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The Lived Experiences of Civilian Review Board Members

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Walden University
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Abstract

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by

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MA Walden University, 2013

BS, Butler University, 1994

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological research was to describe the lived experiences of investigative civilian review board (CRB) members. The central research question of the study examined the lived experiences of investigative civilian review board members as it related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. Eight participants from two CRBs in the Northeast and Midwest formed a random sample of six females and two males. Three data collection instruments were used in this research (in-depth interviews, writing prompts, and personal narratives) to elicit information. The instruments were designed to prompt information about CRB members' experiences based on the concept of procedural justice related explicitly to transparency, fairness, and equity. A transcendental phenomenological analysis consisting of interview transcription and the development of codes, categories, and themes resulted in four main themes and ten subthemes. The main themes were motivation, inconsistency, expectations, and hope. The research results contributed to an increased understanding of the recruitment and selection process to become an investigative CRB member and the training and support board members received while serving. The results of the research were consistent with existing research. It also expanded on the desire of the investigative CRB members to improve recruitment, training, and support along with police and community relations. The result of this research could improve current positive social change through CRBs and other accountability bodies as they seek to enhance fair practices of accountability and oversight while improving relationships with law enforcement and the community and supporting positive social change.

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Dedication

The dissertation is dedicated to all officers who have committed themselves to service and to every Internal Affairs Commander with the difficult task of holding those officers accountable. The road is lonely but honorable.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge my Chair, Dr. James Herndon. You made me work hard and stay accountable. My mother, Ruby Veronica Barton, who always believed in me even when I doubted myself and dried my tears when I cried daily. Thanks, mom, for always being in my corner. To my friend Dr. Jennifer Beskid who stuck by me and helped me navigate completing the dissertation process with Attention Deficit Disorder. She said, "one day at a time, stay organized and maintain an active journal." I also acknowledge my Lord and savior for walking with me on this journey. I know you carried me when I could not walk.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

By their very nature, citizens expect law enforcement professionals to provide quality service using a transparent process that evaluates an officer's professional conduct, adherence to departmental policies, and accountability for any procedural violations (Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2021). Bolger, et al. (2021), Buren (2007), and Hryniewicz (2011) researched police accountability and oversight and concluded that there was a need for civilian oversight boards. Civilian oversight boards are referred to by several different names; for example, in Chicago, Illinois, they are referred to as the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA, 2021). For this research, the investigative boards were referred to as Civilian Review Boards (CRB). In this chapter, I described CRBs, identified organizations that use CRBs, and described these boards' structure, processes, and purpose.

Ali & Pirog (2009) suggested the predominant role of the CRB is to allow citizens to serve as civilian oversight and contribute to police accountability. The literature review found limited information regarding how members were recruited and selected as well as how they were trained and supported. Researchers have explored the different types of review boards utilized to evaluate officers accused of misconduct. These boards include but are not limited to Advisory Boards and Disciplinary Auditors (*Public Participation Guide: Citizen Advisory Boards Us Epa*, 2014). Review boards are discussed further in Chapter 2.

The membership and authority of CRBs vary from profession to profession. The focus of CRBs on police accountability varied from state to state regarding their

structure, purpose, and tasks. There are more than 100 CRBs in the United States (Stephens et al. 2020). While there are differences in how CRBs operate, the process is not new and CRBs are known to have existed since at least the 1960s (Stephens et al., 2020). The literature is unclear about the actual role of CRB members regarding investigative and disciplinary processes. I examined CRBs, specifically the selection of civilian members, the support of these members, and the training members received to participate in the investigative process.

The social implications of this study include the potential to address the inconsistencies in selection and recruitment, training, and support of CRB members. Their results determined a need for standardized recruitment, training, and support. Standardizing processes for CRB members are expected to further transparency between citizens and police, potentially improving relations between these groups.

The next sections briefly summarize the background of CRBs and describe the problem statement I addressed. In addition, the purpose of the study was explained, and the research questions were identified. The conceptual framework guiding the research was procedural justice. Additionally, the nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance are addressed in this chapter.

Background

This study can provide citizens and police with a better understanding of CRBs, bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community. The role of CRBs has been an issue of contention between citizens who view police processes as non-transparent and police officers who have challenged the impartiality of citizens'

participation in a review of police procedures (Beardall, 2019). Beardall (2019) described the history of the CRB opposition by law enforcement. This history dates as far back as 1993 when New York City police officers peacefully demonstrated their disapproval of civilian reviews. Anderson (2020) reported that a Baltimore City (Maryland) CRB member resigned due to a lack of faith in the CRB. According to Anderson (2020), the board's limited power to investigate misconduct desperately needed reform. Fairley (2020) examined how oversight committees handled investigations into police use of force incidents. Specifically, Fairley researched the transparency of police accountability systems such as CRBs in the United States. Beardall determined that social factors such as racial and ethnic groupings ignited citizens' desires to create an oversight board, especially in cases involving use of excessive force by police officers. Beardall referenced the New York Police Department's opposition to review board in 1993 and almost 20 years later the matter of police oversight has continued to be contentious following use-of-force incidents in Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York City, New York; Baltimore, Maryland; and Columbia, South Carolina (Adams, 2019; Adamson, 2016; Delgado & Stefancic, 2016; Gibbs, 2019; Nix & Pickett, 2017; Nix & Wolfe, 2016; Owusu-Bempah, 2016; Nix & Wolfe, 2016). Fairley determined that despite civilian oversight becoming a significant part of the disciplinary process, there was a lack of power which decreased the effectiveness of the CRBs.

Police resistance to CRBs mostly stems from the fact that police officers are being held accountable by citizens who are unfamiliar with police procedures (Beardall, 2019). Police resistance to CRBs primarily stems from the fact that police officers are being held

accountable by citizens unfamiliar with police procedures (Beardall, 2019). Beardall (2019) also attributed police resistance to ongoing mistrust between police and citizens, as citizens view police procedures as lacking transparency. As CRBs continue to be implemented, this researcher was not able to identify research regarding the processes for recruiting, supporting, and training CRB members, a gap in the literature. In addition, the existing research about CRBs varied significantly regarding the role and scope of authority for CRBs.

Lee et al. (2017) explored police officers' perceptions regarding civilian oversight boards by comparing Offices of Professional Accountability to CRBs. Lee et al. highlighted that a challenge to CRBs was the perception that the CRB would be ineffective. This perception was based on the participation of civilians lacking a law enforcement background, limited familiarity with police policy, and almost no training to understand law enforcement's scope of authority. Fairley (2020) reported similar findings.

Problem Statement

The problem I addressed in the research was the inconsistency in the recruitment, selection, training, and support of CRB members. Several studies contributed to research about the CRB's perceived intent (see Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011; McGregor, 2015; Worden, Bonner, & McLean, 2017); however, none of the literature described the lived experiences of investigative CRB members, including how they were recruited, selected, trained, and supported. McGregor (2015) and Finn (2006) explored CRB's effectiveness and identified the various types of review boards. Finn suggested that when creating a

CRB, jurisdictions must first examine the different board variations to find what would be best suited for the needs of their citizens.

The significant gap in the literature was the lack of information describing CRB members' lived experiences, including recruitment and selection criteria, support, and training. By exploring the varied experiences of investigative CRB members I determined literature pertaining to recruitment/selection processes, support, and training standards for CRB members was lacking. I focused on members of investigatory CRBs as these types of CRBs encroach upon police functions. The problem I addressed in this study was the lack of information regarding the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as it related to recruitment, selection, training, and support.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as it related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. This study was suited for a qualitative approach as I explored the lived experiences of investigative CRB members engaged in the investigative process as it pertained to use-of-force incidents and other incidents of perceived police misconduct. Understanding the perspectives of investigative CRB members contributed to research into police reform and accountability. CRB members participating in this study provided information about their experiences as members of investigative CRBs.

Research Questions

Central Research Question: What are the lived experiences of investigative CRB members?

Sub question 1: How were investigative CRB members recruited?

Sub question 2: How did CRB members describe the support they received to conduct investigations into allegations of use-of-force and other police misconduct complaints?

Sub question 3: How did CRB members describe the training provided to them to participate as a member of an investigative CRB?

Conceptual Framework

Procedural justice provided the conceptual framework. Tyler (2017) and Nagin and Telep (2017) described procedural justice as a process based on fairness and equity. When applied to police work, this concept focused on establishing police legitimacy in community relations through fair practices (Nagin & Telep, 2017). This was relevant to the research because the rise of the investigative CRBs resulted from a lack of trust citizens had for law enforcement, especially regarding how police agencies handled allegations of police misconduct.

Members of investigative CRBs are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the fair and equitable standards affiliated with procedural justice (Tyler, 2017). Police agencies and elected officials are responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting CRB members regarding department policies and procedures (Tyler, 2017). Appropriate recruitment, training, and support of members is expected to contribute to the fair and equitable standards of procedural justice. The lack of available literature regarding investigative CRB members' recruitment, selection, training, and support did

not allow for an understanding of how procedural justice applies to both police agencies and citizens.

A fair, equitable, and transparent approach to recruiting members is expected to result in a balanced membership that would satisfy citizens and police agencies (Tyler, 2017). For example, a CRB composed of civilians with ties to law enforcement, such as a retired 9-1-1 dispatcher or police officer, is not considered fair and equitable. A selection process that is not transparent would cast doubt on the overall process of civilian review. Findings would be suspect because citizens may perceive the members were not impartial when assessing an officer's conduct. Additionally, applying this same concept of procedural justice to the training and support of CRB members would be expected to balance the scales of impartiality. Moreover, support for CRB members as they perform their investigative duties would be expected to result in the ability of members to process the unusual and often repulsive nature of the investigated incidents.

A transparent process, proper training, mental health awareness, and clear direction are some of the elements needed for any oversight board's fair and equitable performance for them to make recommendations for members of any occupation (Tyler, 2017). Without a set of guidelines, investigative CRB members would not be able to consistently assess officers' actions, resulting in a meaningless purpose. The tenants of procedural justice are further described in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

I addressed the questions in this qualitative study using a research design that included a phenomenological process that gathered and analyzed data, in this case, the

lived experiences of respondents (see Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is essential in phenomenological research to first identify the problem and explore the shared experiences of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I obtained rich data regarding the shared experiences of individuals participating as members of an investigative CRB.

I conducted the study via interviews with members of current investigative CRBs. I interviewed each CRB member using a validated questionnaire. Participants were asked to provide a personal narrative describing a memorable case they investigated. Additionally, I asked the participant to reply to a writing prompt which was intended to elicit additional information that the participant might have recalled after the interview. The data from the interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts were transcribed and analyzed. Participants had an opportunity to participate in member checking.

Definitions

Administrative Hearing: A process that allows an officer found guilty of a departmental policy violation to be heard by a board consisting of other law enforcement officers and an administrative judge (JUSTIA, 2021).

Community Policing: A philosophy that encouraged law enforcement collaboration with citizens and local leaders to address public safety concerns such as crime prevention and reduction (COPS, 2015).

Civilian Review Board (CRB): A group of individuals selected to explore a law enforcement process or procedure and make recommendations. Civilian review boards have many different names including, but not limited to – Advisory Board, Auditors, Oversight Board, Police Review Commission, Civilian Office of Police Accountability,

Office of the Inspector General, Independent Police Auditor, Police Accountability

Board, Civilian Review Panel, and Civilian Complaint Review Board (the National

Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement [NACOLE], 2016).

Investigative Civilian Review Board: A group of individuals charged with

investigating allegations of police misconduct and making recommendation for discipline

(Finn 2006). Identified in this research as CRB.

Marginalized Communities: Individuals who are left out of normal society

because of their cultural, economic status, social differences, or race.

Police Accountability: Accepting ownership for one's actions or behaviors. It is

"effective constitutional and community policing efforts" (PowerDMS, 2018, para. 6).

Procedural Justice: A process used to resolve problems in a fair and impartial

manner based on the principles of fairness, transparency, being heard, and impartiality

(National Institute of Justice, 2016).

Assumptions

I did not assume that participants provided unbiased responses to interview

questions. It has been established that police are suspicious of the process, citizens do not

trust the outcome, and there are no clearly defined standards for participation and/or

investigation by CRB members (NACOLE, 2016). Only the participants knew the extent

of the validity of their responses.

The current societal view of policing, specifically the use of force incidents that

result in serious injury or death, have polarized the United States (Beskid, 2021). Police

accountability and oversight have been debated in the media by government officials,

within police agencies, and on social media (COPS, 2015). CRBs have been identified as a resource to improve police accountability and oversight despite the lack of available research regarding the experiences of CRB members. For this study I relied on participants providing honest and forthright responses.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study I addressed the lived experiences of investigative CRB members. The focus was on recruiting and selecting investigative CRB members as well as the training and support they received (or did not receive). The study provides valuable information on the guiding principle of fairness and equity that may be applied to all CRBs. Moreover, my research determined that a systematic approach involving trained individuals was more appealing to citizens seeking fair and equitable results. Finally, applying the concept of procedural justice gave CRB members and police officers a voice.

Two large metropolitan cities were the target areas for the research as well as one additional city as a backup. I did not need the backup city because there were enough participants from the two primary locations. I identified that the two locations both operated investigative CRBs. The participants consisted only of members of investigative CRBs; however, due to the lack of identified recruitment/selection standards, the participants' backgrounds were unknown prior to the interviews. Given the diversity of the participants, the research results are transferable to other CRBs. The site locations also contribute to the transferability of the study as the locations were diverse and included one on the Northeast coast, and one from the Midwest.

Limitations

One limitation that impacted the research was my role as the researcher. I am an assistant chief of a police agency, and I am responsible for handling police practice complaints. Because of this assignment, I interacted with CRB members in my area. My position limited me from using CRB members in the area where I work. I selected participants from the NACOLE list containing CRB boards across the United States. Additionally, I practiced epoché and journaling to prevent biases from corrupting the data.

Another limitation was the reliance on the voluntary participation of CRB members and their agencies. Once I obtained approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), outreach to the target CRBs began. I needed to gain buy-in and participation; ultimately, I had enough participants to reach saturation.

Significance

This study was significant because scholarly literature has presented research on the positive and negative aspects of CRBs, including long-standing opposition. One example was Pennsylvania's opposition to CRBs. In 1958, a lawsuit was filed in Pennsylvania to disband CRBs (Wilson & Buckler, 2010). More recently, the commonwealth was exploring a hybrid model of CRBs; however, there was no current research regarding the impact (Wilson & Buckler, 2010). Organizations like the NACOLE, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) have discussed police reform and CRBs extensively, emphasizing the importance of the CRB role. According to Corr, the executive secretary

of the police review and advisory board in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a board member of NACOLE, citizens and police want to work together toward a peaceful coexistence (PERF, 2016).

The study was significant because it addressed the gap in the literature regarding the recruitment, selection, training, and support of CRB members. Studies by Filstad and Gottschalk (2011), McGregor (2015a), and Worden et al. (2017a) contributed to research about the CRB's perceived intent; however, none of the literature described the lived experiences of investigative CRB members about their oversight role and the procedural justice framework. Civilian review and oversight of police discipline, policy, and procedures were vital parts of police reform; hence the need to garner a scholarly understanding of CRB members' lived experiences.

Summary

Numerous taskforces have been formed as the United States directs its attention to accountability and oversight. The president, politicians, local leaders, and the community identified CRBs as the right move toward positive social change regarding police and citizen coexistence (PERF, 2016). Researchers must conduct qualitative studies exploring police reform, accountability and oversight, and transparency. Literature regarding recruitment and selection, training, and support of CRB members has been limited. This research sought to address the disparity in how CRBs operated in recruitment and selection, training, and support. Conducting a transcendental phenomenological study described the lived experiences of investigative CRB members' recruitment, selection, support, and training.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I review the current literature on CRB. CRBs are oversight boards comprised of individuals appointed, chosen, selected, or recruited to address police accountability in a way that provided transparency to the community. In addition to the literature regarding CRBs, I also review the literature on procedural justice. Procedural justice was the theory I used to guide my research. The literature review includes the most current scholarly research on procedural justice, police accountability, police oversight, and CRBs. In my review of the literature, I determined that although research regarding police accountability exists and CRBs seem to be a promising approach to accountability, there is limited research regarding investigative CRBs. The problem I addressed in this study was the lack of information regarding the experiences of CRB members; specifically, members of investigative CRBs. I aimed to describe the lived experiences of CRB members as it related to recruitment, selection, training, and support.

Literature Search Strategy

I analyzed scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed studies connected to CRBs, procedural justice, accountability and oversight, recruitment and selection, training, support, and police legitimacy. Walden University online library, Google Scholar, Pro-Quest, best practice police organizations, Stanford Encyclopedia, EBSCO, SAGE Journals, Psych Info, Criminal Justice Database, Thurgood Marshall Law Library, and MDLE database searches were resources for this study. Varying applications of phrases and sentences focused on specific areas of interest aided the discovery of literature aligned with this study. Single words and phrases using Thoreau were searched

and included *civilian oversight, citizen oversight, civilian review or citizen review, police, cop, law enforcement or officer, oversight or accountability, legitimacy or fairness, community, training or train, recruitment or recruiting or selection, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue,* and *stress* or *pressure*.

In this chapter, I present a literature review evaluating publications from 1988 to 2021, covering the phenomena of police reform and the increased matriculation of CRBs. The earlier works of Tyler (1988) set the foundation for the conceptual framework of procedural justice relevant to this study. It identifies the change in the concept over 40 years. The literature review encompasses the past, current, and future research expectations.

This chapter also provides an overview of police accountability and procedural justice. I examined how CRBs have evolved over the past 60 years and how they support the concept of procedural justice. The specific focus of the research was an examination of investigative CRBs – their composition, purpose, and process. I also explored the history of CRBs, including recruitment, training, supportive resources, and challenges in creating oversight bodies. The second half of this chapter provides scholarly literature on the concept of procedural justice and its alignment with the lived experiences of CRBs.

Conceptual Framework

Procedural justice theory was the conceptual framework theory driving the study. According to COPS (2015), procedural justice theory refers to the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. It is a concept that, when embraced, promotes positive organizational change and bolsters better relationships.

Procedural justice contains to four principles, often referred to as the four pillars: fairness in the process, transparency in actions, opportunities for voice, and impartiality in decision making (Tyler, 2017).

CRBs easily lend themselves to the four pillars described in the definition of procedural justice theory. Tyler (2017) expounded on procedural justice theory explaining that connections were made between citizens and police oversight as the concept allowed citizens to participate indirectly in the oversight processes. Similarly, other researchers studying social justice theories identified roles for citizens in police accountability processes. Other researchers contradicted the positive effects of social justice procedure, and these contradictions were addressed further in this section.

Positive research relating to procedural justice theory included the findings of Ali and Pirog (2019b), who examined how social accountability related to social movement theory and institutional change by exploring its effect on citizen oversight agencies. Ali and Pirog and Konovsky (2000) determined that citizen oversight affected disciplinary proceedings based on their makeup and the scope of authority assigned to the various oversight committees. The effects differed based on the makeup of the committees. Hryniewicz (2011) related accountability to fairness and viewed fairness as being essential in the quest for change. This desire for fairness was also reflected in the role of investigative CRB members (Lee et al., 2017).

Procedural Justice

Two themes emerged from procedural justice theory – first, there was a given situation, and second, the situation must be ethically investigated to produce an ethical

result (Tyler, 1988, 2017). These two themes applied directly to CRB members and their roles in investigative processes. They also supported the argument for the need for systematic and consistent processes.

Procedural justice theory applies to situations where there has been an allegation of misconduct and easily lends itself to CRB processes. It is the role of the CRB members to evaluate the officer's conduct fairly and impartially. Procedural justice was the theory that provided a foundation for what fairness was and provided a blueprint for a standardized process.

Early contributors to the procedural justice theory were Cummings and Anton (1990), who identified procedural justice theory's central theme as one of expectations and consequences, the resulting actions provided a conceptual foundation for this phenomenological study. Tyler (2017) and others have expounded on these original concepts and have provided a blueprint for a procedural justice process. Police reformers, in their research on police behavior, have been focused on the extent to which police behaved in a procedurally just manner during interactions with citizens (COPS, 2015; Tyler, 2017).

A common belief that has emerged from the research was that procedural justice theory could be applied to CRBs. Specifically, the process in which citizens played a role in investigating police misconduct (COPS, 2015; NACOLE, 2016, 2021b Tyler, 2017). Tyler (2017) suggested that there needed to be more research related to procedural justice theory as it pertains to legitimacy and citizen responsiveness in conducting investigations into the behavior of police officers.

In a parallel manner, social psychology and management fields have presented information about the significance of using procedural justice to improve the perceptions of fair and equitable behaviors (Goncalves, 2021; Konovsky, 2000). When the theory of procedural justice has been applied to the CRB process, fairness and equity were expected to drive investigations of police misconduct. Using procedural justice theory to emphasize equity and fairness was expected to positively impact CRB members regardless of their socioeconomic characteristics, including race, gender, culture, and other similar characteristics. (Edwards et al., 2019; Hanks et al., 2018).

Kochel (2019) suggested that the United States is failing in legitimacy because of increased officer-involved shootings in recent years, resulting in decreased public trust in the police. According to Friedman and Ponomarenko (2018) and Kochel , a component of democratic policing involves public trust based on what the community expects. One community identified in Kochel's study was Ferguson, Missouri. The research focused on residents' views of the police, authority, and behaviors following the 2014 shooting of a 19-year-old Black male at the hands of a White police officer.

Kochel (2019) used a panel to assess the impact and effects of procedural justice; specifically trust and legitimacy, following the shooting of a Black male by a White police officer. Kochel conducted a comparison study between Black and White citizens in Ferguson. The study showed a decline in the views Black citizens held regarding trust and legitimacy as it related to police officers compared to those of White citizens, whose perceptions remained stable. Harkins (2015) suggested that the concept of procedural justice was about psychological motivations, building on the four principles of police

legitimacy. Figure 1 depicts procedural justice and how it was related to this research

(Harkins, 2015):

Figure 1

The Four Governing Principles of Police Legitimacy
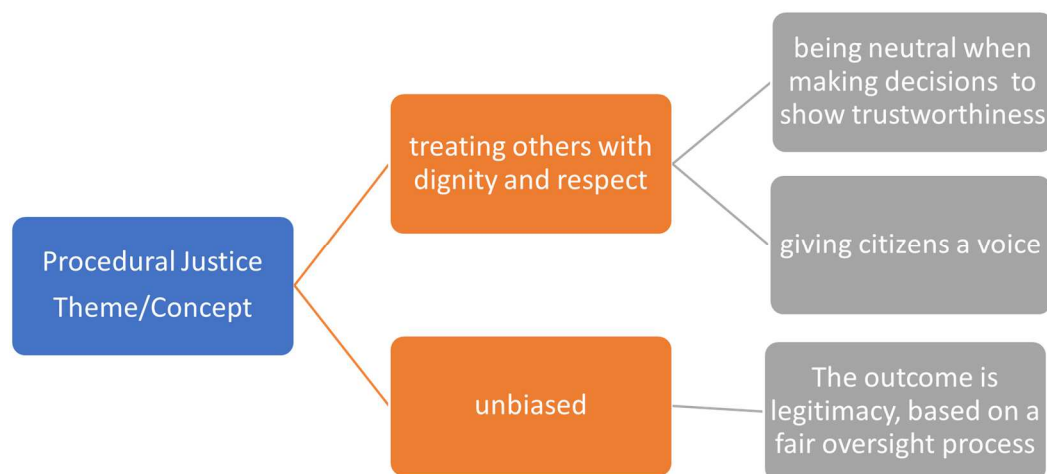
Pardee (1990) and Hattie et al. (2020) described how people dealt with different

situations or environments based on their motivation. Additionally, Hattie et al.

suggested that "motivation is determined by a complex interplay of internal and external

factors" (p. 3). Applying procedural justice theory to CRBs supported the need for

systematic recruitment and selection processes, training, and support, primarily regarding

transparency and legitimacy. Figure 2 shows the five models of motivation.

