviews were audio-recorded, and I took notes. For the data analysis, I used NVivo to analyze the responses to the interview. NVivo is a data analysis software program which helps qualitative researchers organize, analyze, and find insights into unstructured or qualitative data such as interviews, open-ended survey responses, journal articles, social media, and web content. For my research study, I used NVivo qualitative data analysis computer system to compare the significant terms and common terms that were evaluated during the coding process. By using NVivo, I was able to begin the process by taking all the participant's responses from the questions, which were developed and listed under the central research questions and sub questions that aligned with what was being studied.

There are two research approaches are discussed by Rubin and Rubin (2012) and Saldana (2016). The first approach is the deductive and inductive approach. According to Rubin and Rubin, the deductive approach is the qualitative data analysis that involves

analyzing data based on the structure predetermined by the research. Based on these research questions, the research questions were used for grouping and analyzing the data. For this research study, I also used the inductive approach. There was no hypothesis tested used for this research study. During my data analysis, I realize from my participants that there is evidence of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics by police officers.

#### Evidence of Trustworthiness

For this phenomenological research study, my research study involved trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. Rudestam and Newton (2015) described the importance of trustworthiness conducted through credible and truth-finding the answer to the research question. In Chapter 3, the definition of credibility referred to the extent to which a research account is believable and accurate with the reference to the level of agreement between the participants and the researcher. Transferability describes as evidence that the research study's findings could apply to other contexts, situations, times, and populations. The term "confirmability" is the degree to which the outcome could be confirmed or corroborated by other people. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), dependability is qualitative research, which relies on the stability of data over time and conditions utilizing multiple data collection instruments and member checking.

#### Results

The transcription excerpts provide insight to study participants' perceptions regarding the life experience of African Americans and Hispanics who experienced racial

profiling by law enforcement officers. The research described that when there is significant evidence that majority of African Americans experience racial profiling from White police officers. The main themes that I identified were: (a) African Americans and Hispanics are treated like a criminal, (b) African Americans and Hispanics are fearing for their life, (c) African Americans and Hispanics were being profiled by the police, and (d) African Americans and Hispanics show a lack of trust in the police. The following section will discuss how my results by answering my research questions along with sub questions during the interview. Table 1 provides the number of occurrences of each of them in the participants' responses during the interview and survey.

#### Research Question

The research question for my research study was: "What is the lived experience of African Americans/ Hispanics over 18 who have been racially profiled by police officers in the United States?" In response to the research question, I had asked each participant how their experience with the police made them feel uncomfortable, as well how they rate their police service experience, were they satisfied or dissatisfied with police officer service, describe your treatment from a police officer after making contact, and did the officer say or do anything that made you think that race played a factor in racial profiling. Eight participants took the online survey and each participant described and rated their experience with a police officer. Most of the participants addressed that racial profile plays a role among races. In Table 1, the chart displays the number of demographic participants who addressed their experience in racial profiling among police officers.

**Table 1***Experiences of Racial Profiling by Race and Gender*

	Hispanic or Latino	African Americans	White
Female	2	2	1
Male	0	2	1
Unknown	0	0	0
Total	2	4	2

Table 2 displays the number of occurrences of each of them in the participant's response being racially profiled by a police officer.

**Table 2***Number of Racial Profile Occurrences by Theme*

Themes	Hispanic or Latino	African Americans	White
Treatment	2	2	1
Skin Color	0	2	1
Receive a citation	2	4	2
Arrested	0	1	0

## Theme 1: Treatment from a Police Officer

Based on the results of my research participants, six participants shared their belief that during their encounter with the police officer that they were mistreated and treated like a criminal regardless of having committed any crime. Participant 1 shared



