

6-29-2024

Ecological Factors and Minority Young Adults' Trust in Law Enforcement

Jason Boswell
Walden University

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

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

Walden University

College of Psychology and Community Services

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Jason R. Boswell

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

Review Committee

Dr. Ali Banister, Committee Chairperson,
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Kimberley Blackmon, Committee Member,
Criminal Justice Faculty

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

Walden University
2024

Abstract

Ecological Factors and Minority Young Adults' Trust in Law Enforcement

by

Jason R. Boswell

MA, American Public University, 2012

BS, Park University, 2001

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2024

Abstract

Throughout the past decade, studies have shown that the relationship between police organizations and community members has developed mistrust as more citizens begin to document misconduct by law enforcement officers. Studies have also proven that community members trust the police when they feel the police are fair and just. Distrust of law enforcement undermines the legitimacy of police officers, and without this trust legitimacy, police officers lose their ability and authority to perform their jobs effectively. To help bridge the gap between minority communities and law enforcement agencies, this qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to examine the trust within law enforcement using the ecological systems theory. Data was collected by recruiting and interviewing 20 young minority adults aged 18 to 23 years of age in the Dallas, Texas, area. Interview questions were related to the participants' perceptions regarding trust between law enforcement and what factors caused trust or mistrust. Analysis of the data collected led to the identification of three themes: (a) trust was built by close family members, (b) mistrust was built by the participant's social media awareness, and (c) mistrust was built by the participant's awareness of historical events. The findings of this study have potential implications for a positive social change by increasing trust between minority communities and law enforcement, leading to less crime and fewer instances of police misconduct or excessive use of force.

Ecological Factors and Minority Young Adults' Trust in Law Enforcement

by

Jason R. Boswell

MA, American Public University, 2012

BS, Park University, 2001

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2024

Dedication

My dissertation would not have been possible without the encouragement and strength of many people in and throughout my life. First, I would like to acknowledge my wife. Without her encouragement, support, understanding, and, most of all, patience and love, the hours spent on this achievement would not have been possible.

To my kids, this project is a testament to you that anything is possible with hard work and diligence. One can accomplish anything if you put your mind, heart, and soul into it.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to the positive social change that we should all strive to promote and to the continued research and study into ensuring the world is a better place for our children.

Acknowledgments

My dissertation would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of the academic faculty of Walden University. I would like to thank the University for allowing me to conduct my research and providing assistance on many occasions. I would like to acknowledge my committee member, Dr. Kimberley Blackmon, who was willing to provide added encouragement and support. Most importantly, I want to specifically recognize my Dissertation Chair, Dr. Ali Banister, who provided much-needed encouragement and support. A special thanks to her for all the time she spent reading the numerous revisions and for allowing me to improve throughout this journey. Without her guidance and patience, this study would not have been completed.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background	2
Problem Statement	2
Purpose of Study	4
Research Question	4
Theoretical Foundation	4
Nature of Study	8
Definitions.....	10
Assumptions.....	12
Scope and Delimitations	13
Limitations	14
Significance.....	14
Summary	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
Introduction.....	17
Literature Search Strategy.....	19
Theoretical Foundation	20
Social Learning Theory.....	21

Social Control Theory	24
Ecological Systems Theory.....	26
Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts	31
Mistrust of Law Enforcement	32
Definition of Trust	34
Influences of Trust	37
Microsystem.....	44
Mesosystem.....	45
Exosystem.....	46
Macrosystem.....	47
Chronosystem	48
Studies Utilizing Subsystems of Ecological Systems Theory	48
Ecological Systems Theory and Self-Esteem	49
Summary and Conclusions	51
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	54
Introduction.....	54
Research Design and Rationale	55
Phenomenon of the Study	56
Research Tradition	56
Role of the Researcher	60
Methodology	61
Participant Selection Logic	61

Instrumentation	64
Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection	67
Data Analysis Plan	70
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	72
Credibility	72
Transferability.....	73
Dependability	73
Confirmability.....	74
Ethical Procedures	75
Summary	76
Chapter 4: Results	79
Introduction.....	79
Settings.....	80
Demographics	81
Data Collection	82
Data Analysis	84
<i>Note.</i> From Naeem, M. (2024, March 17). “A Step-by-Step Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model on Qualitative Research” [Diagram]. LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/step-by-step-process-thematic- analysis-develop-conceptual-naeem-lwage/	85
Themes and Codes	86

Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	91
Credibility	91
Transferability.....	92
Dependability	92
Confirmability.....	93
Results by Theme.....	93
Theme 1: Age as a Factor	93
Theme 2: Race as a Factor	95
Theme 3: News and Social Media Awareness as a Factor	97
Theme 4: Family Members as a Factor.....	99
Theme 5: Gender as a Factor	100
Theme 6: Historical Events as a Factor	101
Theme 7: Prior Experiences as a Factor	102
Trust Level Results	105
Summary	106
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	108
Introduction.....	108
Interpretation of the Findings.....	109
Key Finding 1: Age Factor Influences Trust Level	110
Key Finding 2: Race Factor Influences Trust Level.....	111
Key Finding 3: News and Social Media Awareness.....	112
Key Finding 4: Family Members Influence Trust Level	114

Key Finding 5: Gender Influence Trust Level	115
Key Finding 6: Historical Events Influence Trust Level	116
Key Finding 7: Prior Experiences Influence Trust Level	118
Limitations of the Study.....	120
Recommendations.....	121
Implications.....	123
Positive Social Change	123
Conclusion	127
References.....	129
Appendix: Recruiting Material	148

List of Tables

Table 1	<i>Participant Demographic Data</i>	81
Table 2	<i>Length of Participants' Interviews</i>	83
Table 3	<i>Research Question and Themes</i>	87
Table 4	<i>Codes Clustered Together</i>	88
Table 5	<i>Themes, Codes, and Frequencies</i>	89
Table 6	<i>Codes and Themes</i>	90

List of Figures

Figure 1 <i>Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory</i>	29
Figure 2 <i>Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory</i>	43
Figure 3 <i>Thematic Analysis</i>	85
Figure 4 <i>Conceptual Model</i>	104

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Researchers have presented studies that show over the past decade, the relationship between police and communities has become strained as more citizens have begun to document police misconduct (Archibald et al., 2017). The basis for the topic selection was to determine whether the ecological systems theory can shape community trust in law enforcement. Currently, very few studies have examined the trust level in law enforcement among minority young adults using the ecological systems theory.

I sought to examine the trust level of law enforcement in minority young adults, 18 to 23 years of age, in the Dallas, Texas (TX) area. Specific focus was placed on efforts to identify whether these young adults developed their trust or mistrust in law enforcement officials throughout their lives due to various ecological systems, such as personal demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, their social or mass media awareness, and historical events.

Using a qualitative research method, including semistructured interviews and rhetorical analysis, I interpreted, analyzed, and provide findings using binary logistic regression and logistic regressions. Finally, I examined these findings in relation to trust levels and how they can provide senior-level law enforcement officials with a base on how to improve or maintain trust levels. Chapter 1 provides the background and problem statement surrounding this phenomenological issue, the overall purpose and research question concerning the study, and finally, the theoretical framework and the significance

of utilizing the ecological systems theory to help understand the level of trust in minority young adults in law enforcement.

Background

Throughout the past decade, studies have shown that the relationship between police organizations and community members has developed mistrust as more citizens have begun to document misconduct by law enforcement officers (Archibald et al., 2017). Research has also shown that communities trust the police when they feel the police are fair and just (Tyler et al., 2014). Distrust of law enforcement undermines the legitimacy of police officers, and without this trust legitimacy, police officers lose their ability and authority to effectively perform their job (Horowitz, 2007).

What is unknown is whether adults within the United States shape their level of trust in law enforcement by their demographics, such as their own personal demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, their social or mass media awareness, and historical events as defined in the ecological systems theory (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study was essential so that law enforcement agencies can gain insight as to the trust level among minority young adults, and where these individuals develop such mistrust or trust. In doing so, senior leadership in law enforcement can develop innovative ways to regain the trust and relationship once lost or maintain and further strengthen these areas.

Problem Statement

Studies have proven that community members trust the police when they feel the police are fair and just (Tyler et al., 2014). Distrust of law enforcement undermines the

legitimacy of police officers, and without this trust legitimacy, police officers lose their ability and authority to perform their job effectively (Horowitz, 2007). The shaping of community mistrust is a building process by which citizens adopt a negative attitude resulting from police using aggressive tactics and behavior. These actions by police officers also help create an environment in which the officers are somewhat paralyzed in performing their duties (Brunson, 2007).

Moreover, citizens residing in more underprivileged neighborhoods have stated that police officers frequently harass and unfairly target them and have more aggressive, disrespectful, and verbally abusive attitudes toward them (Brunson, 2007; Gau & Brunson, 2010). These actions continue to destroy trust in communities and the police or allow for continued mistrust and hatred.

It is unclear whether the factors defined in the ecological systems theory (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979) play a role in how minority young adults shape their level of trust in law enforcement. These factors can include demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, historical events, and even social media influences. Due to the limited evidence in this area, I sought to add to the existing body of research. I aimed to explore what demographic factors shape trust in law enforcement among minority youth aged 18 to 23 years of age within the Dallas, TX, area.

Conducting further research on this topic may bridge the gap in the current research and provide law enforcement information on how to strengthen partnerships with these parties and promote a positive social change by "creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals,

communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies" (Walden University, 2022).

Purpose of Study

In this qualitative phenomenological study, I explored how ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority young adults, 18 to 23 years of age, within the Dallas, TX, area. This was accomplished by utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, such as their demographics such race, age, gender, prior experience with law enforcement, historical events, and their social or mass media awareness. Although there have been studies into the level of trust in law enforcement with minorities, none have been found to explore the 18- to 23-year-old minorities level while examining the ecological influences. Thus, I sought to fill this gap, by providing insight into how the different ecological influences affect minority young adults in law enforcement and to determine whether these factors impact, deter, motivate, or build trust in law enforcement within this specific demographic.

Research Question

The following research question (RQ) guided this study as it pertained to the level of trust in law enforcement by minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age:

RQ: How do ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults, aged 18 to 23, in Dallas, TX?

Theoretical Foundation

This study combined three principal theoretical prisms in the study design, execution, and overall analysis. These prisms included Bandura's (1963) social learning

theory, Hirschi's (1977) social control theory, and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. Each of these theories has assisted researchers in defining how attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions are socially learned, reinforced, and renegotiated.

Furthermore, these particular theories have assisted researchers in explaining how perceptions and conduct are shaped within communities at risk, including minorities.

These theoretical prisms were applied to evaluate how socially learned, approved, and enforced behavior functions as a means of an individual's learned behavior.

These theories have significant implications for this study because they provided a theoretical framework for understanding how personal influences affect minority young adults' level of trust in law enforcement. The central concern of this study was to understand how the demographical influences of minority young adults shape their level of trust in law enforcement officials by their behavior, intuitions, and perceptions. Bandura's (1963) social learning theory and Hirschi's (1977) social bond theory were utilized in the development of this study to learn how people are developed.

Under Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory, an individual develops and learns by observation. It further shows that learning is "the result of direct experience with the environment" (Bandura, 1963a). In other words, people learn their behavior by simply observing others' behavior. Bandura went on to state that the majority of human behaviors are learned through observation and modeling. By watching others, individuals form mental representations of how novel behaviors are executed. These cognitive codes then serve as templates to guide one's own actions during future applicable situations.

With this specific theory, social learning can be utilized to effectively observe and model personal behavior(s) and workplace behavior(s).

As defined by Wiatrowski et al. (1981), Hirschi's social control theory addressed the effects of early childhood within youths and claimed many of them formed a bond to society which prevented some of them from becoming involved with delinquency. The study also claimed that other youths failed to form a bond and became delinquents. This theory was supported by research Hirschi conducted, which revealed that delinquency involvement was inversely related to the strength of an individual's relationship to society.

Very much like these social learning and bond or control theories, ecological systems theory was of specific value to the study as it included not only the same grounded theory as Bandura and Hirschi, but this theory went further insofar as to examine influences such as traditional and social media and environmental changes and influences, which are also connected to the effects of how minority young adults develop their level of trust within law enforcement.

By adding the ecological systems theory, the application of additional influences such as cultural and environmental to the present study situates the level of trust in law enforcement among minority young adults at the center of this study. Subsequently, Bronfenbrenner's theory provides the constructive framework through which to evaluate the effects of the presumed level of trust within the minority young adults in Dallas, TX, as well as the deficiencies of such as it relates to the various rings within the ecological systems theory.

Bronfenbrenner asserted that various ecological systems play a vital role in the development of children as they grow. These influences include areas such as immediate family members, social groups, social and mass media, attitudes of cultural society, and environmental changes. However, no studies have been conducted to determine if these ecological influences change the level of trust in law enforcement among minority young adults 18 to 23 years of age. This study was designed to fill an existing gap in the research regarding the impact in relation to the level of trust in law enforcement within the minority young adult community.

One of the ambitions of this study was to gain insight into the development of policy recommendations that can assist law enforcement officials at all levels to either gain or continue gaining trust among minority young adults through positive social communications and interactions. Although there have been few studies into the level of trust in law enforcement with minorities, none have been found to examine 18 to 23 year old minorities examining the ecological influences. I sought to fill that gap by providing insight into how the different ecological influences affect minority young adults, including determining whether these factors impact, deter, motivate, or build trust in law enforcement within this demographic.

The participants for this study were accessed through convenience sampling, with the participants being provided my educational contact email address on a flyer placed at numerous public establishments such as bus stations, community centers, convenience stores, and other popular fast-food establishments and coffee shops, throughout the Dallas, TX, area. The candidates' personal identifying information was anonymous as

described in the consent form and was not collected. In this study, minority participants were limited to those who self-identified as Black/African American or Latine.

Within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) framework, human perceptions of acceptability and trust regarding the police refer to the degree to which community residents view them as fair and just, as cited by Tyler et al. (2014). The theoretical foundation used in this study stemmed from the multiple areas outlined within the ecological systems theory as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979). These levels of influence can assist researchers in determining the various qualities of a childhood environment and the interaction they have on forming a young adult.

Because the ecological systems theory may help explain how adults in the United States develop their perceptions of trust in law enforcement, integrating the factors within the ecological theory may give further insight into why there is such a considerable level of mistrust between the community and law enforcement. This may also ultimately reduce the number of incidents involving the police and community adults and subsequent attacks on police officers, ultimately shaping trust in law enforcement officers (Rossler, 2015).

Nature of Study

This study was qualitative in terms of methodology, which provided an understanding of a minority young adults' trust level in law enforcement and how such a level was gained using ecological influences as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979). A phenomenological analysis (PA) allowed the participant to provide a personal, in-depth illustration of how and what ecological influences helped shape the trust level in law

enforcement. This type of analysis allows an individual to focus on their personal experience and allows them to share insight on how they formed their level of trust in law enforcement as they moved from childhood to young adulthood.

This PA approach also allows an individual to offer an in-depth representation of what and how they may have experienced an event within the ecological systems theory, as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979). Using a PA was the most suitable qualitative approach for this particular study as it allowed the participants to focus on their lived experiences as outlined by Bronfenbrenner and how these experiences assisted them in forming their trust level in law enforcement officials.

Although there have been few studies into the level of trust in law enforcement with minorities, none have been found to examine 18 to 23 year old minorities examining the ecological influences. I sought to fill that gap, providing insight into how the different ecological influences affect minority young adults to include determining whether these did impact, deter, motivate, or build trust in law enforcement within this demographic.

Because little is known about the link between the ecological systems theory and how it shapes trust within law enforcement among minority young adults, the research design for this study included the narrative inquiry approach. This approach worked best for this topic because it allowed the participant to describe the various factors, as shown in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which helped shape their trust level in law enforcement. It also allowed the participants to provide a detailed description of the factors contributing to the level of trust in law enforcement through direct

observation and interviewing sessions. In this method, researchers can also assume the role of participant-observer and interact with the young adults.

The current theoretical framework in research studies on the level of trust with law enforcement utilizes the rational choice theory, social control theory, and social learning theory, as described by Ressler (2015). This study focused on the minority young adults' level of trust in law enforcement in order to create or regain a productive and prosperous community policing program and reduce the number of deaths, both in the community and in law enforcement. For these reasons, the practical implications of this study within the public service leadership field, specifically within the criminal justice area, focused on the minority young adults' level of trust within law enforcement.

Definitions

While researching this topic, the key concepts that were focused on were the theories that might provide insight into how trust is built among minority young adults. During this examination, three concepts or theories seemed to be the most relevant:

- Bandura's (1963) theory of social cognitive theory
- Hirschi's (1977) social control theory
- Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory

When conducting this research, it was important to identify key terms in order to provide the readers with a clear understanding of the material and information relevant to the study. As such, the following key terms were used in this study:

Black/African American: A specific group of Black/African American people who have ancestors who originate from the continent of Africa (Bryc et al., 2015). While

defining the participant terms of this study, “African American refers to the ethnicity, whereas Black is a racial group/category” (American Psychological Association, 2020).

Latine: A specific group of Latina(o) people who have ancestors who are considered to be Latin American (Bryc et al., 2015). Additionally, the participant term Latina(o) refers to “people who identify as Hispanic, Latino, Latina, Latin@, Latine, Latinx, Chicano, or another related designation, you should consult with the individuals with whom you are working to determine the appropriate terminology.” Furthermore, “the word “Latino” is gendered (i.e., “Latino” is masculine, and “Latina” is feminine), whereas the term “Latine” is gender inclusive” (American Psychological Association, 2020).

Law enforcement officials: Agencies and employees responsible for enforcing laws, maintaining public order, and managing public safety (Miller, 2023).

Minority: As stated in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2020), “A minority group is a population subgroup (e.g., ethnic, racial, religious, or other group) with differential power than those who hold the majority power in the population” (American Psychological Association, 2020). As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (2023), the majority of race in the Dallas, TX, area is broken down by the following statistics: 48.10% White, 23.60% Black or African American, and 42.40% Hispanic or Latina(o). As such, this study focused on the “minority group” as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (2023) report as Black/African America and Latine.

Trust: A firm belief in the reliability, truth, and ability or strength of someone or something (Wilkins, 2018).

As this study utilized the terms defined above, I applied the terms “minority” or “minorities,” “African American,” and “Latine,” as they encompassed the correct ethnicities and races as defined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2020).

During the recruitment phase, each participant was made aware of the terminologies of minority, African American, and Latine. All participants also identified as a minority and non-White. Each participant agreed to the terminology, advised they were not offended, and agreed to continue with the study. Furthermore, the terms “law enforcement” and “trust” were provided as well to ensure the participants were fully aware of the terminology and the terms to be used in the data collection phase and that they were clear and understandable.

Assumptions

This study was based on the assumption that the lack of trust for law enforcement officials by minority young adults stems from traditional upbringing, social circles, and social media reports of police misconduct and the events negatively impacting these young adults. In keeping with this, I assumed that significant exposure to these ecological influences decreased the likelihood that these young adults would trust law enforcement. In addition, this study was executed with the assumption that ecological influences such as family members, social networks, and the mass amount of social media reporting police misconduct increased subjects' sense of family, peer, and community pressure to

mistrust law enforcement and learn to hate the very people who are sworn to protect and serve their communities.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserted that various ecological systems play a vital role in the development of children as they grow. These influences include areas such as immediate family members, social groups, social and mass media, attitudes of cultural society, and environmental changes. However, there have been no studies conducted to determine if these ecological influences change the level of trust in law enforcement among minority young adults 18 to 23 years of age. This study was specifically designed to fill the existing research gap regarding the impact on the level of trust in law enforcement within the minority young adult community. A final assumption was that the participants volunteered of their own free will and were not coerced or promised anything to participate.

Scope and Delimitations

Due to the potential and significant effects of ecological systems in the development of a child into an adult, attention was given to these levels of concentration in order to build trust in people's lives as they continue to interact with police officers (Wu et al., 2015). For these reasons, the theoretical implications that could come from this study within the public service leadership field, and specifically within the criminal justice area, was to focus on the possible rebuilding of trust in law enforcement by minority community citizens.

By providing researchers with the findings of this study, positive social change may result by providing senior-level law enforcement officials the information needed to

improve the minority young adults' trust level in law enforcement and create a better community policing and awareness program. A social change could also see the implication of bridging the communication gap between law enforcement and the minority community, which are believed to have lost trust in law enforcement.

Limitations

The study's limitations were primarily logistical, having been designed and executed by a single researcher in the Dallas, TX, metropolitan area. The study was also limited due to travel restrictions, possible public health constraints or worries relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the possible participant's uneasiness to meet in person due to COVID-19. Although there seemed to be an easiness and relaxing standards concerning COVID-19, there were participants who expressed uneasiness or reluctance to meet in person. Subsequently, all interviews were conducted over telephonic communications due to the participants' personal wishes for safety measures. This particular limitation did reduce my ability to record the participants' body language as compared to a personal face-to-face interview.

Significance

The study was intended to provide a contribution to the criminal justice field by filling a gap in the research surrounding the minority young adults' level of trust in law enforcement as it relates to their demographic factors, which can be explained by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. These demographic factors are made up of five systems or influences: (a) the microsystem, (b) the mesosystem, (c) the exosystem, (d) the macrosystem, and (e) the chronosystem. By examining the ecological

systems as outlined, this study may help law enforcement officials understand why or why not there is a lack of trust in minority young adults for law enforcement officials who have taken an oath to "protect and serve."

The significance of this particular topic to the criminal justice field is needed due to the police and community relationships becoming extremely strained within the past decade. Researchers such as Pratt-Harris et al. (2016) stated that questionable behavior by police officers has spread to the broad mistrust of police and nationwide protests to shed light on this phenomenon. The mere idea that minority young adults can be impacted by the five levels of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory and that people shape their level of trust in law enforcement or outside influences strengthens the idea that if the influence is negative, then there could be actions taken to counter that influence by using positive law enforcement actions. This would, by default, project a positive willingness by law enforcement to regain a higher level of trust. Suppose positive actions can motivate the minority young adults to trust law enforcement. In that case, supporting the ecological influence that exists within the minority young adults' lives may be beneficial.

By examining the ecological systems within the minority young adults' lives, it may be possible to determine at what level they learned to trust or mistrust law enforcement. This study can lead to further research examining how to establish trust with minority young adults and law enforcement.

