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Walden University

College of Psychology and Community Services

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Victoria L. Smith

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2025

Abstract

The Perceived Impact of Officer-Involved Domestic Violence on Law Enforcement Administrators

by

Victoria L. Smith

MA, Philosophy CJ, Walden University, 2023

MA, Science CJ, Saint Leo University, 2014

BS, Science CJ, Saint Leo University, 2013

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2025

Abstract

The frequency of officer-involved domestic violence (OIDV) is a serious problem in the law enforcement profession. This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to determine what measures and specific domestic violence policies are working well and what is working poorly in Florida. This study is critical because it can aid upcoming law enforcement administrators (LEAs) and current LEAs in improving the policies and measures they use in their agency to combat OIDV among their officers and recruits. Jacques's organizational culture theory (OCT) provided a framework for this study. I used purposeful snowball sampling methods to recruit participants for this study. Six law enforcement administrators were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, face to face, and or by phone. All participants were asked a sequence of 21 questions. Participants' data were manually coded, and thematic analysis was used to make the research meaningful. As indicated by the research, Florida has a zero tolerance stance for OIDV. All participants knew that their agency had policies in place; however, they could not effectively articulate their policies but could explain the measures in response to OIDV. The most effective measures used by LEAs were mental health wellness initiatives, employee assistance programs (EAPs), administrative investigations, internal investigations, continuous training, and preventive education. Many LEAs felt that their agency measures to combat OIDV worked well, and no changes were needed. LEAs' failure to effectively articulate their policies creates a possibility for social change. When LEAs are knowledgeable of their policies and how to respond to them, this helps them to make informed decisions, which leads to a positive social change.

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Dedication

I am dedicating this dissertation to God, the head of my life; I am thankful for the strength, wisdom, and knowledge he provided through this dissertation process. To my mother, Sgt. Ernestine, a strong role model to my sisters, Princess, Lisa, my anchors, and my mentor, Dr. Welch, thanks for your tough talks to keep me focused. To my beloved children, Trilicia, Phillip, and Melvin, thanks for believing that I could conquer this excellent task and for understanding that the process was rigorous and came with sacrifices. To my department chair, Dr. Walker, thanks for being a solid rock and providing the tools to challenge myself beyond my expectations. To my accountability partner Lashonda Dale, thanks for challenging me to become a better version of myself, personally and professionally.

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I want to express my warmest gratitude to my mother, family, and closest friends for their love and unconditional support while undertaking this dissertation journey. Special thanks to Sgt. Plummer, for her words of wisdom. I want to thank Walden University for its resources and focus on social change, which inspired me to raise awareness and educate others on my topic. And foremost, I would like to thank God for his everlasting wisdom and the strength that he bestowed upon me to conquer this great challenge.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Domestic violence (DV) has long been a significant issue affecting people all around the world, with it being an increasing issue in the state of Florida. In 2020, there were 106,515 incidents of DV reported to Florida Department of Law Enforcement Agencies (FDLE), resulting in 63,217 arrests (*Domestic Violence Statistics | Florida DCF*, n.d.). In 2019, there were 105,298 incidents of DV reported to Florida law enforcement agencies, resulting in 66,069 arrests Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI, 2019). In 2018, there were 104,916 incidents of DV reported to Florida law enforcement agencies, resulting in 64,574 arrests (*Crime in the U.S. 2018*). Data shows a trend of the seriousness of DV in the state of Florida.

Policing domestic violence and family violence are often interrelated. This study examined the perceptions of law enforcement administrators (LEAs) agency specific policies for officer-involved domestic violence (OIDV) and measures developed to combat DV among officers in Florida. DV covers a wide range of terms, including intimate partner violence (IPV) Boserup et al., 2020). DV and family violence occur among spouses, family members, children, and the elderly population (Boserup et al., 2020). DV is a chain of behaviors that exerts power and control over an individual through threats or violence. DV includes physical, sexual, economic, psychological, and emotional abuse toward someone in an intimate relationship or former relationship (Huecker et al., 2023). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) refers to DV as a societal issue and a violation of human rights. An estimated 10 million people every year

are affected by DV, with as many as one in four women and one in nine men being victims of DV (Huecker et al., 2023). In response to the high number of DV incidents, the criminal justice system has developed preventative measures for the public and law enforcement agencies. Despite federal and state efforts to implement preventive measures, DV still occurs. The International Chiefs of Police (IACP, n.d) has adopted a Code of Ethics that law enforcement officers must adhere to. Law enforcement officers must serve, protect the community, uphold the rights of citizens, and behave in a manner that upholds their departmental values and mission. Law enforcement officers are expected to be bound by professionalism and not take the oath of office unless committed to it (Meister, 2020).

The oath of office is a legally binding agreement officers take when they agree to uphold all federal and state laws in the constitution (Meister, 2020). Acceptance of the oath of office refers to a commitment to laws, integrity, and holding oneself accountable (Newman, 2024). The oath of office is a guiding principle that informs officers of their accountability to themselves and the public. The oath of office signifies that it should be enforced equally and without partiality (Cohen, 2021). There have been incidents involving police officers violating the oath of office, where they could no longer perform their duties as law enforcement professionals (Keyes et al., 2023). Violating the oath of ethics and oath of office minimizes public trust in law enforcement, fairness, and integrity and can negatively affect the organization's culture (Keyes et al., 2023).