Figure 2

Major dimensions of the five models of motivation
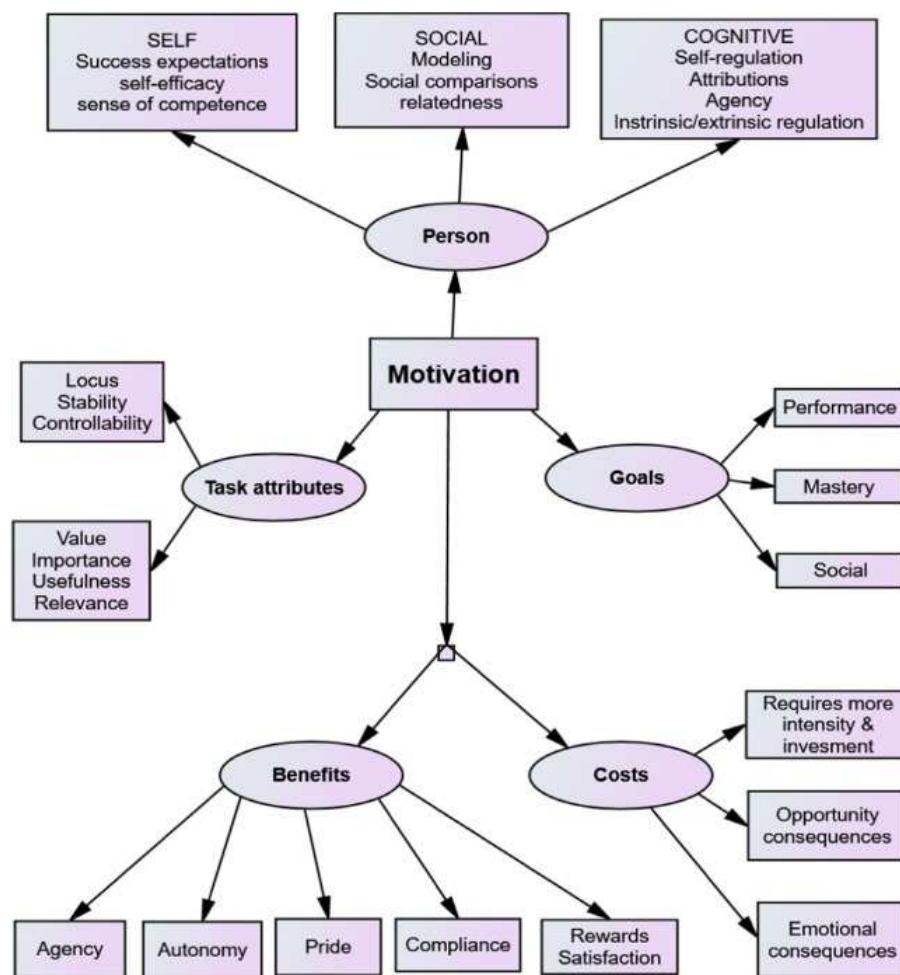
Police Reform and the Community

The need for research into the experiences of members of investigative CRBs has become more evident over the past 10 years following the deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, George Floyd, and Breona Taylor during interactions with law enforcement. These deaths led to an outcry for police reform and accountability (Belam, 2021). Calls for police reform after George Floyd's death in 2020 echoed the typical rhetoric.

The desire for police accountability developed into a global phenomenon and gained more awareness following the founding of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in 2013 (Belam, 2021). As a result of advocacy from groups such as BLM, the message has been that police officers' use of excessive force was no longer acceptable (Belam, 2021). Advocates have been calling for police transparency and accountability using citizen oversight boards. The problem was that many oversight boards emerged without consideration for the structure of the board, training of the members, systematic processes, and support.

Stakeholders from citizen's coalitions, lawmakers, activists, religious leaders, and politicians all wanted to change the perceived injustice perpetrated by police on marginalized communities (Public Participation Guide: Citizen Advisory Boards | Us Epa, 2014). In many news sources, one saw the phrase "no justice, no peace" (No justice no peace, 2020; KARE 11, 2020; Durán, 2016). BLM forced citizens throughout the United States and around the world to examine the concept of social injustice and to question the need for a systematic change in policing, especially the disciplinary process for police officers. It also demanded accountability and oversight measures for police (Belam, 2021).

The President's Task Force on Policing in the 21st Century (2015) concluded that focus on police accountability and recognized procedural justice as a concept that promoted accountability was needed. According to the conclusion of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing , the mentality of policing needed to change from one where the officer perceives themselves as a warrior to that of a guardian. Rahr and Rice

(2015) expressed the same sentiment and described guardians as police officers who treated everyone fairly and equitably.

People have cared about their experiences with the police. They have wanted to be treated with respect and want officers to behave ethically, which has been their interpretation of procedural justice (Rahr & Rice, 2015). Citizens wanted officers' actions to be consistent when performing their duties and to be based on a set of guidelines and departmental policies relevant to equality in treatment while acting as "guardians of democracy" (p.8) (Rahr & Rice, 2015). There has been an expectation that officers serve and protect based on internal and external policies, procedures, and practices that promote accountability and transparency; however, that belief continues to be lost with each use-of-force incident between a White officer and a Black person.

The call for reform of police practices and additional transparency has remained consistent since the 2014 death of a Black adult male at the hands of a White police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, and with more recent events, including the 2020 death of another Black male at the hands of a White police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Despite recommendations for additional police accountability and transparency, a consistent approach to increasing police accountability has not been identified. One potential solution is the implementation of CRBs (The President's Task Force on Policing in the 21st Century, 2015); however, a literature review has determined that there are not any clear standards regarding the recruitment and selection of CRB members or of their training and support.

The existing literature has focused on procedural justice as an essential concept that promotes police accountability. Procedural justice has been a concept that could be applied to CRBs; specifically investigative CRBs and their members' roles in evaluating police officer conduct. Investigative CRBs are one of the few practices used to hold officers accountable for their actions by the citizens they have sworn to protect (Tyler, 2017). Research regarding investigative CRBs is limited and Table1 provides a list of various CRBs, the type of CRB as denoted by each number, and the inconsistent approach to police accountability by each type of CRB.

Table 1

Police Oversight by Jurisdiction it the United States

Name of CRB	Type	Oversight process
Berkeley (CA) Police Review Commission (PRC)	1	Hearings and commission decisions opened to public and media General PRC meetings available for public to express concerns
Flint (MI) office of the ombudsman	1	Findings distributed to media and city archives No appeal Chiefs finding public but not the discipline
Minneapolis (MN) Civilian Police Review Authority (CRA)	1	Hearings are private General public invited to monthly CRA meetings to express concerns Appeal process Complainant is informed whether the complaint was sustained Chiefs discipline not public until final disposition
Orange County (CA) Citizen Review Board	2	Hearings open to public and media scrutiny Findings and the Sheriff's discipline are matters of public record No appeal
Portland (OR) Police Internal Investigations Auditing Committee (PIIAC)	3 & 4	PIIAC audits open to public and media. Citizen Advisory subcommittee meetings open to public and media Appeal to city council PII decisions are public; chief's discipline is not
Rochester (NY) Civilian Review Board	2	Reviews are closed Results are not public No appeal
St Paul Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission	2	Hearings are closed No appeal No publicizing of disciplinary recommendation
San Francisco Office of Citizen Complaints	1	Chiefs' hearings are closed Police Commission hearings are public Appeal process for officers Complaint histories and findings confidential Chiefs' discipline not public
Tucson independent Police Auditor and Citizen Police Advisory Review Board	2 & 4	Monitoring is private Appeal process Board holds monthly public meetings at which public may raise concerns

Note. "Type 1: Citizens investigated allegations and recommended findings; Type 2:

Police officers investigated allegations and developed findings; citizens reviewed

findings; Type 3: Complainants appealed police findings to citizens; Type 4: An auditor

investigated the police or sheriff's department's investigation process." NACOLE (2016).

Police Legitimacy

Police legitimacy played a significant role in the research. It explored how investigative outcomes were affected by the CRB member's experiences. Tyler (1988) described police legitimacy in his study as respect and trust given to a governing body with an expectation of just behavior. Furthermore, Tyler (2017) and Liu and Nir (2020a) suggested police legitimacy would be demonstrated if police officers conducted themselves by adhering to strict policies and procedures. CRB members must be required to demonstrate legitimacy to gain the community's trust and faith in the justice process.

According to Kearns, Ashooh, and Lowrey-Kinberg (2020), citizens' views of legitimacy varied among races. Kearns et al. (2020) suggested that trust and legitimacy guided citizens' responses toward the actions taken by police officers. The efforts of both citizens and police officers are expected to be ethical and unbiased. Standardizing the selection process for CRB members would be one way to validate the process and has the potential to help citizens, and police officers view CRBs as contributing to transparency and fairness. Researching the lived experiences of CRB members shed light on whether there was more leniency in accountability investigations based on the member's perception, training (or lack thereof), and more acceptance of police toward the concept of an oversight body such as the CRB.

Kearns et al. (2020) used interviews to ascertain whether participants believed that legitimacy and trust were synonymous. Kearns et al. (2020) found that the interpretation varied significantly between people of different races or cultures and the results suggested the meaning of legitimacy differed between races and cultures. This

discovery may have a significant impact on the role of investigative CRB members since the members may be from different races and cultures and have limited training regarding police procedures. To demonstrate the impact of limited training for investigative CRB members, it should be noted that trained members of accountability bodies, such as medical oversight boards, were more closely aligned with the subjects they had oversight of because of their extensive medical training (Carlson & Thompson, 2005; Wells, 2007).

The literature review has not yielded information about a selection process specific to members of investigative CRBs. In other words, there was no literature describing the special skills, training, or support standards required for investigative CRB members. Nielson, Hyde, and Kelly (2019), Scholte (2018), and Tallberg and Zürn (2019) expressed that legitimate organizations must have structured and systematic processes. For example, all law enforcement agencies have a recruitment process. Recruiting has been a critical topic amongst police management and extensive amounts of literature (IACP, 2021; National Center for Women & Policing, 2001; PERF 2019; Roman, 2021) have been written about the most successful methods of recruiting. The literature described using social media, job fairs, local leaders, businesses, and public outreach forums as effective resources to recruit from within the community (The Hartford, 2019; PERF, 2019); yet a literature review for standards of recruitment for CRB members yielded minimal results.

A systematic selection process existed in the legislatively mandated selection standards for officers in the state of Maryland. Candidates have been required to meet specific training requirements sanctioned by the Maryland Police Training and Standards

Commission (MPTSC) and codified in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

For example, COMAR 12.04.01.04 provides

- the selection standards requiring recruits to meet minimum age requirements,

- proof of U.S. citizenship, and

- possession of a high school diploma or the equivalent.

Without a transparent recruitment and selection process, the legitimacy of an organization may be questioned not only by law enforcement but citizens alike; thus, the need for a standardized recruitment and selection process for CRB members. The types of standards described in this section contributed to legitimacy and could play a significant role for jurisdictions utilizing CRBs.

Harkin (2015) explored legitimacy using a historical lens grounded in the concept of procedural justice. COPS (2015) and Harkin (2015) examined the effect of rule-breaking and questionable practices by law enforcement professionals that significantly impacted police legitimacy. This examination highlighted the perceived abuse of power and caused a negative shift in respect and trust for police (Davies & Chason, 2020). In Prince George's County, Maryland, when the chief of the largest police agency in the county resigned in 2020 following allegations of misconduct, the agency experienced a loss of respect and the legitimacy of the police agency was questioned (Davies & Chason, 2020). The allegations were based on the perception of unfair labor practices, minority discrimination, and tolerating events of excessive force with little or no disciplinary action documented (Davies & Chason, 2020).

Applying legitimacy to police work has been challenging because the perception of legitimacy has several interpretations. The interpretations result from the many contributing factors, such as differences in eye-witness testimony of a stressful incident. According to Hartman et al. (2018) and Findley and Scott (2006), understanding the body's reaction to stress has been significant in determining the outcome of criminal cases. One example consisted of an officer's recollection of his actions during a shooting. The officer may recall firing two shots when, in fact, he fired six shots. This memory distortion has been attributed to a physiological response to stress which can affect one's memory, vision, hearing, or speech (Hartman et al., 2018). CRB members have been required to complete work involving different interpretations. An untrained CRB investigator has the potential to reach an inaccurate conclusion that the officer under investigation lied due to the CRB member's unfamiliarity with and lack of training about the science behind using force. For example, many officers have received training in the Force Science© program – a copyrighted, nationally accepted program available for law enforcement officers. The Force Science© program has taught that the body's reaction to stress can cause auditory blockage and tunnel vision (Hartman et al., 2018) which could result in the officer's recollect being inconsistent with what their body camera captured. An untrained CRB member would not be familiar with this concept, despite it being a national standard.

Kearns et al. (2019), Liu and Nir (2020), and Schaap (2020) suggested that very little attention has been paid to ways to improve accountability and trust. Perceptions have been based on complex social and institutional factors, resulting in various ways

individuals accepted certain actions and assessed them to determine whether they were ethical or just (Schaap, 2020). Schaap (2020) indicated that because of the differences in how behaviors have been perceived amongst individuals of different races, building trust was unpredictable when individuals of different races and backgrounds were used as members of oversight bodies. The challenge for citizens participating as members of investigative CRBs was that they must determine the legitimacy of the officer's actions, using the materials available to them, with little to no training, and make a conclusion that may be perceived as unfavorable by police, citizens, or both.

Police Accountability

There is a colloquial expression that every action has a consequence. Society expects those with power and control to be held accountable for their behaviors. The President's Task Force on 21st-Century Policing (2015) consisted of more than 200 scholars who explored policing and developed a conceptual framework for police reform. The task force members highlighted procedural justice as a means to assist police agencies with reform. The task force identified the six pillars listed:

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy

2. Policy and Oversight

3. Technology and Social Media

4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction

5. Training and Education

6. Officer Wellness and Safety (COPS, 2015)

Pillars 1, 2, 4, and 5 were the pillars that best aligned with CRBs. Pillar 1 explored how citizens and police could build trust and legitimacy. The perceived legitimacy of individuals who have control was based on the tenets of procedural justice (COPS, 2015). Community leaders recommended shifting the narrative from warrior to a guardian to remove barriers between law enforcement and the community. Harrison (2021) determined that to suppress crime and improve police and citizen interactions, officers must have community trust and trust develops with every positive encounter.

Citizens would be more willing to accept the negative outcomes of interactions between police officers and themselves if they believed the officer's actions were based on a set of guidelines, policies, and procedures (Harrison, 2021). CRB members could provide the level of accountability that would be expected through a provision of transparency pertaining to their investigations (COPS, 2015); however, this must be coupled with training and support for the CRB members. Additionally, governance bodies should be created using a diverse population to include race, gender, language, cultural background, and life experiences (COPS, 2015; Landaw, 2020).

Pillar 2 focused on oversight of the police, changes that needed to be made, and ways to accomplish this (COPS, 2015). As citizens and politicians across the U.S. have continued to call for police reform, reports on improved practice recommendations for law enforcement have emerged. According to COPS (2015), "Law enforcement agencies should have comprehensive policies on the use of force that include training, investigations, prosecutions, data collection, and information sharing. These policies must be clear, concise, and openly available for public inspection" (p.24). COPS (2015),

Rahr and Rice (2015), and Wolfe, et al. (2020), referenced what citizens expected of law enforcement – their expectations included fairness, respect, and cooperation. The U.S. Department of Justice, in cooperation with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (2009), explored what officers expected from citizens who were placed in an oversight role and determined there was an expectation of fairness and equity. Outside of this research, a literature review did not yield any additional information about the expectations of police officers relating to CRB members until 2016 when NACOLE published additional information.

Pillar 4 explored community policing, yet the report did not specifically address CRBs, and other factors related to the role of citizens in community policing. The final report did not address or provide any guidance for establishing CRBs, community involvement, and training of the members. This researcher sought to understand whether the guidance included establishing selection standards for recruitment, training, and support for CRB members that should have been considered in more detail.

According to Cornell Law School (2021), the 4th amendment intends to prevent unlawful search and seizures, affording citizens a right to privacy. The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) recommended that it be a requirement for officers to explain to any citizen the citizen's refusal privileges before conducting a search. While the 4th amendment has been in existence for some time, the members of the task force determined that the manner in which the right of refusal is explained could be confusing. Compounding this with the previously stated understanding that people of different races and backgrounds have different interpretations of verbal information Kearns et al. (2020),

this is an example of how mistrust can develop between citizens and police. Varying interpretations of verbal information is an example of a disparity that could influence the conclusions of investigative CRB members. Establishing recruitment standards could allow CRB members to be screened for their understanding of the law and constitutional rights, thus guiding the training to be provided, ensuring all CRB members have the same foundational understanding. Without recruitment standards and proper training, CRB members may not be able to determine whether an officer violated the complainant's rights, diminishing the credibility and effective oversight that is intended by the establishment of a CRB (De Angelis, et al., 2016; Finn, 2006; & Seyffert, 2017).

Police accountability has become a topic of contention amongst citizens, police, and lawmakers. For instance, during the Maryland General Assembly's 2021 Session, police reform legislation was passed by the members of the General Assembly only to be vetoed by Maryland's Governor. The Governor vetoed three police reform bills (Gaskill, 2021). The members of the General Assembly overrode the vetoes (OAS, 2021), demonstrating that even lawmakers disagree about police reform. There have been disagreements between parties regarding defined policies and practices (Cole, 2021). Whereas Maryland's General Assembly passed legislation to establish police accountability boards, they set up boards whose membership consisted of untrained citizens who would decide an officer's future with little or no standards for recruitment and training. When politicians cannot agree on basic policing principles, the foresight to determine the role of citizens on oversight boards is also neglected.

Furthering the contentious relationship between politicians and police officers, the General Assembly pushed legislation to repeal the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights (LEOBR). LEOBR established rights for officers during the conduction of investigations. This bill was repealed to establish increased accountability and transparency of an officer's disciplinary history (OAS, 2021). To take its place, lawmakers called for establishing citizen accountability boards in every county in Maryland, yet the structure remains undefined (OAS, 2021). For example, county executives appoint members to the boards who have oversight of municipal police agencies. An appointee may be familiar with the large county police agencies yet have no ties to a smaller jurisdictional agency.

The changes to the law place civilians in more active roles. The change in the law now appoints civilians to oversight boards that have them investigating and reviewing misconduct allegations. These civilians now have the authority to make disciplinary recommendations against those officers found guilty without a standard or due process (Cole, 2021); and yet, they have limited guidance and training.

Before the George Floyd era, CRBs were less frequent and were a secondary solution for police oversight (JUSTIA U.S. Law 2021). The biggest challenge for addressing oversight related to CRBs has been LEOBR because of the pushback from law enforcement bodies such as the Fraternal Order of Police. Accepting recommendations for discipline from a group of citizens without formal training in procedural matters relating to police officers is not viewed as a fair process (Elliot, 2020). Additionally, a consensus has been that CRB members made inconsistent disciplinary

recommendations, lacked impartiality, and lacked law enforcement representation (Elliot, 2020). Moreover, the selection process varied from state to state. In some states, mayors or elected officials choose the board members (IACP, 2021; PERF, 2019). In other states, these boards are often composed of attorneys and mediators (Moore, 2020). The noted inconsistencies highlight the need for improvements in the recruitment, selection, training, and support of investigative CRB members.

Pillar 5, training, and education of officers is also relevant to this research. Although Pillar 5 explored the training recommendation for officers, it also related to CRB members. COPS (2015) and Johnson (2019) studied the increasing and changing responsibilities of police officers. At the time of the Rodney King incident in 1991, cops were fighting crime with little oversight – resulting in abuses of authority and power (Johnson, 2019). One could question how extensively Rodney King may have been beaten the technology available in the 21st century had existed. Consistent improvements in technology have resulted in calls for implementation of technological resources without a complete understanding of its potential or even knowledge about how to use it most effectively.

In 2021, discussions revolved around technology and other skills that officers needed to develop to handle the increasingly diverse calls for service. In most agencies, officers must wear body cameras, which activate when dispatched to a call. They must understand and know how and when to de-escalate an incident. They must be fluid in how they transition during calls for service involving the lowest level of force to an escalation to lethal force in a matter of seconds (IACP, 2021; PERF, 2019; Maryland-

National Capital Park Police, 2021). Officers must also utilize practical communication skills when dealing with citizens while understanding and implementing problem-solving principles (COPS, 2015). Research into gender differences has shown that male officers may utilize a hands-on approach quicker than female officers and that citizens respond differently to a male officer vs. a female officer (Roman, 2021). The recommendations of Pillar 5 included scenario-based training on procedural justice, impartial policing, mental health issues, languages, and cultural responsiveness (COPS, 2015). These same training considerations should be considered for investigative CRB members.

The types of training identified above should also apply to CRB members to facilitate the concept of procedural justice. Members also need training on bias awareness, officers' roles and responsibilities in crisis intervention, mental health awareness, and resources provided to officers to handle community relationships. For these reasons, it is crucial to understand the lived experiences of CRB members to address the need for systematic training to create a platform of effective oversight and accountability. Without a system that provides equal information and guidelines, CRB members will not be consistent in how they conduct investigations or how they identify policy violations resulting in determinations that are perceived negatively by citizens, police, or both. COPS (2015), NACOLE (2021a), and PERF (2019) recommended that law enforcement agencies collaborate with community members in the training process. This recommendation can be applied to CRBs.

The Challenge of a Systematic Approach to CRBs

Current literature regarding CRBs has focused mainly on the need for police reform and accountability. Brereton (2000), Davie (2019), Ehrenfreund (2015), and Lee, et al. (2017), have examined the role of the CRB and determined there is not a definitive description of CRBs. Instead, the researchers have determined there is a lack of consistency in defining and determining the members, their training needs, as well as how they are supported. As mentioned previously, Stephens et al. (2020) identified over 100 CRBs, yet the duties and functions of the CRBs were not defined. One example of a CRB is a review board, while another is an investigative body (NACOLE, 2016). According to (*Task Force on Policing - Council on Criminal Justice*, 2020) there is not enough information about citizen oversight investigations, despite societal demands in communities where police misconduct – specifically the use of excessive force – is perceived as rampant. In addition to the lack of a well-defined CRB, there has not been any clearly identified research regarding the recruitment of members to include the selection process, support for members, or training standards. Brunson (2007) suggested that law enforcement agencies should develop review and investigative processes that include civilians to rebuild trust in the police.

Oversight of police officers has increased significantly in the last few years because of incidents involving the deaths of citizens at the hand of the police and the perceived lack of use-of-force justification for these incidents (Ellawala, 2016; Robinson, 2017; & Rueter, 2020). There is a need for increased focus oversight bodies as police reform becomes controversial and the center of conversations among citizens, politicians,

and other community leaders (Rueter, 2020). One of the leading organizations that research oversight bodies is NACOLE. Their existence spans more than 22 years and has provided an extensive resume on police accountability and oversight (NACOLE, 2016).

Research organizations such as IACP (2021), NACOLE (2016), and PERF (2019) created databases to identify the different types of CRBs that exist as well as scope of authority. These research organizations identified over 300 oversight bodies within the U.S. and described their role in police discipline. Their research recommended that the expectation has been for these bodies to be preemptive, objective, community-driven, empowered, transparent, individualized, and interactive with communities and law enforcement working together (NACOLE 2016). NACOLE (2021a) reported the need for additional training and has recently created an academic symposium series to identify scholars and practitioners in the field to develop law enforcement accountability and oversight.

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015), whose members concluded the solution to police reform would be for police agencies to work with citizens to find solutions, began to lay the groundwork for CRBs to improve. COPS (2015) criticized inconsistencies of CRBs, highlighting the lack of information about the who, what, and how of participants and processes. NACOLE (2016), the only organization in the literature reviews identifying qualification standards for oversight bodies, addressed the inconsistencies and has offered suggestions to rectify them. The National Center for Women and Policing (2001) provided historical insight into CRB

membership. They strongly recommended the inclusion of women in CRBs due to their tendency to have good problem-solving skills.

As organizations identify and attempt to address concerns regarding CRBs, the membership and operations have begun shown improvements. However, the lack of selection standards and training for members have not been adequately addressed, impacting the effectiveness of these boards. An example of a challenge to implementing standards for CRBs is the cost of creating and sustaining them. These costs depend on the specific type of oversight system and may place an unsustainable financial burden on agencies (NACOLE, 2016). Citizens still believe CRBs are limited, although beneficial (COPS, 2015). Despite the increase in the implementation of CRBs, the current literature indicates that they could be more effective if there were a systematic process to streamline their role (NACOLE, 2016; Finn, 2006; Finn & Ott, 2021).

Baltimore City's (Maryland) Civilian Review Board is another example of inconsistent implementation of an oversight board. This board allows public members to file complaints against officers in a manner that bypasses the Baltimore City Police Department and effectively removes the police supervisor from the process. In other words, citizens are allowed to "discipline" officers without an investigation into the complaint's validity by the employing agency's hierarchy. One example of the hypocrisy of this process would be allowing a patient, with no formal training in medicine, to inform a surgeon that his surgery method was incorrect. The complaints citizens can refer to the Baltimore City CRB span from allegations of excessive force, police harassment,

false arrests or imprisonment, and the misuse of power, are accepted at face value (Office of Equity and Civil Rights, 2015).

Review Boards

Examples of oversight boards include but are not limited to, medical professionals, lawyers, judges, and police officers. In the United States, state medical boards are responsible for surgeons' oversight and accountability (Carlson & Thompson, 2005). Medical board members are trained medical professionals and follow specific guidelines (Wells, 2007). It is essential to note that the membership of these boards is specific to licensed medical professionals and does not include civilians who do not know the profession.

Another example includes attorney review boards. Lawyers are held accountable by the Bar Association or Legal Association (Britannica, 2021). The boards are composed of attorneys who, amongst their other duties, review their colleagues' actions based on professional training standards (Britannica, 2021). There is a straightforward process for dealing with misconduct by doctors and attorneys; however, this is not true for police officers.

The profession of policing is one of the few professions in the world in which the use of lethal force is justified. Accountability and oversight of police officer misconduct are uniquely different from those in medical professions and attorneys. Police accountability and oversight boards usually consist of civilians with little or no training in police procedures. Unlike the previously mentioned professions, the actions of police officers are reviewed by judges, attorneys, and civilians who analyze each officer's

actions and decision-making without understanding the laws and practices that guided the officers' response in a life-and-death situation. For example, Maryland National Capital Park Police (2021) has policies that allow confidential records relating to police officer trial boards to be reviewed by attorneys, sworn personnel, and other experts whose services may be required.