Summary

I used a qualitative research method to examine the effect of ecological influences in determining the level of trust in law enforcement officials among minority young adults ages 18 to 23 years of age in the Dallas, TX, area. The study employed semistructured interviews to determine if and how ecological influences such as immediate family, social and peer groups, social and mass media influences, and cultural attitudes affected minority young adults' decision to trust or mistrust law enforcement in the Dallas, TX, area. The study included interview data obtained via telephonic conferencing, with recruited participants through convenience sampling based on the subjects' self-nomination for participation in the study.

Chapter 2 will provide an overview of the literature search strategy for this topic, the theoretical framework that guided this study, a review of the relevant literature on this topic, and a concluding summary.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In this study, I sought to assess the level of trust in law enforcement officials among minority young adults aged 18 to 23, utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, thus filling a gap in the literature. There is, however, a significant body of literature currently that has examined the trust level using other theories, such as social control and social learning theories. This literature provided the academic foundation on which this study was built.

This chapter concentrates on the literature review, which is based on the analysis of the literature published in numerous peer-reviewed academic journals utilizing a multisearch strategy to collect and research relevant articles. These databases were hosted on the Walden University platform, and all databases were included in the search. The peer-reviewed and full-text filters were chosen, and multiple database searches were conducted.

At the time of writing, there were no studies that explicitly assessed the level of trust among minority young adults in law enforcement utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. When search terms *trust, minorities, police, and ecological systems theory* were placed into the Walden University database, no results were returned. Although there are no research studies that have specifically utilized the ecological systems theory, scholars who have evolved particular theories and have stated that minority communities have issues with police and trust-building (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998).

An analysis of the existing academic literature indicates significant research has been conducted on the trust levels within law enforcement utilizing theories other than the ecological systems theory. An expansive body of research, moreover, exists demonstrating the negative trust levels in law enforcement using a variety of social theories as well as media reports of police use of force incidents which produce negative results with relationships between police and the communities they serve. However, as shown below, relatively little research has been done on the impacts that ecological systems have on minority young adults between 18 to 23 years of age. The sections below describe the central themes evident in the extant literature.

What is unknown is whether adults within the United States shape their level of trust within law enforcement by their demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, neighborhood safety level, and political affiliations as defined in the ecological systems theory (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study was essential so that law enforcement could gain insight as to the trust level among minority young adults and where these individuals develop such trust. In doing so, senior leadership in law enforcement can develop innovative ways to either regain the trust and relationship once lost or maintain and further strengthen these areas.

Throughout this chapter, a review of the literature search strategy utilized to research articles pertaining to this study is defined, including the outline of Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory, Hirschi's (1977), social control theory, and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory as it pertains to this specific RQ, events that show where the possible mistrust of law enforcement has come from, a

definition of trust, and finally, an in-depth exploration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and how it might provide insight into the level of trust in law enforcement officials among minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age. All of the information and data collected throughout this study may ultimately provide agencies at all levels an insight into how law enforcement officials can effectively promote a positive social change within communities.

Literature Search Strategy

Literature research was conducted utilizing numerous sources of information. However, the Walden online library systems were the primary database. The first search was limited to peer-reviewed articles published between 2018 and 2022. The search was then expanded to include articles published since 2012. Subsequently, the date filters were removed to determine if any high-level sources should be included based on my assessment of the source's applicability and utility to the study. The English language was chosen as the required article language, though the place of publication was not specified.

Initially, the search terms were combinations of *ecological influence OR ecological OR social OR societal OR socio* OR environment** for the first set of terms, *minorit* OR black OR African American OR latine OR person of color OR race OR ethnic** for the second set, *young adults OR adolescen* OR teen* OR youth OR juvenile* followed by *trust* OR confidence OR mistrust OR distrust OR cynic* OR skeptic* OR suspicio**, and finally, *law enforcement OR police OR cops OR officers*.

Subsequently, the above search terms produced a voluminous amount of data and research. In an effort to refine the data in order to bridge the gap of knowledge in which

this study aimed to fill, the search terms were a combination of *trust* OR police** for the first set, *trust* AND minority** for the next, *police* OR trust** for the third set of terms, *minority* AND police**, followed by *minority* AND police* AND ecological systems theory** for the final search. Throughout the research, there was no literature found that directly linked Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory to the forming of trust in law enforcement within minority young adults. Therefore, the contents of this review are limited regarding other theories and levels of trust.

Theoretical Foundation

Theoretically, this study was built off three principal theoretical prisms: Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory, Hirschi's (1977) social control theory, and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. Each one of these theories has assisted researchers in defining how perceptions, attitudes, and behavior are socially learned, reinforced, and renegotiated. Furthermore, these particular theories have assisted researchers in explaining how perceptions and conduct are shaped within communities at risk, including minorities. This study's primary theory was defined by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Under this particular theory, Bronfenbrenner stated that as a child matures, there are numerous ecological systems or environmental factors which play a vital role in their development. This theory is defined in further detail later in this chapter.

Studies have shown that the relationship between police organizations and community members have developed mistrust as more citizens have begun to document misconduct by law enforcement officers (Archibald et al., 2017). What is unknown is

whether young adults within the United States shape their level of trust within law enforcement by their demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, neighborhood safety level, or political affiliations as defined in the ecological systems theory (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979). My goal was to gain insight as to the trust level among minority young adults and where these individuals develop such trust. In doing so, senior leadership in law enforcement can develop innovative ways to either regain the trust and relationship once lost or maintain and further strengthen these areas.

Social Learning Theory

Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory facilitates the analysis of an individual's trust being controlled by their social learning and cognition. The fundamental of Bandura's theory is the nexus between cognition and behavior. This is the assertion that people not only learn how to perceive the world around them by way of the influences of their social environment, but that these environmental influences in rationalize, shape, and provide the legitimacy of their behaviors (Bandura, 1963a). Overall, Bandura suggested that social learning is the basis of both an individual's thought and behavior and forms how one both understands the world and dictates how they act in it. Utilizing the social learning theory as a means of how an individual builds trust as an instrument of social learning underscores the potential of the trust level within the minority community to both define and to affect the trust levels, thus the rift between law enforcement and minority communities (Capece, 2015).

Significant research within academic literature has demonstrated the negative trust levels and perceptions of law enforcement within minority communities using social

control and social learning theories. Under Bandura's (1963a) theory, an individual develops their behavior and attitudes based off of observation. It further shows that learning is "the occurrence of matching responses." In other words, people learn their behavior by observing others' behavior. With this specific theory, social learning can be utilized to effectively observe and model personal behavior(s) and workplace behavior(s).

Rumjuan and Narod (2020) define the social learning theory as an intermediate between behaviorism (the traditional learning theory) and cognitive theory. Their study illustrated that behaviorism centers on one particular view of learning. The specific view is a change in external behavior which is achieved through the use of "reinforcement and repetition," which contributes to the shaping of behavior. This reinforcement and repetition can be defined as conditional learning.

As explained by Bandura (1963a), the social learning theory explains how people learn by observing the behavior of others. Under this theory, Bandura suggested that this process has four components: (a) attention, (b) retention, (c) motor reproduction, and (d) motivation. Bandura continued to state that individuals have limited capacity to learn by observation alone without consciously focusing on and accurately perceiving the key attributes of the behavior being demonstrated. Bandura continued to state that environmental and cognitive factors can also play an influential role in the process as well.

It is no secret that individuals learn by observing and then doing. In fact, some people learn better by watching how something is built, repaired, or transformed, and then allowed to imitate the steps. This type of learning can be defined by the social

learning theory. The term imitation is defined by Bandura (1963b), as the propensity of an individual to mimic behaviors or attitudes as demonstrated by actual or symbolic role models. By utilizing this definition, Bandura referred to imitation as the occurrence of matching responses and called this learning process modeling. He also defined three basic observational learning models as live, symbolic models, and verbal (Bandura, 1963b).

“Live models” includes an individual performing a behavior. As example of this type of learning would be those individuals who have or live with a police officer, where they can learn about their behavior by observing the live model. If this is the case, the individuals who have a close relationship with a police officer who is a family member, a close relative, a friend, or even a neighbor could be strongly influenced by these live models.

The symbolic model can include either a real or fictional character, who demonstrates behavior by being in articles, books, movies, radio, television and so forth. These types of media influences can be positive or negative on the formation of an individual’s view concerning political, environmental, social, and other influences. These symbolic influences are often overused by many adolescents as their behavior-modeling source. In today’s environment, many adolescent people are highly connected within social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tok-tok, and so forth. Edison Research (2010) reported that there were approximately 39 million “habitual social networkers” with in the United States alone who check their social network sites

numerous times throughout their day. The same study reported that juveniles were more likely to be identified as “habitual social networkers” (Edison Research, 2010).

Social Control Theory

Hirschi (1977) asserted that delinquent acts refer to actions that are contrary to or violate existing law. Because the law embodies the moral values of the community (and insofar as it does not, the task of explaining delinquency is even easier), it follows that (a) delinquent acts are contrary to the wishes and expectations of other people; (b) they involve the risk of punishment, both formal and informal; (c) they take (and save) time and energy; and (d) they are contrary to conventional moral belief. If these assumptions are true, it follows further that those most likely to engage in delinquent acts are (a) least likely to be concerned about the wishes and expectations of others; (b) least likely to be concerned about the risk of punishment; (c) most likely to have the time and energy the act requires; and (d) least likely to accept moral beliefs contrary to delinquency.

Hirschi (1977) also developed the idea of social bond theory and suggested four approaches: (a) attachment, (b) commitment, (c) involvement, and (d) belief. The attachment approach is the individuals’ ability to involve themselves against other people. If this attachment develops, then the individual will be receptive to the thoughts, feelings, and even desires of other people. Attachments are often to the individuals’ parents and their attachment to the school influences such as peers and teachers. Commitment is the attachment of an individual’s conventional subsystem such as work, organizational, and so forth and is the rational aspect of social bonding. Belief is the moral aspect contained in the social bonding theory and is different from the other

approaches. Belief is the faith of a person's moral values. According to Widowaty (2019), this means that placing trust in someone despite prevailing standards can reinforce adherence to existing norms. All four of these components should be formed in society (Hirschi, 1977).

Within Hirschi's (1977) social control theory, Wiatrowski (2000) examined the effects of early childhood within youths and claimed many of them formed a bond with a society that prevented some of them from becoming involved with delinquency. The specific study also claimed that other youths failed to form a bond and became delinquents. This theory was supported by research originally conducted by Hirschi, which revealed that delinquency involvement was inversely related to the strength of an individual's relationship with society.

The social control theory has been utilized to define vast social issues in relationship to youth and minority groups. Although Hirschi (1977) did not clearly explore or concentrate on the issue of race and ethnicity in his theory, he did contend that social control theory is constant throughout an individual's social characteristics, to include race and ethnicity. Hirschi continued to state that the social control theory should account for patterns of criminal offending by focusing on the strength of social bonds and ties to conventional society (as cited in Snyder & Duchschere, 2022).

However, research studies have regularly illustrated that ethnic and racial minorities are more likely to reside in communities that are characterized by poverty, unemployment, family disruption, crime and violence, social isolation, and discrimination (Douglas et al., 2021; Peterson et al., 2006). Research studies have also

suggested that the development of societal ties to conventional institutions and belief in conventional values also present problematic situations for these same individuals who reside in such communities (Douglas et al., 2021; Peterson et al., 2006). Thus, by drawing upon these studies and by utilizing Hirschi's social control theory, these so-called social conditions hinder the formation of an ethnic or minority individuals deep-seated attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in "conventional institutions" (Peterson et al., 2006). These conventional institutions are those such as banks, churches, schools, and for this study, police departments and law enforcement officers.

Subsequently, these studies have stated that due to the lack of strong social bonds, racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to engage in criminal activity or behavior due to their inability to create strong social bonds. These inability may also answer the question in this study, as to whether social bonds and the learning within the social groups have an effect on building trust, not only within the social parameter, but with "traditional institutions" and people, as defined by Peterson et al. (2006).

Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory views human development as the result of the interactions between a person and their environment, and this creates a person-process-context synergism that affects the ongoing development of a person. Human interaction with the environment different levels or subsystems as shown in Figure 1 from localized interactions in their home with parents and siblings, to neighborhoods, to their school and peers or personal idols, to extended influences such as interactions within other cultures, societal expectations, or even social determinants such

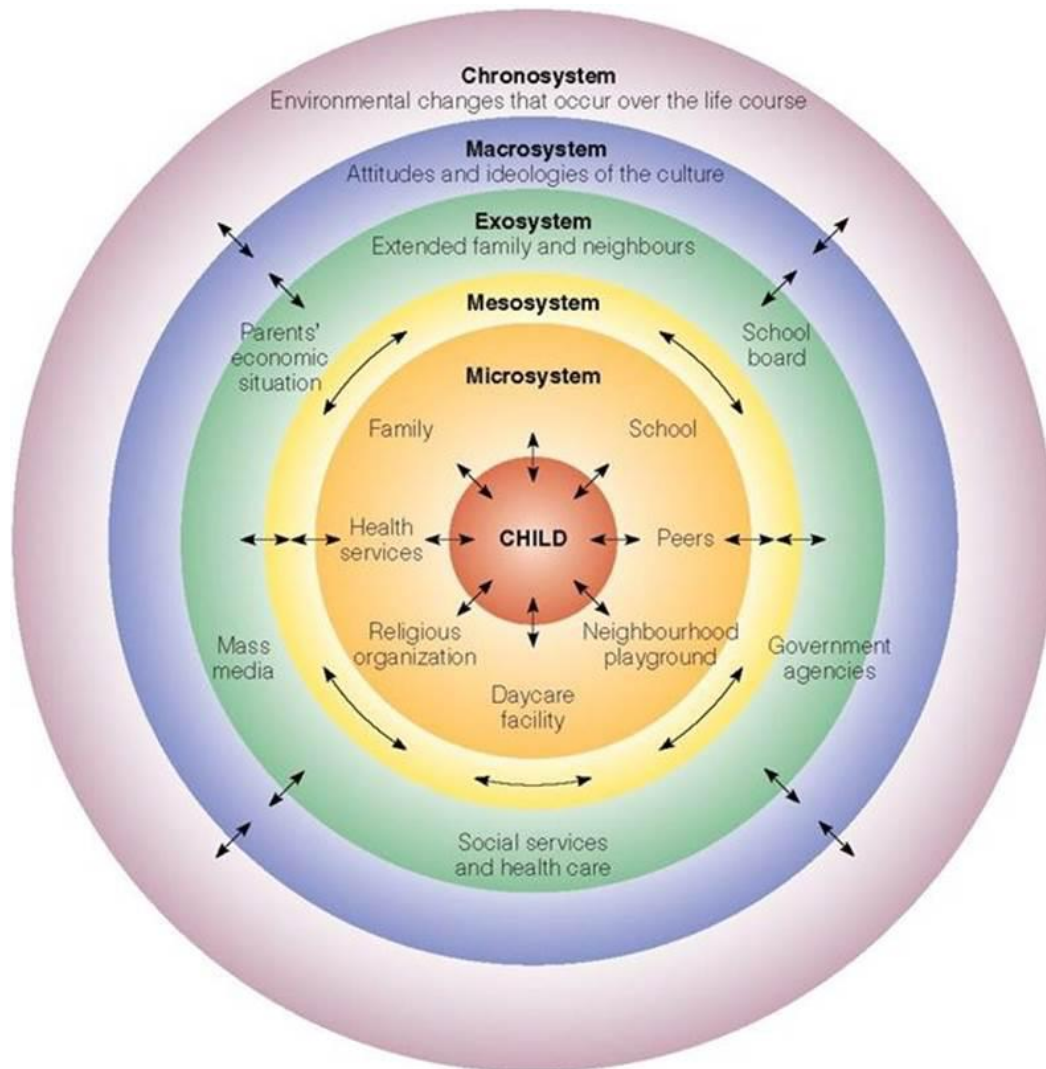
as environmental changes which occur over one's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007).

When examining this specific theory, each environmental "subsystem" or "ring" can have a strong influence on an adolescent's behavior and learning process in another setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). According to Bronfenbrenner's theory, the subsystems or rings of influence highlight the combined effect in human development. Positive and negative interactions can promote the maturity of an individual's competence, self-efficacy, and adaptation. On the contrary, these effects can also cause dysfunction in the positive development. This can occur when interactions with the environment inhibit these positive outcomes, as described by Rosa and Tudge (2013), in and across different domains such as school or within peers. With consistent interactions, positive or negative change is expected in the development of adolescent behavior and maturity.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserted that various ecological systems play a vital role in the development of children as they grow. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), there are five levels of influence that shape the attitudes and beliefs of children and young adults as they mature. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, as stated by Guy-Evans (2020), "views child development as a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment, from immediate settings of family and school to broad cultural values, laws, and customs" (p. 1).

In order to study a child's development as well as young adults, this research study examined not only their immediate environment (microsystem) but also the interactions throughout the larger environment (chronosystem). Bronfenbrenner (1979)

divided an individual's learning environment into five different systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. Simple influences are categorized into each system as depicted in Figure 1 (see Guy-Evans, 2020).

Figure 1*Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory**Note.* From Rhodes, *Theories of Child Development*, 2013)

As illustrated in Figure 1, the subsystems within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory divides a child's development into five categories. These categories or subsystems have a direct and vital affect during the formative years and into an individual's youth. These subsystems are defined in a simple term below; however, they are detailed further when this study dives into the influences of trust. As such, the microsystem is the smallest and consists of individuals and groups which have immediate and direct interactions with a person. This can include individual psychological and physiological influences from family, peer groups, and schools (Lim, 2015).

The mesosystem includes the processes and connections occurring between two or more environments in which an individual exists, or the system of microsystems in a person's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rogers et al. 2018). The exosystem includes the processes that occur between two or more environments, at least one of which does not include the individual of interest. These environments consist of social structures, institutions, and other settings that the person is not directly a part of, yet is still influenced by (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rogers et al., 2018).

The macrosystem influences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) consist of the overarching pattern of micro-, meso, and exosystems characteristics of a primary belief systems such as policies, laws, and values. This subsystem also trends that comprise the broad cultural, political, economic, and societal/environmental backdrop of an individual's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rogers et al. 2018). The chronosystem includes aspects of change within an individual's environment over time as it relates to the other subsystems within the theory. The chronosystem can include external factors such as the death of a

parent, the effect of a move or the immigration of family members and “the effects of large historic events such as wars, natural disasters, and recessions” (Rogers et al., 2018).

All of the above subsystems or influences include areas such as immediate family members, social groups, social and mass media, attitudes of cultural society, and environmental changes. However, there has been no research or studies conducted to determine if these ecological influences change the level of trust in law enforcement among minority young adults 18 to 23 years of age. This study was specifically designed to fill an existing gap in the research regarding the impact in relation to the level of trust in law enforcement within the minority young adult community.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts

The primary focus throughout this study was to determine how ecological influences play a role as it relates to minority young adults' trust in law enforcement in Dallas, TX. In order to focus on this specific RQ, a review of previous literature was conducted utilizing other theories concerning how minorities view the police. The theories that provided the most insight on minority young adults and their level of trust in law enforcement have been briefly discussed and have stemmed from Bandura's (1963a) theory of social learning theory and Hirschi's (1977) social control theory. Subsequent to the discussion of the social learning theory and social control theory, this chapter will define and break down Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory and how it relates to this study.

Mistrust of Law Enforcement

This review of literature on previous research into trust in police within minority young adults highlights the major theme in the development of thinking regarding generating trust in police, which is the need for police and public to trust one another and work together. The irony of the police performance model of the professional era was that the adoption of rapid response technologies and a professional, paternalistic demeanor by police, both of which were designed to rehabilitate the reputation of police in the United States from being corrupt and political to being beyond reproach and neutral, were arguably the factors which contributed to an overall decrease in police effectiveness at stopping or deterring crime as police became isolated from the public (Ostrom & Ahn 2009).

The simultaneous recognition that the public and the police coproduce public safety meant that in order to maximize the use of limited police resources, cooperation between the police and the public was necessary in order to produce public safety. Police efforts to reach the public became the defining characteristic of the community policing philosophy. Getting police out of cars and closer to the people, despite its order maintenance purposes, was a clear attempt at putting police and the public into situations where they might engage in social interactions. Creating opportunities for police and public to work together to bring about changes in the safety of their neighborhoods is in-line with research suggesting that coproduction generates social capital and trust, as suggested by Ostrom and Ahn (2009).

However, the community policing philosophy lacked coherence as an organizational change philosophy and its goal of improving the police-public trust relationship eventually took a backseat to familiar crime control and deterrence strategies. The community policing philosophy also did not explicitly theorize on how to generate trust and cooperation when it was not forthcoming, as was the case in high crime, high poverty areas and minority communities (Nix et al., 2015). As stated by these researchers, the procedural fairness perspective utilizes advances in social psychology to address the lack of theorization on social interactions and trust in the community policing and police performance models. Procedural fairness operates in interactions between police and the public by treating members of the public with dignity and respect and by appearing neutral and transparent in decision-making (Hamm et al., 2017).

Throughout the past decade, studies have shown that the relationship between police organizations and community members have developed mistrust as more citizens have begun to document misconduct by law enforcement officers (Archibald et al., 2017). Research has also shown that communities trust the police when they feel the police are fair and just (Tyler et al., 2014). Distrust of law enforcement undermines the legitimacy of police officers, and without this trust legitimacy, police officers lose their ability and authority to effectively perform their job (Horowitz, 2007).

A vast amount of research has shown that as a result of negative experiences by minorities, Black/African American men, specifically, distrust law enforcement (Burks, 2021). According to researchers, Black/African American men have lower confidence in law enforcement (Burks, 2021; Hockin & Brunson, 2018). In addition, Bent-Goodley and

Smith (2017) reported that many Black/African American communities have a history of mistrust in law enforcement due to the mistreatment of their residents. This has gone further by these individuals informing their children, younger siblings, and friends to adopt similar feelings. This is directly related to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory.

It has been related that minorities continue to deal with this lack of confidence and trust in the police. Brooks et al. (2016) showed that the lived experience of numerous African American men continues to impact their negative perception of law enforcement. While this research showed the trust level in law enforcement, it only examined Black/African American and Latine young adults ages 18 to 23 years of age.