with me that a white police officer that he encountered during his experience with racial profiling was dissatisfied with the police service he received. Participant 1 concluded that he experienced negative behavior from a police officer that the officer was very aggressive and abuse his power. According to participant 1, who is an African American male from Hillsborough County, Tampa Florida, said: *“I have been insulted by a police officer because of my skin color.”* Participant 1 also shared that race played a factor in racial profiling. Why? Participant 1 concluded he was arrested. Participant 2 is a black female who refuses to give her residence and state, but she concluded she had experienced racial profile, but her son was the victim. Participant 2 describes her experience with a police officer as a positive one when she encounters a school resource officer. However, Participant 2 stated that *“the fact that the reason stated for pulling my son over didn’t add up. Couldn’t read the tag. Nothing was covering the tag. In addition, it was a nightmare.”* When asked, “What do you think was the reason for racial profiling you experienced”? Participant 2 responded, *“There is never a reason to racial profile; however, I believe the intent was disbelief that a young African American male can not own a nice automobile; that coupled with a dislike or envy of African Americans.”* Participant 3 shared with me that he was not racial profile. Participant 3 is a Caucasian male who resides in the City of Clearwater in the State of Florida. Participant 3 was satisfied with the police service and treatment. Participant 3 describes his experience when he encountered a police officer when he received warnings for failing to turn his headlights on and another was for failing to stop at the stop sign. According to Participant 3, his response was *“I have received two warnings and one citation. One warning was*

*completely my fault: I failed to turn my headlights on at night. The other warning was because an officer believed I had not stopped at a stop sign, but the driver behind me pulled up as well to corroborate my story, so the officer issued a warning instead of the ticket he was trying to give. My citation was due to out-of-date plates, and the result was to renew my plates and go to traffic court with the new registration to prove I had done it.”* Participant 3 continued that his interaction with a police officer was very tense.

Participant 3 stated, *“Most of my interactions with the police have been tense almost as if the officer is just waiting for the smallest excuse to use a weapon or issue an arrest/ticket. Some are courteous, but most seem as though they see you as a direct threat and treat you as such despite no overt reason to do so.”*

## Theme 2: Skin Color

Eight of my research participants shared their beliefs that police officers racially profile African Americans and Hispanics based on skin color. Participant 8 shared his experience with me during his encounter with the police officer when the officer followed the individual from work. According to Participant 8, he stated that *“I was pulled over once right after I got off work. I noticed that the police officer had been following me from the gas station I went to close to my job after work. I am not way from the gas station and work waiting at a red light to cross and as soon as the light turned green, and I stepped on my gas the lights and the siren went on. I pulled over and I give my license and registration I ask why he pulled me over and he doesn’t tell me. He goes to his car and then comes back and gives my papers and license back tells me he has to go because he got a call and to take my small little air fresher that I had my nephew’s*

*baby picture in off of my rearview mirror and left. I know the law and I know you're not supposed to have things hanging from the rear-view mirror but only if it's a distraction. What I had hanging on my window wasn't disobeying any laws.*" Participant 8 also shared with me what was the reason the officer racially profiled him. Participant 8 response was *"I was in an area known for gang activity and I just look suspect so of course I got pulled over for the smallest infraction. Which was for the front of my car is ahead of the stop sign."* Participant 8 also explained that the police officer was racially profiling him because the officer threw the participant's driver at him. When asked, "Did the officer say or do anything that made you think that race played a factor in racial profiling?" Participant 8 responded, "Yes" because the officer threw the driver's license at the participant. On July 23, 2021, I had the opportunity to conduct a face-to-face interview involving a 27yr female from Georgia who was racially profiled by a police officer. The interview was conducted in a private facility area in South Korea. The participant is an African American female who is 27yrs old and had experience with a police officer who racially profiled her. During the interview, I had asked several questions involving lived experience in racial profiling. The first question was: 1. Describe in detail your personal experience with police racial profiling? The 27-year-old African American female stated, "I was being pulled over 5 and 6 times more often, and I don't think it is normal." The African American female also stated, "The officer talked to me more different than normal people." When she got pulled over, the African American female explained that she had family inside the vehicle including her mother, younger brother, and sister. She also explained when she was encountered by a police

officer. When asked about “Can you describe the relations between the police officer and community in your city or neighborhood?” She stated” There were not many enough black people in the community, and we are afraid of being harassed or disturbed all the time than any other person will be” The 27 yr. old mention that she was driving with her brother when they were pulled over by a police officer. The officer pulled the driver did a background check on the 27yrs old’s brother. The 27yr old African American female stated the officer was very rude to her brother and arrested the brother for no reason. The driver was very scared, and the officer had the driver’s brother arrested and threw him to the ground. The 27-year-old continued to explain that her brother was not doing anything wrong or committing any crime. The 27 yrs. old describes the race of the officer as white, and she was fearing for her brother’s life as a result of the treatment received from the white officer. The 27-year-old African American informed me that her mother filed a complaint against the officer’s misconduct, and she also informed me that her brother filed a complaint against the officer’s misconduct. After the incident, the 27yr old African American female along with her mother and brother discussed the incident at their residence, and the 27yr old African American female decided to address the incident with the officer’s supervisor at the police station.