The purpose of a civilian review is to give stakeholders, usually members of marginalized communities, a voice (Public Participation Guide: Citizen Advisory Boards | Us Epa, 2014). As stated previously, board names and types of training for members vary from state to state, county to county, and city to city. In some states, police officers are protected through defined rights frequently referred to as the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights (LEOBR). A primary concern held by politicians, citizens, and activists was that complaints against police officers were being investigated only by sworn law enforcement officers, in other words- peers, and these peers would find in favor of each other (JUSTIA U.S. Law, 2021). In Maryland, LEOBR provided specific guidelines for investigating police misconduct allegations (JUSTIA U.S. Law, 2021). To improve accountability and oversight, the Maryland General Assembly (2020) passed language that allowed the Governor to direct the Attorney General or designee to conduct investigations into complaints against police officers (JUSTIA U.S. Law, 2021). This is established another form of civilian review and to date, the literature is unclear on the processes for these types of investigations.

In New York City, New York, CRBs are investigative boards. The structure has been described as an investigative body with the scope of authority to conduct

investigations related to officer misconduct and for boards to present their findings and

recommendations for discipline (Davie, 2019). The CRB in Riverside, California, is

known as the Community Police Review Commission (CPRC) and is also an

investigative board. Their purpose includes complaint review, investigations, and making

recommendations for policy change (Daems, 2016). The Civilian Office of Police

Accountability (COPA) in Chicago, Illinois, is the CRB. COPA consists of a group of

civilians tasked with investigating and identifying patterns of police misconduct and

making policy change recommendations (COPA, 2021).

     In Maryland, the use of CRBs is inconsistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. For

example, in Prince George's County, one of the five largest counties in the state, multiple

police agencies have jurisdiction of the county, including three state law enforcement

agencies, three county law enforcement agencies, and over 30 smaller municipal police

agencies. Within this county, the Prince George's County Police Department is the largest

police agency in the county. It utilizes a CRB-type process that allows citizens to

participate and make recommendations regarding the outcomes of any investigation of

police misconduct (Prince George's County, 2019). It is unknown how the other 30+

agencies in Prince George's County operate CRBs. This is further confounded by the fact

that 23 counties in the state of Maryland comprised 157 cities, including Baltimore City,

as shown in Figure 2. (MACo, n.d.).

Figure 3

Maryland Counties
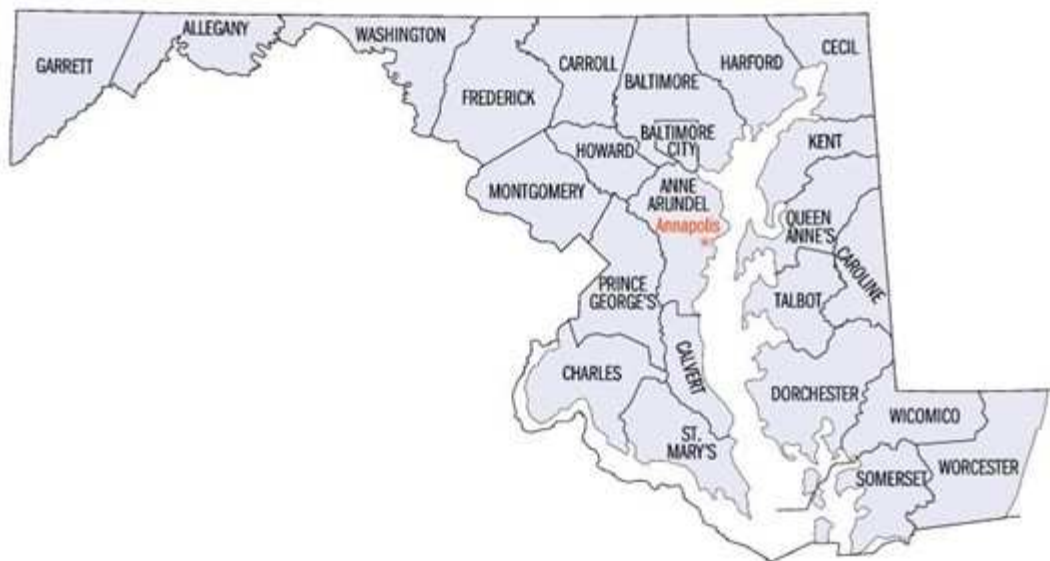
Without a standardized process, should each jurisdiction (city, town, municipality) have its own police department but lack established criteria for selecting and training CRB members, the results of investigations by CRB members would be chaotic. NACOLE (2016) identified over 130 civilian oversight bodies in the U.S. Many states had several, and their recruitment/selection, training, and support processes varied. This research focused on two states of similar size, demographics, and crime statistics. Table 2 lists the cities, towns, and municipalities operating oversight boards. Table 3 lists the various names assigned to review boards.

Table 2

Cities, Towns, and Municipalities Operating Oversight Boards

Cities Towns and Municipalities Operating Oversight Boards		
California	**Illinois**	**New York**

Anaheim	Aurora	Buffalo
Berkeley	Champaign	Clarkstown
Claremont	Chicago	Newburgh
Davis	Urbana	New York
Inglewood		Schenectady
Long Beach		Syracuse
Los Angeles		Rochester
Novato		Village of Ossining
Oakland		
Orange County		
Palo Alto		
Richmond		
Riverside		
Sacramento		
Santa Cruz		
San Diego		
San Francisco		
San Francisco Bay Area		
San Jose		
Sausalito		
Tulare		

Table 3

Various Names Assigned to Review Boards

Review Board Titles
Police Accountability
Civilian complaint review board, Police Review Commission
Independent Police Auditor
Accountability board, Board of Police Commissioners
Office of the Inspector General
Office of the Independent Monitor
Police Commission
Office of Professional Accountability
Police Accountability Board

NACOLE (2016) also provided a list of oversight bodies worldwide.

Investigative CRB

In the literature, Investigative CRBs are described as oversight boards involving

public members who investigate complaints concerning the misconduct of police officers

(Goldsmith & Lewis, 2000). New York City, New York, operated a Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB). This board was one of the more active investigative boards and received more than 750 complaints per year (NACOLE, 2016). While the complaint process has been described by NACOLE (2016), it did not identify how members were selected, nor did it describe any training members of the board received.

The process used by CRB members to conduct investigations is problematic because of the lack of training in investigations for CRB members as well as a lack of any type of standardization. Over 50 investigative review boards have been identified by NACOLE (2022), and the literature regarding the training and expertise members have in evaluating police practices is nonexistent. Davie (2019) reviewed the role of the New York City CRB that investigated the death of Eric Garner while in the custody of New York City police officers and the complaints of excessive force. In his examination of the CRB there was no discussion about how the members of the New York CRB were recruited, selected, trained, or supported. Davie's research was beneficial as it provided a clearer picture of the members' training and what guided their decisions. It also provided insight into how each member was affected by the magnitude of the responsibility. Expanding Davie's research by studying the lived experiences of CRB members will contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of CRBs. The findings could improve social justice reforms while addressing accountability, oversight, and transparency in the age of police reform.

Recruitment

Research by Battle and Orrick (2015), COPS (2015), Dispatch (2019), and Reynolds (2017) has determined that recruitment is a vital part of any organization attempting to identify the most qualified individuals to fill its needs. Dispatch (2019) and Roman (2021) asserted that recruiters should utilize online resources, collaborate with the community, identify a diverse pool of applicants, and consider everyone when trying to find candidates to represent the community. The IACP, PERF, and Police Chief Magazine all state the same philosophy – recruiting is the cornerstone for any successful agency. These research organizations have published many articles on best practices in recruiting, with one article describing the importance of recruiting and selecting officers that mirror the diversity in the community they serve (IACP, 2021). Research by IACP (2021) has determined that identifying the most suitable individuals to represent the agency in the community will strengthen trust and legitimacy.

To begin the recruitment process, knowing the qualifications is crucial. In other job postings, employers list minimum requirements. Police officer applicants generally must have a high school diploma and some college or military experience. Citizens applying to be members of CRBs should have similar standards. Some agencies require an applicant to pay an application fee, a practice that can demonstrate an individual's commitment to the hiring process.

Regarding recruitment and selection, it is essential to have a transparent process. There should be specific standards for recruiting individuals to serve on CRBs. Without a transparent process or specific guidelines, CRBs are being created with inconsistent

standards from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Following the recommendations of NACOLE (2016), all citizens should have an opportunity to become a member of a CRB with decisions to appoint members being based on a fair set of criteria. Examples of transparent processes could include encouraging citizens to apply using public service announcements (PSAs) or publishing a notice in a newspaper or county website.

Training

For an organization to be successful, staff must develop the specific skill set to effectively perform their duties (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). As mentioned, oversight bodies for doctors, judges, and attorneys all have a systematic approach to training. For example, medical boards are composed of trained medical professionals and follow specific training guidelines (Wells, 2007). The membership of these boards is restricted to licensed, trained medical professionals.

Police officers are mandated to complete training. Many states require an officer to complete a police academy that has been approved by the state's Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) entity. Even applicants with a 4-year degree in criminal justice or prior experience as a police officer must complete some type of academy training. This requirement is to ensure that officers are familiar with the laws of the state and the jurisdiction in which they serve. In addition, all officers are required to complete a minimum number of annual in-service training. Given the extensive nature of the training of police officers, it would benefit CRB members to receive standardized training in police processes once appointed as well as annual updates to laws or policies impacting officers' abilities to perform their duties, especially regarding use-of-force.

Yet, the literature for CRBs related to training is very inconsistent. Every oversight body that was explored listed varying degrees of training. NACOLE (2021) offered training to its members. However, none of the literature indicated that the training applied to investigations of misconduct perpetrated by officers.

Support

Incidents investigated by CRB members frequently involved traumatic events related to police misconduct. These incidents included the severe injury or death of citizens at the hands of police officers. The gruesome acts have been captured on video on a regular basis. Investigative CRB members are required to review videos that could include an individual dying or a beating that resulted in severe injury. Scarcer than the lack of training for investigative CRB members has been research into the effects of being subjected to the violence they are exposed to during investigations.

Scholars have written many articles on the effects of vicarious trauma or compassion fatigue. Although not specific to CRBs, researcher have reported how vicarious trauma has affected social workers and created levels of anxiety and or grief related to the individuals with whom they work (Powers &Engstrom, 2019). The authors also suggested the need to support social workers who have had personal exposure to crises and traumatic incidents. Gumani (2017) described how officers constantly exposed to traumatic incidents develop compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue can be equated to a feeling of guilt and may apply to investigative CRB members who view horrific incidents as part of an investigation.

CRBs may benefit from research into how CRB members deal with trauma. CRB members may be traumatized as the result of their exposure to stressful and violent incidents with no recognized support mechanisms to cope with trauma. Kostouros (2016) explained that viewing or hearing a traumatic incident can trigger a vicarious response in the witness. In effect, CRB members become witnesses to traumatic events. For this reason, providing a support system for individuals tasked with viewing and discussing traumatic incidents continuously, such as the investigative CRB members is an area that may benefit from additional research.

Vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout are common in individuals who have been constantly exposed to violent incidents. The current literature presented findings that mental health support was needed when individuals were constantly exposed to traumatic incidents, either through personal experience or from a secondary source (Devilly, Wright, & Varker, 2009). Kiley et al. (2018) suggested that compassion fatigue has negative and positive consequences. The positive was that the individual exposed to the stressor might develop a feeling of helping the individual who was the victim of the trauma. The negative was feeling helpless and sometimes developing post-traumatic stress disorder from the exposure.

Summary

This chapter present information about the history of CRBs, and the current practices related to the process used to create and sustain them. The chapter also highlighted the conceptual framework – procedural justice – that guided this study. Four principles of procedural justice were identified to support accountability and oversight as it related to

CRB members and their roles. Despite the need for standardization of CRBs relating to recruitment, selection, training, and support, progress and improvements was reported to include legislative changes and a push for additional CRBs (NACOLE, 2016).

A gap identified in the literature was the lack of any research on the experiences of CRB members that could provide an understanding of how to improve these boards, specifically in recruitment, selection, training, and support of members. Utilizing a phenomenological research approach was determined to be one way to increase the literature on CRBs. The study conducted proposed gathering personal experiences from participants regarding their recruitment and selection processes. It also included gathering data pertaining to participants' experiences with training on matters including departmental policies, laws, and administrative procedures that govern an officer's actions. The study also explored the participants' experiences with the types of support and resources provided to CRB members. For an organization to be successful, there must be clear direction given to its members.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

In this transcendental phenomenological study, I aimed to describe the lived experiences of CRB members. I specifically sought to describe CRB members' experiences related to recruitment, selection, training, and support. The study garnered substantive information regarding CRB members' experience and interpreted the recruitment and selection process, training or lack of training, and support received in their respective CRBs.

In this chapter, I describe the research process, the design of the study, and the chosen methodology. The research process includes the purposeful selection of participants who completed interviews, provided personal narratives, and responded to writing prompts. I gathered data related to the lived experiences of CRB members while they were participating as members of an investigative a civilian review board. The research design, the participant's criteria for selection, and the reason for using a transcendental phenomenological approach are explained. I also describe the research questions, the participant setting, sampling, data analysis collection, the role of the researcher, issues of confidentiality and ethics.

Research Design Rationale

Scholarly research must advance the study of significant problems that affect society (Patton, 2015). Citizens' expectations of the law enforcement profession have not changed since the1960s; they want quality service (Patton, 2015). In situations involving officer misconduct, they expect transparency and accountability. As mentioned in Chapter 1, demand for police reform reignited following the beating of Rodney King in

Los Angeles, California, almost 25 years ago (Sastry, 2017). The demand has not waned. Following a series of deaths of Black males at the hand of White officers since 2014 (Beskid, 2021), police reform is now one of the main topics regarding oversight and accountability.

I used a transcendental phenomenological approach because it allowed the for an understanding of the participants' experiences regarding their recruitment and selection, training, and support as members of investigative CRBs. Triangulation of in-depth interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts to understand the phenomena better was used to further validate the research. The data collected from in-depth interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts allowed me to use Bernet's (1991) philosophical approach to qualitative research. Conducting a transcendental phenomenological research study and engaging in the practice of epoché allowed me to separate biases as I analyzed the participant's information. Epoché promotes the removal of biases so that there is only the focus on the participants' experiences as they lived them to obtain a meaningful understanding of the data collected (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Questions

Four research questions guided this transcendental phenomenological study. There was one central question and three sub questions.

Central Research Question: What are the lived experiences of investigative CRB members?

Sub question 1: How were investigative CRB members recruited?

Sub question 2: How did CRB members describe the support they received to conduct investigations into allegations of use of force and other police misconduct complaints?

Sub question 3: How did CRB members describe the training provided to them to participate as a member of an investigative CRB?

Setting and Sample

I used two locations in the United States as the setting for my study and participant selection. Location N, a region in the Northeast, and Location M, a region in the Midwest, were used for this study. The target areas were chosen for their similarities and demographics, including race, levels of education, police agency sizes, and CRB types. In both locations, the CRB members received and reviewed completed investigations of police officer misconduct. Figure 4 represents the diversity of Location N, and Figure 5 represents the diversity of the CRB in Location N.

Figure 4

Demographics by Race Location N

Demographics by Race Location N

Two or more races, 3.63

Native American, 0.43

Hawaiian or Pacific islander, 0.06

Asian, 14.75

Blacks/ African American , 24

Whites, 43
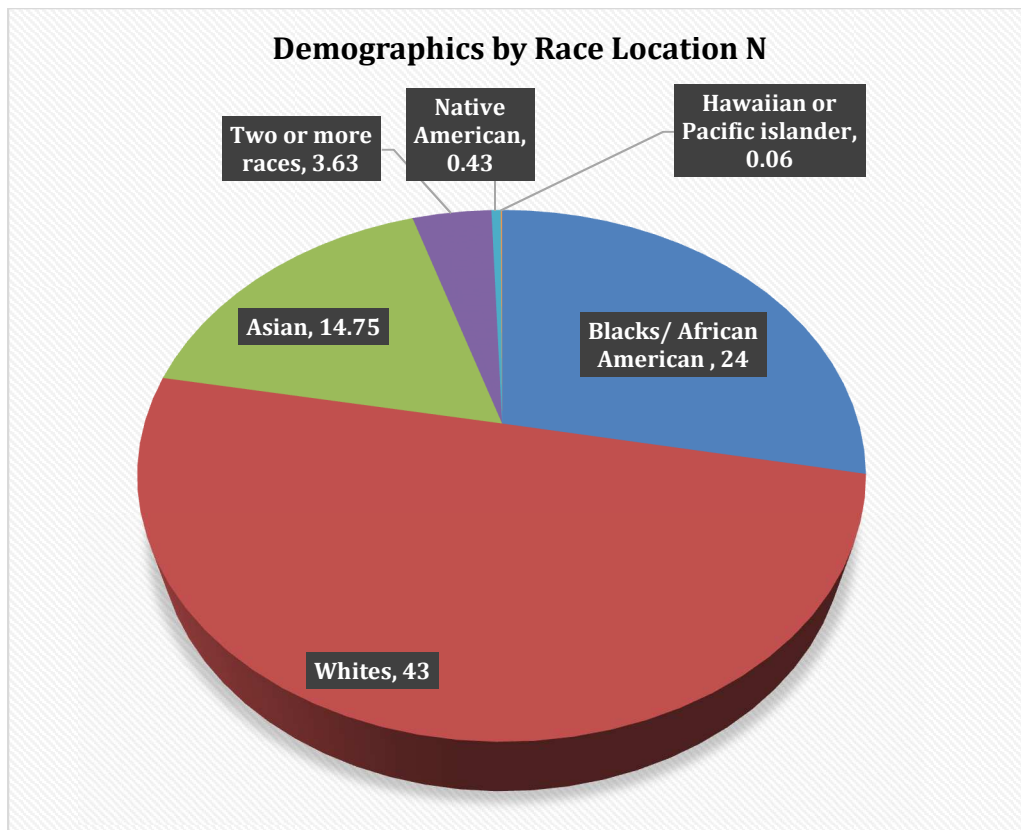
Figure 5

Demographics of CRB members Location N

Demographics of CRB Members Location N
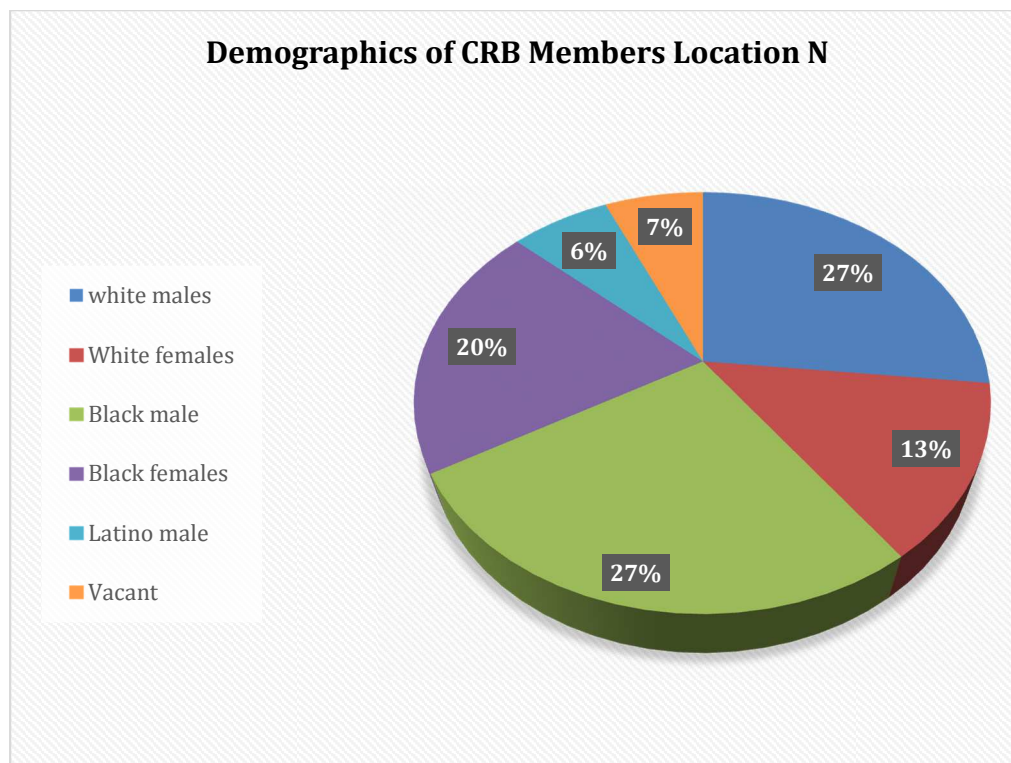
Location N's demographics were comprised of citizens who were 32% white, 24% black, 14% Asian, 3% other, and 29% Latino or other. Citizens over the age of 25 with a high school diploma or higher made up 82.2 % of the board and board members with a bachelor's degree or higher made up 38.1% of the board.

Location M established an investigative CRB when the city council passed an ordinance in October 2016 to create a citizen oversight body to address accountability and oversight. The role of this citizen oversight body has been to receive and investigate complaints relating to police misconduct, specifically use of force complaints. Figure 6 represents the gender of CRB members in Location M and Figure 7 provides the ethnicity of the CRB members of Location M.

Figure 6

Location M - Gender of CRB members
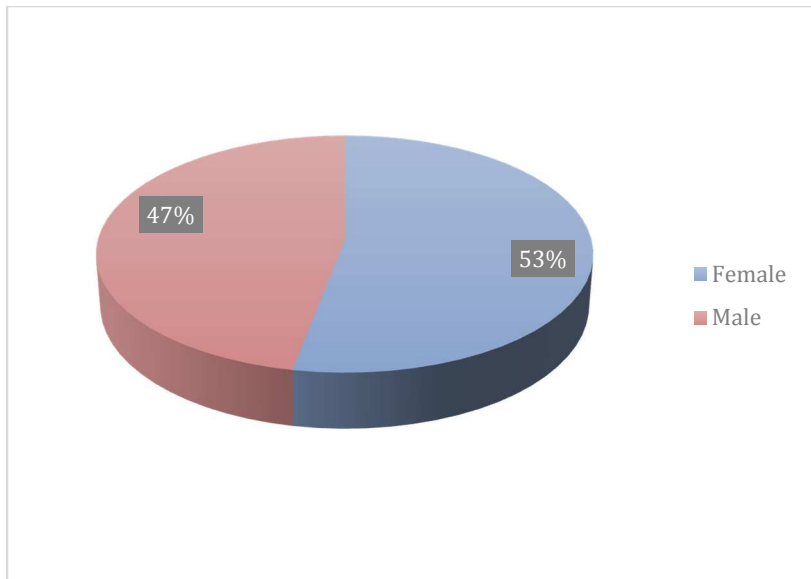
Figure 7

Location M - Demographics by Ethnicity
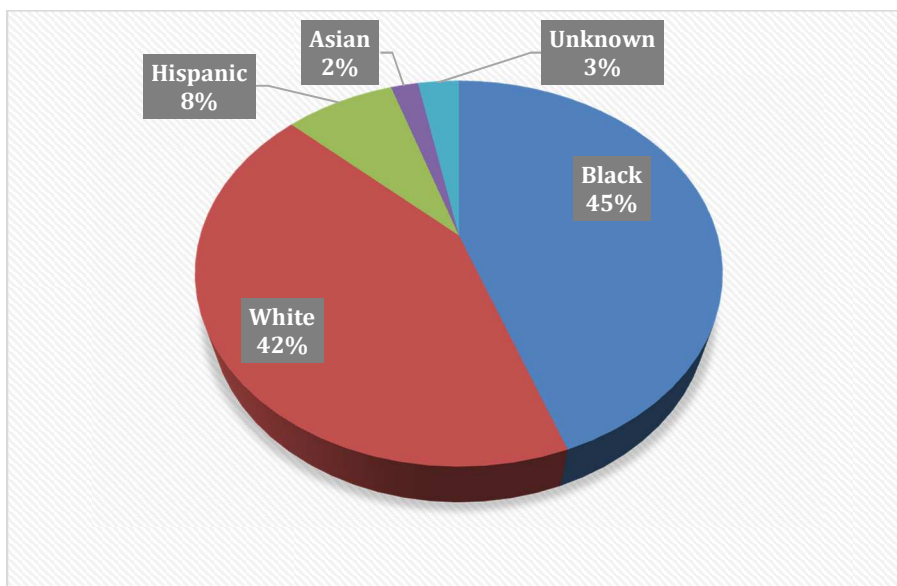
Participants

I selected participants using purposeful sampling. Etikan (2016) determined that purposeful sampling allowed a researcher to use their judgment to select participants. Purposeful sampling is about the characteristics of the population. It is suitable when the researcher has restricted resources, such as travel challenges during a pandemic, time, and limited access to participants. Moreover, Patton (2015) explained, "purposeful sampling provides the researcher an opportunity to permit inquiry into an understanding of a phenomenon in-depth" (p.52). It has been effective in qualitative research that aims to give participants who experienced the phenomenon a voice. (Etikan, 2016).