Definition of Trust

Before attempting to determine which factors the ecological systems theory play in the development of trust, it is necessary to define the types of trust and the influences on it. Generalized trust has been described by Janmaat (2019) as “the core value or belief that other people can and should be trusted” (p.3). In another definition, Janmaat (2019), stated that trust has been defined as the perceived likelihood that others, “at worst, will not knowingly or willingly do you harm, and at best, will act in your interests” (p. 3). Generalized trust is focused outwards and can therefore be an important component when bridging social capital (Gelderblom, 2018). A primary key sign of generalized trust is the well-known saying of “most people can be trusted.” This saying has been found to tap into a syndrome that can be labelled as “trust in strangers” along with other items asking about trust in people one does not know, as described by Uslaner (2002).

Numerous scholars have produced studies where they emphasize that an individual's early childhood is the key formative period for the development of generalized trust. Researchers such as Boldt et al. (2020) considered early parent-child interactions as crucial in the development of so-called blind trust. According to this research, caring parents instill a feeling of self-confidence within their children, thus making them less anxious in their contacts with strangers. These same parents also lead by example when Uslaner (2002) stated, "Parents who are trusting, tolerant, and involved in their communities, are role models leading children to trust" (p. 93). By learning to trust their parent or guardian, Wrightsman (1992) stated that children develop the belief that human beings in general are trustworthy, responsible, and dependable, and carry this disposition with them for the rest of their lives.

This interaction with early childhood development and socialization perspective also broadly includes studies which emphasize the magnitude of early social experiences. A study published by Santiago et al. (2011) revealed that children who grow up in an affluent family are less likely to become a victim of crime and/or abuse. These types of crimes have been recognized as particularly negative influences on the development of children and are more likely to develop a lasting pessimistic outlook on life, including a perception that other people are not trustworthy or benevolent (Brehm & Rahn, 1997).

While some researchers have shown that early childhood interaction with parents has led to a positive generalized trust, others, such as Glanville and Paxton (2015), have argued that generalized trust is also shaped by experiences later in life. These researchers have labelled this view as the social learning perspective. Within this perspective, one

key assumption is that individuals continuously modify their personal trust in others through interactions with people in different contexts. This study produced an analysis of the “Social Trust Survey,” whereby the data supported the social learning perspective as they discovered people develop trust through their interactions with different groups of people.

As shown by researchers (Janmaat, 2019; Quadackers et al., 2012) concerning the development of trust, Stack (1978) asserted that each individual encounters varied interactions from others that can be either positive or negative, where some keep commitments as promised while others do not. Through this, each person extrapolates from prior experiences to cultivate anticipations about how the next interaction may unfold for them. As personal experiences differ across various social realms, their levels of trust are dependent on these social contexts. Generalized trust is then built on the overall average outcome of the different experiences (Evans & van de Claseyde, 2018).

The social learning perspective has also shown that by incorporating several different approaches that emphasize specific interaction conditions and experiences during an individual’s adolescence and adulthood, can be defined as the primary influences of generalized trust. In every social contact, there is some element of trust needed to interact. The degree to which people trust others, labelled as generalized trust, is assumed to be gained through interaction with different social groups.

On the opposite side, particularized trust represents an individual’s confidence in other people who are close to them such as immediate family members and close personal friends, as defined by Braesemann and Stephany (2021). This type of trust is

related in greater detail by Uslaner (2002), who defined a sharp distinction between the two opposing concepts of trust. Uslaner continued to state that the distinction between generalized and particularized trust parallels the difference between bonding and bridging forms of social capital.

Uslaner (2002) also related that individuals create trust and bonds with like friends and people and create connections with people who are different from them. Furthermore, Uslaner clearly linked this idea to group activity by stating, “When we only have faith in some people, we are most likely to trust people like ourselves” (p. 7). Uslaner also stated that “particularized trusters are likely to join groups composed of people like themselves—and to shy away from activities that involve people they don’t see as part of their moral community” (p. 7).

Particularized trust signifies the attitude towards people which one has personal interactions with or knowledge about. While specialized trust can be considered a rational response to the behavior of others and can be rather volatile at times, generalized trust is considered much more stable and less affected by the social context. On the one hand, group trust is positively linked with particularized trust and not with generalized trust. Reversely contrasted, the more groups and individual participates in, the higher the level of generalized trust (Braesemann & Stephany, 2021).

Influences of Trust

Trust is found within various groups to include family, friends, social, and other outside influences. Family and friends play a vital role in crime, substance use, and deviance. Despite this, the effects they exert on behavior are not constant throughout the

life-course. These influences play a particularly important role during an individual's adolescence years, but this effect diminishes as people progress into early and middle adulthood. As described earlier in this study, the social learning theory and social control theory has theorized on how individuals perceive the world around them by way of the influences of their social environment.

There is, however, current literature concerning police legitimacy that shows that media exposure and highly publicized events were significant indicators of citizens' attitudes toward the police. Weitzer and Tuch (2002) analyzed public attitudes towards police departments both prior to and subsequent to highly publicized public events or incidents. A historical event occurred in 1991 when Los Angeles Police Department officers escalated the arrest of Rodney King. These actions by the officers had severe backlash on the Department by the citizens of the communities, ultimately losing their trust to protect and serve. Other highly publicized events surrounding police departments throughout the United States include further actions by various other police departments.

Events such as the death of Eric Garner in New York in 2014, the George Floyd death in 2020 and even up to January 2022, with the incident surrounding Tyre Nichols in Tennessee, showed how police misconduct can shape the mistrust within minority communities. However, it is not only the incidents where an individual dies; there are multiple police misconduct investigations that involve situations where police officers create mistrust in such incidents as falsifying documents to build an investigation in Houston, TX, and in late 2022, a sheriff in Iowa was charged with submitting false

paperwork to the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms but sold them for profit (DiCindio, 2022).

By media outlets (both traditional and social) broadcasting the above incidents as well as hundreds more, certain events can rapidly spread through mass media and social networks, triggering many discussions, heated debates, and even riots within communities. According to Weitzer (2002), case studies that have mass media attention have shown that significant increases in unfavorable attitudes toward police occur after certain events and concluded that “actions that attract media coverage can dramatically shake citizens’ confidence in the police, and even a single high-profile event can seriously tarnish the image of a police department” (p. 397).

Interacting with other individuals who share and have similar ideas or thoughts reinforces an individual’s own behaviors and perceptions when it comes to certain feelings, topics, or thoughts. It is important to understand an individual’s learning process and learning condition in order to pinpoint the shaping effects concerning their attitudes to include the learning process of matching responses and the reinforcement process of learned behaviors. In his research, Bandura (1963a) indicated that one of the necessary stipulations for “learning by observation” is an individual who is stimulated by those around them and that their learning process varies by their environmental factors, such as their parental marital status, neighborhood demographics, and socioeconomic status.

There have been a handful of research studies that have evaluated whether criminological theories can explain the racial and ethnic differences in criminal behavior, or the processes specified by these theories, and whether they are the same across all

racial and ethnic groups. According to Hirschi's social control theory, racial and ethnic differences in delinquency are due to the strength of social bonds to conventional society and institutions (as cited in Costello & Laub, 2020). Although Hirschi (1977) did not outline what specific factors affect the strength of social bonds, it has been the subject of numerous studies stating that single-parent families, lower socio-economic statuses, living in high crime neighborhoods, and the overall racial and ethnic segregations and discriminations are solid factors that block the development of a strong social attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in conventional institutions and people within these foundations.

For this reason, it can be viewed that due to the lack of strong positive social bonds within these types of racial and ethnic communities, these individuals may be more likely to become involved with criminal behavior, and lack the trust needed within law enforcement who have taken an oath to protect and serve the exact same communities (Boman, 2019). By examining adolescent behavior, it might be possible to determine their actions and, thus, their levels of trust as they mature into young adults. In doing so, research into adolescent behavior within the family and school could predict their level of trust within people, specifically law enforcement.

Trust and the social control theory has been studied by Widowaty (2019), in which she examined whether the social control theory can be utilized as an approach in combating future violent crimes by juvenile delinquents in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The purpose of this study was to frame an effective model for addressing acts of violence committed by juvenile offenders based on the principles of social control theory.

Hirschi's (1977) social control theory asks the central question of why everyone does not just break the law, or why it even exists for people who follow the law (as cited in Widowaty, 2019).

Further into the study, Widowaty (2019) related that delinquent behavior is dependent upon several factors which includes the person's parenting relationship, their inner-family and social relationships, the lifestyles of friends, the social environment demands from peers and others, personal anxieties, as well as the social norms which deprive adolescences of their "own identity." The results concluded by Widowaty revealed that violence by the youth in Yogyakarta was a complex phenomenon and that at-risk youth may require the assistance of local law enforcement to modify negative behaviors. However, meaningful change is best achieved when all invested parties, including educators and guardians, play an active role. Widowaty concluded that the optimal approach to violent crimes committed by juvenile delinquents is through utilizing principles of social control theory, with an emphasis on building affection, trust, commitment and involvement.

The environmental factors suggested by Bandura (1963a) and Hirschi's (1977) are similar to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and showed some of the same effects as it pertains to certain environmental factors. The gap of knowledge as it pertains to the ecological systems theory is how these specific factors play a role in the trust level in law enforcement within minority young adults, aged 18 to 23 years of age. Using Bronfenbrenner's theory as the framework for this study allowed the examination

between the importance of direct and indirect experiences of minority young adults and their level of trust in law enforcement.

The social control theory and social learning theory are applicable towards the understanding of certain misbehaviors by minority adolescence; however, most of these studies have only studied the role of race and ethnicity as an exterior factor. The social control theory and social learning theory studies reviewed for this specific research did not question the notion that the relationships between the four elements within the social bonds, and all misbehaviors are invariant throughout the different racial and ethnic groups. As argued by some researchers, race and ethnicity should be the focal point of all criminological research as the social processes and factors linked to crime and delinquency may work differently for each racial and ethnic group, not as a “blanket assumption” (Hawkins 1995, 2003; Peguero et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2006),

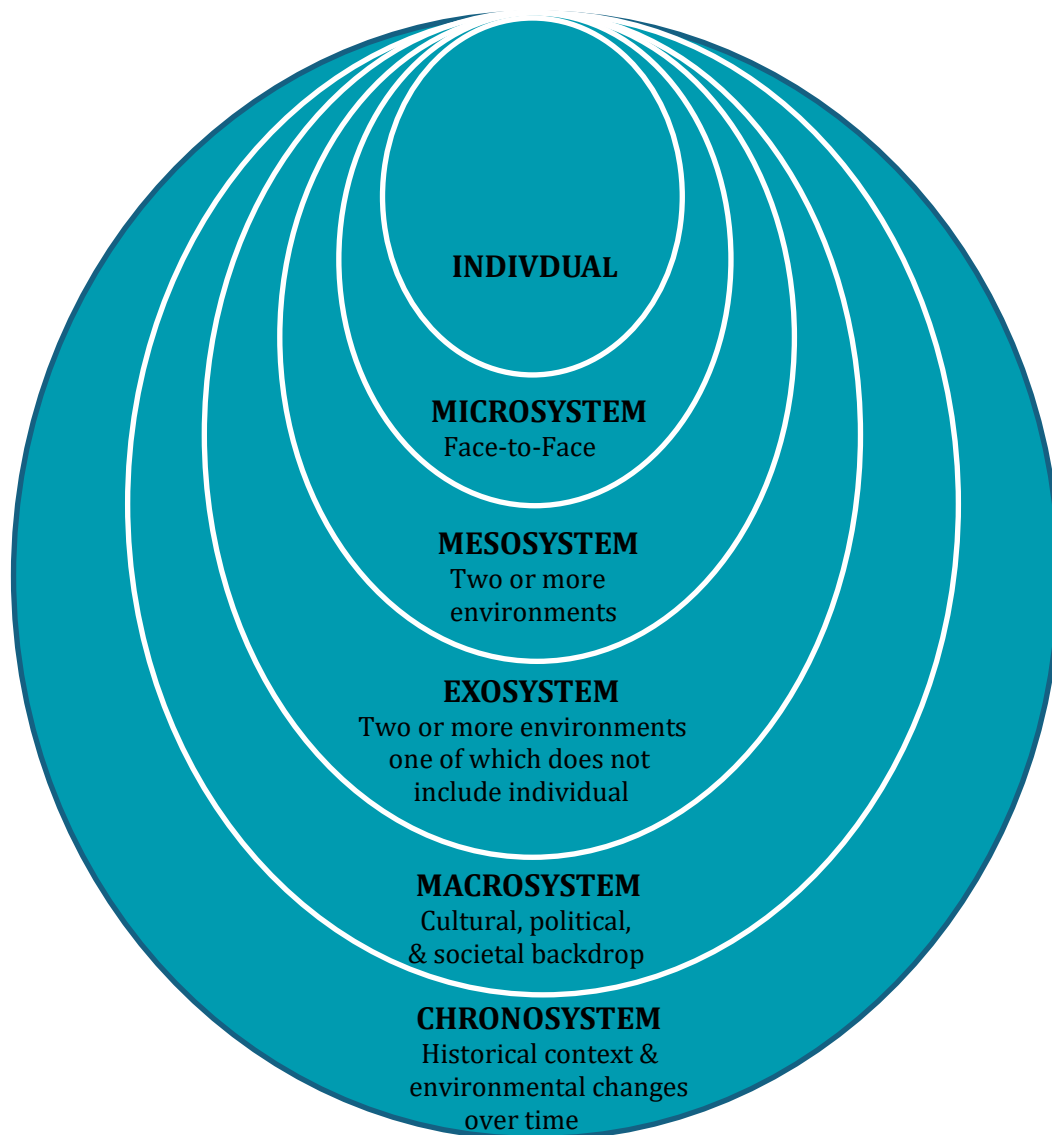
Hence, the fundamental question that emerged from this discussion and directed this study’s research was the relationship between the minority young adults (i.e., Black/African American and Latino/Latina American) ecological influences as defined in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, and how these influences affected their level of trust in law enforcement throughout the Dallas, TX, area, and if it varies by race and ethnicity.

Overall, human development is found within the ever-changing environment of an individual’s upbringing. With a multitude of interacting factors shaping their attitudes, behaviors, and development across their lifespan, any change in this cycle ought to account for environmental processes which can facilitate (or hinder) the change

processes. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory consists of five subsystems or rings, which define how a child's environmental surroundings can shape their attitudes, behaviors, and feelings towards their overall environment. As described in his ecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner stated that all children are affected by their environment by placing their influences into subsystems such as their microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems. Each subsystem is broken down as illustrated by Figure 2 (see Rogers et al. 2018).

Figure 2

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



Microsystem

As previously indicated, the microsystem is the smallest subsystem and consists of individuals and groups who have immediate and direct interactions with a person. This specific subsystem can include individual behavior and influences from family, peer groups, and schools (Guy-Evan, 2020; Snyder & Duchschere, 2022). As the most proximal setting, microsystems outline psychological and behavioral change (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). These close relationships have a surprising amount of power to normalize (or stigmatize) adolescent behavior and to support (or hinder) the best possible individual development.

Family is central to the microsystem, as it is usually the primary environment in which early development occurs. As shown by Mouten et al. (2016), family factors are one of the strongest indicators of misbehavior. Such factors can include strict or cruel discipline, conflicting views by parents, the lack of parenting, and the family socioeconomic status. For instance, if the parent is, or has been involved in, the adult criminal justice system, their experiences with law enforcement can influence their parenting style, leading to controlling approaches and influences (Garstein et al., 2012; Long et al., 2008; Martel et al., 2012).

Family factors often directly affect the adolescence academic success and their interactions with the law and courts can dramatically influence the course of behavior within an adolescent. Additionally, although rates vary across the country, many adolescences involved in the juvenile justice system have already had contact with law

enforcement agencies and are also involved in the child welfare system, hence affecting their attitudes and behaviors towards governmental agencies (Herz et al., 2019).

Peer involvement is attributed to the direct influence like the family influence. Peers can be schoolmates, teachers, teammates, coaches, and members of religious institutions. These individuals can influence the development of an adolescent who does not have available family or parents. Adolescents may benefit from learning problem-solving and communication skills to effectively interact with these types of influences and can be readily influenced by their own personal experiences, which impact the adolescent.

Mesosystem

The mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can include the connections and processes occurring between two or more environments (as cited in Rogers et al., 2018). This subsystem brings together multiple subsystems (two or more) into play with the individual such as the interactions between the family and school, the family and their local neighborhoods, medical providers, child welfare systems, and even juvenile justice if so involved. Mesosystems widen with each occurrence when the individual enters a new setting, according to Rosa and Tudge (2013), and as youth enter the justice system, more actors and influences become involved within their environment.

Most often, these system interactions affect the development and growth of their attitudes and behaviors towards these groups, whether positive or negative. If these systems can effectively collaborate and provide positive influences, the developmental course of these adolescence can change and improve. Every adolescent likely interacts

with several subsystems, each of those subsystems then interacts with one another, and these combinations create numerous mesosystems.

Exosystem

The exosystem, as discussed earlier in this chapter, includes the processes which occur between two or more environments, but at least one of which does not include the individual. These environments consist of social structures, institutions, and other settings which the person is not directly a part of, yet is still influenced by (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rogers et al. 2018). Parental factors, such as contact with the law enforcement or the criminal justice system, suggest that this can also have negative effects on adolescents (Akesson et al., 2012). Police interactions and the criminal justice system can affect the attitudes and behavior of people, which then has a downward force toward the microsystem influences. Exosystem influence on the child can stem from their parent's own traumatic history with the police or criminal justice system, and such realities can have a dramatic effect on adolescent development (Synder & Duchschere, 2022).

Many times, children may focus on their parents' treatment by the police and legal system. In this instance, it would be beneficial to have positive interactions with minority adults in an effort to portray this to their children. Snyder and Duchschere (2022) maintained that the criminal justice system (to include interactions with the police) would most likely fit into the exosystem, noting that these interactions have its own processes and outcomes which is absorbed by adolescent youth. With this theory, experts in the criminal justice system have to be aware of how this system is a part of the

youth's life. This interaction can also work with, or against, other developmental influences or subsystems.

Macrosystem

The macrosystem influences consist of the primary pattern of micro-, meso, and exosystems characteristics of a primary belief systems such as policies, laws, and values (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This subsystem also can also include larger factors such as changes or trends in technology as well as the individuals' belief that they need higher education to reach a particular salary goal (a move from one economic class to the next), and the social decline for memberships in organizational causes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rogers et al. 2018). Researchers have related that the behavioral and conceptual models that are characteristic of the macrosystem are transferred from one generation to another by the means of different cultural institutions like family, school, congregation, workplace, and administration that intermediate the processes of socialization (Navarro & Tudge, 2022).

Chen and Tomes (2005) noted that the macrosystem represents the outermost layer impacting any adolescent. This subsystem has no clear framework, but it consists of the cultural values, traditions, and laws of the adolescent and their families and bounces between, and through all other layers. For example, if in a culture it is believed that law enforcement should not be trusted, then evidently this culture will affect or change the beliefs on the individual. This in turn affects the child, their children, and so on.

Chronosystem

The chronosystem includes aspects of change within an individual's environment over time as it relates to the other subsystems within the ecological systems theory (Rogers et al., 2018). The chronosystem can include external factors such as the death of a parent, the effect of a move or the immigration of family members and "the effects of large historic events such as wars, natural disasters, and recessions" (Rogers et al., 2018, p. 230). The chronosystem highlights that along with internal influences such as maturity and illnesses, according to Rosa and Tudge (2013).

Gibbs (2019) defined one concept that mirrors the ecological systems theory by stating that an individual can adopt a social perspective when they are developing into adulthood and allow moral development, social behavior, and their reality to guide them. According to Gibbs (2019), social perspective-taking involves an individual adopting behavior by mentally assimilating, comprehending, or contemplating another's thoughts, beliefs, emotions, sentiments, desires, preferences, motivations, goals, opportunities, intentions, viewpoint. This study suggests that an individual's values can be shaped by participating within-group solidarity, tradition, and conformity.

Studies Utilizing Subsystems of Ecological Systems Theory

It stands to say that people learn by observation of influences that surround them, as defined by Bandura and Hirschi. However, Bronfenbrenner's study into the ecology of human development in 1979 produced results which ultimately summarized years of other theories and research concerning what guides an individual's development. As related by Darling (2007), unlike most other theory research, Bronfenbrenner did not

concentrate on a specific theory such as the social learning theory. As an alternative approach, Bronfenbrenner concentrated on a systematic approach and numerous hypotheses concerning the development processes from a person's infancy into adulthood. Since the publication of Bronfenbrenner's results, through an analytical review, it appears that these hypotheses have seldom been investigated.

There have been research studies that have shown that media exposure can affect the trust levels within minority communities in law enforcement. For example, Scheidel et al. (2020) found that one environmental factor, exposure to media, (exosystem) significantly increased negative perceptions regarding law enforcement. These studies revealed the author's findings, which included the perceptions of racism within local police departments and an increased sense of a perceived threat posed by police toward minority communities due both to a perceived failure to protect and to the perceived police violence.

Ecological Systems Theory and Self-Esteem

Xin et al. (2019) examined adolescent self-esteem and social adaptation utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. This particular study was aimed at determining if there were relationships between self-esteem and social adaptation, and the chain mediating effect of peer trust and perceived social support using the ecological systems theory. Xin et al. examined 400 adolescents in southwestern China utilizing a "paper-and-pencil" style survey.

The results indicated that these adolescents' self-esteem was in-fact positively linked with social adaptation. Xin et al. (2019) stated that one's self-esteem can be

directly affected by one's social adaptation, as well as being indirectly influenced by social adaptation through their peer trust and perceived social support, as defined in the rings of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. The authors' research also determined that adolescents with higher self-esteem tend to have greater trust in their peers and a stronger perception of social support, which consequently leads to better social adaptation. Xin et al.'s (2019) research also confirmed the influence of self-esteem, peer trust, and perceived social support on social adaptation.