### Theme 3: Received A Citation

From the 8 participants who shared with me their life experience of racial profiling by a police officer, 4 African Americans and 2 Hispanics received a citation from a police officer as a result of minor traffic stops. From the 4 participants who were African Americans, they concluded African Americans males and females are more

likely to receive a citation from a white police officer. Furthermore, 2 Hispanics concluded that white police officers issued more citations to Hispanics for minor traffic stops. Participant #8 who is an African American male concluded that African Americans and Hispanics are easy to receive a traffic citation from a police officer. According to Participant #8 who is an African American male, he stated, “*The police officer was very rude from the moment he stepped out of the car, and it seemed to make him more upset that I was compliant and on my way to a job interview.*” Participant #1, who is an African American male, stated he was very dissatisfied with the treatment he received from the police officer. According to Participant #1, he stated, African Americans and Hispanics are easy to receive a citation from a police officer. However, Participant #1 states that he did not receive a citation, but he was arrested. Participant #1 did not describe his arrest from a police officer, but he did believe that racism among African Americans and Hispanic males are victims of racism. Participant #2, who is an African American female described her experience with a police officer as positive. According to Participant #2, she describes her satisfied service with a police officer, but she was not so confident when making contact with a police officer. According to African American female, she never experienced any negative behavior from a police officer; however, her son was pulled over due to the officer couldn’t read the driver’s license plate. Even though her son was pulled over for a minor traffic violation, she believes that the officer pulled over her son was questionable. When asked about “What do you think was the reason for racial profiling you experienced?” she stated, “*There is no reason to racial profiling; however,*

*I believe the intent was disbelief that a young African American male can not own a nice automobile; that coupled with a dislike or envy of African Americans.”*

#### Sub question 6

During the interview, I asked the 27-year-old African American female, “Can you describe your experience with a police officer? Was it good or bad? Please explain. According to her response, the African American explained she was pulled over and the highlights were on. While she was being pulled over by the officer, the driver had dropped her bag of food on the floor. The officer asked the driver for her driver’s license and registration. When the officer went back to conduct a background check, the 27yr old female driver had reached under the seat to get the bag of food she dropped. The officer approached the driver’s side and said, “*Are you serious? You do not reach under your seat because it makes me think you have something under your seat?*” According to the driver, she stated, “*I know, and I shouldn’t have done that but I was reaching for my food I had dropped on the floor.*” The 27yr old African American female explained the officer’s smile, and they both joked about the incident. The officer did not give the driver a citation but only a warning. The African American female explained to me that her encounter with the police officer was positive because the officer was not rude or treated her like a criminal. Overall, the 27-year-old African American female experience with a white police officer was positive, and she concluded not all police officers are racial profile.

### Sub question 7

When you encounter a police officer, did the officer say or do anything that made you believe race played a factor in the encounter? If yes, please explain. In response to sub-question 7, an analysis of the transcript interviews revealed that incidents of racial profiling occurred in different states in the United States. For example, during the interview, an African American male described his life experience of racial profiling by a police officer in Atlanta, Georgia. He stated that the police pulled him and his friend over because they were driving suspiciously on the road. When the police stopped them, the police asked the driver for his driver's license and registration. The police have also asked the driver if there were any drugs in the vehicle. The driver was upset by the police officer's response about the location of the drugs. The police have also asked the driver if the vehicle was stolen or belonged to someone else. The police stated, "Does this vehicle belongs to you or someone else because you look suspicious driving in this neighborhood because this any area is known for drug dealer distributing drugs." The driver asked the police the vehicle belongs to him and asked the police officer why he needs to know.

### Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological theory research study was to investigate and explain the lived experience of African Americans and Hispanics racial profile by a police officer. Data collection came thru face-to-face interviews that were conducted privately. Interviews were conducted through telephone thru Skype and call recorder. I used NVivo, a qualitative software program, to the analysis of the data that I collected from the interviews and surveys. I also used the theme to develop my research results.