This study created positive social change for law enforcement professionals, families, and communities. By providing recommendations for LEAs, they can improve

resources within the agency for law enforcement officers, families, and the community, an initiative approach against DV. LEAs' understanding of what works well and poorly could combat future incidents among current officers and recruits.

Chapter 1 covers the study's background, problem statement, and purpose of the study. Chapter 1 presents a research question, theoretical framework, and the nature of the study. In addition, Chapter 1 provides definitions, assumptions, and scope. Chapter 1 addresses delimitations, limitations, significance, and the summary.

Background

Law enforcement officers have identified through self-reported surveys how often they participate in DV incidents among their family members and spouses. Johnson (1991) conducted the first report to congress and revealed that DV occurs in police officers' families at a rate of 40%. Klein and Klein (2000) also revealed that officers commit DV among their family members and spouses at a rate of 4.8%. French and Flecher (2022) also brought awareness to the criminal justice communities that there is a problem that exists within law enforcement families when it comes to DV.

While laws and agency policies play a significant part in officers' behavior, there was still a lack of understanding of specific departmental policies and measures that are effective at combating DV among officers in Florida. The study addressed LEAs' specific departmental policies and measures that encourage the ease of reporting for officers (Craddock & Telesco, 2022). The study addressed updated information on OIDV, an unstudied area (Willaimson, 2021).

DV has severe implications for society and the law enforcement profession. Each year, DV costs society's healthcare services an average of 12 billion dollars (Huecker et al., 2023). Also, DV results in economic loss to society, not only from healthcare services but also harm or hurt sustained from the incidents, employees' time off from work, court system costs, and additional expenses (Postmus et al., 2020; Stockman et al., 2015). DV committed by law enforcement officers could drastically affect law enforcement officers' families, children, community trust, and the organizations they serve (Bello, 2021). This study was needed because there is insufficient research on OIDV, which directly affects law enforcement careers and affects approximately 10 million people annually (Gerelt-Od, 2023; Russell & Pappas, 2018). Another reason this study was needed is that DV in police families was still a significant concern in the criminal justice community (French & Fletcher, 2022).

While laws and agency policies play a significant part in officers' behavior, there was still a lack of understanding of specific departmental policies on DV and measures that are effective at combating DV among officers in Florida. This study investigated specific departmental policies on DV, and measures developed by LEAs that allow officers to feel safe and secure with interventions enforced (Craddock & Telesco, 2022). This study addressed updated information on OIDV, which is an unstudied area (Willaimson, 2021).

Problem Statement

There is a problem in the criminal justice profession because of the high frequency of OIDV incidents in the United States and other countries (Gerelt-Od, 2023;

Russell & Pappas, 2018). Research indicates that DV is as high as 40 % in the law enforcement profession (Johnson, 1991; Neidig et al., 1992; & Straus,1990a). Other researchers show that OIDV occurs at a rate between 4.8 % and 28% (Blumenstein et al., 2012; Gershon, 2000; Valentine et al., 2012). Following the Enactment of the Lautenberg Amendment of 1996, which makes it against the law for any person, including law enforcement professionals, to carry a firearm if they have been convicted of domestic violence misdemeanor offenses (House, 1997; Issa, 2019). Therefore, law enforcement is adversely affected because departments must comply with Lautenberg law provisions.

Incidents where officers lose the right to carry a firearm may result in the termination of employment because they cannot perform their duties (Gerelt-Od, 2023; Mennicke & Ropes, 2016; Stinson & Liederbach, 2013). In the state of Florida, it is against the law for any person who has a protection order against them for DV to possess a firearm (Women Laws Organization, 2024). Exploring measures and specific departmental policies on OIDV by LEAs in the state of Florida will provide insights into the criminal justice system and best practices for combating DV among officers.

Purpose of the Study

This phenomenological study examined measures developed by LEAs who have DV specific policies within their organization. The purpose of this study was to determine what measures and specific DV policies are working well and what is working poorly. This study attempted to provide the most effective measures and department policies on OIDV used by LEAs to combat DV among current officers and recruits. Also, this study helps upcoming improve their policies and measures in their agencies based on

new research. This study answered questions about how to decode the code of silence among officers regarding fellow officers who may be at risk of committing DV. This study improves organizational resources for officers, officers' families, victims, and the public. This study's goal was to understand what specific departmental policies and measures work well and work poorly at combating DV among law enforcement officers.

Research Question

Research Question: What measures do law enforcement administrators find effective at combating domestic violence among officers in their agency?

Theoretical and/or Conceptual Framework for the Study.

This study was based on Jacques's (1951) organizational culture theory (OCT). "Organizational culture is the culture that exists in an organization, something akin to a societal culture" (Shafritz et al., 2016, p. 292). OCT posits how organizational patterns, behaviors, values, and beliefs work and are structured (Munir & Arifin, 2021; Shafritz et al., 2016). Jacques's theoretical framework addressed OIDV as it relates to law enforcement agencies and the culture within agencies. This study examined how LEAs address specific departmental policies on OIDV and the measures they developed in their agencies to combat OIDV among their officers.

The OCT was suitable for my research because it examined the effect OIDV had on law enforcement agencies, officer families, and the public. The OCT approach provides insight into how LEAs can guide an agency. In the law enforcement professions, a "command and control" culture could exist (Shafritz et al., 2016, p.292). The OCT could help law enforcement professionals improve the existing culture of hierarchy,

unfavorable standards, boost the morale of recruits, and current officers (Hofer & Savell, 2021; Munir & Arifin, 2021).