I selected participants from CRBs in states without affiliation to me or my agency. Although there was a backup state with similar demographics in the event the primary locations were unavailable; I did not use the additional location. A goal of research is transferability (Statistics Solutions, 2017), in that it must provide evidence pertinent to other accountability bodies in similar locations. This research demonstrated transferability to other jurisdictions using CRBs as it was conducted with a diverse group of individuals from jurisdictions that are universally represented through the United States regarding the size of the jurisdiction, establishment of CRBs, and the diversity of the participants.

The research consisted primarily of an interview to collect data because it allowed for personal interaction and directly captured the voices of the participants. Personal narratives were recorded, allowing participants to provide unscripted accounts of their memories of investigations conducted, and experiences not shared during the interview.

A third source was three questions in a writing prompt that allowed participants to describe any other experiences they had as CRB members that they may have recalled following their interaction with me.

A sample size of eight participants across two locations, Location N and Location M, as described previously was proposed. However, the study reached saturation at eight participants. Guest et al., (2006) suggested that the sample size should reflect the number of individuals required prior to thematic saturation. The data reached thematic saturation by the eighth interview because of the triangulation methods that were selected. All participants were 21 years or older, consisting of males and females, and a diverse ethnic breakdown as seen in Figures 5 and 7. To be selected for the study, participants met the following criteria:

- Participants were at least 21 years old.
- Participants were a member of the participating CRB.

Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality.

Instruments

I created a demographic information sheet that included the participant's pseudonym, age, gender, race, level of education, occupation, marital status, and length of service on the CRB (Appendix C). The pseudonyms were assigned as Participant 1, Participant 2, . . . Participant 8. The demographic information sheet was used as a key to maintain the confidentiality of the participants and will be maintained as a separate document in a secure location in my home office for the period required by Walden University.

I was not able to identify literature that captured the experiences of CRB members. Additionally, no instruments were identified. The lack of existing research and instruments to explore the phenomenon of CRB members leant itself to the determination that the best research method would be a phenomenological research study. Therefore, I created an interview questionnaire to obtain information about the lived experiences of the CRB members. The interview times ranged from 30-45 minutes per study participant. A doctorate-level professional from the field of public safely validated the questionnaire.

Role of the Researcher

Maintaining an objective position when researching to report the participants' experiences was critical. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), the researcher must be very mindful to remain objective because of their role in the research, which essentially is an instrument in the process. As the researcher, I had safeguards, such as triangulation and journaling to promote bias reduction so as not to corrupt the data during analysis, regardless of the other safeguard measures.

As director of investigations of a midsize police agency in Maryland, I have seen firsthand the dissatisfaction and distrust of citizens with the investigative process. Setting aside biases of citizens' perceptions of police allowed me to obtain information about the investigative CRB members' experiences of the recruitment and selection process as well as any training and support they received. Throughout the literature review, an understanding of the investigative CRBs highlighted the inconsistency of the approach (COPS 2015; De Angelis et al., 2016; Fairley, 2020). While investigative CRBs were intended to provide a fair and equitable process to investigate police misconduct, the

literature identified the inconsistency in the process and recommended that additional research be conducted.

As the researcher, I was mindful of biases and questioned how personal experiences could affect understanding of the data. According to Patton (2015), an individual's private life experiences affect how researchers interpret information garnered from the data collected. The trustworthiness of the data is essential, and the processes used in conducting a phenomenological study are geared toward encouraging the researcher to remain objective and unbiased. A researcher must report information accurately without emotional manipulation and use different methods to ensure the independence of personal biases. As a member of the law enforcement community who conducts investigations related to police practice complaints, I recognized how CRB members' understanding of the investigative process might be negatively influenced. To promote a more unbiased approach, I conducted member checking, triangulation of the data, and reflexive journaling to deter unintentional biases from corrupting the study.

Qualitative research was selected because of the limited scholarly information directly exploring investigative CRB members' experiences. Researching investigative CRB members' experiences relating to how they were recruited and their experiences involving training or lack of training and support received during investigation provided more information and allowed me to dive deeper into understanding CRB members' roles and responsibilities. I determined that gathering this information was crucial considering the call for police reform and the need for increased transparency in police accountability.

Data Collection Plan

Various data collection methods were used to safeguard the study's integrity, trustworthiness, and credibility. I engaged in the triangulation process, gathering as much information as possible to validate the data collection methods. I used three methods to safeguard the integrity of the research: in-depth interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts. All three data points helped me grasp the real meaning of the lived experiences of the phenomena (see Patton, 2015).

Interviews

The primary form of data collection was in-depth interviews with CRB members. The interview focused on the lived experiences of CRB members, including the recruitment and selection process to become a CRB member. Additionally, the interview focused on training, the member's external support network, the role of law enforcement, and the community's perception of their role in the process of oversight and accountability. In-depth interviews allowed me to extract the structure and essence of the phenomena (see Moustakas, 1994).

The interview process was systematic to keep consistency across all interviews (see Patton, 2015). I prepared the questions ahead of time, and each participant was asked identical questions. I requested a review of the questions by the head of the CRBs for credibility and validity. The review solicited input on each CRBs operation. I conducted the interviews using video conferencing, allowing participants to choose a time that suited their schedule and facilitated privacy. Each interview was stored on a password protected laptop. The interview questions asked are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Open ended Interview Questions

	Interview Question	
1.	Could you please introduce yourself to me as if you were introducing yourself to an investigative civilian review board during a selection process to become a member?	RQ
2.	Please describe why you wanted to become a CRB member and how did your friends and family respond to your decision?	CRQ
3.	Please describe your experiences with the recruitment and selection process?	SQ1
4.	Please describe what motivated you to join a CRB and what were your expectations?	CRQ
5.	Please describe the training you received as a CRB member?	SQ2
6.	Please describe your experiences with grasping the investigation process?	CRQ
7.	Please describe how your perception has changed about CRBs since being on an investigative CRB?	SQ3
8.	Please describe any support or lack of support you experience while conducting investigations?	SQ3
9.	Please describe any challenges you may have experienced while investigating case?	CRQ
10.	Please describe how you overcame any challenges you have experienced while investigating a police misconduct complaint?	SQ3
11.	Please explain how or why your perception of accountability and oversight may have changed since serving on a CRB?	CRQ
12.	Please describe how you feel about things that influenced your decisions while conducting investigations of police misconduct?	SQ2 & 3
13.	Please provide any other experiences you may have related to CRBs?	CRQ

I submitted the interview questions to the head of the two CRBs in the Location M and Location N. The questions were reviewed for approval for use with the CRB members. The selection standards identified in the research of each location were also reviewed by the CRB heads to confirm their validity. The recruitment and selection processes were not clear for either location. One location selected their members based on appointments by a city official and the other location involved advertising, job posting, and an application process. Question 1 consisted of an open-ended question to support the central research question. Question 2 allowed the CRB members to describe their reasons for becoming a part of the accountability process. According to Moustakas (1994) the utilization of open-ended questions is likely to provide "rich, vital and substantive descriptions" (p.116).

CRBs have been highly scrutinized by both citizens and the police (COPS, 2015). Question 3, 4 and 7 explored the CRB members experiences as they became participants in the process of accountability and oversight of police officers as CRB members. Brown and Crace (1996), and Winston and Keller (2004), suggested that family, friends, and culture affects career decisions.

Questions 5, 6, 9, and 12 were designed to gather information on each participant's experiences with the recruitment and selection process. These questions were intended to explore the members' experiences related to training (or lack of training) and support (or lack of support) they perceived while investigating police misconduct. Questions 8, 10, 11, and13 were designed to elicit descriptions of the participants' expectations as CRB members and were intended to garner information

about their experiences regarding resources provided or challenges faced while conducting investigations. These questions were also intended to gather information about how CRB members addressed challenges they faced while serving on an investigative CRB. Question 13 was intended to gather any additional information participants wished to share about the process of accountability and oversight and how their role influenced the disciplinary process in law enforcement.

Personal Narrative

Immediately following the interview, a recording of each participant describing an investigation that they conducted while serving on a CRB was completed. The personal narrative collected information about the CRB member's experiences of conducting investigations. The personal narrative was intended to paint a picture of a moment in time that further relayed the experiences of CRB members. These narratives provided each participant an opportunity to add to their experience that they may not have previously described during their interview. A transcription service to transcribe the interviews and personal narratives was used. Net Transcript (2021), the transcription company, describes itself as the equivalent of a court reporting company certified for accuracy in audio and video recordings transcription.

Following the interview and personal narratives, each participant received a follow-up email from me. The email included the transcription of both the interview and the personal narrative as well as three additional questions that served as the third triangulation method. Three questions, in the form of a writing prompt, sought additional

information that the participants may have recalled that was not provided during the

initial interview and personal narrative. The writing prompts are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Follow up Writing prompt

Writing prompt
1. Please consider what we discussed in your interview and describe anything else that you would like to share about your motivation to become a CRB member?
2. I would now like you to think about the person or persons who influenced your decision to become a member of a CRB and describe their reaction to your decision?
3. Please describe the ways that you contributed to making your community receptive to the process of investigating police misconduct in a fair and equitable manner?

The writing prompt questions were used to help validate the data from the

participants responses to the interview questions. The first writing prompt question

encouraged the participants to provide additional information that they may have wished

to share during the initial interview. The second writing prompt re-examined the

participants' experiences related to the support (or lack of support) that they received as

they embarked on joining a CRB. The question was intended to further explore the

participants' experiences regarding the perceived support they received from their family

and friends. The third and final writing prompt question was intended to gather

information regarding the participants' expectations and how their experience may have

influenced society's perception of CRBs. To vet the interview questions, a peer review

was conducted and feedback was solicited regarding the meaningfulness of the questions.

IRB Approval Process

Walden University requires Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before any research can be conducted. Along with my committee, the IRB evaluated the instruments selected to be used in this study to assess several areas of the research process. Their goal was to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of each participant and their safety (Walden University, 2021). No data was collected until the IRB approval was confirmed. I obtained participant consent verbally at the time of the interview, followed by emailing the consent form, and having participants return a signed copy of the form to me via email.

The informed consent form (Appendix D) adhered to Walden University's informed consent form and was adjusted for special circumstances that arose from the study that differed from the University's form. I provided contact information to include my name, cell phone number, and email address along with the contact information of a Walden representative.

Data Analysis

Patton (2015) described a phenomenological analysis as a process that draws out the meaning and importance of the lived experience of a phenomenon from an individual or a group of people, a recorded observation. Patton (2015) described this as the data. An analysis of the data of CRB members describing why they chose to be involved in an oversight board that conducts investigations of police misconduct was conducted. I removed all judgment about the phenomena to analyze the data effectively by engaging in epoche´ and bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). To use these techniques, this researcher set

aside what she understands about the phenomenon to stay in the moment while conducting the research. Epoché is a way of reflecting while being aware of biases that one may bring to the study (Moustakas, 1994). I bracketed the key concepts discovered during the interview, which is one of the first steps in phenomenological reduction (Moustakas, 1994).

Following Moustakas' (1994) guide to data analysis I recorded each interview and took notes during each session. In conducting the data analysis, I also transcribed the text. My analysis consisted of applying Moustakas' (1994) guide including (a) lists and individual grouping, (b) reduce the data and eliminate, (c) cluster and thematize the unchanged and constituents, (d) identify the invariant constituent and themes, and (e) create individual textual and structure descriptions for each participant to the results.

Giorgi et al. (1971) recommended the review of all accumulated data before conducting any analysis. I reviewed all interviews, personal narratives transcription, and writing prompts to "get a sense of the whole" (p.83). The review was followed with content analysis to identify codes, categories, and themes. I used NVivo (a qualitative data analysis software) as a second source to organize the data and minimize the potential for inaccurate reporting. Using the software, ensured that all results were complete and organized to avoid missing important information.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a critical part of research. To establish trustworthiness in the research a clear explanation and description of the study, supporting documentation, IRB approval, peer review of the research questions, and informed consent from each

participant was provided. In qualitative phenomenological research, triangulation aids

with validating the data. According to Patton (2015), triangulation can be interviews,

observations, and document analysis. For this research, interviews, personal narratives,

and writing prompts were used. I also took notes during the interviews to document

observations as a supporting part of the interview process. This strategy was

recommended by Patton (2015) and Creswell and Poth (2018). Writing prompts were

employed and compared against the interviews as they added to the trustworthiness of the

study. A review of the transcribed interview, personal narratives, and writing prompts

was completed before member checking was conducted. According to Patton (2015),

allowing participants to member check is a valuable part of the process involved in

triangulation. I also conducted a second review for clarity. Member checks allowed

participants to clarify any statements made during either session and also provided an

opportunity for them to add any information they believed was relevant to the

information they initially provided.

Credibility

Transcendental phenomenological research follows the process of recording and

transcribing interviews, conducting member checking, and assessing documents that

allow for validation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Understanding that qualitative research

gathers rich content, the research was designed to elicit information during the interview

process. I conducted the interviews via video conferencing, outside of traditional work

hours, to facilitate the participant's schedule. I maintained confidentiality by securing all

documents related to the research on my personal computer in a password-protected file

system. The data collection method consisted of video recordings and personal narratives of the participant's accounts of an investigation they conducted while serving as a CRB member.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability and trustworthiness are uniquely linked in research in that they allow researchers to evaluate their findings for consistency and repeatability. I offered the participants an opportunity to discuss the research process to ensure that they were comfortable with participating in the study; this practice develops trustworthiness (Patton, 2015). To strengthen the study's credibility, I also incorporated bracketing and taking detailed notes during the interview process.

Transferability

Patton (2015) described transferability as having the ability to take a broad view of terms in a case. Although CRB members from different states were utilized, the demographics were similar and thus transferable. Reaching saturation in this research was expected to provide rich data that contained variation and intensity, and it could also provide a greater understanding that represented the phenomenon (Morse, 2015). The design of the study allows it to be transferable to other states that have investigative CRBs. Additionally, the researched attained saturation which also contributes to transferability. To reach saturation Patton (2015) described this process as "analyzing patterns as fieldwork proceeds and continuing to add the sample until nothing new is being learned" (p.271).

Ethical Considerations

When conducting research, it is imperative to prioritize ethical considerations. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the use of consent forms, going through an IRB process, and maintaining the confidentiality of records is essential. Approval from IRB for this research was sought and approved as required by Walden University. An overview of the study was provided in advance to the head of the CRB's to address any issues that may have arisen as they related to participant involvement.

A disclosure was be made to the head of the participating CRBs that this participation was voluntary and that interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts would be conducted offsite and would not affect the participant's normal schedule related to their investigations. Additionally, the CRB heads and ultimately the participants were informed that pseudonyms would be used to maintain anonymity. The head of the CRBs would not be provided any information regarding the identity of participants unless the participants disclose this information.

A combination of verbal and written consent was used to provide each participant with a clear understanding of the voluntary nature of the research. The exact type of consent to be attained was determined by the current environment due to a worldwide pandemic that had been in effect since late 2019. The standardized consent form provided by Walden University with minor adjustments in response to the pandemic was the document used and the information was shared verbally at the time of the initial contact and followed up as an attachment to an email.

Participant information was secured, and all written records, including interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts, are in a locked area of my home office. I saved all interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts on a password-protected computer. As indicated previously, I used pseudonyms for each participant, and the participating locations were given an alphanumeric identifier from the Hindu-Arabic system (Location M and Location N). I will retain all files for this research until approval of the dissertation is complete. Once the dissertation is approved, the recordings will be destroyed. I will maintain the transcripts for three years after the dissertation's approval. The files will then be shredded.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the method of collecting the data and the analysis used for the research. Understand how CRB members process and experience their recruitment and selection, training, and support received before and while serving on CRBs is believed to be crucial to allow CRBs to contribute to transparency in policing and ultimately improve relations between citizens and police. I described the data collection process of utilizing interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts to gather information. Included in this chapter was an overview of the data analysis process to provide information on the findings related to credibility and trustworthiness. I described how IRB approval from Walden University was obtained to conduct the research. The vetting process for the interview and writing prompt questions was also described.

The validity of the research was determined using triangulation and the three types of triangulations used were described. In addition, ethical issues and confidentiality

were explained. I described the informed consent process and the voluntary nature of the

research. I present the results of the data analysis in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the transcendental

phenomenological research conducted with investigative CRB members in two locations

in the United States, Location M and Location N. In this study, I used interviews,

personal narratives, and writing prompts of purposefully selected participants to gather

data related to their lived experiences while participating as members of an investigative

CRB. An impression of the participants, as well as an explanation of the themes that were

identified, are contained within. This chapter also includes the results of an analysis of

responses to the individual interviews, a personal narrative to a writing prompt, and

results from follow-up emails from the CRB members.

Chapter 4 is divided into five key sections: (a) settings, (b) participant

demographics, (c) data collection and analysis, (d) evidence of trustworthiness, and (e)

results. Section 1 describes the setting and the personal and organizational conditions that

affected participants during the study. Section 2 describes the participants' demographics

and characteristics relevant to the study. Section 3 describes the data collection and

analysis processes and findings. Finally, Section 4 provides a summary of the research.

This chapter ends with a summary.

Setting

I intentionally chose the study setting to ensure the participants' comfort,

anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality. I conducted the interviews using Microsoft

Teams conferencing and used an Olympus WS-853 voice recorder to record the

interviews. Each participant was interviewed through video conferencing, allowing them

to select their location at the time of the interviews. I conducted the interviews in my private home office. Participants were given a choice to deactivate their cameras during the interview. The audio recording was conducted regardless of video capacity. I transcribed the anonymous recordings using VIQ/Net Transcript Solutions Transcription Services, a professional transcription company. Once the recordings were transcribed, the files were encrypted.

The participants in this transcendental phenomenological study consisted of a diverse group of individuals who were active members of two investigatory civilian review boards located in the Northeast (Location N) and Midwest (Location M) regions of the United States. The COVID-19 pandemic, that onset in 2020 and has continued into 2022, played an integral role in the data collection process resulting in all interviews being conducted virtually. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic created a shortage of CRB members, which critically affected participants' availability to maintain caseloads and led to a shortage of active CRB members.

I sent out recruitment letters to 48 civilian review boards in the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States. I had anticipated contacting CRB members within 2weeks; however, there was a delay in participant responses due to changes in the way internal notifications were received and disseminated to CRB members. Actual response time was 3 months. Participants explained that the delay in their correspondence was due to not receiving information as expeditiously as they usually would pre pandemic because they were meeting less frequently, and communication was staggered. The participants were asked to select dates and times to participate that accommodated their schedules.

Once the interviews began, both locations identified a shortage of active members due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other organizational challenges, such as replacing board members. One component of the worldwide response to the pandemic was to require social distancing and included mandates for wearing face masks in public and maintaining a minimum distance of 6 feet between each person. After the order was lifted, participants expressed that many of their members chose not to return because of the heightened fear of exposure and other conditions known to increase an individual's chance of catching the virus, including age and pre-existing medical conditions.

Participant Demographics

A description of the participants and their demographics is provided in Table 6. The criteria for involvement in the study required participants to be at least 21 years old and active CRB members. Eight members agreed to participate. I collected three types of data from each participant (interviews, personal narrative, and a writing prompt consisting of two additional questions in a follow-up email All participants were between the ages of 45 and 73. Husserl (2012) suggested that a small sample size between six and 10 is adequate for a phenomenological study as this allows for comprehensive explanations of the experiences. The research reached saturation at eight participants as no additional information was forthcoming from the interviews, personal narratives, or writing prompts.

The initial demographic sheet identified gender as male or female. The additional demographic information included educational level, profession, ethnicity, marital status, and the number of years on the board. I assumed that potential participants might be

selective with their responses due to current unrest surrounding police accountability and oversight on the heels of recent events of excessive force and the distrust of police mentioned in Chapters 1, 2, and 3. In conversation with potential participants, many CRB members declined participation because of confidentiality agreements and possible legal ramifications. Others were willing to participate but they needed approval from the CRB's legal counsel. Two CRB participants forwarded the invitation to their peers after meeting with me and learning more about the study.

Table 6

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Ethnicity	Marital Status	Education	CRB (years)	Profession	LE Affiliation
Participant 1	57	Caucasian	Married	MA	3	Professor	Friends & Family
Participant 2	60	Black	Single	BA	4	Retired	Friends
Participant 3	73	Black	Married	Ph.D.	6	Retired Mathematician	None
Participant 4	60	Latina/ Caucasian	Married	Ph.D.	4	Education Leader	None
Participant 5	60	Black	Single	BS	9	Activist	Friends
Participant 6	49	Caucasian	Married	MA	8	Investigator	Friends
Participant 7	53	Caucasian/ Black	Single	BA	2	Grant Writer	Friends
Participant 8	50	Caucasian	Single	JD	6	Legal expert	None

Data collection

Participant 1

Participant 1 was a 57-year-old Caucasian female. Participant 1 had friends and a family member in law enforcement. Participant 1 earned a bachelor's degree in social work and spent more than 30 years working in the field with people with developmental disabilities. She was retired at the time of the interview and disclosed being very involved in her community. During the interview, she stated that she has always enjoyed volunteer work and has always been interested in police accountability as well as police actions and fair treatment of people. She said, "now that I'm retired, I have time to devote to doing things on a volunteer basis, and I can serve my community." The mayor of her hometown contacted her and told her about the opening on the CRB. This aligned with her desire to improve the relationship between law enforcement and the community by "hearing and understanding both sides of the aisle." It motivated Participant 1 because she believed she could make a positive impact and help improve relations between the community and the police department. She has served on her board for 3 years.

Participant 2

Participant 2 was a 60-year-old Black female who stated during her interview that she grew up in a society where she feared the police. She said, "although I was taught to respect them, I still feared them because I grew up where there was constant injustice with people that looked like me, and back then, law enforcement was a completely different color." Participant 2 has friends who work in law enforcement. Participant 2 got her bachelor's degree in criminal justice and worked for the government but always

wanted to speak for the people. She was encouraged to join the board through her political affiliations with some council members. Her motivation to be on the board was to give her people a voice in a society where minorities are often silenced. She stated that she has a very good relationship with the police department in her area, and she feels she is the link that can bring both sides together because people trust her to be fair. She has served on her board for 4 years.

Participant 3

Participant 3 was a 73-year-old Black male and retired mathematician. Participant 3 has no personal connection to law enforcement. During his interview, he advised that someone had contacted him about joining the investigative CRB. He could not remember who but said it may have been one of his political contacts. He stated, "I have never seen an advertisement for the CRB, and I have been on the board for more than 6 years, although my term was supposed to be for 3 years." Participant 3 stated during his interview that he grew up watching injustice on the news and wanted to make a difference in his community. Although he knew very little about the CRB when he joined, this opportunity gave him a platform to become directly involved in the "pursuit of justice for his community."

Participant 4

Participant 4 was a 60-year-old White female who retired from a profession in education at a community college in her local community. Participant 4 has no personal affiliation to law enforcement. During her interview, she stated that she was concerned about what to do when she retired. As an active community member for many years, she

felt she could be a good fit for the investigative civilian review board because of her reasoning skills. She stated, "communication is one of the most important tools when resolving issues." She found out about the civilian review board through the local newspaper, and even though she had never been a participant before finding the information, she decided to apply. Participant 4 felt she had some skills that could be used as a CRB member. The executive director of the CRB, who was a council member, had also contacted her to let her know that she fit the criteria to become a member. She has been a board member for 4 years.

Participant 5

Participant 5 was a 60-year-old Black female who moved to the United States from Jamaica when she was younger. She is a former military nurse and is currently retired. Participant 5 has friends who work in law enforcement. During her interview, Participant 5 stated she has always served her community and, for over 40 years, had seen many horrible things. Participant 5 shared, "I believe I bring a lot to the table and am a valuable member of my civilian review board." Participant 5 stated that over the years, she watched the news and saw a need for change and improvements in police action. This perceived need for change was the motivating factor that led to her application to the CRB. She became involved in community events and was displeased with how certain people were treated. She wanted to have a say as a civilian about the situation in her community. The CRB gave her the opportunity. Participant 5 believed her work was meaningful and that she made a difference as a member of the investigative CRB. She was the longest-serving member (9 years) on her board.

Participant 6

Participant 6 was a 49-year-old White female who shared during her interview that she worked in law enforcement from 1995 to 2003. Participant 6 also has friend who work in law enforcement. She had been an investigator for her civilian review board since 2003. During her interview, Participant 6 stated a politician asked her to be a member of the CRB by a politician. Although she left the police department after getting her Master's in Public Administration, Participant 6 was motivated to be involved in the CRB because she wanted to continue impacting law enforcement. She felt her position would allow her to continue to look at the policies and procedures that governed law enforcement actions. She thought with this oversight; she could still contribute to the community. With her former experience and exposure to law enforcement, she felt that some things needed to change and stated, "I wanted to be a part of something that had meaning and purpose." She has served on her board for 8 years.

Participant 7

Participant 7 was a 55-year-old single Black female. She holds a bachelor's degree and currently works as a realtor. Participant 7 has friends who work in law enforcement. Participant 7 has been serving on her CRB for 2 years. During her interview, she stated,

> I have not heard a lot about an oversight board, but I have a few friends in the States Attorney's office, and they encouraged me to join the board because they felt that I would bring a fair perspective to the group.