The first they were developed in my study was African Americans and Hispanics through treatment. 6 of my 8 participants concluded that they were racially profiled by police officers because of their skin color. The participants who volunteered in this research study experienced racial profiling by a police officer by traffic stops, arrested, received citation, and treatment from the police officer. The research suggested that racial profiling hurts African Americans and Hispanics by a police officers, and they are treated differently by different race groups. In this chapter, I revealed the setting, data collection method, demographics, data analysis method, evidence of trustworthiness, and the results of my data analysis. In Chapter 5, I concluded my findings, limitations of my study, recommendations regarding future research of racial profile among African Americans and Hispanics. In my final chapter, I will also provide a detailed summary of my dissertation and provide a recommendation for social change.



## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to explore and examine the effects of the lived experience of African Americans and Hispanics who experienced or witnessed how racial profiling has impacted their demeanors, opinions, and trust among police officers. I used a combination of research methods to discover and define the phenomenological study of police officers who racially profile African Americans and Hispanics in various states and cities. Although I had hoped to have at least 10 African Americans and Hispanics who were victims of racial profiling by a police officer, I only had eight responders to my survey. Two of the responders were White while two were Hispanics and four African American. Only three responders (All African American) to the survey agreed to be interviewed. I collected data through in-depth surveys and interviews, which I conducted face-to-face and via phone and email. This study was designed to answer the research questions about the life experience of African Americans and Hispanics who were racially profiled by a police officer.

When conducting this phenomenological qualitative research study, I was able to close the gap in the scholarly literature on the impact of African Americans and Hispanics being racially profiled by a police officer. I was able to receive perceptions from different race groups from African Americans and Hispanics who described their relationship with a police officer. Some African Americans and Hispanics believed that many police officers are practicing racial profiling to deter crime. Many believed some police officers are not biased or prejudiced against people of color. In this final chapter, I will address the major findings that the practice of racial profiling against African

Americans and Hispanics continues to exist. The discussion of the findings of the theoretical and conceptual framework, the limitations of my study, future research is required, and a summary of my conclusion are also included. Evidence shows that police officers in most states and cities are continuing racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics, while some police officers demonstrated no prejudice or bias against African Americans and Hispanics. In addition to my research, there is positive social change in how African Americans and Hispanics view law enforcement officers. This research provides insight on better opportunities for law enforcement officers might be able to build better policies and increase community relations with African Americans and Hispanics. Communication, trust, and commitment may lead to better relationships with African Americans and Hispanics.

#### Interpretation of the Findings

During my research, I used the phenomenology theory. According to Patton (2015), a phenomenology theory aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. Phenomenology theory is a term for lived experience as a human being experienced or what people experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken thru conscious awareness. From a phenomenological point of view, people tend to focus on whether something happened, how often it tends to happen, or how the lived experience is related to other conditions or events. I used the phenomenology theory to examine how African Americans and Hispanics experienced racial profiling by police officers. The phenomenological theory explains how human beings experienced in daily lives. The study showed that African

Americans and Hispanics are victims of the racial profiling, and police officers are targeting minorities because they assume they posed a threat to society. The study showed that police officer continues to racial profile African Americans and Hispanics because African Americans and Hispanics are subject to committing more crimes compared to different race groups. The feedback from the participants confirmed that there is a need for better policies and training to eliminate and prevent racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics. Participants stated that they believe racial profile continues to exist, and six out of eight participants suggested that more can be done in police agencies to build a positive relationship with a minority group. Many participants reported feeling that police officers continue to practice racial profiling; however, some believed they received a positive experience from a police officer. Many participants reported feeling that the presence of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics occurred in locations where officers had previously stopped, searched, arrested, ticketed, and interrogated minorities who encounter a police officer. Participant 1 was dissatisfied with the police officer service he received when he encounters a police officer. Participant 1 received no courtesy and respect from a police officer. Participant 1 said, "Based on the data, the percentage of African Americans that are arrested for the similar offense of their non-white counterparts who were not arrested is increasingly high." Participant 1 also said, "The fate that the reason stated for pulling my son over didn't add up. Couldn't read the tag. Nothing was covering the tag. In addition, it was a nightmare." When asked, "Do you think police officers practice racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics"? Participant 3, who is a White male stated,