This study's contribution lies in the empirical support for ecological systems theory and the accurate finding regarding the pathway through which an individual's self-esteem can directly or indirectly impact and influence social adaptation through peer trust and perceived social support. The study also proves that the ecological systems model is theoretical and has had a deep influence in academic research. However, there has been little direct evidence to prove it. According to the results published by Xin et al. and grounded in ecological systems theory, adolescents' self-esteem can be characterized as internal whereas their peer trust exists within the microsystem and/or mesosystem. Additionally, perceived social support among adolescents may originate from the mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem levels. These ecological systems were in parallel circles from the inside to outside rings and proved that social adaptation was the result of interactions across the five systems. The process of the adolescents' social adaptation is figuring out themselves, their ecological systems, and the relations between themselves and their ecological systems. In short, Xin et al.'s (2019) results were explained using the ecological systems theory. Self-esteem is inside the core individual;

peer trust is in the microsystem and/or mesosystem; perceived social support is in the mesosystem, exosystem, and/or macrosystem. Adolescent social adaptation could be promoted by directly enhancing self-esteem, thus indirectly improving peer trust and perceived social support.

Summary and Conclusions

The primary purpose of this chapter was to explore and analyze existing information and theories concerning how individuals are shaped as they grow into mature young adults. Within the theories described throughout this chapter, it can be easy to understand and view how one's attitudes and behaviors can be influenced by an individual's social behavior, social learning, or their ecological influences. Understanding how the trust level among minority young adults in police develops through their environmental influences (i.e., ecological systems) should concern all law enforcement agencies, officers, and government officials. After researching the above outlined theories and establishing a conceptual framework for this study, there remains a gap of knowledge concerning the RQ. It is clear that the social learning theory and the social control theory offer insight into the formation of delinquents; however, the ecological systems theory may provide a deeper insight into this question that will be provided by the personal experiences of the participants.

The research studies presented within this chapter were similar to, or actually utilize, the ecological systems theory on other studies. However, there remains a gap in which this study sought to bridge. As previously shown, when I entered the search terms trust, minorities, police, and ecological systems theory were placed into the Walden

University database, no results were returned. It is for this specific reason that I focused specifically on the ecological systems theory and how it predicts the trust level among the minority young adults in law enforcement throughout the Dallas, TX, area. The belief is that not only does the social perspective play a role in shaping their development, which can have an impact not only on the trust levels but the entire ecological systems theory and the five rings (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem) and define how an individual's trust level is shaped.

The ecological systems theory helped fill the gap of knowledge into how trust levels in law enforcement within minority young adults are formed and provided insight to researchers to help define what criteria leads to the development of trust within the minority young adult community in law enforcement and lead to future research on how senior-level executives in law enforcement may be able to reverse this issue. While the research mentioned above showed the different studies and theories that can explain the lack of trust within law enforcement, there is little to no research pertaining to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. This specific theory was utilized to examine the effects of environmental factors and their relationship on the trust level among minority young adults and police within the Dallas, TX, area.

Additionally, while other terms contributed to this study included the use of force by police officers, perceptions of racial minority citizens and law enforcement officers, and media influences, the main focal point going forward with this study and in the next chapter, is to establish the following: (a) my research topic, (b) the RQ, (c) the research design and rationale, (d) the methodology, (e) the role of the researcher, and (f) an overall

summary. This information leads to Chapter 4, which dives into the data collection, analysis, and so forth. Finally, the final chapter delivers the results of the study and shows which subsystem within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory had the greatest effect on the levels of trust in law enforcement within minority young adults in the Dallas, TX, area.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the levels of trust within law enforcement officials in minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age, in the Dallas, TX area, utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. As reported by Burks (2021), a study reported that 73% of African Americans, 67% of Hispanic Americans, and 38% of European Americans reported believing police used excessive force (Rinehart Kochel & Gau, 2019). Due to these high statistics, it is no wonder there may be a low level of trust in police among the minority communities. Built on this belief, prior research, and a substantiated increase in the use of excessive force by law enforcement on minority adults, it is clear that these minority groups continue to express their extreme dissatisfaction and overall resentment with the current police practices within the United States (McManus et al., 2019).

Due to the above studies and percentages of minority adults believing that the police are using excessive force and leading to a possible mistrust in the police, it lends credibility with this study concerning the trust levels of law enforcement within the minority young adults utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory as described in earlier chapters. As such, this study was guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, and a qualitative phenomenological model was utilized as the methodology. Chapter 1 described the research design and rationale for its use in this study, whereas Chapter 2 provided insight into the theoretical foundation and literature review as it pertains to this specific focus and study. This chapter will include discussions

concerning my role as the sole researcher, the selection of participants, the data collection, issues of trustworthiness, and any ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of the qualitative study was to investigate the trust level of trust in law enforcement by minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age in the Dallas, TX, area. Due to the greater part of the minority population of Dallas, TX, being either African American or Latine, this study determined the trust level of law enforcement utilizing the ecological systems theory within these races. As such, the RQ was specifically defined as follows:

RQ: How do ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults, aged 18 to 23, in Dallas, TX?

The rationale for this specific study is needed due to studies that have shown that the relationship between police organizations and community members have developed mistrust as more citizens have begun to document misconduct by law enforcement officers (Archibald et al., 2017). I hoped to gain insight into developing policy recommendations that can facilitate law enforcement officials at all levels to gain or continue gaining trust within minority young adults through positive social communications and interactions. Although there have been studies into the level of trust in law enforcement with minorities, none have been found to explore the 18- to 23-year-old minorities level while examining the ecological systems within their lives.

Phenomenon of the Study

The phenomenon of the study was based on studies that have shown that communities trust the police when they feel the police are fair and just (Tyler et al., 2014). Due to this mistrust, this study aimed to define the trust level of law enforcement within the minority young adult community, aged 18 to 23 in the Dallas, TX, area. The goal of this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the trust level in law enforcement among the proposed group of participants and to share this information with senior level law enforcement officials in an attempt to facilitate a positive social change.

Research Tradition

Qualitative research methods as described by Mohajan (2018) by and large include interviews and observations, but may also include case studies, surveys, as well as historical and document analyses. Mohajan also defined the qualitative research as “an umbrella term” utilized to refer to theoretical perspectives’ designs. These designs or methods include action research, case study, content analysis, ethnography, grounded theory, historical research, narrative, and phenomenology research (Mohajan, 2018). This study also used the phenomenology method and described why it was chosen over others.

The narrative research method focuses on the participants’ narrative about themselves and/or about events that may have occurred (Burks, 2021; Mohajan, 2018). After examination, this design produced data and possibly the results sought after; however, a narrative research method seeks to tell a story from the beginning to the end of an individual’s personal experience (Burks, 2021; Mohajan, 2018). The research data for this type of research would be composed of letters, interviews, photos, experiences by

family members, personal conversations, journal entries, field notes, and other artifacts (Mohajan, 2018). This type of design is lengthy and very time consuming (Butina, 2015).

The ethnography research method would not have been appropriate for this study because it is a study of the beliefs, social interactions, and behaviors of small societies, involving participation and observation over a long period, and the interpretation of the data collected (Mohajan, 2018). The focus of this study was on the environmental factors that influence the attitudes and beliefs of minority young adults as they mature.

The grounded research theory focuses on generating or discovering a new theory because the belief is that new theories can be developed based on observing the participants and collecting data (Burks, 2021; Mohajan, 2018). The goal of this study was not to develop a new theory; therefore, this design was not in alignment with the aims of this study. Lastly, the case study method is used to examine an individuals' attitudes and beliefs as they mature and how the environmental factors play a role in that development. For those reasons, it was decided not to utilize this particular design.

The case study method is defined by Mohajan (2018), as a "comprehensive description of an individual case and its analysis" (p. 32). Furthermore, a case study methodology is utilized when individually analyzing and describing each person to understand their specific activities, needs, life circumstances, personal history, and other relevant factors on an individual level (Mohajan, 2018). Because this type of method focuses on each person individually for their specific activity, this method was determined to be ineffective, as I focused on a community of individuals, specifically minority young adults, aged 18 to 23 years of age.

Based on the above information, the phenomenological approach was utilized in this qualitative study, as it is most concerned with the life experiences of a concept or phenomenon experienced by one or more individuals. This type of research is also utilized to study areas in which there is little knowledge (Guerrero-Castañeda et al., 2017). Because there is little to no knowledge of how an individual's environmental influences or systems, as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979), can shape their attitudes and beliefs, the phenomenological approach is best suited. It is also vital that when researchers use the phenomenological approach, they become and remain aware of biases they may have, and that they address them accordingly, in an attempt to avoid any interference with their study (Mohajan, 2018).

Phenomenology research is an approach to investigate the everyday experiences of an individual while suspending the researchers' preconceived notions about that specific phenomenon (Neubauer et al., 2019; Teherani et al., 2015). This approach is utilized when a study concentrates on life experiences of a concept or phenomenon experienced by one or more individuals. Phenomenological approaches are based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity and emphasize the importance of personal perspective and interpretation.

As such, they are powerful for understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people's motivations and actions, and cutting through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom. According to Goss and Stevens (2016), pure phenomenological research seeks fundamentally to describe rather than explain. It begins from a viewpoint free of hypotheses or preconceptions, with the aim of

capturing experience as it is lived without imposing conceptual categorizations or theoretical understanding. The goal is to provide a rich, contextualized account of phenomena as directly experienced by consciousness from a first-person perspective. Furthermore, Lester (1999), asserted that phenomenology is concerned with examining experiences from the perspective of the individual in a manner that sets aside typical assumptions and conventional ways of perceiving.

Researchers utilize semistructured interviews in their attempt to gain data concerning their qualitative research study, while also using the phenomenological approach. These types of interviews with study participants allow the researcher to gain a better understanding of the subjective way of thinking from the participants viewpoint (Qutoshi, 2018) and to gather a more in-depth account of their experiences, thoughts, and factors surrounding their upbringing. For this reason, this style of interviewing was used throughout the study.

When conducting the semistructured interviews, focus was placed on asking only open-ended questions to allow each participant the opportunity to provide in-depth responses without any limitations. As stated by Alamri (2019), semistructured interviews allow for the researcher to have flexibility during the interviewing process which then provides the researcher and participant the chance to have a “flowing conversation.” During the interviews, specific focus on context analysis was vital, while also exploring the cause of the phenomena as well as making a point of highlighting the explanations from the participants regarding their social influences as defined by Alase (2017) and Bronfenbrenner (1979).

Context analysis is a conducted through examination of a certain situation or conditions, which helps researchers explain how something happens and the overall impact it can have on an individual or groups of individuals. One main advantage that this analysis gives the researchers is that the information provided can be used to investigate and analyze a social phenomenon in a non-evasive way. The importance of context analysis within this study was to help determine what environmental factors affected the way the participants shaped their level of trust towards law enforcement.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative study is to examine, interpret, and explain the thoughts and feelings of an individual which may affect their behavior (Sutton et al., 2015). In this study, an examination into the participants thoughts and feelings, as it pertains to their social influences and how they may have affected their trust level in law enforcement, was the primary focus. Throughout this study, I was the sole researcher responsible for the recruitment of all participants and conducting the semistructured interviews by utilizing telephonic communications, using open-ended questions (see Alase, 2017).

Collecting and submitting the data for interpretation was also my responsibility. To avoid conflicts of interest in this study, the participants did not have any affiliation with me, either personally or professionally. Specific focus was also placed on remaining unbiased and purposely maintaining an open mind without any preconceived judgement or prejudice. The interview questions were open-ended, as described in the instrumentation section below. When it was time to analyze the data and present the

findings, the results were based on the facts provided by the participants with no bias or predetermined notions.

As it relates to preventing and managing an unbiased foundation, a field journal was created and maintained throughout the course of this study. This journal allowed note taking during the study for me to record all verbal impressions and behaviors by the participants during the research process. During this process, accountability was maintained ensuring no interview questions were leading and were strictly open-ended. The intent of this study was to gain an honest response from all willing participants based on their ecological influences, and not be based on any expectations or preconceived notions.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

For this study, I used purposeful sampling to select the participants, as defined by Palinkas et al. (2015). When conducting a qualitative research study, using a small sample size of at least 20 participants is suggested or until data saturation has occurred (Vasileiu et al., 2018). This sample size is considered a sufficient number of participants because it allowed me to gather sufficient data about the participants and prevented me from feeling overwhelmed (see Burks, 2021; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). Data saturation can be described as data being collected from participants until the information begins to show similar redundancy (Braun & Clarke, 2021). As defined by Saunders et al. (2018), a researcher can ascertain whether more data are required based on the results

subsequent to the interview phase; however, this has to be determined prior to any form of coding.

As such, the goal of this study consisted of conducting personal interviews of minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age, in the Dallas, TX, area. The participants were accessed through convenience sampling, with the participants being provided a contact email on flyers placed throughout the Dallas, TX, area, at various public areas such as bus stations, community centers, convenience stores, and other popular stores (fast food establishments and coffee shops). If the response level was determined to be low, the geographical area was to be extended to the Fort Worth, TX, area.

If convenience sampling did not produce enough participants to reach data saturation, snowball sampling was the next sample selection method to be utilized. Snowball sampling is used to increase the participant group by using contacts known to the selected participants. Snowball sampling, as defined by Kirchherr and Charles (2018), uses participants to identify and recommend other potential individuals willing to participate in the study. However, in this research, 20 purposeful sampling produced enough volunteers, and snowball sampling was not necessary.

The candidates' personal identifying information was provided by the participant and retained by me only after receiving consent. In this study, minority subjects were limited to those who self-identified as African American or Latine as identified by themselves.

When conducting a phenomenological study certain criteria needed to be considered before the selection of participants. All participants self-identified as Black/African American or Latine, and that they were 18 to 23 years of age. I also needed to ensure the participants were placed in an environment that afforded them the comfortability to freely share their experiences. For this specific study, all the participants were minority young adults, aged 18 to 23 years of age. As described by Bronfenbrenner's (1979), ecological systems theory, all participants have obviously experienced ecological influences throughout their lives as they mature. Understanding the different social influences within someone's life is important so that the researcher can remain open to the fact that there may be some form of trauma, either physical or mental, as the interviews are conducted (Williamson et al., 2020).

For the recruitment phase, a Walden email address was placed on flyers so the participants could contact me directly if they would like to participate. All participants were instructed to respond via the email address listed. Once a participant request was received, they were forwarded a consent form that outlined the requirements, the purpose, procedures, sample questions, and the risks and benefits of being involved in the study. It also defined the privacy in which I would take and provided Walden University contact information in the event participants had any concerns. Subsequent to receiving the consent form, the participants were required to simply respond to the email and type "I agree" for final approval.

Once all parties had established a clear expectation of the study and all consents were signed, I contacted each participant and scheduled a date and time for the interview.

Because the interviews were conducted over the telephone, the participant was encouraged to go to a private place as well, such as a bedroom or home office, a private room at a local library community center, or office, where third party presence would be limited. This was to eliminate any outside influences, noises, or distractions. These interview limitations were utilized to ensure the participant's privacy.

Instrumentation

Using a PA allowed the participant to provide a personal, in-depth illustration of how and what ecological influences helped shape their trust level in law enforcement. This type of analysis allowed the participant to focus on their lived experiences and how these experiences helped form trust in law enforcement as they moved from childhood to young adulthood. This type of approach allowed the participant to also provide an in-depth representation of how they may have experienced an event within the ecological systems theory, as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979). Using a PA was the most suitable qualitative approach for this particular study because it allowed the participant to focus on their lived experiences, as outlined by Bronfenbrenner (1979), and provided them the opportunity to describe how these experiences assisted them in forming their trust level in law enforcement officials.

As mentioned, data were collected for this study through semistructured interviews. A voice audio recorder was utilized to ensure accurate data were recorded for the analytical phase of this study. An interview guide was also developed and presented to a qualitative expert panel at Walden University to ensure consistency before any participants were recruited and interviews scheduled.

Subsequent to the initial interview and any follow up questions, emails were exchanged to determine the best procedure to record the information (i.e., follow-up telephone conversation, in person, virtual conversation, or simple email). These follow-up data were also recorded as well for accuracy. This follow-up option was outlined in the participant's consent form, and the participant was asked to identify their preference in the event follow-up questions are required. Because semistructured interviews have been known to allow the researcher and the participant to engage in real-time dialogue, it is also an effective way to ask additional questions or concerns and provides flexibility (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

Throughout the interview, it was crucial to ask all open-ended questions, allowing the participant to expand answers to each question (see Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). It was presumed that all participants who were part of this study would also have some level of education. Due to this presumption, the interview questions were asked in a way that all participants understood. It was intended for these questions to be created on a high school level, which is the equivalent of an individual 18 years old. Along with making sure the questions were worded in a way that the participants could understand, it was also imperative that personal rapport was established between myself and the participant.

In the beginning of the interview, I enhanced a sense of rapport with each participant in order to build a considerate and sympathetic relationship, as well as a sense of mutual trust (see Råheim et al., 2016). Establishing a rapport was done by approaching the interview with an open and curious attitude, and informing the participant that their

specific and personal point of view was important, as it pertained to the environmental factors that affected their trust level in law enforcement. It was of importance to establish personal rapport and was done so by actively listening to the participant, acknowledging their information, talking less, making sure the interview progressed in a calm and steady pace (see Råheim et al., 2016).

For this study, an audio recorder was utilized in the interview setting in order to ensure the information and data collected is accurate. The questions were asked during the interview with each participant are listed below, along with the RQ. In the RQ listed below, an attempt was made to explore which ecological systems or environmental factors shaped their level of trust in law enforcement. To explore this topic, only one RQ was presented:

RQ: How do ecological influences play a role as it relates to the 18 to 23 year old minority young adults' level of trust in law enforcement within Dallas, TX?

During the participant interviews, the following questions were posed in the following order:

1. How does your age play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?
2. How does your gender play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?
3. How does your race play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?
4. How does your prior experience with the police play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?
5. How does your news or social media awareness play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?

6. How do historical events play a role as it relates to trust in law enforcement?
7. What is your current trust level in law enforcement?
8. Where do you think you gained your trust level in law enforcement as it pertains to the ecological systems theory?

Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

For this study, the recruitment of all participants, as well as collecting all data, was my responsibility as the sole researcher. This study consisted of conducting personal interviews of 20 minority young adults, aged 18 to 23 years old, and was accessed through convenience sampling, with the participants being provided a contact email on flyers placed throughout the Dallas, TX, area, at various public areas such as bus stations, community centers, convenience stores, and other popular stores (fast food establishments, coffee shops, and gas stations). Due to the response level being low, the geographical area was extended to the Fort Worth, TX, area as well.

The candidates' personal identifying information was not obtained or retained, due to this study recruiting anonymous participants who provided consent by replying to the recruitment email with the words "I consent." In this study, minority subjects were limited to those who self-identify as Black/African American or Latine as defined in Chapter 1. At the conclusion of the study, it was determined that full data saturation had been met after 20 interviews.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained from Walden University before any participants were sought out for recruitment. Once the IRB approval was approved, contact was made with the various establishments in order to

gain approval to post flyers in the lobbies outlining the study and provide my contact information. Once the participant responded via email and expressed an interest in this study, confirmation that the individual met all the criteria for the study was conducted and the participant was emailed an approved consent form. The consent form itself provided the following information:

- a brief description of the study,
- specific criteria the participant were required to meet,
- a brief background on this study,
- that this study is strictly voluntary,
- an explanation of any procedures and risks,
- an explanation of the different privacy protocols that would be followed.

The participants were required to reply to the original email stating, “I consent” prior to any interviews being scheduled. The participant’s typing “I consent” was also utilized as an electronic signature for the purpose of this study. Once a participant was decided upon, and all the appropriate documentation was received, they were scheduled a specific date and time for me to conduct the semistructured interview, lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. As previously stated, all interviews were conducted via telephonic communications due to the ease of all parties. All interviews were recorded with an audio-recording device and securely stored for privacy reasons.

During the actual interview, no field notes were taken as this may have distracted the participant and interrupted their concentration. Rapport was established by asking preinterview questions that included but were not limited to the following:

- Where did you grow up?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- How many family members were in your household?
- What do you do for employment?

While asking the participant these questions, information was exchanged on a limited basis as in an attempt to build personal rapport and build a small level of trust. Subsequent to the interview, the data transcription was completed by utilizing Sonix, an online audio and video transcription software program, creating a speech-to-text algorithms which also converts audio and video files to Microsoft Word document and PDF's. Prior to submitting the data for interpretation into the Sonix software, all transcripts were reviewed to ensure the accuracy and detail. This information and data from the interviews were then shared with the participants as well to allow them full transparency and a full understanding that the interview questions and answers were uploaded into the Sonix software and finally into NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software, for analyzation. It was also made clear to all participants that the transcriptions were placed and stored on two secured solid state, external thumb drives containing a 256-bit AES XTS encrypted algorithm password for security purposes, and that I was the only person who possessed the password combination to gain access and ensure privacy.

During the interview, it was anticipated that the participants would disclose personal experiences or personal influences, which influenced their level of trust in law enforcement as they matured. It was also anticipated that questions regarding the participants gender, race, and prior experience with the police could cause certain

feelings and emotions to arise. It was very important to have support in place in the event that any of the participants wished to speak with someone after the interview was concluded. In anticipation of this occurrence, a list of counseling services was available to them and would have been provided to them if so needed. These counseling services were to be provided to the participants at no cost. At the conclusion of each interview, it was reiterated what the purpose of this study was, as well as any additional time for the participant to ask possible follow-up questions.

Data Analysis Plan

There are a variety of benefits that can be derived in the use of qualitative techniques. As such, data collection was gained through qualitative techniques that established rapport between the interviewee and interviewer (see Akinyode & Khan, 2018). Through this rapport building, I was able to direct the attention to the participant when it pertained to the material or study, as well as to help motivate the participant to carefully answer open-ended questions that provided the data needed for results. As such, Smith and Shinebourne (2012) stated that a data analysis within the phenomenological research has five separate and distinct phases.

Becoming Familiar With the Data

During this phase, the researchers typically familiarize themselves with the data by continuing to review the data once they have been transcribed and organized (Burks, 2021; Lester et al., 2020). The notion behind this phase is that each time the researcher studies the data, it may provide new information (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). During this stage, it is also suggested by Smith and Shinebourne (2012) that while reviewing the

collected data, the researcher should also note the participants initial reflections and initial interpretations of such.