Her motivation for joining the CRB was that she was already involved in community outreach and service. She stated that her name was thrown in the hat, and she was notified that "I was chosen." There was no formal interview process.

Participant 8

Participant 8 was a 50-year-old White male. He holds a Juris Doctorate and has worked with several federal judges over 7 years. Participant 8 has no personal connection to anyone in law enforcement. He was employed in the federal legal system at the time of the interview. Participant 8 stated that he also had an extensive background in investigating misconduct cases in the city where he resides. During his interview, Participant 8 said that he joined the CRB to help the community and give them a voice because he understood the community's needs and the intricate laws surrounding the police profession. He firmly believed "that law enforcement is a vital part of the community, but guidelines must be in place to manage those who have the power to take away another person's freedom," hence his desire to be a part of the change of accountability and oversight. He has served on his board for 6 years.

Recruitment

Between January 20, 2022, through May 14, 2022, I recruited participants by email and telephone. A recruitment letter was sent to 48 CRBs that were identified as investigative boards across the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States. I used the NACOLE website as the primary source to identify the boards that met the scope of authority compatible for this research. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic many of the board's members were unwilling or unable to participate due to caseload or staffing

issues as well as time constraints. Other boards were not suitable for this research because of their internal legal guidelines which would affect participant anonymity. A total of eight individuals agreed to participate. Three CRB members from the Northeast and five CRB members from the Midwest region of the United States met the criteria for the study and were selected to participate.

Three data collection instruments were used in this research (in-depth interviews, writing prompts, and personal narratives). The use of these instruments aided in safeguarding the study's integrity, trustworthiness, and credibility, and allowed me to gather an extensive amount of information which in turn validated the data collection methods. The instruments were also selected for the purpose of triangulation to produce a clearer understanding of the phenomena. The three data points aided me in grasping the real meaning of the lived experiences of the phenomena (see Patton, 2015) and answered the research questions. Thematic saturation was reached because of the methods of triangulation I chose.

Location

The participants were given the option to select a time and date that was most convenient for them. To provide additional privacy I asked that participants not disclose their location to me. The only personally identifiable information consisted of the participant's email address. The email address was used to send a link to the conferencing platform on Microsoft Teams. I conducted each interview in the privacy of my home office.

All eight interviews and personal narratives were conducted via the Microsoft Teams video conferencing platform. The interviews and personal narratives were recorded using a handheld WS-853 digital voice recorder with a built-in stereo microphone. Additionally, as a backup device, my iPhone 13 Pro Max MLEV3LLA recorder was available. All devices were password protected and only accessible to me. Following each interview and personal narrative, I connected the WS-853 digital voice recorder containing sound the files of each interview and personal narrative to my password-protected PC using the unit's built in USB drive. Once the WS-853 digital voice recorder's USB was connected to the PC, the system automatically converted each file into MP3 sound files. The files were then transferred to VIQ/Net Transcript Solutions Transcription Services who I hired to transcribe the interviews. The transfer took place by way of a secured password protected internet account. A confidentiality agreement was signed by VIQ/Net Transcript Solutions Transcription Services as a part of the contractual agreement between me and the transcription company.

I conducted crosschecking of the sound file against the written transcription. A word for word comparison of the transcription to the audio recording allowed me to verify the content for accuracy. A low percentage of incorrect output, including spelling errors and words with similar pronunciation, was corrected. Each interview and personal narrative transcript were then forwarded to the corresponding participant for member checking. The finalized transcription was then encrypted and stored on a password-protected PC that is only accessible by me. The participant writing prompts were collected from their email responses. All three data collection instrument and my field

notes containing descriptive information and responses were secured on the password protected PC.

In-depth responses to 13 open-ended interview questions were collected during one-time audio interviews. I expected the interview to last between 40 – 55 minutes and the personal narrative 10 – 15minutes. On average the data collection of each interview and personal narrative lasted an average of approximately 68 minutes which provided sufficient time for the participants to provide in-depth responses to the research questions.

Prior to the interviews the participants were assured of the confidential nature of the study by way of an email that contained the letter of invitation. Once they agreed to participate, I emailed them an informed consent form. Participants were required to review the consent form and respond to the email if they agreed to participate with the words "I consent." Once an interview date and time was scheduled, I inquired whether the participant had any questions regarding the process before the interview began. I reiterated the legal and ethical limits of confidentiality as disclosed on the consent form. The participants were advised that any identifiable information such as name, specific organization related to their occupation, or the details about the location of their CRB would be concealed. Additionally, they were informed their answers to interview questions would be coded and could not be recognized. I reiterated that all data would be securely protected and saved for 5 years as required by Walden University and then would be destroyed in accordance with best practices and legal standards.

The in-depth interviews consisted of 13 open-ended questions. The questions were broken into the following categories: (a) the process and expectations of recruitment and selection, (b) participants expectations while serving on the CRB, (c) friends and family responses to the participants' decisions to join the CRB, (d) training expectations, and (e) support expectations and concerns. The open-ended questions used during the interview helped participants to go into more detail in their responses which elicited additional information on the topic of the study. As recommended by Knight (2013), I used interview techniques such as dialogue continuers and motivational analyses to gather deeper responses from the participants.

The first and second variation in the data collection process was the use of an iPhone 13 Pro Max as a conduit for capturing the participants' responses. During interviews with two of the participants there was an issue with Internet connectivity which caused the data collection method to be changed to a telephonic interview. The participants called my iPhone, and the interview was conducted on speaker in my private home office. The interviews were conducted on speaker phone to allow for audio recording with the handheld recorder. The 6 other interviews went as planned.

The third variation in the data collection process involved the duration of the recruitment of participants. As stated in Chapter 3, it was anticipated that all participants would be recruited and selected within two weeks of the initial mailing; however, due to the challenges of COVID-19 and consent the recruitment took over four months. The recruiter encountered a reduction in the number of potential participants from the two locations because of a shortage of CRB members within those organizations. Both

Location M and N had several vacancies. The representatives from each location attributed CRB vacancies to internal and external factors. There was no other deviation in the data collection process.

Data Collection Analysis

This chapter represents my interpretation of the data that was collected through Transcendental Phenomenological Analysis resulting in inductively created codes, categories, and themes. The research steps included the process of epoché, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meaning. I used an interview guide specifically designed to explore the lived experiences of CRB members through in-depth interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts for consistency and bias removal. The three data collection instruments focused on the lived experiences of CRB members to include the recruitment and selection process to become a CRB member, training, available resources, challenges, external support network, law enforcement, and the community's perception of their role in the process of oversight and accountability. I extracted the essence of each in-depth interview for the eight participants using epoché, imaginative variation (eidetic), and transcendental reduction (Moustakas, 1994). Using receptive listening and open mindedness I was able to gather a wealth of information and discern codes, categories, and themes related to the research questions. Participants described their experiences about how they were recruited and selected to join the CRB. They described their experiences pertaining to the training that they received or the lack of training. They also described the different variations and interpretations of the support structure of the CRB and their expectation for their future

roles. I was able to identify codes, categories, and themes that captured the variety of similarities and divergent perspectives of their experiences. A structural synthesis was produced from the complete collection of interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts from gathering the eight participants' perspectives that constituted the final phase during which the essence of the phenomena was explained.

Theme Development

The study was grounded in Tyler's (2017) Procedural Justice Theory. This theory was selected for its significance and alignment to the CRB members expectations of the idea of fairness in the processes that resolved disputes and apportioned resources. Procedural justice speaks to four principles commonly referred to as the four pillars: (a) fairness in the process, (b) transparency in actions taken, (c) opportunities for voice, and (d) impartiality in decision making. CRB members represent their community, and they want the foundation for investigating police misconduct and evaluating department policies associated with officer's job performance to be grounded in fair processes.

The analysis of the in-depth, interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts produced four initial themes: (a) Motivation, (b) Inconsistency, (c) Expectations, and (d) Hope. Emerging from the first theme, Motivation, were the following subthemes (i) Voice, (ii) Fairness, and (iii) Change. Emerging from the second theme, Inconsistency, were the following subthemes: (i) Disparities in the CRB's scope of authority and (ii) Deficiencies in the Recruitment and Selection process. Emerging from the third theme, Expectations, were the following subthemes: (i) Member's responsibility, (ii) Structure and oversight in training, and (iii) Support of CRB members. Emerging from the fourth

theme, Hope, were the following subthemes: (i) Mental Health Support Programs for CRB members and (ii) Future Policies, Programs, and Service Delivery Systems. A summary of the major themes is provided Table 7 and aligns with the theory of procedural justice.

Table 7

Themes

Major themes	Subthemes	Codes
Motivation	Voice	*community (12), fairness (15), minorities*
	Fairness	*(13), selection (6), recruiting process (15)*
		training (20) policy (6), COVID (11),
	Change	*help (12), attorney (4) mental health (4)*
Inconsistency	Scope of authority	*civilian review board (30), auditors (23)*
		reviewers (49), role (6)
	Deficiencies in the	*newspaper (4) website (3) interview (5)*
	Recruitment and	*citizen academy (11),*
	Selection	
Expectations	Structure and oversight	*investigation, (11), consistency (14) use of*
	in Training	*force (7),*
	Support for CRB	
	members	*mayor (13) political (9) city council (50*
Hope	Policy	*policy improvement (4), support (10),*
		relationship (6), trust (14)

structure (4), community respect (5)

Evidence of Credibility and Trustworthiness

The eight participant's responses created saturation for this study and the holistic descriptions obtained from the interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts associated with these themes was consistent. Although some participants were more forceful with their opinion and had stronger conviction in their experiences, there were no observed divergent responses. I used the most effective data collection method to ensure credibility and trustworthiness to aid in answering the research questions of this study (Moustakas, 1994). A transcendental phenomenological analysis (TPA) enabled the examination of the personal lived experience of CRB members as they described the recruitment and selection process, training, and support in their everyday journey in the role. Throughout the process I used epoché, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meaning.

I used the interview, personal narratives and writing prompts in the data collection to reveal shared views and commonalities between the responses from the eight participants. The interviews were recorded and then sent to VIQ/Net Transcript Solutions Transcription Services to be transcribed. I assessed each transcript against the audio file for exactitude. This double review process I used to transform the participant's responses from audio recording to a written record guaranteed the accuracy of the data for analysis. The transcription was then vetted a third time. Each participant was provided their transcribed interview for member checking. No additional information was provided.

Each of the interview transcriptions were between 18 to 24 pages in length and each of the personal narratives transcribed were between 2 to 4 minutes in length.

Throughout the multiple document reviews, I used epoché to minimize biases and to ensure that: (a) the interview elements sufficiently spoke to the research questions, (b) each interview was exactly documented, (c) the questions were presented based on the Interview Guide, (d) the questions aroused both similar and different experiences and views from each participant to effectively compare them, and (e) that equal consideration was given to negative or deviant incidents described by the participants in order to support, contradict and otherwise revise the major patterns discovered in the data analysis.

While reviewing the data, I utilized epoché listing all her biases, presumptions, or beliefs about the phenomena that could potentially affect the analysis process in a separate document. Phenomenological reduction was achieved by gathering exemplary experiences from each participant's interview, personal narratives, and writing prompts and grouping them into major themes, subthemes, and codes with the research questions in mind. I created an excel spreadsheet that included the participant demographic information and significant statements as well as to organize the data (Moustakas, 1994).

I then imported the excel spread sheet into NVivo 12 Plus, a data analysis program that aided in the detection and grouping of patterns in the participant's feedback. This process set the groundwork for a structural synthesis. The next step I took in the transcendental phenomenological analysis was using imaginative variation by exploring the participants experiences through the context, series of events and the relationships

developed amongst the themes. I then developed structural descriptions from textural descriptions with the aid of the NVivo program.

Dependability

Every researcher must have dependability, trustworthiness, and confirmability as they produce the consistency and validity of a study's findings (Forero et al., 2018). The research should be replicable. Independent research must be able to produce similar conclusions from the original data (Forero et al., 2018). I used an interview guide containing the 13 in-depth interview questions to ensure consistency. I also used the interview guide's follow-up questions to further stimulate the discussion and urge additional conversation related to the topics that came out during the interview. The interview guide promoted a systematic approach to the process of collecting the data for accountability and auditing purposes which were intended to ensure the research could be replicated by other researchers.

Transferability

Transferability is limited outside of the bounds of this study. According to Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2006 this limitation occurs when a small sample size is used. To limit errors in methodology, data interpretation and the creation of a final report I followed the four systematic steps (epoché, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meanings) recommended by methodology expert Dr. Philip Adu from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, National Center for Academic and Dissertation

Excellence (NCADE). Subject matter expert Dr. Jennifer Beskid provided

additional direction for the completion of the study.

Results

I used a qualitative research design for this study because it provided a platform

for the CRB members to have a voice. Particularly, a transcendental phenomenological

study was conducted for CRB members to describe their lived experiences relating to

their recruitment and selection process as well as training and support. The data was

collected from in-depth individual interviews, participants' personal narratives, and

writing prompts. Themes emerged from the interviews and were then triangulated with

each participants personal narratives and writing prompts.

The eight CRB member who participated in this study described their past

and present beliefs, expectations, and attitudes toward recruitment and selection,

training, and support for CRB members. The participants were all over the age of

21 and active members of CRBs. The one-on-one, in-depth, interviews provided

insights into the participants' motivations, expectations, and impressions

regarding the value of CRBs in the community. Opinions regarding the usefulness

of CRBs designed to mitigate the aftereffects of police misconduct complaints

varied little between participants and their thoughts about future program

development and implementation were similar. Some often-repeated themes were

the disconnect between CRBs and the community, the importance of CRBs and

the need for better recruitment of board members. Additionally, the theme of

consistency in training requirements for CRB members was universal amongst the participants.

Theme Development

I used Microsoft excel to conduct bracketing of each interview and personal narratives to aid in the gathering of similar words to further establish commonalities of the participants experiences. I identified key terms such as inconsistency, expectation, hope, motivation, scope of authority, voice fairness, change, and accountability.

Research Question Responses – Motivation

The first theme to emerge was *motivation*. The theme of motivation centered on why the participant wanted to serve on the board. These motivations included childhood memories of controversial encounters with police, a desire to see fair procedures involving police discipline, providing a voice, and giving back to the community. The participants shared a variety of different experiences that motivated them, and these emerged in the subthemes. The three subthemes that developed from motivation were: (1) providing a voice, (2) fairness in investigations, and (3) change community perceptions of the police.

Voice

The first subtheme to emerge from the major theme *motivation* was to give citizens a voice. Participant 5 is a retired military nurse. After she retired, she became an activist and is a politician. She stated, "I know that I have the community's ear, so I want to give minorities a voice." Whereas Participant 1, a Caucasian female who lives in a diverse area, said, "I did this pre all the garbage that happened in the last couple of years.

They were not getting treated equitably by the police department." Participant 1

continued, "I got that from talking with some and with my neighbors and going to

different neighborhoods and community meetings. I just felt that they needed to have a

voice on the board."

Participant 4 who had a community experience that was like Participant 1 said,

"I've been an active member of this community for many years, and I really feel, like, I

wanna give back to the community in some way and be a voice for the people."

Participant 4 attended community meetings and volunteered at a community center. This

exposed her to a diverse group of young people. She described how she often heard the

African American males talk while playing basketball. "They banter about being harassed

by the police. One kid said the police break the rules all the time but nobody gonna check

them."

Participant 6's motivation stems from a different place. As a former police officer

who worked in a diverse area and conducted criminal investigations, she had a lot of

interactions with minorities. She said, "whenever I investigated crimes it was important

to hear all sides so giving the community, complainants, and officers a voice was the only

fair way to conduct investigations." Participant 6 was incredibly open during the

interview; it was clear that she was very passionate about her purpose on the board. She

used her hands to gesticulate, and she came alive when she expressed her passion for

making sure the policies reflected the needs of the community.

Participant 3 was a vocal participant. He expressed that "you can't open the paper

without seeing the tension that currently exists between many police departments and the

people, to whom they provide a service." Participant 3' voice heightened when he said "in many cases the nature of that service is not dictated by the people that are being served. They have no voice and I think that's wrong. I am their voice on the board."

Similarly, Participant 8 explained. "I also have a long background, in investigating police misconduct cases for the city where I live, and, have a lot of experience interacting with, members of, communities of all types." His demeanor appeared nostalgic when he said "I connect with people of all kinds of demographic, racial, gender, ethnic backgrounds. Um, and, have done, quite a bit of public speaking in that capacity." Participant 8's motivation was expressed as the interview continued. He said, "I would very much like to continue to serve in this capacity, helping the community to have a voice in the way that it's policed and helping, the police to understand the needs of the community policing that they are policing."

Participant 2, an African American woman, said she grew up in an area where there were mostly Caucasians. As a child she saw what she described as injustice by law enforcement toward members of her race. "Because of some other things that I've done in the community they asked me to be on this panel because they know I would speak for them; you know give them a voice. I make people listen." She also added "I have a lot of friends that are police officers, and they also want me on the board because they know me. I will be fair, and I also speak for them."

Participant 7 was an African American female. She was very candid during her interview. Like Participant 2, she said, "I have lived in this county for over 30 years, and I feel that I have much to offer regarding how the community feels about cases pertaining

to police officer misconduct. In answer to her motivation for joining the board Participant 2 added "I want to help my community by giving back and contributing to fair practice that will help to either exonerate officers or identify problems in the Police Department." She expressed her expectation of a fair process and shared, "I feel that as a part of the community I can contribute to a fairer practice to get to the bottom of issues that can arise from officers' bad behavior." Participant 2 continued "or any policies that needs to be revisited. I have seen so many things in the news about the way the police behave. also, all my life I grew up seeing Black men fear the police. Some are not allowed to defend themselves, so maybe I can in some way be their voice and speak for them."

Participant 2 explained how her experience on the board contributed to equity and oversight for her community. Participant 2 said, "not everyone has the opportunity for such a platform to share their ideas with the council and with the mayor." She expanded further by stating, "having a seat at the table is the perfect opportunity to right some wrongs, especially with the current climate."

Fairness

The second subtheme to emerge from the major theme *motivation* was fairness. The experiences of fairness of the recruitment process and investigations emerged as the second subtheme of the major theme motivation. Areas highlighted in the interviews regarding the recruitment process and the participants experience revolved around how the participants were recruited and selected, their expectations, concerns regarding the small circle of individuals that were extended opportunities to serve on the boards. Fairness of the investigative process revolved around the CRBs involvement in the

investigative process, the outcome of the cases as well as concerns related to the responses to recommendations for policy change. The participants spoke extensively on fairness of how the recruitment process worked when they first got involved in the CRB. They discussed their experiences, and some negative experiences were shared regarding how they were recruited. Another area of fairness as it related to procedural justice was expressed by the participants regarding their experiences and observations of the investigative process. Both sets of CRB members joined their boards with high expectation and the idea is that they would be able to contribute to a fair and equitable process. Participants shared their experiences of fairness regarding the more recent events in the media regarding police brutality, politicians and community members calling for the police to be defunded.

Participant 1 reported a humane motivation to become a CRB member, "I've always been interested in police accountability, as well as police actions and fair treatment of people." She added, "You must be fair when evaluating someone's behavior because of its subjectiveness." She continued to expand on this thought with the statement, "What I think is fair may not be seen the same way by someone that comes from a different background, so CRB member must also be openminded."

Participant 5 spoke about her military career and how fairness went hand in hand with the honor of servicemen and women. She spoke about her experiences of injustice when she first came to the United States and encountered the police. Participant 5 said of her experience. "I wanted to become a member of the civilian review board because I listened to the news and saw interaction of citizens with officers around this city."

Participant 5 spoke of the feelings of concerns that she developed because of the media's depiction of police actions explaining "Some things I'm very displeased with how certain people are treated unfairly and I wanted to have a say as a civilian on what is going on." As she became more forthcoming during her interview Participant 5 expressed more about her motivation to be involved in the CRB. She said, "I have served on many boards for citizen rights, fairness and becoming a part of this organization was beneficial for my community." Participant 5 added "I like to help people and give them a voice to make sure things are fair." She provided an example how law enforcement can improve in fairness:

> I think there is a lot of unfair behavior when it comes to police conduct because I will use an example, but I will not call names. There is an officer right now that responded to an incident, and he drove the person home that committed the crime. We later found out that the criminal was his brother and he covered it up. Therefore, I'm happy that I am involved because I can't speak for the community member who have been affected by such a crime someone needs to be there to speak for them because they're not able to speak for themselves. I am looking at the fairness and the equity part.

Participant 5 described how she felt about what she described as the unfair treatment of minorities and about racial profiling. She talked about department policies that appeared to be skewed negatively toward minorities. Participant 5 said, "I noticed that a lot of the rules are geared towards things that involved African Americans in a negative way. Although I must say most of the cases that we got were complaints of

abusive language and unfair treatment and profiling." The expanded on her CBS's scope of authority by saying, "The more serious cases that involved use of force is investigated outside of our civilian board."

Every participant had remarkably similar experiences with the recruitment and selection process. Participant 5, and Participant 1 shared their experiences and echoed that there was no true recruitment process. Participant 5 described he experience as an immigrant. She told her story, "I came to this country 1974, so back in the days when I came to this country what I saw and learned was that it was unheard of for people of my color to be a part of a police review board." Participant 5 expressed her feelings of disparity. She said, "There was no equality and citizen of my color did not have a voice." She expressed her additional motivation to get involved in the political arena and for joining the CRB. She stated "Those are the experience that I have gained to allow me push forward to be able to be on a review board with the Police Department. Participant 5 explained that her political affiliation was a steppingstone to the CRB. Participant 5 explained, "The experience I had when I was being recruited and processed was because of my position. I was known in the community and was contacted by the city council." She also shared that, "the police wanted us to get involved and be a part of the board. She then turned her attention to her concern regarding how she was recruited. "They talked about it on the news but there was no real advertisement." She inferred that there needed to have a better process in place and felt it was political, "there should be a way for regular folks to be involved in civilian review boards not just because of who you know."

Participant 1 described her experience with the recruitment and selection process. "The way that I became aware of the vacancy, was, a friend of mine who was, my council representative on the City Council, reached out to me." Participant 1 used a very similar phrase as Participant 5. She said, "They reach out to people they know." She continued to describe her experience. The process she described was very simple. Participant 1 said, "I made a call, and they went over the ins and out of being on the board." Participant 1 shared her concern of the recruitment process by stating, "I think that our recruitment and selection process is probably not the best. It certainly not a fair process for everyone." She discussed how the board was created. "The ordinance that created the board just kind of touches on, the board appointees being, representative of the city as far as diversity on population, et cetera."

It was interesting to hear Participant 1 say that "Our ordinance does say it has to be announced and its somewhere buried on our web page but do people read the webpage." Participant 1 also described the small circle of people that has an input on who was selected for the CRB. She said, "other board member makes recommendations when there is a vacancy."

Participant 6 affirmed what other participants shared. Her experience was comparable. Participant 6 was also contacted by an attorney that was connected to the board. In her description she also mentioned an announcement that she saw on the county website but indicated that it was not specific to the CRB, "It's difficult to find. I didn't even know about it until after my friend referred me to the chair and I had already been appointed by the City Council." Participant 6's concern with the process was express as a

lack of fairness. I observed that Participant 6 lowered her voice when she said, "To be honest, I would say the selection process was more than fair to me but not so much to the community because not everybody gets that opportunity. They need to do better."

Participant 3 could not remember how he was recruited said, "I don't think that it was advertised as well as it should be." He expresses the need for more transparency in the recruitment process. Participant 3 shared his belief, "There are many citizens who don't know that the civilian review board even exists. I would think if I were the mayor and there were openings, I would be talking to a reporter about trying to get people in the city to apply to make if open to all." He became more emphatic in his description of the recruitment process by saying, "These things should be listed explicitly on a website to make the recruiting fair." In his interview he also challenged the mayor to improve the process by adding, "That [the process of recruitment] should be made clear and the mayor who is the nominating official should be doing that".

Like Participants 1, 5, and 6, Participant 3's experience was similar. He said, "In my case I think it was a friend of mine who's politically connected that suggested I applied, and I did." Participant 3 spoke of the unusual way he was selected. He said, "At first the chairman contacted me and suggested I become a part of an audit board because I'm a mathematician." Participant 3 explained that he declined the initial offer and was then contacted about becoming a part of the CRB. Participant 3 again shared his displeasure with the process by saying, "A few hours later I got contacted by a news personality saying that they heard that I had been selected for the civilian review board."

Participant 3 echoed the other participant from his board's belief that "there is no true recruitment process."

Participant 4 spoke of her recruitment experience, "I'm gonna be honest because I think that's what you're looking for is honesty. I was called by the then executive director of the citizen review board, and we did a phone interview." Participant 4's concern with the recruitment and selection process was that there were no specific qualifications. Participant 4 said, "I remember distinctly asking her, what the qualifications were, number one and what kind of characteristics was she looking for in terms of qualifications." She stated that the executive director "was looking for somebody who could be objective. Some leadership or administrative work." Participant 4 further stated, "her next words, honestly. She was looking for someone with a diverse background."