“Depending on where you are raised (for example, a town with a history of prejudice), you may grow up with a subconscious bias towards people of color even though you do not realize it. It can be very hard to recognize this bias and move past it. Some people do not even realize they are racial profiling and will try to write off as statistical stereotypes, but it is still prejudiced.” However, Participant #3 described that most police officers do not have a racial profile. His experience with a police officer was very intense but Participant #3 believes the officer was using good judgment when he received a citation for out-of-date plates. When asked to describe his experience when contacting a police officer, Participant #3 stated: “Most of my interactions with the police have been intense and almost as if the officer is just waiting for the smallest excuse to use a weapon or issue an arrest/ticket. Some are courteous, but most seem as though they see you as a direct threat and treat you as such despite having no overt reason to do so. I have received two warnings and one citation. One warning was completely my fault: I failed to turn my headlights on at night. The other warning was because the officer believed I had not stopped at a stop sign, but the driver behind me pulled up as well to corroborate my story, so the office issued a warning instead of a ticket he was trying to give. My citation was due to out-of-date plates, and the result was to renew my plates and go to traffic court with the new registration to prove I had done it.” Some others believed not all White police officers are racially profiling against African Americans and Hispanics. For instance, Participant #4’s experience was different. Participant #4 is a Hispanic male who encountered a police officer, and he described his life experience because he has an uncle who is the chief of police in Temple Terrace. Based upon his experience, he mentions

experienced negative behavior from a police officer and describes how easy for African Americans or Hispanics to be treated differently compared to different race groups. When asked about his experience when interacting a police officer, Participant #4 stated, “Overall, I have had decent interactions with police officers, however, that does not mean there isn’t still an issue with racial profiling in law enforcement.” Treatment plays a major factor in how police officers treat African Americans and Hispanics. For instance, a police officer may treat an individual differently based on his or her race. From Participant #4 stated, “I have always received decent treatment from police officers because, despite being a Hispanic person, I pass as a White person. I’m sure if my skin color was darker this would be a very different story.” Some African Americans and Hispanics do not feel that all police officers treat people differently regardless of race. For instance, Participant #5, a Hispanic female shared her life experience with a police officer. When asked about her experience with a police officer, Participant #5 responded was “satisfied with” the police service she received. Participant #5 also experienced the officer treated her with courtesy and respect. Participant #5 described her experience with a police officer at Hillsborough County, Florida as beneficial, and the officer was very nice to her when she was pulled over for a traffic violation. Participant #5 did receive a citation but overall, experience with a police officer was beneficial.

Although there are different life experiences of how African Americans and Hispanics feel about police officers, there are other African Americans and Hispanics who feel they are racial profile because of their skin color. According to Participant #7, an African American female described her experience with police were satisfied. This

individual claim she was racially profiled by a police officer based on her race. She claims the officer was very rude, and the officer cited her because of her race. Based on her response, she stated, "Police officers are very condescending. They do not always make you feel comfortable when pulling you over." She also stated, "Police officers already have a bias against the two races, and they have a very condescending attitude immediately due to the need to feel superior over them." When she was pulled over for a traffic violation, the officer accused her of trying to evade the stop. Overall, Participant #7 was dissatisfied with the police service she received from the police officer. Several participants have expressed how police officers continue to practice racial profiling because African Americans and Hispanics committed more crimes compared to different race groups. Participants agreed that race is a factor of the racial profile, and many police departments are implementing policies to eliminate racial profiling. One final participant shared his experience with the police officer. According to Participant #8, African Americans and Hispanics are easy to receive a traffic citation from a police officer from different race groups. Furthermore, Participant #8 also believed racial profiling has a negative effect among African Americans and Hispanics in law enforcement. When describing his experience when made contact with a police officer, he stated, "I was pulled over once a night after I got off work. I noticed that the police officer had been following me from the gas station I went to close to my job after work. I'm not away from the gas station and work waiting at a red light to cross and as soon as the light turned green, and I stepped on my gas the lights and the siren went on. I pulled over and I give my license and registration I ask why he pulled me over and he doesn't tell me. He

goes to his car and then comes back and gives my papers and license back tells me he has to go because he got a call and takes my small little air fresher that I had my nephew's baby picture in off of my rear-view mirror and left. I know the law and I know you're not supposed to have things hanging from the rear-view mirror but only if it's a distraction. What I had hanging on my window wasn't disobeying any laws." Participant expressed his frustration of how the officer abused his power. For example, when making contact with the officer, Participant stated, "he was very rude from the moment he stepped out of the car, and it seemed to make him more upset that I was a complaint and on my way to a job interview."