Coding the Data

Selecting short descriptive words or phrases allowed me to assign significant meaning to the data. Smith and Shinebourne (2012) stated that during this stage, the researcher may use metaphors and figures of speech. It has also been suggested that the researcher should pay close attention to certain emotional and distinct phrases that are utilized (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

Realign From Codes to Themes

In this step, the researcher creates short descriptive words or phrases that have a significant meaning and transfers these phrases and words into themes. These short descriptive words and phrases help identify the phenomenon (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

Discovering a Connection Between the Emerging Themes

This stage consists of taking the emerging themes and grouping them together. The researcher should write down a description of what the participant experienced with the phenomenon. Under each description, the researcher then describes how the experience occurred (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

Making the Analytic Process Transparent

During this stage, the researcher must ensure the reader is able to understand the material. The researcher is also responsible for writing a detailed section, which outlines

the participants experience and how they experienced the phenomenon (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

As such, the data pertaining to the themes and codes received from the participant interviews were translated and uploaded into the NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software, and the results were reported in a clear and concise manner, which allowed easy interpretation and reading.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of this research is my sole responsibility. Trustworthiness is defined by Connelly (2016) as being based on the confidence and quality in the data. Connelly further explained that when trying to establish trustworthiness within a study there are specific criteria that need to be met: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.

Credibility

Credibility refers to the truth or can be considered the confidence of a study and the overall findings of that study (Connelly, 2016). To ensure credibility, each participant was able to review a summarized version of the interview and provide any feedback in order to confirm that the transcript was from their interview and that it accurately described their interview. The summarized version of the interview was then provided to each participant via email, which also provided an additional layer of accuracy and credibility to this study.

Prolonged engagement and reflexivity were also utilized to ensure credibility in this study. With regards to a prolonged engagement with the participant, it was essential

to spend quality time with each participant so a firm understanding of the meanings underlying participants' experience, as described by Ho et al. (2019), can be related. Lastly, to address the reflexivity, Berger (2015) stated that the researcher is obligated to address these issues succinctly and clearly, so the reader can evaluate the research. In this study, detailed notes were taken throughout this process, after concluding each participant interview, as well as during all meetings with my committee members.

Transferability

Transferability concerns the extent to which the researchers' interpretation or conclusions are transferable to other similar contexts (Nassaji, 2020). Furthermore, "transferability should not be meant for the researcher to make generalizable claims but instead to provide sufficient details that make transfer possible in case readers wish to do so" (Nassaji, 2020, p. 427).

In order for transferability to be achieved, detail descriptions of the data were available for the reader/ audience so that they could make comparisons to other context, which would be based on as much information as possible (see Burks, 2021; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A comprehensive description was noted by providing an in-depth account of the phenomenon, which allows the reader to make their own comparison.

Dependability

Dependability refers to showing that the findings of a study are consistent, the findings can be repeated in similar conditions, and that there is sufficient information so that other researchers may follow the same procedures, albeit possibly reaching a different conclusion (Stenfors et al., 2020). To achieve dependability in this study,

detailed notes were taken at the conclusion of every interview. As previously stated, all interviews were recorded with an audio recorder to ensure accurate data was collected and transcribed for the analysis portion of the study. Other ways dependability was achieved was to maintain an audit trail (Amankwaa, 2016), which consisted of taking notes from the beginning to the end of the research process, as well as keeping the interview transcripts for transparency. Throughout this research process, the members of Walden University's committee have provided in-depth feedback to ensure this study met the dependability criteria.

Confirmability

Confirmability, as stated by Kyngäs et al. (2020), describes the degree of neutrality or, in other words, the extent to which the findings of a study reflect the respondents' opinions and experiences rather than the researchers' biases, motivations, or interests. In order to achieve confirmability in this study, an audit trail was maintained and consisted of the notes that were taken throughout the research process, as well as the interview transcripts and conclusions. Additionally, the current chapter and any published reports include sufficient details about the methodology of the study to allow it to be replicated for confirmation. Various field notes were taken throughout the entire research process, so confirmability was transparent upon the completion. These field notes were made immediately after each interview, while conducting research, and during all meetings with Walden University committee members. As an added layer of confirmability and so the smallest detail is not lost in translation, an audio recorder was used during the interviews and throughout this study.

Ethical Procedures

As ethical procedures are of the utmost importance, I received the proper approval (#07-17-23-0516836) from the Walden University IRB before the participants were emailed prior to any participate being recruited or any data collected. Therefore, before moving forward with the above-mentioned steps in this study, approval from Walden University's IRB was first obtained.

Walden University's IRB's sole responsibility is to ensure that all Walden University research complies with the university's ethical standards as well as U.S. federal regulations. The IRB's ethics review and approval are required for all Walden-affiliated studies before participant recruitment, data collection, or dataset access. (Walden University, 2022)

This process ensures the participants are protected and that no undue harm will come upon any of the participants in a study. Before any of the interviews were conducted, all participants fully understood the confidentiality of this study in detail. By ensuring the participants understood the confidentiality and safety concerns that this study brought to light, the participants fully understood that the only instance that confidentiality would be broken is if they state that they feel like harming themselves or others. Once all parties had established a clear expectation of the study and all consents were acknowledged and signed, I set up a scheduled date and time with the participants to conduct the interview.

Due to this study examining the environmental factors that shape the trust levels within police among minority young adults aged 18 to 23, a primary focus was placed on how they were raised and what influences shaped this level of trust. It was anticipated

that there may be a risk of a participant's emotions being sparked (e.g., asking a specific question about an ecological system within their life, not knowing it may cause the participant to react in a certain way). During the study, no participant expressed concern for themselves or others, so the referral to professional services was not needed.

All study participants were made fully aware that they had the ability to terminate any participation in the study at any time during the process. If the participant wished to terminate their involvement, an explanation would have been provided advising them that their participation was strictly voluntary, and if they wished to withdraw from the study, they were free to make that choice without any repercussions or negative feelings.

Throughout this study, no participant expressed a desire to withdrawal.

In order to protect the identity and confidentiality of each participant, they were assigned a letter for identification purposes (i.e., Participant 1). The participants' true identity was not disclosed to any third parties, nor were any data received. All recordings and transcripts are stored on an external, encrypted hard drive and placed in a combination safe, which is located in my residence and will be stored for a total of 5 years. This combination safe is only accessed by me and no other individual(s). At the end of the 5-year period, all documents, recording, and data contained on the above-described hard drive will be destroyed.

Summary

This study utilized a phenomenological approach in this qualitative study to examine what ecological system or environmental factors played a role in the shaping of minority young adults aged 18 to 23 years of age, and their level of trust in law

enforcement within the Dallas, TX, area. Utilizing the phenomenological approach allowed for the better understanding of how this trust level is formed and how senior level leadership among law enforcement agencies can change the views if needed. Throughout this chapter, many points were discussed to include the different research traditions that could have been used, why the phenomenological approach tradition was ultimately selected and utilized, as well as the specific criteria met for each participant in order for them to be involved with this study. Such criteria were previously defined as minority subjects who were limited to those self-identifying as African American or Latine. Furthermore, 18 to 23 years of age was also determined by allowing the participant to acknowledge and confirm their age fell within the required range.

For this study, the sample size of 20 participants were recruited, at which point data saturation was met. My role as the sole researcher was discussed, and how the recruiting, rapport building, and interviews of the participants were conducted. Additionally, my role was defined to include any issues concerning bias, as well as my creative plan in the design of an unbiased study, which did not obstruct the ability to conduct interviews, analyze the research data, and present any findings.

Chapter 4 will describe the settings and demographics of the study, as well as the data collection. Within the data collection reporting, I will show the number of participants interviewed until data saturation occurred, how the data were collected and recorded, and any possible unusual circumstances that may have occurred during the participant interviews. Subsequently, an additional report will be presented on the process

of the data analysis, which includes the specific codes and themes utilized and any discrepant cases which may have to be factors onto the analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine how ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults 18- to 23-years of age, within the Dallas, TX, area. This was accomplished by utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory and focused on areas such as demographics, prior experience with law enforcement, and social media awareness. The data was collected and analyzed to answer the following RQ that guided this study:

RQ: How do ecological influences shape the trust in law enforcement among minority adults aged 18 to 23 in Dallas, TX?

The semistructured interviews conducted for data collection were professionally transcribed to ensure the trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. These included a thorough understanding of the institutional review board process, strict maintenance of participant confidentiality, and awareness of potential psychological, mental and/or physical demands placed on participants. Careful protocols were developed to clarify how and why an individual's confidentiality may be broken, as well as the possible impact on a participant who withdrew from the study at any point. The protection of human subjects was of utmost importance in all aspects of research design, data gathering techniques, and dissemination of findings.

This chapter outlines the context and participant characteristics of the study as well as the procedures for data gathering and analysis. A total of 20 interviews were

conducted until thematic saturation was reached. Data was collected through semistructured interviews, which were audio recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. For analysis, I employed a general inductive approach using thematic analysis. First, I closely read each transcript to familiarize myself with the content. Next, I generated initial codes to identify salient features of the raw data that may inform the RQ. I then collated codes into potential themes while reviewing all data extracts for each theme. I defined and named the themes before producing the final report. No discrepant cases emerged that impacted the analysis. The RQ is addressed by presenting data and direct quotes from participants to support each finding. Tables and figures are used to illustrate results as outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. To conclude, I provide a detailed summary of the case study and associated results discussed above.

Settings

I used field tests to gain experience interviewing and to assess if the interview questions were appropriate for answering the RQ. However, the data collected from the field test interviews were not used in the study analysis. The field test was given in one mock interview with an unrelated volunteer. The volunteer for the field test signed an informed consent and met with me over a telephone call. Field Test Participant (FTP) #1 was a male who identified as a 23-year-old African American. The result of this field tests provided the necessary practice I needed to continue with this study. As described in Chapter 3, the FTP interview was conducted via telephonic communications due to the

ease of all parties. During this specific interview, no field notes were taken; however, it was recorded with an audio-recording device.

Demographics

At the beginning of each interview, I discussed certain demographic factors and specific information relevant to this study with the participants. I informed each participant they did not have to answer any of the questions if they did not wish to or if any question made them uncomfortable. The questions related to their age, their race, community trust, and their social media presence. Table 1 shows the demographic data.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Data

Participant	Race	Age
Participant 1	Black/ African American	23
Participant 2	Black/ African American	22
Participant 3	Black/ African American	21
Participant 4	Black/ African American	18
Participant 5	Black/ African American	20
Participant 6	Latino	23
Participant 7	Black/ African American	23
Participant 8	Latino	22
Participant 9	Latino	19
Participant 10	Latino	20
Participant 11	Black/ African American	18
Participant 12	Latino	21
Participant 13	Black/ African American	19
Participant 14	Latino	18
Participant 15	Latino	20
Participant 16	Black/ African American	20
Participant 17	Latino	21
Participant 18	Latino	23
Participant 19	Black/ African American	21
Participant 20	Latino	23

Data Collection

Data collected, which consisted of semistructured interviews, were transcribed to ensure trustworthiness and other issues such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Lastly, I considered ethical considerations, such as the understanding of the IRB process, the confidentiality, and addressing related issues for all participants. This involves potential psychological, mental, and physical instances, protocols for referrals, conditions for breaching confidentiality, and procedures if a participant declines to participate at any point during the study.

The data was collected from a total of 20 participants who participated in telephonic conference call interviews. Of these 20 participants, 10 identified as Black/African American, and 10 identified as Latine. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes, with the longest interview lasting approximately 43 minutes. Unless otherwise noted, all interviews took place between September 15, 2023, and January 11, 2024. Table 2 provides details on the time for each interview.

Table 2*Length of Participants' Interviews*

Participant	Length of interview	Transcribed pages
Participant 1	36:17	21
Participant 2	42:57	24
Participant 3	30:01	11
Participant 4	32:36	14
Participant 5	37:04	21
Participant 6	30:32	11
Participant 7	32:08	13
Participant 8	28:52	10
Participant 9	27:55	09
Participant 10	31:00	12
Participant 11	28:06	09
Participant 12	36:45	21
Participant 13	33:51	15
Participant 14	28:52	10
Participant 15	40:27	22
Participant 16	29:44	11
Participant 17	38:11	21
Participant 18	33:18	14
Participant 19	41:50	22
Participant 20	31:39	12

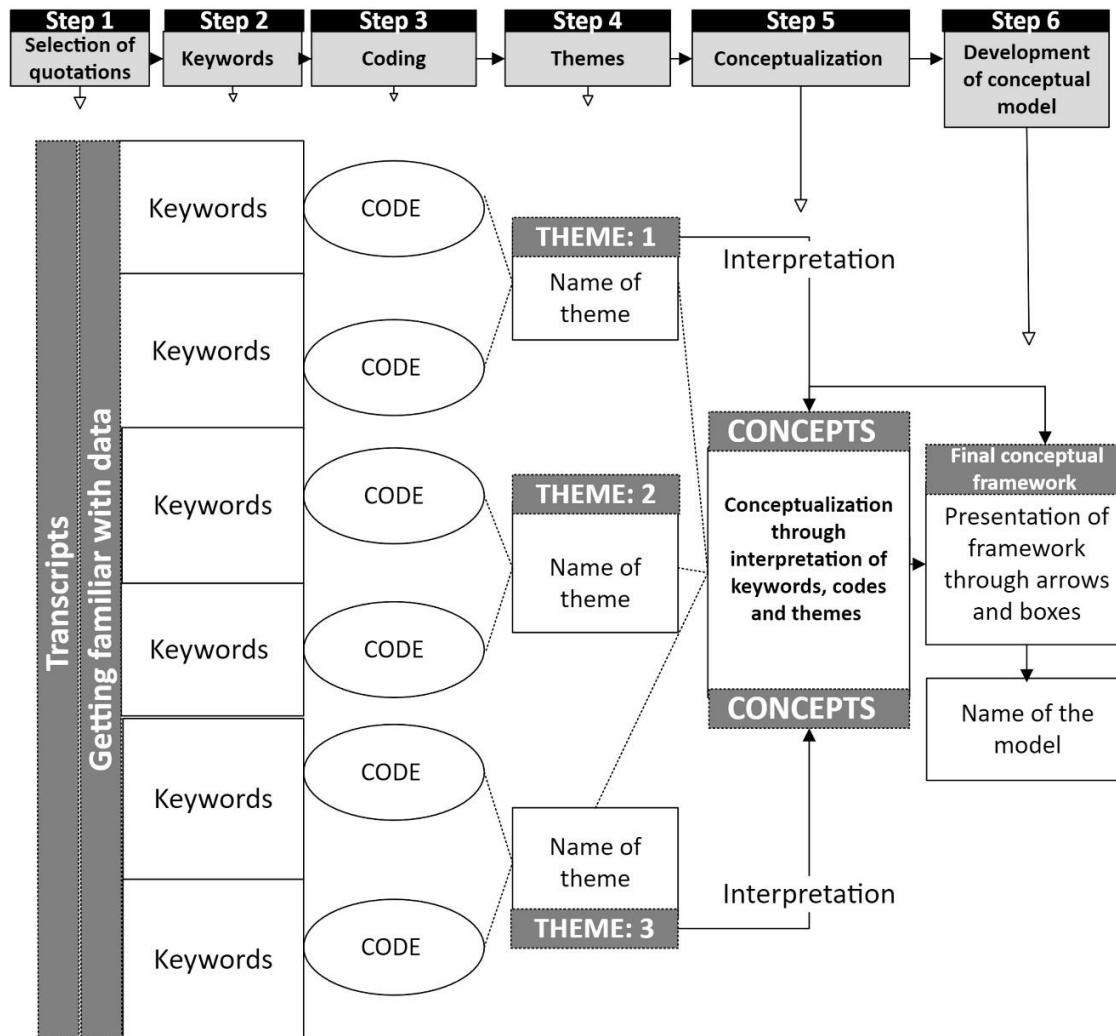
All interviews were recorded using an audio recording feature, after which each interview recording was labeled with an anonymous label identifying the participant (Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.). Interview recordings were saved on password-protected external thumb drives, where I was the only person with access to the data. The thumb drive was then stored in a secure vault located inside my residence, where I was the only one who had the entry code. The data collection process had no variations from the plan presented in Chapter 3, and no unusual circumstances were encountered during this data collection process.

Data Analysis

The phenomenon explored in this study was how minority young adults developed their trust level in law enforcement utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system theory. This study aims to provide senior-level law enforcement officials with a guide to building better community relationships while promoting positive social change. To explore this phenomenon, I used the one-on-one semistructured interview process by which I interviewed the participants over the telephone. Data was collected from 20 participants who resided in the Dallas, TX, area. Subsequent to the interviews being concluded and the recordings being transcribed, I emailed each transcription to the respective participant for member-checking. After all documents had been checked by the participant and returned, I then employed a 6-step thematic analysis process, as defined by Naeem et al. (2023). Figure 3 shows the thematic analysis.

Figure 3

Thematic Analysis



Note. From Naeem, M. (2024, March 17). “A Step-by-Step Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model on Qualitative Research” [Diagram]. LinkedIn.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/step-by-step-process-thematic-analysis-develop-conceptual-naeem-lwage/>

Themes and Codes

In this study, 20 participants were interviewed to give their perspectives on whether ecological factors influence trust in law enforcement among minority adults. Data saturation is when the researcher does not produce new information from extra participants (Guest et al., 2020). NVivo 14 was used as an organizational tool to store data and to organize the similarities in coded and grouped texts. In this process, I only used NVivo 14 for coding, which helped to organize the data for the ultimate identification of themes. Throughout the data analysis process, I utilized the 6-step procedure defined by Naeem et al. (2023).

Step 1: Transcription, Familiarization With Data, and Selection of Quotations

In this initial phase of the thematic analysis of the data, I transcribed the data using Sonix, an online audio and video transcription software program. After the transcription of the data, I took time to read through the transcripts three times to become familiar with the data. While going through the transcripts, I was able to identify important sections and selected quotes that represented the diverse perspectives of the data in relation to the RQ.

Step 2: Selection of Keywords

In this phase, I cross-examined each of the 20 interview transcripts, identifying recurring patterns and terms and designating them as keywords. The keywords were meant to express the viewpoints of the participants in relation to the RQ. It is important to note that each keyword was derived from the 20 transcripts.

RQ: How do ecological factors influence and shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults aged 18 to 23 in Dallas, TX?

In this RQ, I aimed to investigate the ecological factors that influenced trust in law enforcement among minority adults in Dallas, TX. Seven themes emerged, including age, race, news and social media, influence from family members, gender, historical events, and prior experiences of the participants. The seven themes were identified based on the keywords and codes from participants' responses, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Research Question and Themes

Research question	Themes
RQ: How do ecological factors influence and shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults aged 18 to 23 in Dallas, TX?	Theme 1: Age factor influences trust level Theme 2: Race factor influences trust level Theme 3: News and social media awareness Theme 4: Family members influence trust level Theme 5: Gender influence trust level Theme 6: Historical events influence trust level Theme 7: Prior experiences influence trust level

Step 3: Coding

According to Naeem et al. (2023), codes are defined as short phrases or words that are assigned to sections of data. These codes capture the core message of the data without providing any interpretation. Utilizing this information, I was able to identify 24 codes from the transcribed data using NVivo 14 data analysis software. The keywords that were identified in Step 2 were useful in converting the raw data into meaningful and manageable units. Table 4 describes the codes that were clustered together.

Table 4*Codes Clustered Together*

Cluster 1:	Cluster 2:	Cluster 3:	Cluster 4:	Cluster 5:	Cluster 6:	Cluster 7:
*Age influences trust. *Kids don't know much about law enforcement. *More trust when older. *Unfair treatment because of age. *Young people associated with crime.	*Race influences trust. *Stereotype on black women.	*Biased information from mass media. *More coverage in social media. *News providing information. *Social media providing information.	*Family members being part of officers. *Family members influences trust.	*Gender influences trust. *Males treated unfairly than women. *Women and girls treated unfairly in society.	*Learning historical events. *Past events affecting trust.	*Mixed range of experiences. *Not all officers are bad. *Officers are also human. *Positive personal encounters with officers. *Prior experiences. *Attitude towards low enforcement.

Step 4: Theme Development

Naeem et al. (2023) stated that in theme development, the researcher organizes codes into meaningful units to identify the relationship between the codes. From the codes identified in Step 3, I was able to then categorize them into themes, which linked the RQ to the data. In this study, I was able to come up with seven themes that helped to answer the RQ. Table 5 shows the themes, codes, and frequencies.

Table 5*Themes, Codes, and Frequencies*

Theme	Codes	Frequencies
Theme 1: Age factor influences trust level	*Age influences trust.	13
	*Kids don't know much about law enforcement.	14
	*More trust when older.	18
	*Unfair treatment because of age.	14
	*Young people associated with crime.	16
Theme 2: Race factor influences trust level	*Race influences trust.	20
	*Stereotype of black women.	12
Theme 3: News and social media awareness	*Biased information from mass media.	16
	*More coverage in social media.	10
	*News providing information.	12
	*Social media providing information.	48
Theme 4: Family members influence trust level	*Family members being part of officers.	10
	*Family members influence trust.	18
Theme 5: Gender influence trust level	*Gender influences trust.	38
	*Males are treated unfairly than women.	12
	*Women and girls are treated unfairly in society.	10
Theme 6: Historical events influence trust level	*Learning historical events.	30
	*Past events affecting trust.	22
Theme 7: Prior experiences influence trust level	*Mixed range of experiences.	9
	*Not all officers are bad.	24
	*Officers are also human.	12
	*Positive personal encounters with officers.	8
	*Prior experiences.	20
	*Attitude towards law enforcement.	16

Step 5: Conceptualization Through Interpretation of Keywords, Codes, and Themes

In this phase, I identified themes through defining concepts that emerged from the data. According to Naeem et al. (2023), the researcher should identify social patterns and align them to answer the RQ. All the definitions were assessed based on reliability, clarity, applicability, accuracy, and their relevance to both theory and practice. This allowed me to produce a table to depict the specific codes and which specific theme they would fall under for this study. Table 6 illustrates the codes and themes.