Participant 4 expressed her disappointment in the recruitment process. "I was also selected because I was female." Although Participant 4 expressed her disappointment in the process she stated, "It has gotten much better now. While I appreciate the fact that I was selected because of my gender, I don't know, I didn't feel really comfortable in the beginning because of how I was selected." Like several of the other participants she described ways that her CRB had changed over the years. Participant 4 said, "There was a change in leadership, and I think the current philosophy of making that review board representative of our community, that is her goal and her objective and that's fair."

Participant 8 talked about his experience with the recruitment process in a separate way from the others. He stated that he was interviewed by the chair of his board. His description appeared to be more in-depth. Participant 8 said, "the interviewer was very

adept at getting me to talk about my thoughts about you know for instance, the officer who shot Amadou Diallo and had been acquitted, at trial." Participant 8 further described his experience. "I was asked what I thought about the case and whether I thought it was fair. The chairman asked about my biases to see if I could be impartial and separate my feeling from the facts."

Participant 2 spoke of fairness of the recruitment process and explained that she was recruited by the County Executive. "The County Executive who told me I should throw my name in the hat." Participant 2 further describe her political affiliations, "I dealt with, some of the Congress people. And I had to go, write up a little speech. I had to speak in front of the County Executive and their board." Like Participant 4, the process she described did not include any specific qualifications needed to be a board member. Participant 2 explained that her speech only included, "who I am, why I wanted to be on the panel, and what I can bring to the panel."

Participant 2 also mentioned an inconsistency that she observed in the process about the selection of the board members. She said, "they did not want other police officers on the panel because they didn't want them to know someone and try to say good things about them so that was one of their hard lines." Participant 2 did share that the appointing officials did allow one retired police officer on the board. She expressed the challenges the board encountered having a police officer on the board. She described how the board handled this challenge, "We excluded him from some of the votes because he knew the officer who was involved" and expressed "that seems strange and unfair to me." Participant 7 expressed her idea of fairness as a part of her motivation to be on the board.

She said, "I feel that as a part of the community I can contribute to a fairer practice to get to the bottom of issues that can arise from officers' bad behavior or any policies that needs to be revisited."

Change

The third subtheme to emerge from the major theme *motivation* was change. The concept of change as it related to training and policy was explored. The members from the respective boards spoke candidly about their experiences with training and their review of organizational policies. Some members were motivated to demand additional training and wanted to play a more significant role and policy change. Participants 1, 2, and 5 all expressed mixed feelings about how they were trained and the types of training they received.

Participant 1 described the training that she received as a CRB member as lacking. She said, "Each new member gets a handy dandy member information binder. The binder has the ordinance itself, the bylaws, or hearing expectations and we are required to review this as soon as we become members of the board." She mentioned that "We do annual training and we're provided some information from the police chief, and the state's attorney's office." Participant 1 described the types of trainings that they received.

> We can attend a Citizen Police Academy. They do use of force training, and what it means they show videos with a variety of levels of force. There are some scenario-based trainings you know do you shoot do they shoot the baby you know that kind of stuff.

Her overall experience with training was that there was a lack of consistency. She explained that "our administrator goes to different trainings and brings the information back but with COVID that has changed, and a lot of our training is now done by video."

Participant 5 had a lot to say about training. She became very animated and described her experience as a positive one because she felt she helped implement new training requirements. Participant 5 felt that there was a lack of training when she first joined the board, but it improved because she insisted on it. "I said it to anyone that would listen, we need better training and more consistent training." Participant 5 also mention that the most consistent part of their training experience was the Citizen Police Academy. Participant 5 said "I learned a lot at the Citizen Police Academy. They taught us about use of force, baton, and the taser. I went on a ride along and walk along with several different officers. This was recommended but not required." Participant 5 expressed that riding in the police vehicle priority provided a better understanding how fast officers must react to incidents and opened her eyes to understanding a little more from the officer's perspective.

Participant 1 expressed a similar feeling as it related to the scenarios she watched. Participant 1 explained "you never know how fast a situation changes and how fast you have to react unless you are a part of it." Both Participant 1 and 5 expressed that there have been improvements with the types of training although there is a consistency issue. Participant 1 said "we have gotten better at communicating policy and procedure changes as well as a request for better training opportunities. We don't have a lot of training in mental health and there are no mental health experts on our board."

Participant 2 and 5 also expressed concerns relating to the types of training. Participant 5 said, "there are a lot of incidents that stems from mental health issues, and we have no training in that." Participant 2 stated "the use of force complaints that we review often result from a mentally ill person not following police direction. They need to train the officers or provide mental health support instead of defunding the police." Participant 3 stated "they offer training like a Citizen Police Academy and use of force, but it's not required. I am an educated man I don't need that."

Participants 4, 6, 7, and 8, described similar experiences on their board. They described their positive and negative experiences relating to training is as follows. Participant 4 said "we were required to attend the Citizen Police Academy. That was by far one of the best things I have ever done in my entire life." Both groups talked about "ride along" as part of their training. Management suggested this training to Location M, but location N board members were required to attend this course. Participant 4 also mentioned developing a relationship with the police department as a part of her experience joining the board stating, "Several of the higher echelon of the organization came and talked about, you know, their roles and their responsibilities, their experiences. And then at the conclusion we were required to do a ride along." Participant 6 also mentioned the ride along experience as part of her training, sharing "The ride along was fun and beneficial."

Participant 8 had investigated police misconduct for many years and mentioned that "doing a ride along gives you clarity and puts things into perspective." Participant 7 felt that seeing the officers perform their job was critical, stating, "as part of my training, I

was required to do a ride along after taking the Citizen Police Academy course. It was good." Other training mentioned by participants from Location M included the use of force and shoot don't shoot scenarios.

Except for Participant 3, the consensus from both locations was identified as a lack of consistency with training. All eight participants experienced training in their own way and found it beneficial. However, they felt that there was a lack of consistency with the different types of training and the lack of a curriculum.

Research Question Responses – Inconsistency

The next major theme to emerge was *Inconsistency*. Initially, the CRB members discussed inconsistency resulting in the subtheme of deficiency in the recruitment and selection process. The variation regarding the deficiencies in the recruitment process was consistent in both groups. Both locations discussed the political aspect of being selected to be on the board, and both felt that the process was flawed. Additionally, most of the CRB members reported feeling frustrated with the scope of their authority as it related to investigations, with a few describing that they felt more like auditors than investigators.

Participant 1 had concerns with the deficiencies in the recruitment process. Participant 1 said, "I think that our recruitment and selection process is probably not the best." She also spoke of the appearance of fairness stating, "I think the recruitment process could be more transparent, but just in the sense that more people know there were vacancies. We're pretty good at advertising how to make complaints." She added, "We should be just as good at advertising vacancies." Participant 5 said, " The process is about who you know. I am politically connected, so it was easy to find out about it." Participant

5 further discussed her feeling about the process." Most people on the board are invited to join. It's not clearly advertised."

Participant 2 described her relationship with the county executive as her "in" with the board. She also spoke about the membership requirements as being inconsistent. Participant 2 shared her experience in the recruitment and selection process, "The county executive told me I should throw my name in the hat." Her observation indicated that the guideline do not always apply to everyone. She said, "they did not want other police officers on the panel" and continued, "they did allow one retired police officer."

Participant 3 expressed his frustration with deficiencies in the recruitment process stating, "The mayor should announce the openings. It should be advertised." His experience also highlighted a connection with an inner circle. Participant 3 explained, "If you knew someone, you had a better chance, but we are still fighting for diversity on the boards." His frustration became more apparent when he said, "I don't think that it's advertised as well as it should be that, so many people, I don't doubt that there are many citizens who don't know that the civilian review board even exists."

Participants from the Location M expressed similar concerns about inconsistencies in the recruitment and selection process. Although Participant 4 felt that the recruitment process had improved dramatically, she shared her feeling about the current state of the process, "I'll be honest; I'm not sure what kind of screening is done for potential members." She also said,

when I was told about it, I did see that our local newspaper had an article about

the citizens' review board. They had a link to an application for anybody who

might be interested in applying to be a member.

No other participant mentioned a link for interested applicants to apply.

Participant 6 also shared how she felt regarding deficiencies in the recruitment

process. Participant 6 stated, "a retired officer joined our board although this was

frowned upon." She said, "it was my understanding that law enforcement could not be a

part of the board." Participant 8 had a similar experience that further identified

inconsistencies in the recruitment and selection process. He described going through an

interview process as part of his experience, "So, the initial interview was, I guess,

somewhat probing but more informational on both sides." He further explained, "I think

their main concern was if I was somebody who could think through complicated ideas

and situations. And was I somebody who was prejudiced in one way or another about

policing." Participant 8 added that there was a second interview that was long and

intensive. He was the only participant from either board that had two interviews, which

again pointed out the inconsistencies in the recruitment process in the recruitment

process. Participant 8 described his second interview as "being grilled for about an hour."

No other board member from either location described being interviewed about their

beliefs which further supported the subtheme of deficiencies in the recruitment process.

Participant 7 described her experience as seeing the news and Facebook posts

related to stories of officers assaulting unarmed individuals or using excessive force with

no ramifications for their actions. She indicated that she didn't even know that an active

civilian oversight board could fundamentally change how citizens were treated. Her recruitment process also involved politically connected friends suggesting that she apply to the board. Participant 7 said, "my friend gave me the number of the chairman of the board, and I called set up an interview, met with them, and about a week later, I got an email telling me that I had been selected." She also added that the mayor appointed the board members.

There were additional experiences related to the deficiencies in the recruitment and selection process that have been identified in the demographics table 6 related to the number of years each board member served. Board members were appointment to a 4-year term. Most members from both locations stated that their appointment had been extended. They mentioned that their time may have been extended because of COVID which increased the challenges of recruiting during this time. The members served between 2 – 9 years.

Disparities in the CRB's Scope of Authority

The second subtheme that emerged from the major theme of *inconsistency* was disparities in the CRB's scope of authority. Members from both groups discussed the inconsistencies related to their responsibilities or role. Participants from both groups expressed that when they joined, they were told that they were on an investigative board; however, the role they played in the process was that of a reviewer of completed investigations. The two locations were classified on the NACOLE website as investigative boards; however, the participants' experience collectively suggested that the board acted in the capacity of auditor instead of investigator.

The board members were asked about their role on the investigatory board. Participant 1 described the inconsistency of the board member's roles related to investigations. The board's role changes based on the type of investigation and who conducted the investigation. Participant 1 explained, "The way our process works is that there are simultaneous investigations by the Police Department internal affairs office and our office." Participant 1 further stated, "we don't do the investigations the administrator does." Participant 1 also talked about the inconsistency with timelines. She said, "it takes a little longer because we have to rely on some of their investigations to do our investigation." Further expanding on the board's processes, Participant 1 discussed the scope of authority as it related to who the board could interview. Participant 1 stated, "we don't interview police officers we get the tapes of their interviews with their internal affairs department." Participant 1 explained, "we also use a private investigator, that we can pay if we need to, to have a case investigated and the administrator is not available." Further expanding on the inconsistency in the investigative process and the scope of the board's authority. Participant 5 said, "I kept pushing to have more training to understand and provide better service for the community, especially when we are doing investigations that can affect another human being's life."

Participant 5 shared why she felt training was essential. "The administrator does the investigations, but if we are supposed to do investigation, we should have better training." To add to information about the scope of the board's authority, Participant 5 provided information about the type of cases that they reviewed. It was interesting to note the more serious cases involving use of force are investigated by other investigative

resources such as a larger police department. Participant 5 described the type of cases her board reviewed. She said, "most of the cases that we get are complaints of abusive language and unfair treatment and profiling. Participant 5 further shared, "the investigation process is interesting because the chief of police and deputy chief and high-ranking commanders do their investigation." She further stated, "our board reviews the investigations that the police department or the administrator does, and we make recommendations." She expanded on the investigatory process explaining, "before they can make a final decision, the board reviews the body camera footage and any other report that they had taken from the interview of the officers." Participant 1 felt that review practice improved transparency stating, "the investigation process is complicated when you review all evidence and reach a conclusion they could add additional information, and you have to review the information again."

Participant 5 described her board as an investigative board because the administrator has the authority to do some investigations, and the city pays her salary. She shared her expectations of joining the board stating, "the rest of us are volunteers, but I think the board needs more power and credibility based on our ordinance." Both Participants 1 and 5 expressed their frustrations with the inconsistency of the scope of their authority.

Participant 2 described her experience providing additional clarity for the statements made by her and other board members about the scope of the board's authority. She said, "the outcome may be different because of the back and forth. It takes a long time to come to a decision and to make a recommendation." Unlike Participant 5,

Participant 2's description focused more on the reviewer's responsibilities. During her interview, she focused on how the cases were reviewed and explained more about the process. She said, "we would get a completed case file to review." Her experiences included reviewing videos and reading all the statements of all involved parties. Both Participants 1 and 2 expressed that extensive reading was involved in the review process. Participant 5 talked about the case review process as well, "sometimes we had a lot of pictures, and some of them were a little graphic, but we got to see them read all the details."

Location N came together after their case review and discussed their thoughts on the investigation report and the evidence they reviewed. The experiences shared were similar to the participants from Location M. The group would discuss concerns regarding the report. Participant 2 spoke about her experience with those discussions, "sometimes we found that they were negligent, we would add notes to the file. The police chief would have to sign off on it." Participant 4 also expressed that, "I take notes as I read and make suggestions to the chief." Participant 8 expressed his concern with the quality of the investigations. As an experienced investigator, he felt the cases could have been investigated better. Another inconsistency that Participant 2 pointed out was that "They didn't always come back and tell us what changed if we disagreed with their findings."

Participant 3 further explained his experiences describing his board as having independent investigators, who are not a part of the CRB, and are paid. He indicated that the board is investigatory for this reason, although the members do not conduct the actual investigations. Participant 3 said, "We have a separate staff do the investigation, and we

also get the investigation file from the police department. We reviewed those and ensured everything was in order. I guess that was our role." He added, "we also make our recommendations, not that it carries any weight." Like Participant 2's frustration with inconsistencies in the investigative process and the scope of the board's authority, Participant 3 mentioned that "The old chief was difficult. We would make recommendations, but we would never know the actual outcome, which I found frustrating."

Members from Location M felt that the investigative process was flawed. Their approach was similar to what Participant 2 from Location N described. Participant 4 said, "there are too many moving parts." Participant 4 explained the process, "It has been my experience that when a citizen files a complaint against an officer, that complaint will go first to Internal Affairs." She added, "Internal Affairs will do a cursory evaluation and investigation of that complaint, and then the complaint comes to us at the citizen's review board." Location M participants received all evidence, including the body-worn camera and the completed investigation report. Participant 4 stated, "our charge is only to determine whether that officer violated departmental policy." She explained that it is a requirement by the state.

Both boards were affected by COVID-19. They explained that their case reviews took longer because it was difficult to get together, making it challenging to access reports at times. Participant 6 said, "with COVID, the courts were closed, and documents were always delayed." Participant 8 mentioned, "completing reviews became a problem due to confidentiality and limited access to the reports." Participant 7 spoke of the

inconsistency of their meetings, "we had fewer meetings, but it seemed like the complaint also became less frequent."

As did members of Location N, Participant 4 discussed her feelings relating to the review findings, "we reviewed cases in groups and discussed our opinions." She added, "our findings would be influenced based on the group's makeup. If we are with a group with more minorities, their experience would affect how they felt about the incident we reviewed." Participant 3 shared the same sentiment, although he became more colorful in describing his experience. Participant 3 said, "a White board member can't possibly understand the experience of a Black man, so sometimes I feel like they minimize what the police did."

<div align="center">Research Question Responses- Expectation</div>

The third major theme to emerge was *expectations*. Both locations had similar expectations when they joined the CRB. Most of the members expected to receive some training specifically relating to use of force and other wanted training on how to complete investigations. The impact of COVID-19 included less interaction with training staff from the academy as well as hands-on training and in person file reviews. Other expectations included support for board members. The participants received support from their families, and friends. They expected to be supported by the police department and the appointing authority. as well as expecting some type of support to deal with the different cases they received.

Structure and Oversight in Training

The first subtheme that emerged from the major theme of *expectation* was structure and oversight in training. The board member's issues included a desire for more training and consistency in training. They also spoke of the different types of training that they received.

The board members described their experiences. Participant 5 was very vocal about the lack of a structured training curriculum. She felt that the Citizen Police Academy course should be a requirement, and every board member should take the same training to have consistency in understanding cases, which she felt could impact the outcome, "board members need more organized training." Participant 5 added, "There are times that the board has heated discussions about what is right and wrong." She felt it comes back to training, "I jumped up and down about it because I think that it is important for us to be fair and knowledgeable on what we are reviewing."

Other members from Location N had similar expectations as Participant 5 regarding the consistency of training and the need for a more organized training curriculum. Participant 2 also enjoyed the Citizen Police Academy training and stated, "Every new board member should take the CPA." Participant 2 added, "if we expect officers to be trained on mental health and use of force, we should also be trained on similar things like department policies." She expressed that a friend who is an officer shared this as a concern. Participant 3's experience has been consistently different from the other board members. Participant 3 said, "as an intelligent man I did not need training to be on the board." No other board member shared that sentiment.

Participant #4, an educator, stated, "there is not a list of training requirements for our board." However, she did indicate that all members of Location M were required to take the Citizen Police Academy course. Participant 8 felt it was imperative to have structured training. He said, "police have required training, so do attorneys, judges, and doctors." His experience was that "Our role is very important so we should have a required set of training that we must complete. I don't think this has been taken seriously." Participant 7, the newest board member, having served just two years, and who was a grant writer, felt that the CRB would be able to get grants for training. She said, "the DOJ has many different types of grants, and that could benefit the board if some training courses were made mandatory for members."

Support for CRB members

The second subtheme that emerged from the major theme of *expectation* was support for CRB members. Most members on both boards felt supported by their friends and families. Common phrases used by both groups included leader, fair, voice, family, and justice. Except for Participant 3, the other board member's experiences were described as promising, rewarding, and good.

Participant 1 said, "my family was very supportive." Participant 5 spoke extensively about her expectations when joining the board and how her family, friends, and community reacted to her decision. She described the positive support she received during the recruitment process:

When I told my friends that I wanted to join the review board, my friend thought I would be good for the position. My daughter and my grandson were excited

because they knew that I like to be involved in the community, which I do a lot. I
am a former military nurse, and I like to help people and give them a voice to
make sure things are fair. I thought there was no better way to serve than to help
them because, in my opinion, the minorities need a voice, and I have a loud one.

Participant 2 said she wanted to be on the board because she grew up in the
county and saw injustice daily. Speaking about support, Participant 2 said "my family
was supportive." She further described their responses, "It wasn't a surprise to them
because I've always been the one that had the mouth, say whatever needed to be said
regardless of the consequences." Participant 2 continued to describe how her
outspokenness made for a good fit on the board as part of her motivation, "someone has
to speak up, and that's what I do."

Participant 4's response was uniquely different. Her family was supportive, but
they did not understand what she would do as a board member. Participant 4 said, "the
reaction of my friends and family, they still don't quite get it, they still don't quite
understand what it is I do, but they are supportive." She added that her family supported
her because of her passion to help her community. She said, "I want to give back to my
community".

Participant 8, Participant 7, and Participant 6 also had strong support from their
family and friends. Their experiences were similar in response to their decision to join the
CRB. Participant 8 said, "my girlfriend is very supportive." Participant 7 said, "My mom
was supportive, and my siblings thought it was cool, but they worry about negative
exposure."

Most of the participants also discussed support from other organizations. Overall, they felt that the police departments were supportive, and they had the support of the city council, the county executive, the mayor, and the attorneys assigned to their board. Participant 1 said, "They visited our meetings regularly." Participant 5 added, "We have a great relationship with the mayor's office. They support what we are doing." Participant 2 also stated, "The new chief is great. He always listens to our recommendations. That's a lot of growth."

Location N was under a consent decree, and Participant 3's experience with organizational support was different from the other board members because of these guidelines. He did not consider the other organizations supportive because he felt the board had to force cooperation. As one of the members with more extended service on the board, he had a quite different viewpoint. Participant 3 explained that he had watched the CRB change from a complete lack of support to forced support over the years. Participant 3 explained what he felt was a lack of support:

> Meeting after meeting with the old chief was a struggle. Then we got a new chief, and I spoke up and said look, the consent decree says you're giving us that stuff. Right so we had the consent decree, so they had to cooperate some. That's why I use the word comply. They finally decided to comply with the law's demands. Now we're getting BWC footage, photographs, et cetera. We're getting their reports etc.

Unlike Participant 3, the other participant's experiences with support were presented more positively. Participant 1 expressed that the new chief was supportive and

gave them whatever they needed to complete their review. Although none of the board members knew who the other participants were Participant 5, Participant 2, and Participant 1 mentioned that there was one board member who was sometimes difficult to work with. Participant 5 said, "I expected push back from the police department, but it was just the opposite." Participant 2 felt the same, "…the support is good now. Talk about change."

The participants also talked about mental health support. Most of them felt that mental health experts should provide support for the board members. Participant 4 stated, "when we review a difficult case, you know like ones involving use of force, some of it is hard to watch." Participant 6 felt that "sometimes we need someone to talk to, but for the most part, we talk to each other." Participant 5 expressed a similar experience and said, "I always have time to listen to the other board members when they struggle with what they see." Participant 7 said, "Some cases affected me emotionally." Participant 6 described one such incident:

> We reviewed a particularly horrible case where a police car had a child. The child died. We had to find out if the officer was at fault. The video did not show any emergency lights. That was hard to watch, and some of the members were in tears. We could have used mental health support for cases like that. But how do we get funding?

Research Question Responses- Hope

The fourth major theme that emerged was *hope. I received* positive responses from the board members of both locations regarding their hope for the future regarding

policy. The overarching experiences of participants described suggestions for policy improvements, which could ultimately enhance community relationships, build trust, and provide support for CRB members to cope with case reviews.

Policy

The subtheme that emerged from the major theme of *hope* was policy. Board members talk about the need to improve some department policies and procedures. Participant 5 shared,

I noticed that a lot of the rules or geared towards things that involved African Americans in a negative way. This sometimes causes profiling. I have seen an improvement in some of the policies. As a result, I believe in the consent decree.

She also applauded the state for putting oversight as part of the new laws. Participant 5's experience was, "These new laws now make cases more open to the community." She added, "people don't have to wonder what the outcome of a case is." Participant 3 also mentioned the policy changes in his board process because of the consent decree, I'm hopeful that we continue to see changes in the policies that affect mostly minorities." Participant 1 remarked, "I live in a diverse neighborhood. I am hopeful that the civilian review board's work is beneficial in righting some wrongs."

Participant 2 was excited about the changes she had witnessed with policy improvements. She spoke to better relationships between the community and the police over the years. Participant 2 said,

the board has a seat at the table and can speak for the community. I have seen the change in relationships. Although sometimes we have setbacks, I am hopeful that we continue to move forward in a positive way

Participant 4 spoke of trust during her interview. Her statement was very similar to the other board members from her location. Participant 4 said, "I believe that with the board in place, we can rebuild the trust in law enforcement. And one way is to change some of the policies to on how our officers operate." Participant 6 mentioned, "I know this is cliche, but where there is trust, there is hope; and as board members we are helping to build trust between the two major players." Participant 8 added to the topic of trust, "With the new laws and transparency making the policies public in the finding of investigations, trust will continue to grow between the police department and the citizens."

Central Research Question Responses

The central research question guiding this study was "What were the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as it related to recruitment and selection, training, and support?" I designed the central research question to gain an understanding about how investigative CRB members experiences differed from two different CRBs Locations, M and N. I obtained responses from the eight CRB members serving in two locations. One group was from the Midwest, and the other was from the Northeast. The contrast resulted in a broad range of descriptions of their lived experiences.

An analysis of the participants interviews, personal narrative, and writing prompts, using coding, resulted in the identification of four major themes – Motivation,

Inconsistency, Expectation, and Hope. The major themes were supported by the three sub-questions, and further analysis resulted in eight subthemes being identified. The major themes and the eight subthemes answered the central research question. The subthemes (Voice, Fairness, Change, Scope of authority, Deficiencies in the recruitment and selection, Structure and oversight in training, Support for CRB members, and policy) supported the answers to the research question.

The unrest caused by the killings of Black men at the hands of White officers impacted the lived experiences of CRB members and was a primary motivation for most participants. Participant 5 expressed, "I see the injustice on the news." Participant 1 described the disparity that she watched in her diverse neighborhood and shared, "I want to give them a voice." Participant 3 referred to where he grew up, "In my neighborhood, Black men are afraid to walk the streets for fear of being shot by the police." He expressed that was a part of his motivation to join the CRB.

Participants also spoke about being the conduit to give the community a voice. Participant 4 said, "I wanna give back to the community in some way and be a voice for the people." Participant 5 wanted to be the instrument of fairness and a voice for her community to be heard. She said, "I am a former military nurse, and I like to help people and give them a voice to ensure things are fair."