Nature of the Study

This study employed a phenomenological design using a qualitative method. "Phenomenological research focuses on the meaning of a particular group" (Grossoehme, 2014, p.7; Lim, 2024). Phenomenological research typically uses a small sample size and purposeful sampling (Bartholomew et al., 2021; Grossoehme, 2014). This study used purposeful sampling of a small selection of LEAs. This study used the interpretive phenomenological design to inform me how LEAs interpret and understand their lived experiences of the phenomenon.

The phenomenological design allowed LEAs to account for their own experiences of how specific department policies and measures developed for OIDV to combat DV among their officers are working well or poorly in their agency. Data was collected from interviews with current LEAs following an interview guide, field notes, and a password-protected cellular device to record the interviews. This study ensured that the cellular device was stored in a secure location. Participants were de-identifiable, and their privacy and confidentiality were protected to avoid causing harm to participants. This study allowed me the opportunity to send participants a copy of the interview transcripts to review and approve for accuracy. After accuracy was met, I analyzed the data, transcribed it, and placed it in phrases, common themes, and patterns.

Definitions

Domestic violence (DV) occurs when a household member, same-sex relationship, romantic partner, intimate partner, family member, or former partner tries to gain power or control over a person through acts of fear or intimidation (Huecker et al., 2023).

Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to violent or aggressive behavior that occurs in intimate relationships. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2018).

Officer-involved domestic violence (OIDV) refers to domestic violence committed by law enforcement professionals on household members, same-sex relationships, romantic partners, and or spouses (Cheema, 2016; French & Fletcher, 2022; Oehme, 2018; Russell & Pappas, 2018).

Law enforcement administrators (LEA) are responsible for law enforcement agencies' management and daily operation, including implementing and developing departmental policies to maintain order in the public and combat crime (Massey, 2023).

Assumptions

The central assumption was that a code of silence exists among law enforcement professionals (Torres & Curiel, 2023). The code of silence and solidarity among officers may keep them from reporting fellow officers' incidents of DV. This study assumed that LEAs would have profound knowledge about what effective measures are used to combat DV among their officers and recruits. Also, this study assumed that law enforcement perspectives would provide essential information for combating DV incidents among law enforcement professionals. A further assumption was that the criminal justice system

must emphasize the need to decode the code of silence among law enforcement professionals to improve help-seeking behaviors for officers who may be at risk for committing DV and encourage the reporting of incidents of DV where officers may feel at ease about coming forth. The study's assumptions were necessary for the study because they created an awareness of biases and individual perspectives regarding the phenomenon.

Scope and Delimitations

The social problem was the high frequency of OIDV incidents among law enforcement officers. This research focused on measures and policies used to combat DV among officers in Florida. The primary goal was to examine what measures LEAs used that work well and that work poorly at combating DV among their officers. By gaining an in-depth understanding of specific departmental policies on OIDV and measures developed, this study sought to determine why some officers commit DV while others comply with departmental policies and measures developed and do not. The scope of this study was limited to covering LEAs in Florida.

Participation in this research required the participation of males and females who are LEAs. A purposeful sample size of five to 10 was sought, which aligns with phenomenological research until no more data emerges (Creswell & 2013; Grossoehme, 2014; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Participants must have completed a form of DV training, have specific department policies on OIDV, or have developed measures in their department for DV prevention. Participants cannot have any outstanding allegations against them for DV.

Limitations

This study identified various limitations. The first limitation was the selection of participants to participate in the study in Florida. The second limitation was obtaining a suitable sample size because LEAs might hesitate to participate due to a code of silence in the policing culture (Donner & Maskaly, 2023). Third, the findings might be limited to law enforcement agencies in Florida because other states and regions may have different policies and measures to combat OIDV incidents. This study addressed limitations by attempting to interview participants in law enforcement agencies with policies on OIDV and or who have developed measures to combat DV among their officers. This study may not be dependable in other states and countries because it was conducted in Florida. Also, male and female LEAs will be interviewed to improve gender balance and gender perspective and to minimize biases in the population being studied. This study allowed for an introduction to the study letter to be sent out to familiarize the participants with the study and the criteria for participation.

Recruiting was difficult due to the nature of the study and the stigma associated with OIDV. To enhance the durability of the research, this study provided a well-defined description of the setting and context of the study. The generalizability of the study was limited due to the study location being in Florida; different states and countries may have different policies and measures regarding combating OIDV and other perspectives. To address the limitations of the research, participants with OIDV policies and measures developed for DV for their officers will be interviewed. This study used bracketing to

address personal biases and a detailed journal of the expectations, attitudes, and beliefs about the topic.

Significance

This study added to the literature on the measures and specific departmental policies used among LEAs to combat DV among officers and recruits. This study is also unique because it provided a wealth of knowledge from LEAs who have experience working with departmental policies and measures developed. The state of Florida has developed Florida Model Policies for intervention and prevention of DV among officers. This policy attempts to combat the incidents of DV committed by law enforcement professionals. Due to the frequency of OIDV incidents, the 4.8-40% of officers who commit DV among their spouses and family members in the state of Florida and other countries must gain the skills they need to keep them from becoming perpetrators of DV (Gerelt-Od, 2023; Johnson, 1991; Mennicke & Ropes, 2016; Neidig et al., 1992; Russell & Pappas, 2018).