Table 6

Codes and Themes

Codes	Themes
*Age influences trust. *Kids don't know much about law enforcement. *More trust when older *Unfair treatment because of age. *Young people associated with crime.	Theme 1: Age factor influences trust level
*Race influences trust *Stereotype on black women	Theme 2: Race factor influences trust level
*Biased information from mass media *More coverage in social media. *News providing information *Social media providing information	Theme 3: News and Social Media Awareness
*Family members being part of officers *Family members influences trust.	Theme 4: Family members influence trust level
*Gender influences trust. *Males treated unfairly than women. *Women and girls treated unfairly in society.	Theme 5: Gender influence trust level
*Learning historical events. *Past events affecting trust.	Theme 6: Historical Events influence trust level
*Mixed range of experiences *Not all officers are bad. *Officers are also human. *Positive personal encounters with officers. *Prior experiences. *Attitude towards law enforcement	Theme 7: Prior Experiences influence trust level

Step 6: Development of Conceptual Model

In this final step, as suggested by Naeem et al. (2023), I came up with a unique representation of the data, which was guided by this study's theoretical framework. The conceptual model, as shown in Figure 4, served as an answer to the RQ and underscore the contribution of the study to knowledge.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in research refers to the various steps taken by the researcher to ensure that the data collected is reliable, valid, consistent, and relevant (Stahl & King, 2020). Care was, therefore, taken to plan the design of research studies, to pretest materials for data collection, to train researchers, to standardize data collection procedures, to analyze data with rigor, to be reflexive in the engagement of all data collection participants, and to engage triangulation, member checking, and peer review (see Stahl & King, 2020).

Credibility

Credibility involves the correct and true data, but it depends on the researcher and the method of research used (Stahl & King, 2020). To keep credibility in my research, I followed the accepted methodologies and justified my choices. I further subjected the research to peer debriefing, where both a faculty chair and a subject matter expert reviewed the research and its findings. Additionally, I applied the method of member checking by sharing the interviews with the interviewees to check the correctness of the data. The transcripts were confirmed to have represented their opinions by way of

participant verification. Member checking was to confirm the contents of the transcription to be true and hence contributed to the credibility of the findings.

Transferability

Transferability, according to Stahl and King (2020), is the degree to which the conclusions of the study can be made applicable to contexts or conditions other than those to which they are specifically related. For good transferability of the findings, a full description of the methodology has been given in the research: the setting, number of participants, how they were selected, and criteria for including and excluding them. This would allow readers to judge if the findings could be applicable to their settings. The results of this study can be generalized to the research settings that are similar to the present study in the Dallas region based on the methodology used by including specifically the minorities who met the criteria for selection.

Dependability

As Kyngäs et al. (2020) noted, dependability is one of the essential elements guaranteeing the reliability of data used in a study. It looks at the consistency and dependability of the study's findings. Specifically, another researcher would come to similar results if they used the same methodology. Establishing dependability is through the provision of a full account of data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods, used by Kyngäs et al. (2020). An audit trail was also established to document the conduct of the qualitative study, which included detailed field notes and documents related to the study. This audit trail, therefore, not only eased the documentation of all procedures

undertaken but also made it possible to have the study repeated by others and achieve the same results, hence enhancing dependability.

Confirmability

Confirmability, as an aspect of reliability noted by Stahl and King (2020), indicates that the results gathered within the context of the study need to be unbiased towards the information that the researcher collected. In this view, I used thematic analysis where saturation of points and development of themes were done objectively. This process involved a thorough and systematic reading and coding of the data while patterns emerged, and the development of themes generated until they stopped emerging. I utilized a reliable and transparent coding system where the initial line-to-line coding of codes was later condensed into secondary codes. This categorical approach ensured objectivity throughout the study, minimizing subjectivity in the analysis process.

Results by Theme

As I analyzed and reviewed the codes and themes numerous times, it became apparent that each of the seven themes had underlining factors which fell into one of the five ecological systems as described by Bronfenbrenner (1979). These themes and environmental factors are described below.

Theme 1: Age as a Factor

Ten participants mentioned that age was one of the major factors influencing their trust in law enforcement. The results indicated that young people did not have much information regarding law enforcement, were unfairly treated, and were associated with crime, and as they grew older, their trust level increased.

Participant 4 mentioned they did not know much, and they had little experience, stating that at age 18, they were just starting to figure things out. The participant continued and stated that they did not know much because they were still young and thus had not experienced much firsthand.

Regarding being treated unfairly due to age, Participant 1 noted that he had experienced or had seen people being treated unfairly because of their young age. The participant said that when he was a child, he observed different treatments or unfair treatment towards someone due to age while shopping in various stores. Witnessing this as a child increased his level of mistrust of police officers.

Participants also pointed out that law enforcement officers associated young people with crime. For instance, Participant 2 noted that police officers often assume young people are prone to causing problems. The individual discussed how law enforcement officers often make assumptions when interacting with young Black males, whether in a vehicle or socializing in public spaces. Assumptions such as "Do you have anything in the car?" or "They have to be up to no good" appear to be automatically made due to their age and race. These types of assumptions were said to contribute to the level of mistrust this individual felt toward law enforcement.

Participant 16 noted that mistrust of law enforcement continues due to police officers routinely questioning groups of youth seen together in public. The participant indicated that officers often ask questions implying wrongdoing, such as "What are you doing?" and "Why are you here at this time?" even when no illegal activity is evident. In

the view of Participant 16, such questioning appeared to be based on assumptions made by police, and ultimately undermines trust in law enforcement over time.

Some of the participants mentioned that their trust level could increase over time as they were growing older. This was evidenced by Participant 8, who felt that as he grew older, his trust level would increase because assumptions, such as having a gun or something else in the car, were associated with the activities of the youth. Similarly, Participant 3 responded to the interviewer's question asking whether their trust level would change when they grew older and said, "I think it's my age." By the same token, Participant 5 emphasized that age was a major contributing factor by saying she felt that as young adults, their voices are not heard by officers, but as they mature and grow older, officers may respect them more and listen.

Ten participants identified this theme as one of the major key influences shaping the trust level among minorities in Dallas, TX. Only one participant mentioned that they never thought that their age mattered when it came to influencing their trust level. This theme helped to answer this specific ecological factor.

Theme 2: Race as a Factor

Eleven participants contributed to this theme. The findings revealed that African American and Latino people revealed the mistrust levels due to feelings of being discriminated against because of their color.

Participant 15 talked about being Black as an issue to police officers, saying that even before 2020, police officers would have an issue with people who were Black. This participant relayed the police would assume that Black people were up to no good, and

this made some police officers resort to violence. Participant 15 also noted that his trust in law enforcement had been negatively impacted due to perceived instances of racial discrimination by police officers against individuals of certain ethnic backgrounds.

Participant 3 also shared an experience where a police officer issued her a citation during a traffic stop yet did not do the same for her White friend who was also in the vehicle. As she described, "I was in the car with one of my white friends...when we were pulled over by law enforcement. The officers only asked my friend for her license and registration, and then allowed her to continue on her way." This participant went on to say that in the previous month, she had an encounter with local police where she was automatically given a ticket following several probing questions regarding weapons inside the car and demands to see her driver's license and vehicle paperwork. She explained that these types of actions by law enforcement significantly contributed to her lack of trust in the police.

Participant 19 also said that there existed a lot of stereotypes against Black women. The participant narrated that Black women were known to be violent, angry, and very aggressive. This would influence how police officers would interact with them. Matters such as sexual crimes would be downplayed by police officers due to the stereotypes they have against Black women.

The theme of race gave insight into how race was an influencing factor that shaped the trust level of minorities. It was noted that law enforcement officers assumed that Black people were accustomed to committing crimes and thus unfair treatment. This theme helped to answer the RQ.

Theme 3: News and Social Media Awareness as a Factor

Eleven participants contributed to this theme. The findings revealed that news outlets and social media pages provided coverage that raised awareness on matters of law enforcement and how they treat people. This informed the perceptions of eleven of the participants.

For instance, Participant 17 talked about news outlets providing wider coverage, relating that if a man is accused of a sexual assault crime occurs, she has witnessed it being underplayed or not mentioned in the news stream. However, this participant related she had seen the exact opposite and said, “I’ve seen it in the news with...Breonna Taylor...it does play a role because there is just a lot more coverage, and I’m just able to see it.”

Participant 10 narrated that her perception changed when she heard from a news outlet how discrimination is going on towards Latines. This participant said the only reason she learned about her local Sheriff being racist and talking in a negative way about Latines. She continued that this type of behavior would have gone unnoticed, but due to it being broadcast in the news media, she was able to learn of this behavior, which created a level of mistrust.

Regarding the influence of social media pages, Participant 3 talked about how TikTok had a significant impact on her perception. She narrated that when she was navigating through TikTok, she saw crazy stuff happening to children, women, and men. She also described witnessing a TikTok video where police officers shot four Black women, which not only scared her but also deeply affected her.

Participant 5 also echoed the sentiment that social media influences people's perceptions. This participant stated that younger generations are undoubtedly impacted by the content spread through social media platforms. This individual mentioned that upon coming across anything negative or noteworthy on social media, they automatically share that message via the same medium with family and friends. They continued by adding that social media has the ability to shed light on events and occurrences that may not gain traction through traditional media outlets.

Other participants highlighted that social media pages present biased information that could mislead the public. For instance, Participant 2 mentioned that social media pages are only filled with negative information about law enforcement officers. The participant stated that often times, social media pages would present negative information. The negative news would be given priority to float on the top, while the positive news would be presented as a last resort. Most of the positive news would not get viewership from people. Participant 2, therefore, noted that this would definitely influence someone to conclude that all cops are bad.

Similarly, Participant 4 also pointed out that social media pages present a lot of false accusations, or a lot of videos would be posted presenting police officers as people who are not following rules. People who are consuming such information would then start asking questions such as, "What if that happens to me?" and that this attitude affects the trust level that people have towards police officers. This theme on social media awareness helped to answer the ecological influence question.

Theme 4: Family Members as a Factor

Participants mentioned that some of their family members were part of law enforcement, while some mentioned that stories from their family members influenced their trust level.

Participant 7 narrated that his trust level had always been high since his father was part of the law enforcement team. The participant pointed out that his trust level was always high because his father was a sheriff. He would talk to his father about the job and observe how his dad would help people. When he was young, the participant continued, he would play cops and robbers, and interact with other police officers, which made him gain more trust towards them. The participant also mentioned that growing up, he wished to be a police officer based on the experience he had interacting with them.

Participant 2 similarly said that she was influenced by one of her relatives, who was a police officer. Participant 2 noted that this positive influence was brought about due to their interactions together. Similarly, Participant 14 said, “Yes, family is where I learned the trust.”

Regarding family members giving stories about their interaction with law enforcement, Participant 19 recalled stories shared by family members regarding police interactions. This participant recalled stories that were shared with him by his mother and father regarding interactions with police officers. His mother had told him as a child that owning a vehicle of a certain color, specifically red, would increase the likelihood of being stopped by police, who would then proceed to question the occupants. Participant 19's father also shared stories from his youth about being regularly approached by police

late at night, even when he and his friends were not obviously engaged in any illegal or suspicious behavior. According to Participant 19, these stories from his mother and father contributed to his level of mistrust.

This theme highlighted how families play a role in influencing the trust level of minorities in Dallas, TX. The responses given by the participants gave insight into the environmental influence RQ.

Theme 5: Gender as a Factor

Seven participants contributed to this theme. The findings showed that law enforcement officers treat men and women unfairly in society.

Participant 13 narrated that men were often associated with criminal behavior or suspicion of criminal activity. This participant stated quite plainly that gender plays the biggest role in their level of distrust of law enforcement officials. This participant went on to explain that the experiences of being a male versus a female during any interactions with the police are vastly different. He continued, "In my view, the police tend to be harder on males, and that is likely why there are more Black males who are shot and killed by police."

Regarding the unfair treatment of women, Participant 4 indicated that simply by virtue of being a female, they felt it necessary to constantly monitor their surroundings to ensure their own safety in any environment. She also noted that gender was a contributing factor in the level of trust that individuals place in police officers. Participant 19 mentioned witnessing women being killed by police. They recounted observing four African American women being fatally shot by law enforcement just days prior. The

participant noted that this experience was quite frightening and had a significant impact on how they view law enforcement-community relations.

Seven participants highlighted this theme, showing that gender played a significant role. Two participants responded that gender does not influence trust level. This theme helped to answer the RQ as it related to this particular ecological influence.

Theme 6: Historical Events as a Factor

Data supporting this theme was drawn from eight participants. The results showed that past events had a great deal of influence on the trust level of minorities in Dallas, TX.

For instance, Participant 1 provided a narrative regarding her educational background surrounding the history of Black women and law enforcement from an early age. She remarked that during her initial lessons, she was instructed on the origins and establishment of the police institution and penal system as a whole within the United States. The participant noted she gained contextual awareness surrounding the core motivations and objectives that led to the formation of these entities. Furthermore, she observed and acknowledged numerous inequities and injustices that have impacted individuals both in the past and present, which informed her current perspective and level of trust placed in police enforcement efforts.

Several participants discussed how historical events have impacted their levels of trust in law enforcement. Participant 11 noted that her distrust stems from past occurrences. As an example, she referenced the tragic incident involving George Floyd and how that influenced the degree of trust he places in police officers today. Participant

7 similarly indicated that his trust fluctuates depending on what has transpired historically. He emphasized that some events from the past have demonstrated police acting appropriately while others showed unjust behavior.

According to Participant 7, high-profile cases that receive media attention can cause his trust levels to rise or fall based on the specifics of what transpired. Both participants' responses suggest that trust is a fluid measure shaped not just by individual experiences but also by highly publicized incidents from history that continue to impact perspectives. Their accounts provide insight into how officers can both build and undermine trust depending on how they conduct themselves in high-pressure situations that receive widespread attention.

Theme 7: Prior Experiences as a Factor

Data supporting this theme was drawn from nine participants. The participants narrated their experiences with law enforcement officers and how they influenced their trust level.

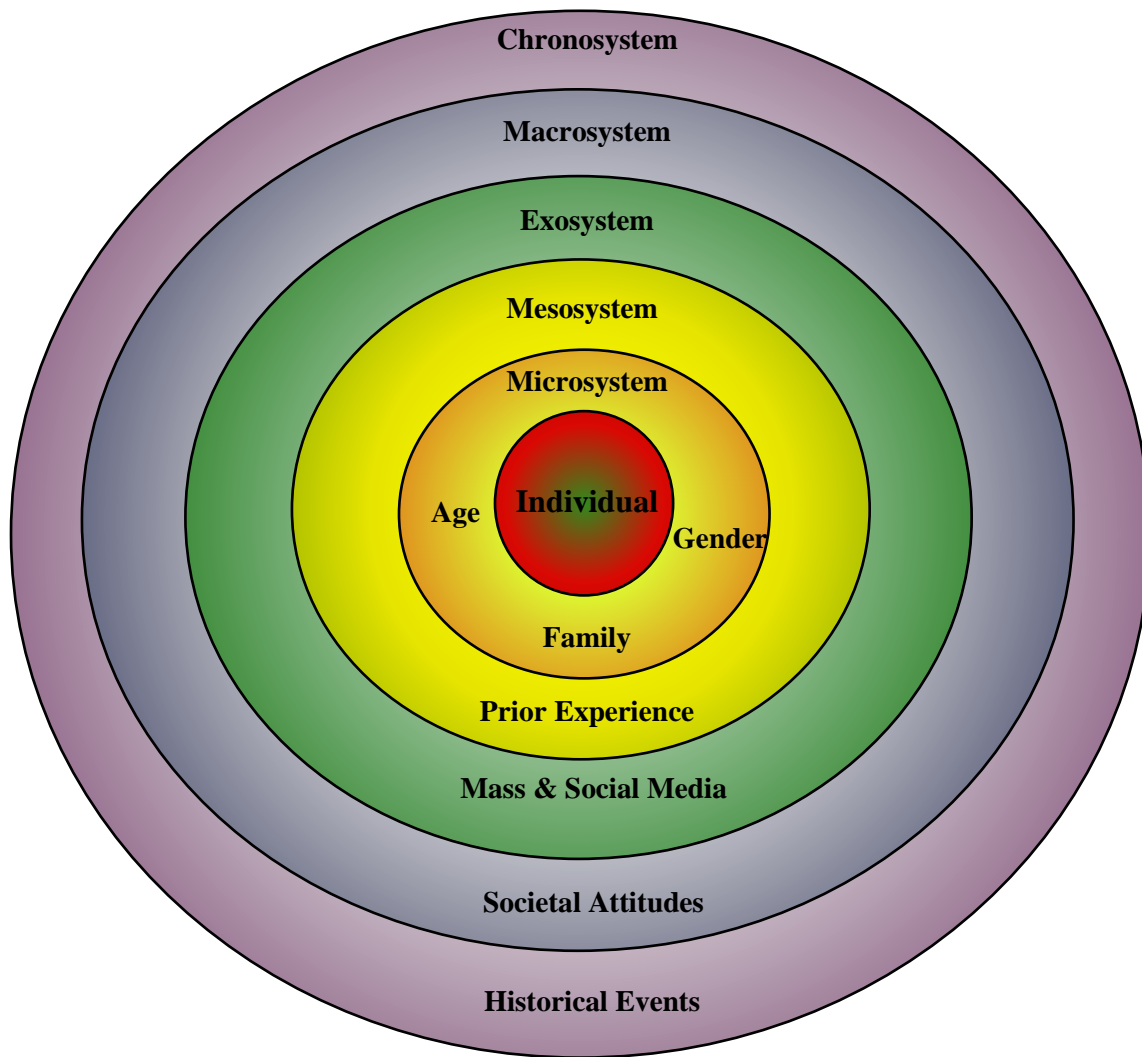
According to an account shared, Participant 6 recounted an unfortunate incident involving his cousin, who passed away while detained by law enforcement officials. This participant related that his cousin was described as a generally peaceful person. It was relayed that one evening while operating a motor vehicle, his cousin was stopped by police and taken into custody. Tragically, during the period of incarceration, his cousin was allegedly tased by officers, resulting in fatal consequences, with no public disclosure of the event or disciplinary actions brought against the officers involved.

Similarly, Participant 18 mentioned that her trust level was shaped by prior experience. The participant explained that their friend had received a DUI charge when he was approximately 19 to 20 years old, which resulted in probation and requirements for drug and alcohol testing. In contrast, the individual affirmed that they have never been in legal trouble or faced any charges. They believed that factors such as their friend's prior offenses compared to their own lack of any criminal history builds trust. This is because in the intervening time, the individual feels they have demonstrated personal growth and increased maturity.

Nine participants contributed to this theme of prior experience encountering law enforcement officers. Three participants mentioned that their experience with law enforcement officers was positive, and this made them increase their trust level. This theme helped give a response to the RQ. Upon reviewing and conducting an analysis of the codes and theme provided above, it was able to determine where each code and theme fell within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Conceptual Model



Trust Level Results

The findings of this study, grounded in the ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), provide rich insights into the multifaceted factors influencing trust levels among minority young adults towards law enforcement. Participants articulated a distinct understanding of trust formation, drawing from various ecological systems that intersect and shape their perceptions.

Within the microsystem, age, gender, and race emerged as salient influences, with participants expressing heightened skepticism towards law enforcement due to their age. Gender dynamics also played a role, with some male and female participants highlighting experiences of gender and race-based discrimination within law enforcement interactions. In the mesosystem, prior experiences with law enforcement emerged as a pivotal factor influencing trust. Negative encounters, characterized by perceived bias or excessive use of force, eroded trust, while positive interactions fostered a sense of legitimacy and trustworthiness. The exosystem, encompassing mass and social media, exerted a profound influence on trust perceptions. Participants discussed the pervasive impact of sensationalized news coverage and viral social media posts such as TikTok, which portrayed law enforcement misconduct, contributing to a climate of fear and mistrust. At the macrosystem level, participants' trust in law enforcement was deeply influenced by familial attitudes, reflecting generational experiences and beliefs that underscored perceptions of authority, justice, and community safety within minority populations. Finally, the chronosystem underscored the dynamic nature of trust formation, with

historical events serving as enduring markers that intersect with contemporary experiences to shape trust trajectories over time.

Overall, the findings underscore the interconnectedness of ecological systems in shaping trust dynamics among minority young adults toward law enforcement.

Understanding these complex interactions is vital for developing targeted interventions and policies aimed at fostering trust, promoting accountability, and bridging divides between minority communities and law enforcement agencies.

Summary

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to examine the ecological influences that shape trust in law enforcement among minority young adults aged 18 to 23 in the Dallas, TX, area. The study addressed one RQ: How do ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority adults aged 18 to 23 in Dallas, TX? This question allowed me to investigate the ecological factors that predict the level of trust that young people have toward law enforcement.

Seven themes emerged from the analysis: age, race, awareness of news and social media, influence of family members, gender, impact of historical events, and influence of prior experiences. The thematic analysis approach suggested by Naeem et al. (2023) was applied to develop these themes. NVivo 14 was utilized to organize the data into codes, categories, and themes. All themes were discussed in relation to the RQ. The results provided valuable insight into what influences the level of trust among minorities in Dallas, TX, with respect to law enforcement. Chapter 5 will comprehensively analyze the study's findings, exploring their interpretation within the context of existing literature and

theoretical frameworks. It will address limitations, provide recommendations for future research, and discuss implications for policy, practice, and community engagement.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This qualitative phenomenological study explored how ecological influences shape trust in law enforcement among minority young adults, 18 to 23 years of age, within the Dallas, TX, area. This was accomplished by utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which included their demographics, including immediate family members, social groups, cultural attitudes, prior experience with law enforcement, historical events, and social or mass media awareness. The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological research design to understand the observed experiences of minority young peoples' lives and the effect of ecological factors on their level of trust in law enforcement.

The phenomenological approach was the most suitable methodological option, and it helped to obtain impressive descriptions of how different environmental systems influenced the formation of either trusting or distrusting points of view of police among the participants. A total of 20 minority individuals aged 18 to 23 from the Dallas, TX, community were interviewed. They were asked how their age, gender, race, past involvement with law enforcement, media habits, and historical understanding have affected their view of the police over time. The phenomenological nature of the study allowed participants to openly share their lived experiences regarding how different systems shaped their trusting or distrusting views of police through interviews.

This qualitative research was necessary because although past research has focused on trust perception among minorities regarding police, no known study has

attempted to view it through Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system theory. Knowing the different influences an ecosystem is made up of may give law enforcement much information on strengthening bonds and encouraging trust with the local population. This study aimed to address the gap that existed by providing an option into how the various ecological influences affect the minority young adults in security forces and to consequently determine whether these factors impact, deter, motivate, or build trust in law enforcement within this specific demographic.