The participants spoke about how some of their expectations changed while on the board. They described the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020; specifically, how it impacted and continues to impact their boards in 2022. The impact of COVID-19 included changing how the CRBs conducted meetings, reviewed reports, their

recruitment process, training regularity, and support services. The boards held meetings virtually and required courses such as the Citizen Police Academy and other training were suspended. There was a shortage of board members due to members being afraid of becoming ill from COVID, and there was also a mandatory social distancing.

Other areas of the CRB function affected by COVID-19 included community meetings, and case reviews took twice as long because investigative documents were not allowed outside of the in-person sessions. This change caused by COVID- 19 caused cases to take much longer to be resolved. More severe cases were repeatedly postponed due to social distancing and limited space to accommodate board members, attorneys, and respondents. Participant 6 said, "with COVID, the courts were closed, and documents were always delayed." Participant 8 mentioned, "completing reviews became a problem due to confidentiality and limited access to the reports." Participant 1 said, "we don't get much training anymore because of COVID, and many of our members are older."

Research Question Response: SQ1

SQ1 for this study was: How were investigative CRB members recruited? The purpose of this question was to gain an understanding of how CRB members experience the recruitment process to join the board. The major theme of *inconsistency* and *motivation* both contributed to SQ1. The subthemes that applied were deficiencies in recruitment and selection, voice, fairness, and change.

The board members spoke extensively about their experiences with the recruitment process. Both locations have laws in place regarding the creation of civilian review boards. The participants expressed they knew about the CRB and that it was open

to the public but felt inconsistency in how the members were recruited and selected.

Participant 5 said that "getting members does not align with what the process should be."

The consensus from most of the participants was, there were flaws in how board

members were recruited and selected. They felt the process needed to be changed to

include how positions to the CRB were advertised and how members were selected. In

the analysis relating to recruitment, the words that stood out were:

- Political referenced nine times.

- City council referenced twelve times.

- Mayor referenced thirteen times; and

- County Executive referenced two times.

Several of the board members spoke of the politics behind the selection process. They

expressed that the process was not open to everyone because it was not advertised

effectively, and even in the cases where it was announced, it wasn't easy to locate the

information in the news. Seven out of the eight participants stated that a political figure

recruited them. The eighth participant said his recruitment was political even though he

could not remember exactly which of his friends in office recruited him.

Participant 4 said, "I was called by the then executive director of the citizen

review board." Participant 5 said, "I am politically connected, so it was easy for me." She

added, "Most people on the board are invited to join. It's not advertised." Participant 7

said, "I have a few friends that are politically connected, and one of them told me about

the board and suggested that I apply." Participant 8 described how he monitors the job

board and, "They've never posted one of these board positions to a jobs board." He

added, "I have never seen a posting for that job." Participant 2 explained that she is also connected politically because of the friendships she developed over the years. Participant 2 shared her process. She had an interest in the Citizen Police Academy. "I was recruited after the Citizen Police Academy through our County Exec's Office." Participant 6 and Participant 1 had friends that were on the city council. They had similar experiences. Participant 6 described her experience with the recruitment process, "I was told to put in for the position by a friend who sits on the council." Participant 1 said, "I am retired, so a friend of mine who was my council representative on the City Council had reached out to me and suggested I joined." Participant 3 could not remember which of his political affiliates suggested he join the board but stated, "I don't think that it's advertised as well as it should be. I don't doubt that many citizens don't know that the civilian review board even exists."

Some board members also spoke about inconsistency with meeting specific criteria for being on the board. Participant 2 told of an officer being on the board when one of the requirements stated that an officer could not be a part of the civilian review board. Participant 2 expressed, "they did allow one retired police officer, and we excluded him from some of the votes because he knew the officers involved." At the same time, Participant 1 voiced, "what I found confusing was the qualifications. We had an officer on the board." Participant 1 did not elaborate on her observation. Participant 3, however stated, "Officers should not be on the board, but they allowed it."

Research Question Responses: SQ2

SQ2 for this study was "How do CRB members describe the support they received to conduct investigations into allegations of use of force and other police misconduct?" This question's purpose was to understand the participant's experience relevant to organizational and mental health support they may have or have not received in their role as investigators and the level and types of help available. The major theme of *Hope* contributed to SQ2. The subthemes that applied were Policy, Support for CRB members, Voice, Fairness, and Change.

In both locations, participants established a unique perspective on the cases they investigated, their authority's scope, and their role. The first discovery gained from the participant's experiences was that they described case review as a significant part of their scope of authority. Except for a paid administrator or outside investigator. The responsibility of investigating a complaint was not part of the board's scope of authority. More importantly, to note is that allegations of use of force were not a primary function even in the role of reviewers of the investigations.

The participants expressed feelings of being supported by their families. With one exception, both boards affirmed that the mayor's office, the police chief, and the city council supported them. Additionally, they felt supported by the other board members and relied on this in high stressed situations. A significant revelation involved their description of support related to mental health support. Participants described how they coped with the review of cases involving difficult incidents. A common explanation regarding support was that they would talk to each other. Participant 1 said, "we have a

good group now that is very supportive. The mayor and deputy mayor are both very

supportive." She also added, "the new chief is supportive." She described mental health

support by saying, "We just lean on each other. We make friends within the board, and

you talk after meetings." Participant 1's response regarding support was about

recruitment and related to SQ1. Participant 1 said, "I think the city could be more

supportive in their webpage. It's horrible."

Participant 5 mentioned hope in terms of giving the community a voice.

Participant 3 expressed hope and his experience of change in a unique way. Participant 3

explained that he had watched the CRB change from a complete lack of support to forced

support over the years. Participant 3 said, "Meeting after meeting with the old chief was a

struggle. Then we got a new chief, and I spoke up and said, 'the consent decree says

you're giving us that stuff.' They had to cooperate."

Most of the members described being a voice for the community and their hope

that the CRB would be respected. They also expressed that they would be able to develop

stronger relationships between the police department and the citizens. Most participants

wanted to give the community a voice, which was the central part of their motivation to

join the boards.

Research Question Responses: SQ3

The SQ3 for this study was "How do CRB members describe the training

provided to participate as a member of an investigatory CRB?" This question's purpose

was to understand the participant's experience in their role as investigators and the types

of training they received. The major theme of *inconsistency* and *expectations* both contributed to SQ3.

The subthemes that applied were scope of authority and structure and oversight in training. As stated previously, the board participants from both locations had expectations about their authority scope. The overall impression was that the participants felt more like reviewers or auditors than investigators. It was also interesting to note that use the force cases or usually not reviewed by either bored.

The participants also expressed concern regarding improvement of the skill set to conduct a review or, as Participant 5 explained,

> I kept pushing to have more training, so I think there should be special training for us so that we can understand and provide better service for the community especially when we are doing investigations that can affect another human being's life.

Both Participant 1 and Participant 5 stated that a paid administrator conducts the investigations. Still Participant 5 lamented, "if we are supposed to do investigation, we should have better training."

The expectation of investigating cases was echoed amongst the participants. Participant 5 shared, "The more serious cases involving use of force are investigated outside our civilian board." Participant 4's expectations of investigating cases also changed. She described her experiences reviewing cases rather than investigating them. She also provided recommendations relating to policy changes and discipline. Participant 4 commented, "We review cases and make recommendations." Participant 5 further

stated, "Our board reviewed the investigations. The police department and the administrator do the investigation, and we make recommendations. The administrator is paid. The rest of us are volunteers." She said, "I think the board needs more power and credibility based on our ordinance." Members from Location N found the investigative process complicated and inconsistent. Participant 8 was disappointed because of his extensive experience as an investigator and his expectations for conducting investigations.

Most of the board members expected to investigate cases and like the other participants, Participant 8 expressed this sentiment as he described his experience, "I expected to investigate the cases, but the board only reviewed them." Participant 8 talked about his in-depth knowledge of investigations and found that the cases he reviewed were lacking, "The summaries would be inaccurate. It was just wild." Participant 8 further discussed the board's support and said, "I got a lot of great support." Among his examples of support, he shared:

> I reviewed a serious case where somebody lost an organ. The medical records were provided, and we were able to see the evidence to figure out whether the injury was attributed to the officer's interaction or if it happened some other way. That's the closest I got to an actual investigation.

Participant 6 expected to be a "real investigator." She added, "we get in groups of about four people and review the cases for accuracy and make sure the officer followed policy." Participant 7 positively described her experience. Although her expectation of the scope of her authority changed, she felt that the role she plays is still necessary and

helpful to her community. Participant 7 said, "Officers do the investigation, but we would be given the reports and be able to review all the evidence after the investigation had concluded." She added, "My friends still felt that at least citizens would get to see how these investigations were conducted and discuss whether the officer should be found guilty or innocent." Participant 7 ended her statement describing her experience and the role she played with, "In our community, that is a plus."

Both boards spoke about training related to their expectations, and I gained additional insight regarding their concerns of inconsistencies. Both boards talked about the Citizen Police Academy. Training requirement was different between the two boards. Location N was not required to take the course, while Location M was. Participant 5 was very passionate about her experiences. She expressed her frustration regarding training, as mentioned before, where she said, "if we are supposed to do investigation, we should have better training." Participant 5 shared how she took it upon herself to get additional training because she felt it was necessary. Participant 5 said, "I went on ride-alongs and walk-alongs." She also attended a Citizen Police Academy. Participant 5 added, "I spoke to the mayor and asked for training to learn about the police work and their policies." Participant 5 also described getting the other board members involved and demanding more training. Participant 1 concurred that there was insufficient training, which was more inconsistent now with the COVID-19 pandemic. She mentioned the Citizen Police Academy course that she attended. Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 5 all spoke of the benefits of training and specifically mentioned the academy and scenarios

exercises as part of the training they received. Participant 1 said, "it gives you a little bit more clarity on why they may have reacted the way they did."

Location M board members were required to attend the Citizen Police Academy course. They all shared similar positive experiences but wanted more consistent training. Participant 4 said "we as review board members probably do not have enough training." Participant 4 did express her thoughts on the training she experienced, "the first training we were required to attend was the Citizen's Police Academy, and that was by far one of the best things I have ever done in my entire life."

Participant 6 and Participant 8's views were similar because of their former experiences with investigations. They both felt that there was not enough consistent training. Participant 6 explored ways to get additional training for her board members. Participant 6 said, "It's hard to find training specific to what we do. They recommend training on NACOLE, but nothing is consistent right now" [referring to the changes resulting from the pandemic]. Participant 8 felt it was imperative to have structured training. He said, "police have required training, attorneys have required training, judges, and doctors alike." Participant 7 felt that the CRB would be able to get grants for training. She said, "the DOJ has many different types of grants, and that could benefit the board if some types, of course, were made mandatory for members."

Summary

Chapter 4 detailed this study's eight participants, including race, education, occupation, age, and the number of years each served on the board. The participants consisted of eight investigatory civilian review board members from two locations in the

United States (Northeast and Midwest). I designed the study to learn about the lived experiences of investigatory civilian review board members as it related to recruitment and selection, training, and support.

Major themes were developed from an analysis of interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts. The four major themes that emerged were Motivation, Inconsistency, Expectation, and Hope. The major themes resulted in subthemes. Eight subthemes emerged. The subthemes were: voice, fairness, change, scope of authority, deficiencies in the recruitment and selection, structure and oversight in training, support for CRB members, and policy. The analysis allowed me to address the research questions. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the lived experiences of investigatory CRB members as their experiences related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. The theory guiding this study was procedural justice (Nagin & Telep, 2017; Tyler, 2017) as procedural justice established police legitimacy and was applicable to CRBs as it utilized fairness and equity. This fairness and equity could also apply to the recruitment and selection of board members as well as the training used to support CRB members.

Considering the growing call from citizens for the government to defund the police, along with new legislation on police reform, and the inclusion of investigatory CRBs in police reform, this study is particularly significant. As an integral part of improving police accountability and oversight, CRBs must conduct themselves fairly and equitably and in order for this to be done, consideration needs to be given to how members are recruited, trained, and supported. Additionally, conducting a police complaint investigation through a fair and equitable process will promote police legitimacy and the way citizens perceive the law enforcement community. This study was intended to add to the scant body of research on investigative CRBs.

Chapter 5 consists of a detailed discussion of the themes identified from the interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts provided by CRB members who participated in the research. I used a transcendental phenomenological analysis to capture, explore, and describe participants' experiences. I used the NVivo data analysis software to help further identify patterns and created a word cloud to visually represent

the participant's experiences. The in-depth interview process facilitated a holistic insight into the participant's experiences. Additionally, procedural justice theory was used to address the research question, "What are the lived experiences of civilian review board members as it related to recruitment and selection, training and support?", justifying the study's conclusion. Chapter 5 includes the following sections: (a) introduction, (b) interpretations of findings, (c) limitations of the study, (d) recommendations, (e)implications, and (f) conclusion of the study.

Interpretation of the Findings

I focused this study on the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as they related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. I collected data from in-depth interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts. I also collected interviews and personal narratives virtually and collected the writing prompt via emails from participants. Following completion of the interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts, I used VIQ/Net Transcript Solutions Transcription Services, a professional transcription company, to transcribe the data. All responses were then coded and analyzed. The data that were analyzed resulted in the identification of four major themes: (a) motivation, (b) inconsistency, (c) expectations, and (d) hope. Emerging from the first theme, motivation, were the following subthemes: voice, fairness, and) change. Emerging from the second theme, inconsistency, were the following subthemes: disparities in the CRB's scope of authority and deficiencies in the recruitment and selection process. Emerging from the third theme, expectations, were the following subthemes member's responsibility, structure and oversight in training, and support of CRB

members. The following subthemes that emerged from the fourth theme, hope, were mental health support programs for CRB members and future policies, programs, and service delivery systems. The above themes extended the knowledge of the current study.

Major Themes

The four major themes that emerged from the research are described in this section. As applicable, information pertaining to the subthemes was also discussed. The participants were able to give a voice to each of the themes and there was a significant amount of agreement among them.

Motivation was the first theme that emerged from my findings. Most participants described their motivation for joining the investigative CRB as giving the community a voice. Some shared experiences included stories of minorities being afraid of the police and not having an opportunity to express their concerns without retaliation. Participant 5 said, "I know that I have the community's ear, so I want to give minorities a voice." Participant 1 stated, "I just felt that they needed to have a voice on the board." Participant 6, a former police officer, had additional motivation. She said, "whenever I investigated crimes, it was important to hear all sides, so giving the community, complainants, and officers a voice was the only fair way to conduct investigations." I identified the common motivation amongst the participants as a desire for them to be the conduit for giving the community a voice.

The second major theme identified was inconsistency in several critical areas. Participants described inconsistencies in the recruitment and selection process, the scope

of authority, inconsistencies in training, the types of training they received, and the
support the board received. All areas of inconsistencies were able to be related to
procedural justice. One consistency that I found throughout the research was the political
connections associated with being selected for the CRB. Each participant described their
experience with the recruitment process. Below are three common phrases used by the
participants linking their experiences of being recruited via a political connection:

- The mayor contacted me.

- A council member suggested I join.

- The board chairman contacted me.

None of the recruitment processes were independent of a political connection. The lack of
independent recruitment through practices such as advertised recruitment, independent
posting, application, and interview, were indicative that the process was internal and
potentially biased. The drawbacks were that the selected members were from a limited
pool of participants and did not reflect the diversity of the community for whom they
were giving a voice.

The third major theme identified in the research was expectation. Participants
described their expectations in relation to the investigative process and the training they
received. The locations were selected based on how they were categorized on the
NACOLE website as investigative CRBs; however, the participants' experiences
collectively suggested that the board acted in the capacity of auditor or reviewer instead
of an investigator. Most participants expected to investigate misconduct allegations;
however, they discovered their scope of authority was not that of investigations but of

auditors or reviewers. Although some participants described their responsibility as investigators, they reviewed cases others had investigated to determine whether policies were violated and to make recommendations relating to discipline.

Another area identified with the theme of expectation was that of training. Most participants expected to receive training in the use of force and how to conduct investigations. They received minimal training in both areas. Relevant to training expectations, the second theme of inconsistency was also connected. Participants talked about wanting more training and the desire for consistency in the types of training they received. In the area of support, the participants described positive experiences with their expectations. Most of them shared positive experiences of being supported by the mayor, the police chief, and attorneys. Participant 3 had a different experience. He felt the support was forced because the agency for which he was a CRB member was under a consent decree.

The fourth major theme, hope, was shared by most of the participants. Participants described hope for the future regarding policy. Board members spoke about the need to improve some department policies and procedures. Participant 5 shared,

> I noticed that a lot of the rules were geared towards things that involved African Americans in a negative way. This sometimes causes profiling. I have seen an improvement in some of the policies. As a result, I believe in the consent decree.

Participant 3 also mentioned the policy changes in his board's process because of the consent decree. He said, "I'm hopeful that we continue to see changes in the policies that affect mostly minorities." Participant 1 remarked, "I live in a diverse neighborhood. I am

hopeful that the civilian review board's work is beneficial in righting some wrongs."

Many of the participants also expressed hope for community relationships to improve,

hope about building trust, and providing support for CRB members. Participant 2 said,

> The board has a seat at the table and can speak for the community. I have seen the
>
> change in relationships. Although sometimes we have setbacks, I am hopeful that
>
> we continue to move forward in a positive way.

Participant 4 spoke of hope and trust during her interview. Her statement was remarkably

like other board members from her location. Participant 4 said, "I believe that with the

board in place, we can rebuild the trust in law enforcement. And one way is to change

some of the policies on how our officers operate." Participant 6 mentioned, "I know this

is cliche, but where there is trust, there is hope; and as board members, we are helping to

build trust between the two major players." Participant 8 added to the topic of trust,

"With the new laws and transparency making the policies public in the finding of

investigations, trust will continue to grow between the police department and the

citizens." The participants shared hope for improved transparency through the sharing of

information. They were hopeful that their role as reviewers would build trust between law

enforcement and the community. There was also hope for improved policies and better

governance of actions. Finally, the participants shared hope for the support of CRBs and

their role in accountability and oversight.

One central research question and three sub questions framed the focus of the

study about the lived experiences of investigative CRB members. The central question

arose from the existing research that consistently identified a variety of review boards

including auditors, investigators, advisory boards, and disciplinary auditors (see Anderson, 2020; Beardall, 2019; Stephens et al., 2020). Additionally, the existing research identified significant differences in these boards' scope of authority, inconsistencies in the selection of board members, and disparities in training and support provided to the members (see Beardall, 2019; Fairley, 2020; Lee et al., 2017).

Several participants described positive experiences on their CRBs. One consistent statement amongst the participants was "giving citizens a voice." Five participants reported the concept of providing a voice to citizens contributed to their motivation for becoming a part of the CRB. Participant 2 described her experiences with the police and what she observed. She said, "I grew up seeing Black men fear the police. Some are not allowed to defend themselves, so maybe I can in some way be their voice and speak for them." Participant 5 described herself as an active community member who served on many boards for citizen rights and fairness. She said, "Becoming a part of this organization was beneficial for my community. I like to help people and give them a voice to make sure things are fair." Participant 4 spoke about being the conduit to giving the community a voice. Participant 4 said, "I wanna give back to the community in some way and be a voice for the people." The importance of being heard echoed throughout the interviews. Many participants connected the concept of providing a voice for the community to gain respect as CRB members. Giving citizens a voice was a primary motivating factor for the participants and supported the first major theme, motivation.

The subthemes of Theme 1, voice, fairness, and change, were also interspersed through the participant's experiences. Many participants spoke about fairness and equity

in not just the recruitment but in the investigations. Of note, one significant finding relevant to the central research question was the need for a fair and equitable process in recruiting and the future hope for change in that process.

SQ1 was "How were investigative CRB members recruited?" The consensus throughout the interviews, personal narratives, and writing prompts were that there is a significant deficiency in the recruitment and selection process. The weaknesses included how the board recruited new members, challenges with transparency in the process, and a lack of clear qualifications and standards to become a board member.

Every participant had remarkably similar experiences with the recruitment and selection process. A common experience was that member selection was based on political connections. Participant 1 and Participant 5 shared their experiences and echoed that there was no proper recruitment process. Participant 5 explained that her political affiliation was a steppingstone to the CRB. She said, "The experience I had when I was being recruited and processed was easy because of my position. I was known in the community and was contacted by the city council." Participant 1 had a friend on the city council, and that individual reached out to her and suggested she apply. Participant 1 said, "I think our recruitment and selection process is probably not the best. It's certainly not a fair process for everyone." Participant 3 disclosed that a political figure also recruited him, and the county executive contacted Participant 2 and encouraged her to apply for the position. Participant 2 also expressed that she had political affiliations, such as personal relationships with members of Congress, which made becoming a board member more accessible.

Many participants shared that no clear advertisement for joining CRB was provided to the public. Participant 5 explained that she heard about the CRB on the news, but there was no advertisement. She was familiar with the CRB because of her political affiliations. Participant 5 said, "there should be a way for regular folks to be involved in civilian review board not just because of who you know." Participant 3 expressed the need for more transparency in the recruitment process. During his interview, he stated,

there are many citizens who don't know that the civilian review board even exists. I would think if I were the mayor and there were openings, I would be talking to a reporter about trying to get people in the city to apply to make it open to all.

Participant 4 also shared her disappointment in the recruitment process, she stated "I was selected because I was female and there were no other clear qualifications required." She also said, "I was called by the then executive director of the citizen review board and did a phone interview." This statement once again showed no systematic recruiting process, which in its own way addressed a need for procedural justice.

SQ2 was "How did CRB members describe the support they received to conduct investigations into allegations of use of force and other police misconduct complaints?" The second major theme of inconsistency related to the scope of the board's authority permeated in the responses from all eight participants. The consensus from both boards was that investigations were subjective in that many members' experiences relating to investigations were that they were more auditors who reviewed completed investigations rather than conducting them. Participants 1 and 5 both stated that a paid administrator conducted the investigations. Participant 5 described her experience with the

investigative process and the expectation. She said, "if we are supposed to do investigations, we should have better training." She added, "the more severe cases involving the use of force are investigated outside our civilian board." Participant 4 also described how her perception of her role changed related to investigating cases. She commented, "we review cases and make recommendations." Like Participant 5, her board reviewed the investigations conducted by the police department or the board's administrator.

Another clear indication of a lack of consistency in the investigative process and the board's scope of authority was discussed by Participant 8, who talked about his in-depth knowledge of investigations. He mentioned that he reviewed cases and found them lacking while reviewing them. He stated, "the summaries would be inaccurate." Participant 6 said she expected to be a "real investigator." Her experience was that the group reviewed completed cases for accuracy "to ensure that the officers followed policy." Participant 4's experience, although positive, reflected a change in her expectations as it related to the scope of their authority. She felt that her role was still helpful to her community although "officers do the investigation, we would be given the reports and be able to review all the evidence after the investigation had concluded." Most participants shared that use of force complaints were above their scope of authority and conducted by an outside entity such as the police department. The board members had the opportunity to review those cases for accuracy and to verify that officers followed department policies.

The subthemes of policy, support for CRB members, voice, fairness, and change were highlighted by most participants. Participants described the support they received from their family and other community members related to investigations and being on the board. Participant 8 described the board's support and said, "I got a lot of great support." He expressed support in the form of having access to the evidence related to cases that he reviewed. One example was "the medical records were provided, and we were able to see the evidence to figure out whether the injury was attributed to the officer's interaction or if it happened some other way." Participants identified mental health support experiences as a need CRB creators needed to address. There was more emphasis on the support participants received from their families versus mental health support. The support from their family and the community empowered them to recommend improvements in policies that promoted fairness for all.

Several participants described their experiences as they related to support relevant to the investigative process. Their experiences were similar in that they spoke of organizational support from the police department, the legal system, and politicians. Participants 1, 2, and 8 experienced positive support from local leaders in the community. Participant 1 said, "the mayor and the deputy mayor are very supportive". Participant 2 mentioned that the chief of the police department was supportive in providing the board access to the evidence related to the cases they reviewed and said, "we had an attorney that was always there." She also described monthly meetings where the committee requested additional resources and received support. Both Participants 1 and 2 expressed

that over the years they have noticed a positive change in the support they received from the police department.

Participant 8 talked about the tremendous support he received while reviewing cases. He also mentioned accessibility to medical records and other evidence. He said, "although they are supportive, I sometimes wonder if we're being utilized in the best way." Participant 8 had concerns about the board's scope of authority with investigations. Participant 5 felt that the police department provided excellent support to assist in the investigative process, especially in dealing with evidence. She said,

> There is a rule in place that makes them provide us with all the evidence, you know, the body camera footage and all the statements and even pictures that they took from the scene because we don't get to go to the scene when a complaint is filed. They [police department] are very helpful.

Although both boards shared positive experiences with support, they also highlighted that their recommendations were often ignored. Participant 5 said, "They listen to us even though most of the time they don't really take our advice or our recommendation." Participant 3 also shared a similar sentiment. He described his experience with the investigative process and the support he received as being forced. Participant 3 explained that his board would meet with the police department, and they would have discussions. The board would submit their findings; however, they would not know if their recommendations were accepted.

SQ3 was "How do CRB members describe the training provided to participate as a member of an investigatory CRB?" Existing literature highlighted the need for

comprehensive policies for training. COPS (2015) suggested that policies should be clear, concise, and open for public inspection. Missing from the final report was guidance for establishing CRBs, managing community involvement, and training of its members.