This study provided insight into the needed resources, programs, and training needed among officers and recruits to gain the skills they need to cope with elevated stress levels that may lead to officers perpetrating DV. Also, this study provided LEAs with the knowledge, guidance, and skills needed to prevent future incidents of DV in the state of Florida and other countries. The goal of the study was to determine what departmental policies and measures work well and work poorly at combating DV among law enforcement officers. This study findings help decode the code of silence, reduce the stigma attached to reporting fellow officers or at-risk officers for DV, and normalize

help-seeking behaviors to prevent DV incidents among officers. Also, the study improves help-seeking behaviors for the family members of officers who may be at risk, and the relationships between law enforcement and the community. The study helped provide more resources and programs tailored for officers, recruits, and families of officers to maintain the organization's integrity, boost officers' morale, and reinforce public trust.

Summary

OIDV is an understudied area with implications for officers, officers' family members, spouses, organizations, and the community. The study's primary goal was to determine what departmental policies and measures work well and what works poorly at combating DV among officers. The criminal justice system has developed Florida's Model Policies to prevent future victimization by law enforcement professionals and provide them with the necessary resources and skills to prevent them from committing DV. This study added to the literature by providing LEAs in Florida and globally with best practices for combating DV among their officers and recruits. Previous research had not focused on understanding what departmental policies and measures are most effective at combating DV among officers and recruits. In Chapter 2, this study explains the literature strategy and the theoretical foundation as it applies to the topic under study. This chapter includes definitions and concludes with a summary before transitioning to Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Officer-Involved Domestic Violence Incidents in Law Enforcement Families

This study explained how LEAs use specific department policies and measures developed to combat OIDV among their officers within their agency. This study described OIDV as DV perpetrated by a law enforcement officer (Oehme, 2018; Russell & Pappas, 2018). OIDV impacts families, spouses, communities, organizational cultures, officers' wellness, and officers' performance of duties. OIDV is a grave issue that is often understudied due to methodological issues. Data on the impact of OIDV shows that it occurs at a rate of 4.8-40% (Johnson, 1991; Neidig et al., 1992; Mennicke & Ropes, 2016; Russell & Pappas, 2018). Several studies concluded that there are challenges with determining how often OIDV occurs because no system accurately tracks the rate at which OIDV happens (Mennicke & Ropes, 2016; Moran & Hodge, 2021). Russell and Tannenbaum (2016) conducted a study of 299 law enforcement officers in 27 different states. They revealed that 51% of officers admitted to responding to incidents of DV perpetrated by a fellow officer.

OIDV has profound implications that could lead to officers' family issues, inability to perform their work, organizational issues, and officers' inability to protect the public. Several studies also addressed the influence of police officer's work on their families. Johnson (1991) conducted a quantitative study investigating police officers and their families' wellness. The study sample size included 728 officers and 479 spouses. Johnson found that an estimated 40% of officers surveyed disclosed that they behaved aggressively toward their family members and spouses. Johnson et al. (2005) conducted a

quantitative study investigating the relationship between officers facing real-life encounters with violent behaviors and domestic abuse using the pathway model approach. The study consisted of 413 officers who completed surveys about issues within families. Johnson et al. (2005) also found a significant link between aggressive behavior among police officers and DV among their spouses. This behavior could be attributed to work-related stress and command presence. Previous work further demonstrated the need for research on OIDV.

Although there are inconsistencies in the literature on the rates at which officers perpetrate DV, it still occurs at alarming rates. Russell and Tannenbaum (2016) found that 51.3% of officers admitted they experienced responding to OIDV incidents (as cited in Russell & Pappas, 2018, p.135). Waters and Ussery (2007) found that, on average, between 60,000 to 180,000 households would experience domestic violence annually, along with police officers' families (Landers et al., 2020). This suggested that OIDV is a social problem and criminal justice problem.

Self-reported surveys have been one of the most effective strategies for understanding OIDV. Mennicke and Ropes (2016) conducted a quantitative study by synthesizing the literature of seven studies related to OIDV to determine the frequency with which OIDV occurs using multiple Criminal Justice Databases. Mennicke and Ropes examined the findings of inconsistencies over time. Mennicke and Ropes found that officers admitted to behaving violently at a range of 4.8 - 40% of the seven articles.

This study used several quantitative, qualitative, periodicals, and law reviews surrounding the topic of OIDV and family violence in police families while conducting a

review of the literature. Chapter 2 presents a literature strategy, keywords, and a database to be used to locate articles. Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical foundation of Jacques's (1951) organization theory. Chapter 2 also provides a research analysis of the chosen theory related to this study. Chapter 2 explains why the organizational culture theory was chosen and how the theory relates to the research question. Also in Chapter 2, this study comprehensively reviews the literature regarding the key concepts in this current study. Chapter 2 discusses the major themes identified and adds to the existing body of knowledge. Chapter 2 concludes with a wealth of knowledge on the topic of study. This chapter then transitions to Chapter 3, where the methodology is discussed.

Literature Search Strategy

This study used keywords and databases to search for the current literature on the topic. The following fields were explored: criminal justice, social science, and psychology. This study used the following keywords to gain a deeper understanding of this current topic: *domestic violence, intimate partner violence, officer involvement,* or *officer perpetrated*. This study used a second set of keywords: *culture or culture, family violence in police families, officer-involved domestic violence,* or *officer-perpetrated domestic violence*. This study also used additional search terms: *code of silence, organizational culture, police ethics, police professionalism, stress,* and *alcohol*. Current articles were used to ensure the information reflects current information in the criminal justice field. This study used some information that may be outdated because the current topic is understudied.