There is a concern from the minorities group who have been victims of racial profiling by a police officer and causing some type of tension affecting the development of the relationship status between African Americans/Hispanics and police officers.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study limitation included the coordination of interviewees' time, schedules, and my efforts to transcribe due to some interviews being conducted on video teleconference and face-to-face. The limitations of the study were challenging due to the lack of participants who were not interested in the study. Furthermore, I was stationed overseas when conducting my study and reaching out to my participants. This study is limited to the instance of participants who have lived experiences of racial profiling by a police officer. For example, my phenomenological study targets a small sample of sizes of participants who were African American, and Hispanics have been identified with lived experiences of racial profile by a police officer. Some participants are individuals

who have opinions around a police officer who racial profile minorities group. I target my participants who experienced racial profiles or have witnessed racial profiles by a police officer.

### Recommendations

During my research and my findings, there are four recommendations to help improve the relations between minorities group and police officers. First, police agencies must implement police policy to address and eliminate racial profiling. Police agencies must develop community policing that involves a relationship with minorities groups. Community policing develop education or vocational programs for African Americans and Hispanics where individuals get the opportunity to communicate and build relations. Second, police agencies must select and hire more African Americans and Hispanics in the police force. A future study in selecting more African Americans and Hispanics in law enforcement reduces and eliminates police officers practicing racial profiling. Selecting an African American and Hispanic police chief will help the community in gaining trust and confidence with police officers. Third, the city and police agencies must document the number of racial profile incidents involving police officers. The lack of documentation of police misconduct brings negative perceptions among African Americans and Hispanics. Police officers must be held accountable for their actions. Lastly, police agencies must create and develop a culture program in which police officers respond and engage in relations with African Americans and Hispanics.



## Implications

My research has contributed to a positive social change that can impact relationships between police officers and African Americans and Hispanics reference to the phenological theory. The positive change to eliminate racial profile in creating state and federal legislation that prohibits police officers to discriminate minority groups. The anti-profiling policy is the first step to help law enforcement agencies to eliminate racial profiling. Federal, state, and local agencies must implement training, supervision, data collection, and accountability measure to ensure police officers are held accountable for misconduct. Furthermore, state and federal agencies must implement police body cameras where the video is captured on body cameras of police misconduct. State, local and federal police agencies must implement the federal bill known as the End Racial Profiling Act, which prohibits police officers from practicing race in an officer's decision to stop, interview, frisk, search, and arrest. State and federal legislators create community policing strategies where programs can engage police officers to engage in community activities within the community. During the interview, I was able to collect participants' feedback on what they believed could be done right for police officers to prevent racial profiling. The data from the articles I analyzed also revealed the same feedback on positive change the participants had made suggestions to implement. The participants' responses recommend that police offices hire more African American and Hispanic officers in the force. This helps eliminate and establish a better culture within the community and law enforcement agencies. By hiring African Americans and Hispanics in the police force, the trustworthiness and communication help establish a developing

relationship between law enforcement and the citizens living in communities. Overall, this study's implication for positive change not only can help establishing a relationship between police officer and African Americans and Hispanics, it will also law enforcement agencies to eliminate crime and eliminate social injustice against African Americans and Hispanics.

### Conclusion

In this phenomenological qualitative study, I have provided and presented research on the scope of perspectives on how African Americans and Hispanics continue to become racially profiled by police officers. In addition, I have shared how the lack of relationship and commitment how police officers treat African Americans and Hispanics differently from different race groups. This study shows the tension between the police and racial/ethnic minority communities has been and continues to be one of the most challenging issues facing American police organizations. My findings support that African Americans and Hispanics face racial profiling by the presence of police officers. Officers use the racial profile as a police tactic whose practical origins are associated with the Reagan Administration's War on Drugs. The nationwide shows many African Americans and Hispanics believed police officers use racial profile to determine, and victims' racial profile continues to increase in police shootings, arrests, searches, traffic stops, citations, and interrogations against minority groups. The research was developed with the purpose and intent to provide the feelings, concerns, and impacts of African Americans and Hispanics' experience of racial profile continue to show the less relationship with police officers. From the participant's responses and interviews, it was

discovered African Americans and Hispanics who have direct contact with a police officer are subject to experience racial profiling.