Based on interviews with 20 minority young adults aged 18 to 23 in the Dallas, TX, area, several critical ecological factors influenced their trust in law enforcement. Participants indicated that their age, race, awareness from news and social media, influence from family members who were in law enforcement or had past experiences, issues of gender discrimination, learning about historical events of discrimination, and their own prior experiences with police all impacted the level of trust they felt towards law enforcement. These findings help explain how different ecological systems shape perceptions of and interactions with police among this group.

Interpretation of the Findings

Following the data collection, I subsequently used thematic analysis to identify seven critical findings related to the RQ. The findings emerged from the codes and themes most common across the 20 interview transcripts. These findings were based on the frequency count for the specified theme and helped address how ecological factors shape trust in law enforcement among the target population.

Key Finding 1: Age Factor Influences Trust Level

This key finding confirms what has been found in the peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2. Nix et al. (2015) claimed that the younger generation was less likely to trust the police and had more negative perceptions of the authority figures than senior people. Similarly, in their study, Hockin and Brunson (2018) observed that the elders reported more confidence in and happiness with the police than the younger population. This finding went further by exhibiting the influence of age on the level of trust. The study also revealed that the younger participants showed more distrustful attitudes towards law enforcement due to their impression that the police enforced the laws selectively. They described their encounters with the police, where, in their opinion, young age made them subjects of unjust suspicion and arrests.

Nonetheless, this significant finding expands upon prior research, thereby adding depth to the way age shapes trust among minorities. The study emphasized that participants believed that young individuals are naturally engaged in criminal activity because of their age, a phenomenon that had not been determined before. According to the study by Brunson (2007), based on African Americans' accumulation of police experiences, age biases caused young individuals to feel constantly watched by the police and be suspected of being guilty just because of their younger age. This study has revealed new information related to the issue, and the study has clarified why younger minority people usually have unwelcoming opinions of the police than the other senior age groups.

The phenomenon that age influences the level of trust could link with individuals within Bronfenbrenner's microsystem and mesosystem facing different developmental phases. Bronfenbrenner (1979) noted that the microsystem is made of structures an individual continuously relates to, such as family, school, religious organizations, and neighborhood. Generation after generation, these units influence and consequently express their unique personality by absorbing and changing their views and behaviors. There is a connection between the various personal-community systems, and those interactions influence development. Accordingly, Bronfenbrenner pointed out that individuals evolve through different environmental systems with changing interactions and experiences of the world. With this said, it is possible that their trust level may be determined by their current age and stage of development in these systems.

Key Finding 2: Race Factor Influences Trust Level

This key finding is consistent with what was found in the literature based on how race influences trust levels. Based on the information provided by Peguero et al. (2015), race and ethnicity have been consistently linked to encountering police victimization. Remarkably, their research discovered higher rates of police victimization among non-White youth, especially Black youth, than their White counterparts. Another similar finding is the one presented by Brooks et al. (2016), whereby Black men said the police regarded them as disrespectfully and racially discriminated against them.

Nevertheless, this finding also extends the preceding literature by offering a qualitative assessment of how race determines the degree of trust in people's lives. As found by Weitzer and Tuch (2002), quantitative analyses of questionnaire data have been

based on this issue. Weitzer and Tuch conducted a national survey using the findings that race was a key predictor of profiling perceptions by the police, where non-Whites were more likely to assume that the police had always looked down upon them. On the other hand, this finding provides a more qualitative substantive understanding of race. The finding presents the precise racial dynamics as well as the factors that contribute to individuals being stereotyped as criminals by police due to their race. As a result, this finding offers nuanced lived experiences that can help extend quantitative results by giving context and a total picture of the role of race in the perception of police legitimacy.

This finding can be interpreted within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2013) asserted that a significant element in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was human development as being a process that is shaped by various environmental systems, ranging from the immediate settings such as a home and a school to the broader context of the culture and the society. This study's findings demonstrate how cultural and racial stereotyping in the macrosystem, as well as the overall disposition in policing, determine how police officers interact with the public. The narratives by the participants provided illustrations of the problem of racial profiling, stereotyping, and assumptions about criminality that exist at the cultural and ideological level, the ones that participants on micro, personal levels directly experienced.

Key Finding 3: News and Social Media Awareness

The finding corroborates the literature that media and news reports can determine public attitudes toward law enforcement. Hockin and Brunson (2018) mentioned that

police misconduct cases that came under the radar of social media and newer technologies get public awareness almost instantly. Similarly, Horowitz (2007) found that media portrayals significantly impact the degree to which the public trusts the police. Thus, this finding revealed that the participants were aware of issues in their neighborhood through wide-ranging news coverage or by seeing posts on popular social media platforms like TikTok, which fit perfectly with the prior studies.

Nonetheless, it offers an empirical finding that leads to new qualitative insights into these mechanisms and thus expands current theories of influence. Such accounts from participants in the study highlight how, through social media, direct exposure to incidents that target specific groups like Black women affected their perspectives in ways that the quantitative studies have not analyzed in depth. This was further shown by some of the participants' acknowledgment that not all content on social media is evenly presented. Such an in-depth analysis helps to develop a realistic representation of the divergent effects of news on the viewers' perceptions of the role of police legitimacy. According to Nix et al. (2015), in their national survey, citizens received most of their knowledge about the police from the news media. As a result, this finding illustrates the primary function of indirect impacts, for example, the media coverage, on trusting law enforcement.

This key finding can be comprehended in the Hirschi (1977) social control theory context. Based on Costello and Laub (2020), Hirschi's theory implies that ties to traditional social institutions, family, and school may prevent young people from committing delinquencies. Individuals are more prone to committing crimes when these

ties are lost or weakened. As a result of this finding, it became clear that the news and online media reports may harm the ties between people and the law as a social institution.

Key Finding 4: Family Members Influence Trust Level

This key finding aligns with and extends knowledge in the discipline discussed in Chapter 2. Long et al. (2008) stated that family stress can enhance children's behavior and viewpoints. The participants' answers illustrate how family relations and experiences may affect their degree of trust toward the police. Participant 7 said that he had a father who was a policeman and had positive interactions with police officers during his childhood experiences, like fishing trips with the officers, making him have high trust in police officers. Participant 2 said that her mom cautioned her about racial discrimination as a result of her own experiences affecting the participant's confidence in the police.

This finding affirms the ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), which argued that individuals develop within immediate environments like the family. Cultural influence seasons brought about by individual and family interactions, and stories shared at home are a microsystem that shapes children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Prior literature, in general, considered family stress much generally. However, this finding elaborates on how particular family dynamics and precedents of experience with law enforcement impact trust in general.

The finding further widens the range of understanding of how family socialization is not only through the narration of available arguments but also through the experiences within the household. As Bandura (1963a, 1963b) reported, observational learning from models, especially family members, plays a massive role in shaping attitudes and

behaviors. This central result reflects the influence of narrative as a part of the observational learning process with familial stories and experiences.

Key Finding 5: Gender Influence Trust Level

This finding affirms what previous researchers found, that African American men have less trust and more negative views or experience with police than African American women. Brunson (2007) conducted observational research among young African American adults about their police experiences, and they used to say they had been treated with a display of disrespectfulness and with a lot of brutalities. This is in line with the views of participants who mentioned that African American men were more likely to be linked to criminal activities, and a common perception in the police force was to treat them more harshly. As described by Peguero et al. (2015), Black men are probably the victims of police brutality, which in turn aligns well with this finding.

Nevertheless, this finding extends the knowledge of how gender influences trust levels by highlighting the experiences of African American women. Even though the literature does not give details in this regard, a participant mentioned seeing the reports of African American women who were killed by police. Such an instance aids the development of how the conduct of each group, African American males and females, may be influenced by gender factors despite the possible differences in their experiences.

Similarly, Brooks et al. (2016) highlighted that the relationship between gender and the way police treat other African Americans needs to be further researched, and better policies could be developed to foster a fairer treatment of the genders. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is essential in explaining why the gender

issue impacts the levels of trust within African American communities toward law enforcement officials. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), human development is a complex process shaped by different environmental systems, such as those found in a home or a classroom, and by broader social and cultural norms of a society.

This finding thus reveals that socially constructed notions concerning gender through the macrosystem in Bronfenbrenner's theory assist in shaping African Americans' encounters with law enforcement from childhood onward. Male and female members do not feel equally affected by negative experiences within the system, as evidenced by the reduced level of trust between these individuals over time. This finding conforms to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory, in which the wider social setting is seen as a layered system penetrating and shaping behaviors and development within systems that have a small and moderate size. Therefore, ecological orientation deals with historical and societal norms, rendering factors like gender, defining concepts such as trust levels, and explaining the distinctions in the trust level between communities and police.

Key Finding 6: Historical Events Influence Trust Level

This key finding confirms what was found in the literature, which stated that historical events influence trust levels. Burks (2021) indicated that the personal experience of distrust with and dislike for African American men by the police is historically based. Several participants mentioned that historical cases such as the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement have played a significant role in their current distrust of police, aligning with what Burks had mentioned. Bent-Goodley

and Smith (2017) also talked about the influence of the Civil Rights movement on forming African Americans' perception of police while adding to this key finding.

This key finding extends the discipline's knowledge by highlighting this qualitative aspect of how historical events affect levels of trust. Researchers like Burks (2021) and Bent-Goodley and Smith (2017) established that historical events shape perceptions. Still, this finding aids in providing the opinions expressed by the participants directly on how the specific historical events they were familiar with or witnessed influenced their trust in the police. One participant gave an in-depth qualitative view on how the enactment of slave patrols back in the 1800s could be the most profound reason for having trust issues with the police. As Brooks et al. (2016) reported, qualitative data research can give a holistic understanding of lived experience different from merely numerical illustrations. This finding is, therefore, crucial because it clearly illustrates history's solid and lasting impact on trust.

Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory can also support in explaining this noteworthy finding. Rumjaun and Narod (2020) asserted that social learning theory, as put forward by Bandura, envisioned that human beings can learn through observing others in a societal setting, which mainly includes witnessing and learning from past events. The participants' recounts of how the deaths of George Floyd, Rodney King, and other Black individuals in the hands of the police played a part in their present level of distrust reveals how the social learning process is taking place. A vivid picture of how people acted during the historical injustices became clear to people directly when they

observed the interactions between the police and African Americans/ minorities (Brooks et al., 2016).

As social learning theory indicates, individuals will form opinions and anticipations and perceive the police, the surrounding community, and society through observational learning. Participants would feel that they can prove that various sources of present-day distrust could be traced to specific memories of historical events, which were learned according to Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory, which claimed that social and historical contexts strongly influence people's attitudes and behavior.

Key Finding 7: Prior Experiences Influence Trust Level

This finding aligns well with the conclusions of the literature that prior experiences influenced trust levels. Brunson (2007) argued that African American young men's regular interactions with police officers shaped the way they see law enforcement agencies and have their social relationships among them. Participants' views also corroborated Brunson's opinion, with some simply saying they had a negative or positive history with the police, and it had influenced their trust towards law enforcement now. Brooks et al. (2016) also discussed how the "lived experience" of over-policing and disrespect shapes Black men's views of law enforcement.

This analytical finding deepens the awareness by describing concrete past experiences that affected trust levels. Previous literature established that experience shapes perception (Brunson (2007)). However, when questions were asked, and the participants reciprocated responses, it was evident that they did not only describe their experience but emotionally presented the experiences, too. Participant 2 narrated a story

about how his cousin was tortured to death while in jail. According to Hamm et al. (2017), procedural justice approaches believe that citizens' encounters with the police influenced how they trusted the police. The personal accounts, as per the participants, present concrete samples of how the prior experiences positively or negatively impacted people's later perceptions of legitimacy as predicted by procedural justice models. As Nix et al. (2015) found in their quantitative investigation, personal experiences substantially affect trust. Consequently, corresponding qualitative reports serve as in-depth interpretations concerning the nature of experiential influences.

This finding conforms to Hirschi's (1977) social control theory. As shown by Costello and Laub (2020), in the social control theory by Hirschi, bonds to traditional society, that is, attachment to good role models, belief in common ethical values, commitment to educational or career goals, and engagement in law-abiding activities, are the elements in society that facilitate control on individuals' inclinations towards delinquency or criminal behavior. The narratives of the participants concerning their experiences with the police, whether positive or negative, showed the truthfulness of social control theory. When participants had negative encounters that eroded their bonds to law enforcement as representatives of conventional society, such as a cousin being unjustly killed by police, as one participant described, it seemed to undermine their commitment to the societal norm of respecting law enforcement authority according to their accounts. However, the other group, which had previously experienced positive interactions with law enforcement officers, built their loyalty and stronger relationship with them due to social control theory. On the other hand, in terms of social bonds, they

seemed more ready to trust and were possibly more controlled by their previous interactions with police, which turned out positive.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study was the small sample size. Qualitative studies use small, purposeful samples; the sample focused on only 20 participants who may not have represented the entire population. Increasing the sample size is recommended to unveil more themes or give a more profound perspective (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Based on the 20 minority young adults aged 18 to 23 in the Dallas, TX, area, some views might have been ignored because they were left out due to the small sample. By drawing a bigger sample size, it is possible that more convincing findings could have been achieved by saturating the data more completely (Bekele & Ago, 2022). Some interviews could have discovered information that could have changed the ability to understand better how ecological impacts affect civilians' trust in law enforcement. Hence, the small sample size, typical in qualitative research, might have limited the complete picture of the complexities of views among this population.

Another shortcoming was the emphasis on phenomenological research design. The phenomenological method was beneficial in understanding lived experiences; however, it does not allow for claims of causation (Suddick et al., 2020). The study was specifically designed to discover the role of ecological factors in shaping trust. However, using phenomenological design, only self-reported perceptions could be drawn rather than objective measures. This study design might have benefited from a mixed-methods approach with qualitative interviews and quantitative analyses for more in-depth insights.

Nonetheless, the phenomenological design seemed most appropriate considering the research aim of getting an exploratory approach.

Another limitation was the potential bias from the participant responses. Getting the interviewees to think about complex topics like race, sex, and past police departments could have made some respond according to what they thought was more of a social norm instead of being honest. The first step is to build a rapport to lessen this effect's effect to some extent, but it cannot be eliminated (Bergen & Labonté, 2020). An anonymous survey may have provided more realistic feedback.

A final limitation was the study's focus on a single geographical area. While the Dallas, TX, area was selected primarily because of its demographic diversity, the study results may not directly apply to other regions with different political and economic backgrounds. Still, a multisite evaluation could have helped identify place-based factors impacting law enforcement trust. The heterogeneity of samples should be addressed, as it is a problem most qualitative studies face (Bergen & Labonté, 2020).

Recommendations

According to this research's limitations and outcomes, instead of a qualitative study with a more comprehensive knowledge of how the environment impacts criminal trust in law enforcement, one recommendation for future studies would be to use a mixed methodology. The study employed a qualitative strategy that relied on self-reported data as the only means of collection, thus preventing the use of objective measurement. A mixed method with in-depth interviews and validated surveys would provide more detailed, triangulated information (Leavy, 2022). Using quantitative instruments would

allow the level of trust in each ecological domain specified by Bronfenbrenner (1979) to be measured, and qualitative interviewing would still allow participants to express themselves in their own words. This could overcome the limited reliability and tendencies to make causal claims.

Additionally, a comparative study across multiple sites is recommended. Braesemann and Stephany (2021) mentioned that socioeconomic and political environments differ from area to area. Different environments might affect the level of confidence that the minorities have in the leadership that services them. By picking many unique sampling areas, other place-based variables conditioning these attitudes might as well be unveiled. For example, if a liberal city is compared to a conservative rural location, this exercise may generate necessary data for the efficiency and adequacy of forthcoming trust-building measures. On the other hand, future studies should prioritize phenomenological methods to grasp lived experiences in-depth and broadly by following the suggestions of Moustakas (1994).

A longitudinal research design could help with the gradually developing nature of trust across lifetimes. The present study assumed a specific narrow age group of 18- to 23-year-olds, but the evaluation of influences is formed gradually throughout the maturation of ecological systems (Hawkins, 1995). Through the same participants' follow-up to adulthood over several years, critical periods and lasting impacts related to building trust perceptions could be better differentiated (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This mixture of retrospective accounts would supplement this by addressing the gaps in how those environmental influences interplay intricately from childhood until early adulthood.

Implications

The section will discuss the implications based on the social outcomes likely to come out of the study. The study concluded by emphasizing the need to gather more information about the attitudes of minority youth toward law enforcement and the role played by their environment in developing trust in law officers. Such revelations can guide the activities and reforms needed to achieve harmony and mutual respect between police and the public.

Positive Social Change

At the personal and family level, the study reveals the significance of the individual and family relationships that minority youth have in developing attitudes towards law enforcement agencies. By understanding and taking action against the identified microsystem, the police forces can engage in more meaningful participation with the minority communities. Through the involvement of youth and their families in the broader community, police can build trust, influencing how the youth think and behave from an early age.

As a result, they can help build trusting relationships and combat prejudices and stereotypes passed down intergenerationally. One example could be an outreach program within the community where police officers are invited to schools and neighborhoods to interact with children and families in non-enforcement situations. These programs could play a part in building a trustworthy relationship at a crucial stage of growth, and they will help address fears or stereotypes passed down from generation to generation.

At the organizational and policy level, the findings underscore that organizations should examine their pervasive actions and the broad cultural-social norms that guide their officers when responding to a diverse population. This justifies structural changes and implicit bias training for fair and equal treatment of people from the community, regardless of their racial, gender, or age identity. Providing support to programs that are culturally oriented and focus on building/ improving communication between the police and communities of color serves as a platform for the formulation and implementation of cultural programs geared towards creating productive relationships within the communities.

Some remedies that should be considered include establishing community-based advisory boards, reforming discriminatory policies, and implementing accountability mechanisms to appropriately manage misconduct reports or cases of alleged discrimination. From a broader point of view, this research lays essential groundwork for the socio-political transformation of the entire system to solve inequalities and unite the races without conflicts. That is why the trust and cooperation between the authorities and minority groups can improve more and more.

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological methodology, which effectively enabled an exploration of participants' lived experiences regarding how ecological influences shaped their trust in law enforcement. In the future, researchers can consider employing a mixed-methods research methodology that triangulates these insights and specific data points the context may provide. Blending in the metrics on trust, which are universal throughout different ecological settings, would have brought

out more credible qualitative data. This solves the problem of reliance on phenomenological design only in terms of lack of reliability and the ability of the research to make causal claims. Mixed methods research utilizing qualitative and quantitative methodologies would lead to more trustworthy results with increased credibility and scope of application.

Various theoretical frameworks guided this study in identifying the contributing factors to trust in law enforcement. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory is paramount to outlining multilevel systems of environment that shape development and attitude. On the other hand, incorporating Bandura's (1963a) social learning theory marked the last stage of understanding how historical actions and prior experiences affect the extension of trust through observational learning mechanisms. Besides this, Hirschi's (1977) application of social control theory demonstrated how an individual's interpersonal relationships influence the tie between conventional institutions like the police.

However, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory grounds the contextual influences, layering it with social learning theory and social control theory enriched the understanding of trust development via memory and relationship lenses. An integrated model that involves this trio of approaches -- Bronfenbrenner analyzing nested systems, Bandura (1963a) breaking down what makes observational learning so influential, and Hirschi (1977) exploring how different relationships impact development -- is a more sophisticated way to look at how various ecological factors interact

contradictory with one another to shape the evolution over time of the attitudes of the individuals.

From the empirical perspective, this study contributes to the qualitative evidence explaining how the ecological environment relates to ethnic minority youth's attitude toward trust. At the same time, concluding the whole community based on a sample represents confined limitations. Researchers should stay up to date on the latest findings regarding place effects and develop multisite comparative study designs using larger samples across various locations, which could help reveal additional important place-based distinctions. Capturing longitudinal data tracking dynamics regarding youth and seeing how they transform into adulthood will also further the creation of conceptual models. By implementing various research approaches across contexts, we can bridge the gap in empirical understanding and inform strategies for positive police-community relations.

Based on this study's findings, several recommendations for law enforcement practice could help improve trust among minority communities. These programs must ensure that community advisories are in place and that law enforcers are always there to do their work. Sincere involvement, mutual understanding, and goodwill at these community relation-driven programs' initial stages can keep kids from absorbing stereotypical notions or preconceived ideas.

Furthermore, it supports the conclusion that training on unconscious racism and racial and gender stereotypes must be an integral part of the efforts to eliminate police officers' unjustified behavior. Instructional programs should aspire to help officers

become aware of unconscious biases and give practical strategies to avoid prejudice-generated thoughts that might cause deviations from the unbiased treatment of all citizens in the community. Hiring diversified police forces in addition to training might help police departments better reflect the population they serve.

Conclusion

Due to an in-depth qualitative phenomenological approach, this research provided significant findings concerning the direct impact of the ecological environment on minority young adults' attitudes toward law enforcement. The interviews helped to highlight several systemic influences at different levels of microsystems, from family to macrosystems, such as history, culture, and news media. This cognitive understanding of trust emerges throughout the developmental process, from interactions with various environments to relationships with other individuals at different times. A crucial point to remember is that there must be holistic approaches to create trust and simultaneously address influences at personal, community, and systemic levels through strategies such as community policing, implicit bias training, diversifying police representation, and accountability reforms.

Therefore, it came to the view that these old injustices and ongoing discrimination traditions are transferred from one generation to the next through social learning and observational activities between the families and the communities. As per the findings, trust is not always achieved, and hence, it has to be deliberately developed over a long-term basis to eliminate prevailing inequalities. While the conclusions highlighted some initial opportunities for relationship building, such as establishing early positive contacts

between police and communities, the overarching message of the study emphasizes that substantive reforms addressing systemic injustices that perpetuate harm and indifference should be prioritized.

Addressing the root causes of inequities embedded within institutions and cultural practices is essential to improve trust and cooperation between law enforcement and minority groups over the long run. Trust can be slowly re-established only due to collective action to correct significant faults related to the social-cultural environment and stereotypes that persist within the police force. Another critical factor is the inclusion of the viewpoints of marginalized groups. A comprehensive approach includes adjustments to attitudes and behaviors and practical and community-oriented policing techniques.