Theoretical Foundation

Elliot Jacques 1951 developed OCT. Jacques is well-known for his case study based on the changing culture in a factory setting (Pathiranage et al., 2020). While Jacques's theory is dated, it is still prominent today in discussing the OC in law enforcement professions. Jacques concluded that an OC entails sharing the organization's values and beliefs among members of the organization; also, members learn to share similar values and beliefs as others in the organization to be accepted by their colleagues (Shafritz et al., 2016). Jacques also highlights two factors concerning OCT. One factor is that there are rules that are not always stated in policy but are expected for members of the workplace to adhere to the beliefs and values that members of the workplace hold (Pathriange et al.,2020; Shafritz et al., 2016).

The OCT plays a key role in the law enforcement profession because the agency's culture could negatively or positively impact officers' behavior and overall performance. Meng and Berger (2019) found that OCT is based on learned behaviors that transfer from one workforce member to another. Lubis and Hanum (2020) also revealed that when members of the organization accept the culture and become part of it, they are more likely to perform better, which leads to overall job satisfaction. OCT is still widely used in the following fields: behavior management, organizational theory and behavior, business management, human resources, anthropology, and social science (Alshamari, 2017; Denison, 1990; Schein, 2010). By the 1980s - 2000s, researchers explored organizational culture (OC) regarding how members of an organization values and beliefs impact their overall performance (Schein, 1985). Today, OC is still based upon the

beliefs and values of members existing in an organization that are passed down over time (Hardcopf et al., 2021).

Gender Dynamics

Gender dynamics play a role in officers perpetrating DV. Williamson (2021) revealed that male officers are more likely to engage in DV in adulthood as opposed to female officers. Also, female officers exposed to DV in early childhood are less likely to engage in DV incidents among their spouses in adulthood (Williamson, 2021). This suggests that gender dynamics influence whether officers will perpetrate DV. For example, Okuda et al. (2015) revealed that women behave less aggressively than men, but men commit more criminal sexual acts than women. Peralta and Tuttle's (2013) study also revealed that men's violent behavior could be attributed to gender norm roles. Law enforcement agencies should employ more resources that aid in officers' understanding of the impact domestic violence has on their certification, OC, performance of duty, and public safety.

What is known is that there is a difference in gender dynamics as it relates to officers committing DV (Williamson, 2021). What is controversial is that female and male officers may differ in whether they engage in OIDV based on socioeconomic factors, demographic factors, and their exposure to DV in early childhood. What remains unstudied is a more extensive scope as it relates to measures of OIDV that consist of all forms of psychological abuse and sexual offenses. This suggests that more research is needed to provide law enforcement agencies with a better understanding of the impact

that psychological abuse and sexual offenses have on officers' performance of duty and OC.

The law enforcement profession is known to have a culture of silence. Cordner (2017) conducted a quantitative study to examine the culture within law enforcement by gaining officers' perceptions of members of the public, police duties, and police operations. Data was derived from a previous study between 2014 and 2015 with an estimated 13,000 law enforcement officers from 89 agencies. Cordner also explored the effect of officers' personality traits and organizational relationships on different officers within law enforcement. Cordner found that law enforcement officers' beliefs are mostly optimistic regarding their organization and that they do not differ based on officers' personal traits, but officers' perceptions differ based on the agency for which they are employed. Lorsch and McTague (2016) revealed in a study that OC does not lead to organizational problems. Lorsch and McTague also found that poor leadership and not staying current with organizational standards could result in administrative challenges for the organizations. This suggests that every law enforcement agency's culture differs.

DV is a serious social problem and a criminal justice problem that affects people worldwide and often goes unreported to law enforcement officers. El Sayed et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study of nine police agencies and 498 officers to examine officers' perceptions of DV incidents. The study methods consist of online surveys and paper surveys. El Sayed et al. found that officers' perceptions of DV varied based on demographic factors and rank. In a related study, DeJong (2008) revealed that officers admitted to being overwhelmed when responding to IPV cases because of their lack of

experience working with IPV cases and adverse experiences of direct involvement with victims. This suggests that officers with experience working with IPV cases can influence how IPV cases are overseen. Another study revealed that female officers who are well-trained to oversee DV cases illustrate empathetic behavior and refer victims for outside resources (Stalans & Finn, 2000).

Police officers may be the perpetrators of DV, but they also may encounter DV in their personal lives. Brennan et al.'s (2023) study of the relationship between victimization and perpetrating violence revealed that of the 876 police officers and police staff surveyed, 23% had admitted to being a victim of DV while employed at a law enforcement agency. Brennan et al. also revealed that female police officers admitted to experiencing domestic violence at a rate of 61% while 27% admitted to being victimized by a fellow police officer. Even more interesting, 40% of the officers surveyed failed to reveal that they were victims of DV. This suggests that women police officers experience more DV than their male counterparts and that both male and female officers tend not to disclose that they engage in abusive relationships. Water and Ussery (2007) also revealed that police experience DV comparable to members of the public. What remains unstudied is the experiences of OIDV or victimization of officers while not working (Brennan et al., 2023). This suggested that more research was needed on the impact OIDV has on law enforcement agencies, OC, and officers' performance of duty. Therefore, law enforcement agencies should employ strategies to minimize victimization and violence perpetrated by officers.