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## Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Flyer

### Research Participation Invitation Letter

Dear Respondent

My name is Jeremy Bell. I am Ph.D. student at Walden University. I am conducting a study on racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. Racial profiling is a serious problem in law enforcement and many African Americans and Hispanics have negative perception of their live experience in racial profiling.

I would greatly appreciate your participation.

#### **Voluntary Participation:**

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked complete an online survey and take part of a virtual interview done via Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams or some other similar virtual communication. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes and will be audio recorded. You will be compensated for participating in this study in the form of a \$20 gift card of your choice.

The researcher is interested in your experience involving racial profiling by police in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. The researcher is seeking to recruit to seven to ten African Americans and Hispanics adults between the ages of 18 years or older from different areas in Pinellas and Hillsborough County in State of Florida who believe that they have been subjected racial profiling by the police.

If you choose to voluntarily this study, please click the following link to access the online survey.

#### **Link to Survey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VSV3256>

Thank you in advance for your consideration and assistance with my research project.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Bell

(727) 483-3267

Email: jer041986@yahoo.com

## Appendix B Consent Form

Email Consent Form for Online Survey and Interview of Racial Profiling in State of Florida.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to understand the life experienced of African Americans and Hispanics who are victims of racial profiling in state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County. I am inviting African Americans and Hispanics who have suffered and experienced racial profiling from law enforcement to participate in this study. The researcher's research question is "What is the lived experience of African Americans/Hispanics over 18 who have been racially profiled by police officers in the state of Florida in Pinellas and Hillsborough County?"

### **PROCEDURES:**

If you agree to be in this study, you are ask to take an

- 5-minute on-line survey
- After completing the 5-minute survey, the researcher contacts participant to schedule and 30-to-40-minute virtual interview in a private room thru Zoom, Microsoft Teams Skype or etc.
- The researcher uses an audio tape recorder during the interview process to collect documentation.
- After the interview, the researcher sends \$20 gift card to the participant.

Here are some sample questions for the interview and survey

- Please describe your encounter with a police officer that led you believe you experience or a victim of racial profiling or discrimination?
- How does racial profiling a negative effect among African Americans and Hispanics?
- What changes affect you when you encounter a police officer?

### **VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:**

Your participation in this survey and interview is voluntary. You can refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey or interview at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer for any reason.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS.**

For this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as stress, fatigue, or upset. This study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Some of the survey questions ask about your experience involving racial profiling with police officer may be distressing to you as you think about your life experiences racial profile by a police officer.

There are no physical, social, or economic risk pose to the participants or the study. This study does not pose to your risk of legal status or services.

The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal. You may feel a little uncomfortable or embarrassed answering personal questions on the survey and interview questions. To minimize the risk, the researcher will rephrase the phrase or sentences in the survey or interview. The researcher will also provide a professional counselor if you become distraught during the interview or survey.

If the research reveals criminal activity or child/elder abuse during the study, the researcher reports the criminal behavior to proper authorities by state law.

Your responses will help lawmakers, policymakers, police chiefs, city mayors, senator and legislation to understand and learn more about the lived experience of racial profiling among African Americans and Hispanics in State of Florida, and how racial profiling has changed the perceptions among minority groups and police officers. Your responses will provide insight about how to reform the police strategy in law enforcement in the state of Florida.

**PAYMENT:**

This research has a \$20 compensation for individuals who wish to participate. A \$20 compensation is sent to individuals who participated in the study.

**PRIVACY:**

The researcher is require to protect your privacy. Your identity will be kept confidential, within the limits of the law. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Furthermore, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data is only share by the researcher and researcher's committee. Data is kept secure by data encryption, using password protection, discarding names and refer participants as "Joe 1 from city of

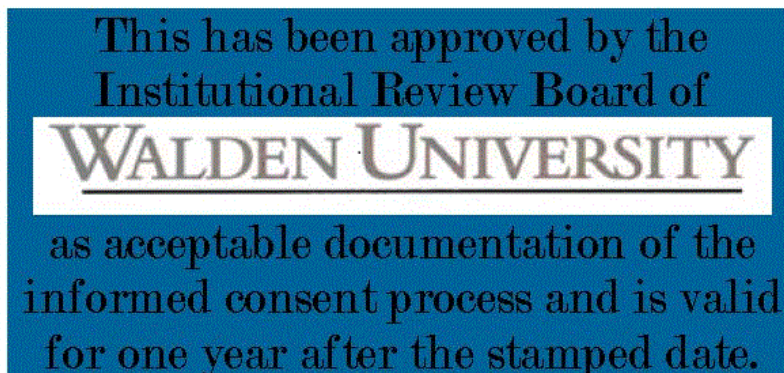
Clearwater” or “Jane 1 from city of Largo”. The researcher will keep the data for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university. The researcher conducts virtual interviews online at home. Virtual interview is between the researcher and the interviewee and secure by using the internet security.