The existing literature also highlighted how officers should perform their duties; however, there was no mention of any resources investigative CRBs should use to discern the actions of an officer. Kearns et al. (2017) stated the disparity in training could influence the conclusions of investigations conducted by members and recommended that recruitment standards and training should be well established. One example being an individual's knowledge of constitutional law. Without proper training, CRB members are not able to determine whether an officer violated the complainant's rights, diminishing the credibility and effective oversight that is intended by the establishment of a CRB (De Angelis et al., 2016; Finn, 2006; Seyffert, 2017).

Participant 1 described the training she received as a CRB member as lacking. Use of force training was incorporated in what she described as an annual training that included information from the police chief and the state attorney's office. Participant 1 suggested that her CRB could attend a Citizen Police Academy as she learned about use of force from the scenario-based training she participated in previously. Participant 1 described her overall experience with training as being inconsistent.

Participant 5 described her training experience as positive. She mentioned a lack of training when she first joined the CRB but reported this improved over the years because she insisted on it. She indicated that she was directly involved in implementing new training. She said, "I said it to anyone that would listen. We need better and more

consistent training." Participants 2 and 5 also expressed concerns about the types of training they received. Participant 3 shared that his board was offered the opportunity to participate in a Citizen Police Academy and members would receive training on the use of force. However, the training was not required for members, and he did not participate in that training.

Participants 4, 6, 7, and 8 described similar experiences on their boards. They all mentioned the ride-along experience as a positive part of their training. Participant 4 said, "it helped develop relationships with the police department," and Participant 8 said, "the ride along was by far the best exposure for understanding what officer experienced." All eight participants felt that training was essential; however, they all agreed that there was a lack of consistency in the training they received and mentioned the absence of a standardized curriculum.

Current literature regarding CRBs focuses mainly on the need for police reform and accountability (see Ehrenfreund, 2015). Brereton (2000), Davie (2019), and Lee et al. (2017) examined the role of the CRB and determined there was no definitive description of CRBs. This determination was consistent with my research. As mentioned previously, Stephens et al. (2020) identified over 100 CRBs, and determined the duties and functions of the CRBs were not defined. I found that participants described the same experiences relating to their board's scope of authority.

According to Ochs and Gonzales (2019), there was not enough information about citizen oversight investigations, despite societal demands in communities where police misconduct - specifically the use of excessive force - was perceived as rampant. Brunson

(2007) suggested law enforcement should develop review and investigative processes that included civilians to rebuild trust in the police. CRBs have the potential to meet this need; however, there is a lack of consistency in defining expectations, as well as determining the members, their support, and training needs. In addition to the lack of a well-defined CRB, I found no literature specific to the recruitment of members, including the selection process, support for members, or training standards.

Limitations of the Study

This study explored the lived experiences of investigative civilian review board members as they related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. Data were collected using an in-depth interview with 13 initial questions, a personal narrative, and a writing prompt. In this transcendental phenomenological analysis, I utilized several steps to ensure trustworthiness during the execution of the study, such as having a clear separation of participants from me.

As an Assistant Chief of a Police Department, I am tasked with accountability, oversight, and involvement with CRBs in the area where I work. It was imperative to address any possibility of bias by selecting review board members from another state with whom I had no connection. To ensure the trustworthiness of the identified CRBs, I recruited participants from the NACOLE list of Investigative CRBs.

I selected participants from two locations with similar demographics. I also addressed potential bias by engaging in the practice of suspending judgment (epoché). The research process included:

- Setting aside natural assumptions regarding the phenomenon.

- Regular journaling.

- Providing the participants, the opportunity for member checking.

I followed the four systematic steps to limit errors in the methodology, data interpretation, and the creation of a final report. The steps were (epoché, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meanings) recommended by methodology expert Dr. Philip Adu from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, National Center for Academic and Dissertation Excellence (NCADE). Subject matter expert Dr. Jennifer Beskid provided additional directions for the completion of the study.

Another limitation was relying on the voluntary participation of CRB members and their agencies. Although this limitation was outside my control, once the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval had been obtained, I sent letters of invitation to 48 target CRBs from the NACOLE list to gain buy-in and participation. When I received a positive response from a CRB member that met the criteria, I responded immediately via e-mail, got consent, and scheduled the interview. I also provided follow-up as agreed upon relating to member checking and writing prompts. I attained saturation and did not expand the study beyond the two target areas.

The COVID-19 global pandemic also limited the study because of the restrictions placed on how and when the CRBs met. The pandemic also limited how CRBs were recruited (community engagement) and the types of training and support they received. The pandemic severely impacted both CRBs. It affected the delivery of cases reviewed and in-person training for CRB members. The board held virtual meetings, which

presented a challenge for case review due to the confidential nature of investigations and restrictions placed on how the reviews were conducted. The inability to review cases in person resulted in extended time to completion. For example, the participants explained the normal process of an investigation and findings was usually one year; however, the board extended the time it took for cases to be reviewed, especially those identified as criminal because the courts were closed.

Both boards were affected by COVID-19. They explained that their case reviews took longer because it was difficult to get together, making it challenging to access reports. Participant 6 said, "with COVID, the courts were closed, and documents were always delayed." Participant 8 mentioned, "completing reviews became a problem due to confidentiality and limited access to the reports." Participant 7 spoke of the inconsistency of their meetings, "we had fewer meetings, but it seemed like the complaint also became less frequent."

Scope and Delimitations

As I embarked on this journey, it was obvious that there would be a limited number of investigative CRB members. To add to the existing literature, I focused on CRB members who conducted investigations based on their scope of authority. Furthermore, I focused on the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as they related to their recruitment and selection, training, and support. I utilized a transcendental approach which, as suggested by Moustakas (1994), allowed for the investigation of human experiences. The transcendental phenomenological research design allowed the CRB members to share their experiences holistically.

Identifying and selecting the participants for this research was a delimitating factor. The participants had to be members of an investigative CRB in the Northeast and Midwest areas of the United States. Using these two locations allowed for added distance from my location to aid in anonymity and neutrality. I identified two large metropolitan cities as the target areas for the research. NACOLE identified the two sites as having investigatory CRBs. The result of the study is transferable to other CRBs given the diversity in the specified locations, including one on the Northeast coast and one from the Midwest. Delimitation was not selected for education background or age as this would have further narrowed the pool of qualified participants.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study sought to learn about the lived experiences of investigative CRB members as they related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. The CRBs were conducting investigations of police misconduct when there was a national outcry to defund the police and a general distrust for law enforcement. This outcry stemmed from increased incidents where minorities had died during interactions with police officers.

Recruitment and Selection

There was a lack of formal recruiting through the media, including Facebook or news channels. CRB website provided little to no direction regarding membership. There was also a lack of a systematic process. Except for Participant 8, whose process involved two interviews, the selection process was disorganized in that potential members were contacted by phone and did not need to meet a criterion. Only one participant mentioned a standard. Participant 4 expressed her disappointment in the recruitment process. "I was

also selected because I was female." Although Participant 4 expressed her disappointment in the process, she stated, "It has gotten much better now."

One question this study sought to understand was the recruitment and selection process of CRB members. Specifically, one question asked participants to describe how CRB members were recruited. Of the eight participants, seven responded that recruitment had significant deficiencies. Most participants expressed that the process was not open to everyone because it was not advertised effectively. Even in the cases where it was announced, it wasn't easy to locate the information in the news. Except for Participant 3, who said his recruitment process was political, but he could not remember exactly which of his friends in office recruited him, seven out of the eight participants confirmed that a political figure recruited them.

Additionally, this study determined there was an overarching political influence regarding the selection and recruitment of CRB members. The current research described political involvement in which stakeholders from citizen coalitions, lawmakers, activists, religious leaders, and politicians sought to change the perceived injustice perpetrated by police on marginalized communities (*Public Participation Guide: Citizen Advisory Boards | Us Epa*, 2014). Many news sources used the phrase "no justice, no peace" (The Guardian, 2020, KARE 11, 2020, Durán, 2016). The BLM movement has forced citizens throughout the U.S. and worldwide to examine the concept of social injustice, question the need for a systematic change in policing – especially the disciplinary process for police officers, and address accountability and oversight measures for police (Belam, 2021).

In this research, a political connection was a term that participants shared as they described their experiences. To be exact, seven of the eight participants described how their political connections resulted in their participation as a CRB member. Participants specifically addressed how political concerns were manifested in the recruitment process. Participant 7 said, "my friend gave me the number of the chairman of the board, and I called, set up an interview, met with them, and about a week later, I got an email telling me that I had been selected." She also added that the mayor appointed the board members. Participant 4 said, "I was called by the then executive director of the citizen review board." Participant 5 said, "I am politically connected, so it was easy for me."

Training

Two questions addressed inconsistencies that related to investigation, training, and support. Participants described inconsistencies in the scope of their authorities regarding investigations. Six of the eight participants shared that their role was more as reviewers or auditors than investigators. Although Participant 5 considered herself an investigator, she described her responsibility as reviewing a completed investigation conducted by the Police Department or a paid administrator. Participant 3 also used the words investigator, describing her experience reviewing a completed case file. She did not investigate the case.

This study did not seek to address what was going on in the media regarding law enforcement and community relations. Yet, many participants expressed their motivation to be on the CRB stemmed from a desire for fairness and equity and providing the community of voice because of the negative perceptions they believed society held

toward police officers. Participant 1 described the disparity she watched in her diverse neighborhood and shared, "I want to give them a voice." Participant 5 wanted to be the instrument of fairness and a voice for her community to be heard. She said, "I am a former military nurse, and I like to help people and give them a voice to ensure things are fair." Participant 3 mentioned where he grew up, "In my neighborhood, Black men are afraid to walk the streets for fear of being shot by the police." He expressed that was a part of his motivation to join the CRB.

Authority of the CRB

When considering recommendations for future research, the scope of authority of CRBs is one area that should be explored further. The study determined the scope of the authority of the investigative boards needed to be better defined. Although NACOLE had more than 48 CRBSs listed as investigative boards, meaning that the board members conducted investigations; during the interview, participants reported their experiences as being case reviewers or auditors. Participant 1 explained, "we also use a private investigator, that we can pay if we need to, to investigate a case and the administrator is not available." Participant 3 said, "We have a separate staff do the investigation, and we also get the investigation file from the police department." Participant 4 said, "we reviewed cases in groups and discussed our opinions." She added, "our findings would be influenced based on the group's makeup." She said that her expectations of investigating cases also changed. She described her experience as reviewing cases rather than investigating them. Participant 8 expressed this sentiment as he described his experience, "I expected to investigate the cases, but the board only reviewed them." Additional

research could help to determine if the CRB can effectively contribute to meeting the community's needs for procedural justice in investigations.

Another recommendation for future research would be to examine the level of expertise of CRB member regarding knowledge of police training and practices to include use of force and other mandates for police investigations. These practices could be valuable to reduce negative community perceptions or biases relating to the effectiveness of current and future CRBs.

The current literature describes CRBs often as a dog with no teeth because of the scope of their authority (CNS, 2017; KVIA, 2020; & Quander, 2014) and the research confirmed this belief. Several CRB members discussed their shared experiences that their recommendations were not taken seriously. Participant 3 shared his experience, "we also make our recommendations, not that it carries any weight." Participant 2 felt similar frustration stating, "They didn't always come back and tell us what changed if we disagreed with their findings."

Training

Research into a standardized curriculum for CRBs could be beneficial as it may provide a more fair and equitable investigative process leading to an improved relationship between law enforcement and the community. It could also help civilians who desire to join a CRB by expanding their understanding of police policies and actions relating to the use of force and other incidents they are investigating. Inconsistency in training was a common experience among the participants. Except for Participant 3, the remaining seven participants expressed a need for consistent training. Many participants

described the training they received regarding use of force; however, there was no systematic approach involving a training curriculum in either location. One location required its members to attend a Citizen Police Academy, while the other recommended the academy but did not require its members to attend.

This study aligned with the previous literature and identified the critical need for change and improvements in training and support. Participant 1 expressed her frustration with the lack of training and said,

I kept pushing to have more training, so I think there should be special training for us so that we can understand and provide better service for the community, especially when we are doing investigations that can affect another human being's life.

Board members in Location M were not required to take the Citizen Police Academy course; however, Location N was required to do so. This is one example of inconsistency in training. Participant 5 said she took it upon herself to get additional training because she felt it was necessary.

There were also positive experiences relating to training from the participants in Location N. Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 5 from Location N spoke of the benefits of training and specifically mentioned the Citizen Police Academy and scenario exercises as part of the training they received. Participant 1 said, "it gives you a little bit more clarity on why they may have reacted the way they did." These experiences reiterated the need for systematic curriculum-based training for all CRB members. Participant 6 said, "It's hard to find training specific to what we do. They recommend

training on NACOLE, but nothing is consistent right now" [referring to the changes with the pandemic]. Participant 8 felt it was imperative to have structured training. He said, "police have required training, attorneys have required training, judges, and doctors alike." Participant 7 felt that the CRB would be able to get grants for training. She said, "the DOJ has many different types of grants, and that could benefit the board if some types, of course, were made mandatory for members."

Support

Finally, the study revealed political figures and board members' families supported CRBs. The current research also confirmed the support of local leaders and lawmakers called for establishing citizen accountability boards in every county in Maryland (OAS, 2021). The support in the current research involved creating CRBs to address accountability and oversight; what it did not cover was the mental health support needed to process cases involving use of force. Research into mental health support for CRB members could aid in addressing unconscious biases that could develop from case reviews that may be difficult to process emotionally.

Participants experienced support related to accessibility to evidence associated with cases being reviewed and the support they received from their families. Many participants shared experiences of the support they received from their family and friends. Participant 1 said, "my family was very supportive." Participant 2 shared the same experience stating, "My family was supportive. It wasn't a surprise to them because I've always been the one that had the mouth, say whatever needed to be said regardless of

the consequences." Although Participant 4 had support from her family, she stated that "they still don't quite understand what it is I do, but they are supportive."

The participants also described the support they received regarding resources to investigate cases. They described evidence as being accessible and provided to the board members. One department was under a consent decree and as such some of the board members thought the sharing of information was done with reluctance. Participant 3 describing the support he received as forced. He emphasized that due to the consent decree, the police department had no choice but to provide the board with the evidence they needed to review cases. Participant 8 mentioned getting access to body camera footage and medical examiner reports while reviewing a case.

A consistent message that emerged from the study was the desire for mental health support for CRB members. Future research could explore the role of mental health services. Participants shared that they supported each other when they faced an emotionally difficult case. Most felt that mental health experts should be provided to help board members. Participant 7 said, "Some cases affected me emotionally." Participant 4 stated, "when we review a difficult case, you know, like ones involving use of force, some of it is hard to watch." Participant 6 felt that "sometimes we need someone to talk to, but for the most part, we talk to each other." Participant 1 said, "we have a good group now that is very supportive. We just lean on each other. We make friends within the board, and you talk after meetings."

Empirical Implications

The implications of this research served to address a gap in the literature regarding the experiences of Investigative CRB members. Specifically, the research provided insight into the CRB members experience relating to recruitment and selection, training, and support. The research examined how CRB member were recruited and the selection process as well as the volume and types of training received by board members. Finally, participants offered insight into the support they received relevant to emotional support from their families as well as mental health support or lack thereof.

Theoretical Implications

The theory that guided this study was Tyler's (1988) procedural justice theory. I selected Tyler's approach because the goal of CRBs was to provide a service to the community that was fair and equitable as it relates to how they recruit and select their members. Additionally, the board members expected proper training to conduct impartial investigations of alleged police misconduct and reasonable support when dealing with the exposure of critical incidents.

The study helped clarify CRB members' critical needs and concerns related to recruitment and selection, training, and support. The experiences described by the participants supported Tyler's (1988) theory of fairness. Although not directly addressed in the research, two participants shared that they were not paid for serving on the board.

The participant's statements identified a need for a more systematic approach to the process of recruitment and selection. Participant 1 shared her concern about the recruitment process by stating, "I think that our recruitment and selection process is

probably not the best. It's certainly not a fair process for everyone." She talked about

political affiliations that allowed her to become a part of the CRB. She stated, "The way

that I became aware of the vacancy was, a friend of mine who was my council

representative on the city council reached out to me."

The process identified a bias in that all citizens did not appear to have the same

opportunity to be selected for their CRB. Participant 3 spoke of the lack of equity in the

recruitment process and said,

> There are many citizens who don't know that the civilian review boards even
>
> exist. I would think if I were the mayor and there were openings, I would be
>
> talking to a reporter about trying to get people in the city to apply to make it open
>
> to all.

Participant 8 described how he monitors the job board. "They've never posted one of

these board positions to a jobs board." He added, "I have never seen a posting for that

job." Like Participants 1, 5, and 6, Participant 3's experience was similar. He said, "In my

case, I think it was a friend of mine who's politically connected that suggested I apply,

and I did."

The participants shared their experience about training and expressed a need for

training that would help them conduct better investigations. Except for Participant 3, all

others desired more training or what could be best described as a systematic approach to

training that was fair and consistent. Without consistent training, the expectation of

investigations being fair, unbiased, and equitable for officers would be concerning.

Participant 1 described the training she received as a CRB member as lacking. Her

overall experience with training was that there was a lack of consistency. She explained, "our administrator goes to different trainings and brings the information back, but with COVID, that has changed, and a lot of our training is now done by video."

Participant 5 felt there was a lack of training when she first joined the board, but it improved because she insisted on it. "I said it to anyone that would listen. We need better training and more consistent training." Participant 5 also mentioned that the most consistent part of their training experience was the Citizen Police Academy. One location required its members to attend a basic Citizen Police Academy, while the other did not. Participant 8 felt it was imperative to have structured training. He said, "police have required training, so do attorneys, judges, and doctors." His experience was, "Our role is very important so we should have a required set of training that we must complete. I don't think this has been taken seriously." Participant 7 said, "the DOJ has many different types of grants, and that could benefit the board if some training courses were made mandatory for members."

Investigations were problematic for both CRBs. Members of both boards described inconsistencies in the way cases were handled. The scope of the board's authority needed improvements. Participants reviewed cases that an administrator or the police department had already investigated. Although these boards were identified as an investigative board, their members did not conduct investigations. Using the police department to conduct investigations of allegations of police misconduct could not be considered a fair and equitable process. Participant 2 stated officers were not supposed to be on her CRB, yet the Council made an exception for one retired officer, understanding

that he could not review cases involving officers he knew. This did not align with the theory of procedural justice. Participant 3 said, "we also make our recommendations, not that it carries any weight."

Most of the members expected to receive some training on using force, and others wanted training on how to complete investigations. Participant 5 said, "board members need more organized training." Participant 5 added, "There are times that the board has heated discussions about what is right and wrong." She felt it comes back to training, "I jumped up and down about it because I think that it is important for us to be fair and knowledgeable on what we are reviewing." Participant 8 said, "I expected to investigate the cases, but the board only reviewed them." Participant 8 talked about his in-depth knowledge of investigations and found that the cases he reviewed were lacking, "The summaries would be inaccurate. It was just wild."

Conclusion

There has been a significant rise in the demand for civilian review boards, and it has become more evident that they will play an integral role in investigating police misconduct. These boards have received mixed reviews about their effectiveness and value to a fair and equitable process as it pertains to their role as an accountability and oversight entity. Research exists regarding the effectiveness of CRBs, but there is limited information about the recruitment and selection process as well as training and support for board members.

This study determined that although the current research identified the need for civilian review boards as one way of addressing accountability and oversight, a

systematic process for training or support has not been universally established nor has a clear understanding of the board's scope of authority been determined. The current research has concluded citizens would be more willing to accept the negative outcomes of interactions between police officers and citizens if they believed the officers' actions were based on a set of guidelines, policies, and procedures (Harrison, 2021). CRB members can provide a level of accountability stemming from the transparency of their investigations (COPS, 2015); however, this must be coupled with training and support for the CRB members; as well as governance bodies being established to include diversity of race, gender, language, cultural background, and life experiences (COPS, 2015; Landaw, 2020).

In addition to determining scope and authority as well as the make-up of participants, uniform policies guiding the CRBs should be developed and adopted. According to COPS (2015), "Law enforcement agencies should have comprehensive policies on the use of force that include training, investigations, prosecutions, data collection, and information sharing. These policies must be clear, concise, and openly available for public inspection" (p.24). COPS (2015), Rahr and Rice (2015), and Wolfe, Rojek, and McLean (2020) referenced what citizens expect of law enforcement - fairness, respect, and cooperation. Just as law enforcement agencies should have policies to guide an officer's conduct, CRBs should have policies to guide their processes. Once policies are established, members should receive training regarding their roles.

This study concluded there was a lack of consistency in the training of CRB members. One location had some mandatory training, while the other did not. Participant

5 said, "I kept pushing to have more training to understand and provide better service for the community, especially when we are doing investigations that can affect another human being's life." The study suggested a systematic approach to continuing education for CRB members should include a curriculum consisting of mandatory courses relating to police policy, use of force, applicable state mandates relating to law enforcement oversight, and how to conduct a misconduct investigation.

Finally, this study determined a need for a clear understanding of CRB members' roles and the scope of their authority by both the members and the agencies they served. Every participant described case reviews, not case investigations, even though they are listed on the NACOLE list as Investigative boards. Participant 2 said, "we review cases and make recommendations." This information should be made public to support transparency and promote citizen trust.

The research was interested in determining the type of support participants received given the nature of the cases being reviewed. Participants spoke minimally about mental health support. The study revealed that law enforcement management and city officials support the work of the CRB; however, they did not demonstrate the need to provide mental health support for the potential trauma reviewing these cases may cause. There was a clear indication that mental health support is a resource that was lacking in CRBs. Participants expressed they supported each other when dealing with a difficult case review and touched on how support from police administration is improving.

CRBs must continue to identify and standardize their best practices to provide accountability and effective oversight. They can begin this journey by providing a more

equitable recruitment and selection process as well as consistent mandatory, systematic training for members. Finally, providing resources to support CRB members, who may be emotionally affected by reviewing cases that can be disturbing, is an area that would benefit from additional research. The result of this research could potentially improve current best practices in CRBs and other accountability bodies as they seek to enhance fair practices of accountability and oversight while improving relationships with law enforcement and the community and supporting positive social change.

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Appendix A: CRB member letter

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY

I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University for the PhD in forensic psychology program. I am recruiting research participants who are current members of civilian oversight boards, investigating police accountability. For the purpose of this research, the boards are referred to as Civilian Review Boards (CRB).

This study is important because the current research does not provide information about how CRB members are recruited, selected, trained, and supported from a holistic perspective. The study will be supervised by Doctor James Herndon, Walden University.

This study seeks to investigate how CRB members experience the recruitment and selection process of becoming a CRB member. The study will also explore the experiences CRB members have with regard to training and support while serving on an investigative CRB.

LOCATION
I will interview the participants remotely via a video conferencing platform. The interview is expected to last between 30 - 45 minutes, will request a personal narrative, and will be followed-up with an email writing prompt. Participation is completely voluntary. The participants identity will remain confidential.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS
This study has the potential to help citizens and police organizations understand how CRBs differ based on the recruitment and selection process as well as training and support the members receive.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
Current Investigative CRB members with the follow:

1. Participants must be at least 21 years old
2. Participant must be a member of the participating CRB

To further discuss this or if you have additional questions, please contact me at or call or text at

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

Dear Prospective Participant Name:

I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am recruiting investigatory Civilian Review Board members for a significant study. The study is a transcendental qualitative exploration of Investigatory Civilian Review Board members' experiences joining and serving on Civilian Review Boards. This study seeks to investigate the lived experiences of Civilian Review Board members relevant to the recruitment and selection process. The study will also explore the Civilian Review Board member's experiences pertinent to training or lack of training provided, support or lack of support received while serving on the civilian review board.

I am seeking active CRB members above the age of 21 who have conducted police practice complaint investigations. I plan to begin collecting data in March and April of 2022. If you are interested in participating in this study or know someone who meets the criteria for the study, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. You can reach me directly by clicking the linked email at
The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes with a follow-up audio recording. about 10 minutes in length. Each interview will occur via an electronic platform and will be audio recorded. Your name will not be used in the research. Instead of your actual name, a pseudonym will be used, and your organizations' name will not be shared with readers of the study or at final publication. This study is voluntary, and you can end the interview at any time. Your information and participation will always be kept confidential.

Thank you in advance for considering this worthy endeavor. Although participation in this study will help fulfill my requirements for a Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology at Walden University, the information gained from this study can benefit many, including citizens and Law enforcement management who continue to work toward improvements in transparency and accountability.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Walden University PhD Candidate

Appendix C: Demographic Information Sheet

Pseudonym: _____   Date: _____

Age: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____

Marital Status: _____

Position on CRB_____

Years on the CRB: _____

Highest educational level

____ High School/GED
____ A.A./A.S.
____ B.A./B.S.
____ Master's/Professional
____ PhD

Profession: _____

Any affiliations with police (other than CRB membership): _____

Appendix D: Writing Prompt

1. Please consider what we discussed in your interview and describe anything else that you would like to share about your motivation to become a CRB member?

2. I would now like you to think about the person or persons who influenced your decision to become a member of a CRB and describe their reaction to your decision.