Police officers experience work-related stressors, which are known to be linked to IPV committed by police. Zavala and Melander (2019) conducted a quantitative study investigating the role of self-discipline and dominance in OIDV. The study used data derived from Gershon's (2000) study that examined the literature on police stress and DV perpetrated by police. Zavala and Melander found no relationship between the lack of self-discipline and IPV, but the officers' desire for power was associated with IPV. Anderson and Lo (2011) also revealed that police officers' work-related stress is related to IPV committed by police officers toward their spouses. This suggests that work-related stress experienced by police officers leads to IPV towards their family members or spouses.

The police profession is known to experience elevated stressors on and off the job. Prost et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative study of law enforcement officers to examine officers' exposure to abuse early on in life, substance abuse, other related mental health issues, and the part they play when collaborating with victims of officer perpetrated DV. The study sample included 1661 police officers with the general power to make arrests. The methodology used for the study was the National Prevention Toolkit, which is a resource used to help identify risk factors in officers who may be perpetrating DV. Prost et al. found that officers who had a history of childhood trauma and recovered from trauma collaborated better with victims of officers who perpetrated violence than officers who had not recovered from traumatic events. Two studies have concluded that there is a significant association between traumatic experiences early on in life and IPV perpetrated by police (Kurtz & Hughes, 2021; Zavala et al., 2015). Several

studies cite that being under the influence of alcohol could lead to violent behavior (Mayshak et al., 2020; Reingle et al.,2014). This suggests that unresolved traumatic experiences could result in officers' inability to perform their duties effectively.

Job-related stress experienced by officers could harm their personal and professional lives. Padilla (2020) conducted a quantitative study to investigate the level of stress and causes of stress among police officers. The sample size was 147 officers. Padilla used the Police Stress Survey (PSS) assessment to examine work-related stress among officers. Padilla found that psychological stress is more common than occupational stress within the workforce. Two studies concluded that psychological stress was more prevalent than organizational stressors among police officers (Collins & Gibbs, 2003; Ermasova et al., 2020). In another study, Galanis et al. (2021) found a correlation between stress experienced by officers in the workforce and their personal lives. This suggests that work-related stressors could lead to psychological and organizational stressors among officers.

Officers who experience stress that is not resolved could lead to violent behavior. Kurtz and Hughes (2021) conducted a quantitative study to examine stress and the correlation between childhood traumatic experiences and violence committed by officers. The population studied included 1,104 officers. Kurtz and Hughes used data obtained from Gershon (2000), who examined the literature on police stress and DV perpetrated by police. Kurtz and Hughes (2021) gathered data from questionnaires on stress experienced by officers in early childhood, exposure to violence between parents, and child neglect. Kurtz and Hughes found that unresolved trauma experienced early on in life and

exposure to violence between parents early on in life could lead to violent behavior among officers. McClure and Paramenter (2020) also revealed that DV perpetrated toward spouses derives from abuse experienced in childhood, stress, and attachment problems. Two studies concluded that officers who experience stress could lead to violent behavior among their family members or spouses (Amendola et al., 2021; Zavala & Melander, 2019). This suggests that unresolved trauma among officers could lead to violent behaviors in marital relationships and among family members.

Job-related stress among law enforcement officers can lead to problems with their overall health and affect their relationships with family members. Tuttle et al. (2018) examined the association between job stress and unhealthy marital relationships among officers. The methodology used was the police officer questionnaire. The population sampled included 1,180 married officers in the United States. Tuttle et al. found that job stress and spillover damage the dynamics of officers' marriages. Multiple studies have concluded that stress can negatively affect how officers regulate stress in family relationships (Amendola et al., 2021; Neff & Karney, 2009). These findings suggest that the on-the-job stress experienced by law enforcement officers can lead to negative spillover in the family unit.

Stress experienced by officers who are not treated could lead to problems within officers' family lives and personal issues. Landers et al. (2020) conducted a phenomenological study to investigate the perceptions of law enforcement professionals' spouses who had experienced secondhand knowledge about traumatic events from their spouses. The sample size included eight officers' spouses. Landers et al. found that

secondary trauma experienced by officers' spouses influences how they support officers when they experience traumatic events. Studies of stress among officers also revealed that stress could lead to conflict within the marriage and family unit (Friese, 2020; Johnson et al., 2005). Multiple studies also revealed that a career in law enforcement is stressful (Anders et al., 2022; Donnelly et al., 2015; Jetelina et al., 2020). This suggests that law enforcement professionals' spouses are essential in helping officers manage their stress.

The police profession is highly demanding, often resulting in stressful encounters and authoritarian spillover. Anderson and Lo (2011) conducted a quantitative study using data from "the Gershon's survey study of police stress and domestic violence in Baltimore "(p. 1179). Anderson and Lo examined whether there was a relationship between work-related demands and domestic abuse of spouses by law enforcement officers. The methodology used to gather data included questionnaires from 1,104 participants. Several studies found that work-related stress is linked to IPV perpetrated by police towards their spouses (Anderson & Lo, 2011; Duxbury et al., 2021). It is now well-established from various sources that there is a direct link between authoritarianism in law enforcement and IPV perpetrated by police on a family member or spouse (Casas & Benuto, 2022; Johnson et al.,2005). This suggests that work-related stressors play a significant part in officers perpetrating DV on their spouses. Therefore, law enforcement agencies or supervisors must understand the process by which work-related stressors influence OIDV.