### **CONTACT**

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Jeremy Bell, at via email at [jer041986@yahoo.com](mailto:jer041986@yahoo.com).

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you can call Walden University’s Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210. Walden University’s approval number for this study is **12-21-20-0740148** and it expires on **December 20, 2021**.

**OBTAINING YOUR CONSENT:** You may print or save of this consent form for your records. If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by clicking ‘Next’ below.



## Appendix C Survey Questions

### Law Enforcement and Racial Profiling Among African Americans and Hispanics in the United States America

1. What is your gender
  - a. Female
  - b. Male
2. What is your race?
  - a. White or Caucasian
  - b. Black or African American
  - c. Hispanic or Latino
  - d. Asian or Asian American
  - e. American Indian or Alaska Native
  - f. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
  - g. Another Race
3. What is your age?
4. What state do you reside in?
5. What city are you resident in your state?
6. How will you rate your police service experience with a police officer?
7. Were you satisfied or dissatisfied with a police officer service?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied



- c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  - d. Dissatisfied
  - e. Very dissatisfied
8. During your most recent traffic stop, did a police officer treat you with courtesy and respect?
- a. Yes, definitely
  - b. Yes, somewhat
  - c. No
9. How confident were you when you made contact with a police officer
- a. Extremely confident
  - b. Very confident
  - c. Somewhat confident
  - d. Not so confident
  - e. Not at all confident
  - f. Extremely confident
  - g. Very confident
  - h. Somewhat confident
  - i. Not so confident
  - j. Not at all confident
10. Have you experience negative behavior from police officer's customer service?

a. Yes

b. No

11. Were you a victim of racial profiling from a police officer?

a. Yes

b. No

12. Do you think police officer practice racial profiling against African Americans and Hispanics? If so, please explain

a. Yes

b. No

c. Other (please specify)

13. Racial profiling has a negative effect among African Americans and Hispanics in law enforcement

a. True

b. False

14. Law Enforcement officers treat African Americans and Hispanics differently compare to different race groups?

a. True

b. False

15. Does skin color plays a role in racial profiling?

a. Yes

b. No

16. How easy for African American or Hispanic receive a traffic citation from a police officer?
  - a. True
  - b. False
17. Describe your experience when making contact with a police officer?
18. Describe your relations with a police officer
19. What is your perspective among police officer in racial profiling with African Americans and Hispanics
20. Can you describe your treatment from a police officer after making contact?
21. What do you think was the reason for racial profiling you experienced?
22. Did you received a citation, given a warning, or arrested? If given a citation or arrested, what was the outcome of the citation or arrest?
23. Did the officer say or do anything that made you think that race played a factor in racial profiling? If yes, please explain

## Appendix D. Interview Questions

1. What city and state do you reside in?
2. Describe the neighborhood you reside in?
3. Please describe your encounter with a police officer that led you to believe that you experience or believe a victim of racial profiling or discrimination? (Time of day or year, were you walking, shopping, or driving, were you with someone or alone)
4. How do you feel when a police officer approaches you or stopped for a traffic violation, investigating, or questioning?
5. Please describe your relationship with a white police officer.
6. How often is time you see a police officer racially profile an African American or Hispanic?
7. What type of police activity have you witnessed, observed, or experience in your community?
8. What changes affect you when you encounter a police officer?
9. What is your perspective of the police?
10. How would you describe the relationship between African Americans and Hispanics and police in your county? (Describe in full detail)
11. How does racial profiling have a negative among African Americans and Hispanics?
12. How will you improve the relationship between African Americans/Hispanics and police in your community?

13. Can you describe the location or neighborhood when encountering a police officer?
14. Describe an incident when you were racially profiled by a police officer?
15. What do you think or how did you react when a police officer discriminate against you based on your skin color?