Developing more muscular communication lines between crime prevention agencies and the people they are tasked to serve to foster tight cooperation is a continuous process that needs to tackle the root causes of society's deep injustices. Continued dedication to justice, fairness, accountability, and inclusion and guaranteed policy and cultural changes at the enterprise level will ensure sustainable progress over a long period.

References

- Akesson, B., Smyth, J. M., Mandell, D. J., Doan, T., Donina, K., & Hoven, C. W. (2012). Parental involvement with the criminal justice system and the effects on their children: A collaborative model for researching vulnerable families. *Social Work in Public Health, 27*(1–2), 148–164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2012.629898>
- Akinyode, B. F., & Khan, T. H. (2018). Step by step approach for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability, 5*(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.11113/ijbes.v5.n3.267>
- Alamri, W. A. (2019). Effectiveness of qualitative research methods: Interviews and diaries. *International Journal of English and Cultural Studies, 2*(1), 65-70. <https://doi.org/10.11114/ijecs.v2i1.4302>
- Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies, 5*(2), 9-19. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.5n.2p.9>
- Amankwaa, L. (2016). Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Cultural Diversity, 23*(3), 121-127.
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association 2020: The official guide to APA style* (7th ed.).
- Archibald, P. C., Daniels, K., & Sinclair, M. (2017). Social work analysis of social change reflecting renewed plans for effective urban community policing in

Baltimore City. *Urban Social Work*, 1(1), 5–19.

<https://doi.org/10.1891/2474-8684.1.1.5>

Bandura, A. (1963a). Influence of models' reinforcement contingencies on the acquisition of imitative responses. *Personality and Social Psychology*, 1(6), 589–595. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0022070>

Bandura, A. (1963b). Social reinforcement and behavior change—Symposium, 1962: 1. Behavior theory and identificatory learning. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 33(4), 591–601. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.1963.tb01007.x>

Bekele, W. B., & Ago, F. Y. (2022). Sample size for interview in qualitative research in social sciences: A guide to novice researchers. *Research in Educational Policy and Management*, 4(1), 42–50. <https://doi.org/10.46303/repam.2022.3>

Bent-Goodley, T., & Smith, C. M. (2017). An African-centered approach to community policing. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 27(1–2), 92–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2016.1266856>

Bergen, N., & Labonté, R. (2020). “Everything is perfect, and we have no problems”: Detecting and limiting social desirability bias in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 30(5), 783–792. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732319889354>

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475>

Boldt, L. J., Goffin, K. C., & Kochanska, G. (2020). The significance of early parent-child attachment for emerging regulation: A longitudinal investigation of processes and mechanisms from toddler age to preadolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, *56*(3), 431–443.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000862>

Boman, J. H. (2019). The crucial role of friendships and peer relationships in the etiology of crime, deviance, and substance use (pp. 479–496). In: Krohn, M., Hendrix, N., Penly Hall, G., Lizotte, A. (eds) *Handbook on Crime and Deviance. Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research*. Springer, Cham.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20779-3_24

Braesemann, F., & Stephany, F. (2021). Between bonds and bridges: Evidence from a survey on trust in groups. *Social Indicators Research*, *153*(1), 111–128.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-020-02471-z>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). To saturate or not to saturate? Questioning data saturation as a useful concept for thematic analysis and sample-size rationales. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *13*(2), 201–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1704846>

Brehm, J., & Rahn, W. (1997). Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital. *American Journal of Political Science*, *41*(3), 999-1023. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111684>

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: experiments by*

nature and design. Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Evans, G. (2000). Developmental science in the 21st century: Emerging questions, theoretical models, research designs and empirical findings. *Social Development*, 9(1), 115–125.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (2007). The bioecological model of human development. *Handbook of Child Psychology*, 1, 793–825.

Brooks, M., Ward, C., Euring, M., Townsend, C., White, N., & Hughes, K. L. (2016). Is There a Problem Officer? Exploring the Lived Experience of Black Men and Their Relationship with Law Enforcement. *Journal of African American Studies*, 20(3–4), 346–362.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-016-9334-4>

Brunson, R. K. (2007). “POLICE DON’T LIKE BLACK PEOPLE”: AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUNG MEN’S ACCUMULATED POLICE EXPERIENCES*. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 6(1), 71–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2007.00423.x>

Bryc, K., Durand, E. Y., Macpherson, J. M., Reich, D., & Mountain, J. L. (2015). The Genetic Ancestry of African Americans, Latinos, and European Americans across the United States. *The American Journal of Human Genetics*, 96(1), 37–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajhg.2014.11.010>

Burks, Cachet Dominique, "African American Men’s Negative Personal Experiences With and Trust in Police" (2021). *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 10098.

<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/10098>

- Butina, M. (2015). A Narrative Approach to Qualitative Inquiry. *American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science*, 28(3), 190–196.
<https://doi.org/10.29074/ascls.28.3.190>
- Capece, M. (2015). Social Learning Theory. In *The Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* (p. 1–6). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118519639.wbecpx162>
- Chen, C., & Tomes, Y. (2005). Culture and Adolescent Development. *Development of Adolescent Development*, 6, 1–8.
- Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Medsurg Nursing : Official Journal of the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses*, 25(6), 435–436.
- Costello, B. J., & Laub, J. H. (2020). Social Control Theory: The Legacy of Travis Hirschi's Causes of Delinquency. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 3(1), 21–41. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-criminol-011419-041527>
- Darling, N. (2007). Ecological Systems Theory: The Person in the Center of the Circles. *Research in Human Development*, 4(3–4), 203–217.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15427600701663023>
- DiCindio, M. (2022, September 14). 10 examples of police misconduct to refer to for your case . LLC, D. C. L. (2022, November 10). 10 examples of police misconduct to refer to for your case. DiCindio Law LLC. Retrieved January 28, 2023, from <https://www.dicindiolaw.com/blog/10-examples-of-police->

[misconduct-to-refer-to-for-your-case/](#)

- Dodgson, J. E. (2019). Reflexivity in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(2), 220–222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334419830990>
- Douglas, R. D., Alvis, L. M., Rooney, E. E., Busby, D. R., & Kaplow, J. B. (2021). Racial, ethnic, and neighborhood income disparities in childhood posttraumatic stress and grief: Exploring indirect effects through trauma exposure and bereavement. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 34(5), 929–942. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22732>
- Edison Research. (2010). Twitter usage in America: 2010.
- Evans, A. M., & van de Calseyde, P. P. F. M. (2018). The Reputational Consequences of Generalized Trust. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44(4), 492–507. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167217742886>
- Evans, C., & Lewis, J. (2018). *Analysing Semi-Structured Interviews Using Thematic Analysis: Exploring Voluntary Civic Participation Among Adults*. SAGE Publications, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526439284>
- Fischer, Matthew Robert, "Impartiality, social network effects and collective memory: three essays on trust in police." (2019). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 3258. <https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/3258>
- Gartstein, M. A., Putnam, S. P., & Rothbart, M. K. (2012). Etiology of preschool behavior problems: Contributions of temperament attributes in early childhood. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 33(2), 197–211.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/imhj.21312>

Gau, J. M., & Brunson, R. K. (2010). Procedural Justice and Order Maintenance Policing: A Study of Inner-City Young Men's Perceptions of Police Legitimacy. *Justice Quarterly*, 27(2), 255–279.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418820902763889>

Gelderblom, D. (2018). The limits to bridging social capital: Power, social context and the theory of Robert Putnam. *The Sociological Review*, 66(6), 1309–1324. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026118765360>

Gene Williams. (n.d.). Applied Qualitative Research Design.

Gibbs, J. (2019). *Moral Development & Reality; Beyond the theories of Kohlberg, Hoffman, and Haidt*. Oxford University Press.

Goss, S., & Stevens, C. (2016). *Making Research Matter; Researching for change in the theory and practice of counselling and psychotherapy*. Routledge.

Guerrero-Castañeda, R. F., Menezes, T. M. de O., & Ojeda-Vargas, Ma. G. (2017). Characteristics of the phenomenological interview in nursing research: Characteristics of the phenomenological interview in disease research. *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem*, 38(2), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1983-1447.2017.02.67458>

Guest, G., Namey, E., & Chen, M. (2020). A simple method to assess and report thematic saturation in qualitative research. *PLOS One*, 15(5), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232076>

Guy-Evans, O. (2024). *Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory*. Simple

Psychology. <https://www.simplepsychology.org/brofenbrenner.html>

Hamm, J. A., Trinkner, R., & Carr, J. D. (2017). Fair Process, Trust, and Cooperation: Moving Toward an Integrated Framework of Police Legitimacy. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 44(9), 1183–1212. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854817710058>

Hawkins, D. (1995). *Ethnicity, Race, and Crime: Perspectives Across Time and Place*. State University of New York Press.

Hawkins, D. (2003). *Violent crime: Assessing race & ethnic differences*. Cambridge University Press.

Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social Science & Medicine*, 292, 114523, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>

Herz, D. C., Dierkhising, C. B., Raithel, J., Schretzman, M., Guiltinan, S., Goerge, R. M., Cho, Y., Coulton, C., & Abbott, S. (2019). Dual System Youth and their Pathways: A Comparison of Incidence, Characteristics and System Experiences using Linked Administrative Data. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(12), 2432–2450. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-01090-3>

Hirschi, T. (1977). Causes and Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. *Sociological Inquiry*, 47(3–4), 322–341. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682X.1977.tb00804.x>

Ho, S.-S., Holloway, A., & Stenhouse, R. (2019). Analytic Methods' Considerations

for the Translation of Sensitive Qualitative Data From Mandarin Into English. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1-6.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919868354>

Hockin, S. M., & Brunson, R. K. (2018). The Revolution Might Not Be Televised (But It Will Be Lived Streamed). *Race and Justice*, 8(3), 199–215.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/2153368716676320>

Horowitz, J. (2007). Making Every Encounter Count: Building Trust and Confidence in the Police. *National Institute of Justice Journal*, 256, 8–11.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/e592672007-002>

Janmaat. (2019). The Development of Generalized Trust among Young People in England. *Social Sciences*, 8(11), 299. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8110299>

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A.-M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72(12), 2954–2965. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031>

Kincade, L. L., & Fox, C. A. (2022). “Runs in the family”: Fear of police violence and separation among Black families in central Alabama. *Psychology of Violence*, 12(4), 221–230. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000420>

Kirchherr, J., & Charles, K. (2018). Enhancing the sample diversity of snowball samples: Recommendations from a research project on anti-dam movements in Southeast Asia. *PLOS ONE*, 13(8), 1-17.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0201710>

- Kyngäs, H., Kääriäinen, M., & Elo, S. (2020). The Trustworthiness of Content Analysis. *The Application of Content Analysis in Nursing Science Research*. 41-48. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-30199-6_5
- Leavy, P. (2022). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guilford Publications.
- Lester, J. N., Cho, Y., & Lochmiller, C. R. (2020). Learning to Do Qualitative Data Analysis: A Starting Point. *Human Resource Development Review*, 19(1), 94–106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484320903890>
- Lester, S. (1999). *An introduction to phenomenological research*. In Stan Lester Developments.
- Lim, H. (2015). Social modeling effects on perception of the police. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 38(4), 675–689. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-02-2015-0018>
- Long, C. E., Gurka, M. J., & Blackman, J. A. (2008). Family Stress and Children's Language and Behavior Problems. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 28(3), 148–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121408318678>
- Martel, M. M., Gremillion, M. L., & Roberts, B. (2012). Temperament and common disruptive behavior problems in preschool. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53(7), 874–879. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.07.011>
- McGrath, C., Palmgren, P. J., & Liljedahl, M. (2019). Twelve tips for conducting

qualitative research interviews. *Medical Teacher*, 41(9), 1002–1006.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2018.1497149>

McManus, H. D., Cullen, F. T., Jonson, C. L., Burton, A. L., & Burton, V. S. (2019).

Will Black Lives Matter to the Police? African Americans' Concerns about Trump's Presidency. *Victims & Offenders*, 14(8), 1040–1062.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2019.1671288>

Mihas, P. (2019). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1195>

Miller, E. J. (2023). The Concept of the Police. *Criminal Law and Philosophy*,

17(3), 573–595. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11572-023-09682-8>

Mohajan, H. (2018). Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7(1),

21-24. <https://doi.org/10.26458/jedep.v7i1.571>

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage Publications.

Mouton, B., Loop, L., Stiévenart, M., & Roskam, I. (2018). Confident Parents for

Easier Children: A Parental Self-Efficacy Program to Improve Young Children's Behavior. *Education Sciences*, 8(3), 134-153.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci8030134>

Naeem, M., Ozuem, W., Howell, K., & Ranfagni, S. (2023). A Step-by-Step Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, 1-18.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231205789>

Nassaji, H. (2020). Good qualitative research. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4), 427–431. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820941288>

Navarro, J. L., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2022). Technologizing Bronfenbrenner: Neo-ecological Theory. *Current Psychology*, 42, 19338-19354.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02738-3>

Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2019). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 8(2), 90-97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-0509-2>

Nix, J., Wolfe, S. E., Rojek, J., & Kaminski, R. J. (2015). Trust in the Police. *Crime & Delinquency*, 61(4), 610–640. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128714530548>

Novich, M., & Hunt, G. (2017). “Get off me”: Perceptions of disrespectful police behaviour among ethnic minority youth gang members. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, 24(3), 248–255.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687637.2016.1239697>

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Collins, K. M. T., & Frels, R. K. (2013). Foreword: Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory to frame quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 7(1), 2–8. <https://doi.org/10.5172/mra.2013.7.1.2>

Ostrom, E., & Ahn, T. K. (2009). The Meaning of Social Capital and its Link to Collective Action. *Handbook of Social Capital* (pp. 17–35). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781848447486.00008>

- Pabel, A., Pryce, J., & Anderson, A. (2021). *Research Paradigm Considerations for Emerging Scholars*. Channel View Publications.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Paxton, P., & Glanville, J. L. (2015). Is Trust Rigid or Malleable? A Laboratory Experiment. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 78(2), 194–204. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272515582177>
- Peguero, A. A., Popp, A. M., & Koo, D. J. (2015). Race, Ethnicity, and School-Based Adolescent Victimization. *Crime & Delinquency*, 61(3), 323–349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128711398021>
- Peguero, A. A., Popp, A. M., Latimore, T. L., Shekarkhar, Z., & Koo, D. J. (2011). Social Control Theory and School Misbehavior: Examining the Role of Race and Ethnicity. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 9(3), 259–275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204010389197>
- Peterson, R., Krivo, L., & Hagan, J. (2006). *The Many Colors of Crime Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America. The Many Colors of Crime: Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America.*
- Pratt-Harris, N. C., Sinclair, M. M., Bragg, C. B., Williams, N. R., Ture, K. N., Smith, B. D., Marshall, I., & Brown, L. (2016). Police-involved homicide of

unarmed Black males: Observations by Black scholars in the midst of the April 2015 Baltimore uprising. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 26(3–4), 377–389.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2015.1132853>

Quadackers, L., Groot, T., & Wright, A. (2012). Auditors' Professional Skepticism: Neutrality Versus Presumptive Doubt. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 561–599.

<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2162947>

Qutoshi, S. (2018). Phenomenology: A Philosophy and Method of Inquiry. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 5(1), 215–222.

Råheim, M., Magnussen, L. H., Sekse, R. J. T., Lunde, Å., Jacobsen, T., & Blystad, A. (2016). Researcher–researched relationship in qualitative research: Shifts in positions and researcher vulnerability. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, 11(1), 1-19.

<https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v11.30996>

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, R. M. (2019). Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2019). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Sage Publications.

Rinehart Kochel, T., & Gau, J. M. (2021). Examining Police Presence, Tactics, and Engagement as Facilitators of Informal Social Control in High-Crime Areas. *Justice Quarterly*, 38(2), 301–321.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2019.1632917>

Rogers, J. L., Gilbride, D. D., & Dew, B. J. (2018). Utilizing an Ecological

Framework to Enhance Counselors' Understanding of the U.S. Opioid Epidemic. *The Professional Counselor*, 8(3), 226–239.

<https://doi.org/10.15241/jlr.8.3.226>

Rosa, E. M., & Tudge, J. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Development: Its Evolution From Ecology to Bioecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5(4), 243–258. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12022>

Rossler, M. (2015). *Environment and citizen resistance of police coercive authority: application of defiance and social disorganization theories*. In Dissertation. Michigan State University.

Rumjaun, A., & Narod, F. (2020). *Social Learning Theory—Albert Bandura* (pp. 85–99). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43620-9_7

Santiago, C. D., Wadsworth, M. E., & Stump, J. (2011). Socioeconomic status, neighborhood disadvantage, and poverty-related stress: Prospective effects on psychological syndromes among diverse low-income families. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 32(2), 218–230.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2009.10.008>

Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & Quantity*, 52(4), 1893–1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>

Scheidel, A., del Bene, D., Liu, J., Navas, G., Mingorría, S., Demaria, F., Avila, S., Roy, B., Ertör, I., Temper, L., & Martínez-Alier, J. (2020). Environmental

conflicts and defenders: A global overview. *Global Environmental Change*, 63, 102104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2020.102104>

Smith, J. A., & Shinebourne, P. (2012). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological*. (pp. 73–82).

American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-005>

Snyder, S. E., & Duchschere, J. E. (2022). Revisiting ecological systems theory:

Practice implications for juvenile justice youth. *Translational Issues in*

Psychological Science, 8(2), 234–245. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tps0000324>

Stack, L. (1978). *Trust. Dimensions of Personality*, 561–599.

Stahl, N. A., & King, J. R. (2020). Expanding approaches for research:

Understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 44(1), 26–28.

Stenfors, T., Kajamaa, A., & Bennett, D. (2020). How to ... assess the quality of qualitative research. *The Clinical Teacher*, 17(6), 596–599.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/tct.13242>

Suddick, K. M., Cross, V., Vuoskoski, P., Galvin, K. T., & Stew, G. (2020). The

Work of Hermeneutic Phenomenology. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 160940692094760. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920947600>

Sutton, J., & Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis, and Management. *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy*, 68(3).

<https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456>

- Teherani, A., Martimianakis, T., Stenfors-Hayes, T., Wadhwa, A., & Varpio, L. (2015). Choosing a Qualitative Research Approach. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, 7(4), 669–670. <https://doi.org/10.4300/JGME-D-15-00414.1>
- Trojanowicz, R., & Bucqueroux, B. (1998). *Community policing: How to get started*. (2nd ed.). Anderson.
- Tyler, T. R., Fagan, J., & Geller, A. (2014). Street Stops and Police Legitimacy: Teachable Moments in Young Urban Men’s Legal Socialization. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, 11(4), 751–785. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jels.12055>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2023, July 1). *Quick Facts - Dallas City, Texas*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/dallascitytexas/PST045223>
- Uslaner, E. M. (2002). The Moral Foundations of Trust. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.824504>
- Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Thorpe, S., & Young, T. (2018). Characterizing and justifying sample size sufficiency in interview-based studies: systematic analysis of qualitative health research over a 15-year period. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 18(1), 148. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0594-7>
- Walden University. (2022). *Research Ethics Review Process by IRB*. <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/research-center/research-ethics/review-process>
- Weitzer, R., (2002). Incidents of police misconduct and public opinion. *Journal of*

Criminal Justice, Volume 30, Issue 5, 2002, 397-408.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352\(02\)00150-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352(02)00150-2).

Weitzer, R., & Tuch, S. (2002). Perceptions Of Racial Profiling: Race, Class, and Personal Experience. *Criminology*, 40(2), 435–456.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2002.tb00962.x>

Wiatrowski, Michael David, "Social Control Theory and Delinquency"
(1978). *Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 857.

<https://doi.org/10.15760/etd.857>

Wiatrowski, M. D., Griswold, D. B., & Roberts, M. K. (1981). Social Control Theory and Delinquency. *American Sociological Review*, 46(5), 525.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2094936>

Widowaty, Y. (2019). The Application of Social Control Theory in Preventing Violent Crime by Juvenile Delinquent. *Journal Media Hukum*, 26(2).

<https://doi.org/10.18196/jmh.20190133>

Wilkins, C. H. (2018). Effective Engagement Requires Trust and Being Trustworthy. *Medical Care*, 56(Suppl 1), S6–S8.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/MLR.0000000000000953>

Williams, D. R., Haile, R., González, H. M., Neighbors, H., Baser, R., & Jackson, J. S. (2007). The Mental Health of Black Caribbean Immigrants: Results from the National Survey of American Life. *American Journal of Public Health*, 97(1), 52–59. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2006.088211>

Williams, G. (n.d.). *Applied Qualitative Research Design*.

- Williamson, E., Gregory, A., Abrahams, H., Aghtaie, N., Walker, S.-J., & Hester, M. (2020a). Secondary Trauma: Emotional Safety in Sensitive Research. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 18(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-019-09348-y>
- Williamson, E., Gregory, A., Abrahams, H., Aghtaie, N., Walker, S.-J., & Hester, M. (2020b). Secondary Trauma: Emotional Safety in Sensitive Research. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 18(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-019-09348-y>
- Wrightsmann, L. (1992). *Assumptions about Human Nature: Implications for Researchers and Practitioners*. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483325934>
- Wu, Y., Lake, R., & Cao, L. (2015). Race, Social Bonds, and Juvenile Attitudes toward the Police. *Justice Quarterly*, 32(3), 445–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2013.778325>
- Xin, Y., Li, Q., & Liu, C. (2019). Adolescent Self-esteem and Social Adaptation: Chain Mediation of Peer Trust and Perceived Social Support. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 47(4), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.7870>

Appendix: Recruiting Material



Want To Promote Positive Social Change? *Then Let Your Voice Be Heard!*

What is this study about?

This research study seeks to find the environmental factor which formed your trust level in law enforcement.



Why Participate?

- Your voice may help determine where trust in law enforcement is developed.
- Your input may help change the perception between the public and police.
- You can assist in creating a positive social change.

Who Can Participate?

- Adults aged 18 to 23 years of age
- Must be considered a minority
- Able to participate in a 30-minute interview (Virtual, In person, or Telephonic)

This interview is part of the doctoral study for a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Interviews will take place in July through December 2023.

To confidentially volunteer, please send an email.