Law enforcement is a highly demanding job that often results in adverse psychological and physical stress that could lead to job performance issues. Ratnayake and Gunasekara (2023) conducted a mixed-method study to examine the link between occupational stress and job performance. The targeted population was 110 non-United States officers. The methods utilized included questionnaires and interviews to obtain data. Ratnayake and Guanasekara found that job stress experienced by law enforcement officers can negatively affect how they perform their duties. For example, the lack of adequate resources to meet the needs of the officers contributes to stress in the department, such as needing more officers to perform duties, politics, command presence, long shifts, and more (see Ratnayake & Guanasekara, 2023). Two studies conclude that officers' rank made a difference in the stress level they experienced; high-level officers tend to experience less stress than lower-ranking officers (Acquadro Maran et al., 2015; Edward et al., 2020). Also, high stress levels could negatively affect officers' overall health and performance of duty. These findings suggest that job stress experienced by officers could lead to officers being unable to perform their duties adequately.

Law enforcement officers tend to encounter traumatic events that could lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Craddock and Telesco (2022) conducted a quantitative study to explore the relationship between job tenure and the effect of PTSD on officers' conceptualization of the world. The sample population included 408 law enforcement officers in the United States. The method included an instrument used in the study, the Cumulative Career Traumatic Stress Questionnaire Survey (Marshall, 2006). Craddock and Telesco found that the longer officers are employed in law enforcement

and encounter traumatic job-related events, the more likely this will adversely affect their overall performance and health.

Geronazzo-Alman et al. (2017) found a link between the number of years officers encounter critical incidents and PTSD. In addition, the number of years employed in law enforcement can adversely affect job performance, overall health, problems within the family unit, and relationships with spouses. Several studies revealed that officers tend to experience a change in how they conceptualize the world after being exposed to traumatic events related to their job duties (Marshall, 2006; Regehr et al.,2021) These findings suggest that law enforcement officers face challenging job-related situations that can result in PTSD and affect their relationships with their family members and spouses.

Occupational Stress

Several studies address police officers' occupational stress and the impact it has on their job performance, mental health, physical health, marital relationships, and the public. Paoline and Gau (2023) conducted a quantitative study of 349 police officers to investigate how factors inside and outside the agency influence officers' character, including work-related stress. The target population included sworn police officers. The methodology included paper questionnaires from a police agency in the United States. Paoline and Gau (2020) found that work-related stress was significantly related to factors inside and outside the workplace. Also, whether officers received adequate supervisor support was linked to their stress levels. To clarify, officers' feelings of doubt, lack of trust in the community, and feelings of being susceptible affect their stress levels. As opposed to factors inside the agency, support from supervisors lessened work-related

stress experienced by officers, and upper management did not affect officers' stress levels. The officers' role orientation did not affect work-related stress. Paoline and Gau also found that occupational stress affects officers' job performance, and officers receiving supervisor support are less likely to experience higher work-related stressors. These findings suggest that officers' perceptions of outside factors are the primary cause of work-related stressors among officers.

Police officers experience occupational stressors known to be associated with operational stressors, personal stressors, and organizational stressors. Padilla (2020) conducted a quantitative study investigating the relationship between stressors and critical stress-related factors. The study used a cross-sectional survey and the PSS to obtain data (Spielberger et al., 1981). The target sample was 147 Hispanic law enforcement officers employed at a Southwestern police agency. Padilla found that ethnicity was not a cause of stressors, while officers' position was positively associated with organizational stress; ethnicity, gender, and number of years on the job were unrelated to occupational stress. In addition, officers who held supervisor positions showed increased organizational stress levels. Purba and Demou (2019) found that work-related stress can negatively affect officers' psychological state and the agency in which they are employed. Nisar and Rasheed (2020) also revealed that work-related stress can affect officers' ability to perform their duties. These findings suggested that job-related stress adversely impacts officers more than critical stress-related factors and officers' ability to do their job.

Occupational stress often affects officers' performance of duties. Lawson et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study to explore the association between organizational justice and job-related stressors on officers' perceptions of whether their morals and values justify their misconduct. The target sample was 437 sworn police officers. The method used was data obtained from different law enforcement agencies across California using questionnaires. Lawson et al. found that organizational justice is linked to chronic work overload. The results also showed that when officers perceive their morals and values as fair based on workplace procedures, this can positively influence their behavior.

In addition, the results showed that a lack of self-restraint was associated with officers' perception of what they perceived to be morally correct based on their value system. Two studies revealed that elevated levels of work-related stressors are linked to negative beliefs about police misconduct (Fridell et al., 2021; Lawson et al., 2022). Wu et al. (2019) also indicated that officers who perceived their supervisor as fair were less likely to engage in illegal or corrupt behaviors. These findings suggest that organizational injustice and job-related stressors can lead to misconduct among police officers.

Operational Stress

Operational and organizational stressors could negatively impact officers' performance, mental health, and physical health. Edward (2021) conducted a mixed-method study to investigate stressors among officers and the strategies they use to process their stressors. The population study included 128 officers across the northeastern region of the United States. The methods used in the study included questionnaires and

open-ended questions. Edward et al. found that lack of personal time, job-related activities while off duty, long work hours, and the inability to separate jobs from work were linked to operational stressors. Officers reported that job-related health stressors negatively impacted psychological and physical health. Officers also reported a lack of staff, conformity to existing rules that prevent officers from making independent decisions, and inadequate training in innovative technology, which were associated with organizational stressors.

Officers revealed coping mechanisms, such as taking accountability, showing content, and establishing goals to manage stressors. The least reported coping mechanisms were mental distress, substance use disorder and showed no regard for the issue. Officers also revealed years of service as an organizational stressor. Years of service showed a positive correlation to organizational stress, lack of adequate staff, unfair distribution of work, and unequal enforcement of agency rules. Operation stressors did not vary in terms of organizational stressors. Bishopp et al. (2019) found a positive relationship between officers' stress and psychological well-being. Claudia et al. (2015) revealed that despite officers' work schedules, they encountered more operational stress patrolling, and officers reported more work-related stress, such as work overload, lack of staff, and inadequate resources. These findings suggest that officers experience both operational stress and organizational stress. In addition, officers use different strategies to manage stressors. How officers address stressors could result in higher stress levels and potentially adversely impact relationships between the police and the public.

Stress in the Policing Profession

Officers' exposure to critical incidents and their daily duties often leads to operational stress. Rajan et al. (2021) conducted a quantitative study investigating the association between work-related stress and one's ability to understand and manage emotions. The target population was 80 law enforcement officers from Bangalore Police Department. The researcher used personal interviews and the Operational Police Stress Scale to measure work-related stress (McCreary & Thompson, 2006). Also, the researchers measured officers' ability to understand and manage emotions using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Hyde et al., 2002). Rajan et al. (2021) found that sex, years of service, relationship status, and training did not affect police-work-related stress. Abdulah et al. (2021) also revealed that individuals' ability to manage their emotions is related to their ability to control stressful events or situations. These findings suggest that officers' ability to understand and manage their emotions plays a role in being emotionally stable. When officers are not emotionally stable, this increases the likelihood of suffering from work-related stress.

Occupational Stress Versus Operational Stress

While occupational stress and operational stress differ, they play a major part in officers' ability to perform their duties effectively and make critical decisions. Occupational stress in policing refers to the decline of officers' mental state and overall well-being (Cohen et al., 2019). Also, occupational stress in policing includes but is not limited to officers' working long hours and conflict experienced within the department with other law enforcement personnel. In addition, operational stress refers to the

everyday stressors that police officers encounter (Queiros et al., 2020). These findings suggest that the policing profession encounters exposure to elevated stressors that could adversely affect officers' overall well-being, the organization, and members of the public.

Work-Family Conflict

Inter-role conflict from job demands and family often affects law enforcement professionals. Valmari et al. (2023) conducted a qualitative study exploring officers' private and working lives. The sample size included seventeen officers from Sweden, male and female. The method used was semi-structured interviews. Valmari et al. found that job-related demands can negatively affect officers' personal lives. Secondly, officers tend to be cautious of their surroundings because of their occupation, which may interfere with their social life. Lastly, officers cannot foresee dangers when they are out in public; therefore, they must be aware of their surroundings. Greinacher et al. (2019) found that stress and PTSD regularly occur in officers who frequently assist victims.

Studies on challenging demands and tasks of everyday life could negatively affect officers' work and family lives, leading to officers becoming overwhelmed (Kumar & Kamalanabhan, 2017; Lambert et al., 2022). These findings suggest that job demands experienced by officers can place a strain on officers' personal lives. Law enforcement is one of the most demanding careers. The law enforcement profession often adversely affects officers ' personal and family lives, leading to work-family conflicts. Viegas and Henriques (2021) conducted a quantitative study to examine the association between police officers' work-related stress, WFC, and job fulfillment. The study sample included 100 Indian law enforcement officers. The method used to obtain data included

questionnaires. Viegas and Henriques found an inter-role conflict between job-related stress experienced, family stress among police officers, and the effect that these roles have on each other. Also, officers who experience elevated stress levels tend to experience lower job fulfillment. Also, officers who experience elevated levels of family stress tend to experience higher levels of job-related stress. Multiple studies concluded that there is a positive link between stress experienced on the job and stress experienced within the home (Grandey et al., 2005; Rathi & Barath, 2013; Viegas & Henriques, 2021). These findings suggest that there is an interrelationship between work-related stress and family stress.

Law enforcement officers often must balance their professional and family lives, which could be stressful and result in work-family conflict. Duxbury et al. (2021) conducted a quantitative study to examine the relationship between officers' personal lives and job-related demands in a patriarchal culture. The population studied included 880 officers throughout Canada. The method included surveys. The criteria for the study consist of married or cohabiting officers, officers who performed caregiving, and or worked as a caretaker outside work. Duxbury et al. found that male officers admitted experiencing more work-family problems than female officers. Female officers admitted to experiencing more dual roles. Males and females were comparable in experiencing multiple roles related to work and family. Two studies have concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between job-related demands and prominent levels of role overload, which results in work-family conflict (Armstad et al., 2011; Hofer, 2021).

These findings suggest that regardless of gender, officers tend to experience dual roles, and that spillover results in work family conflict.

Other Crimes Committed by Law Enforcement Personnel

Police involvement in crimes both on and off duty has long been an issue in the United States. Boateng et al. (2023) conducted a study to examine police misconduct and the aspects that influence illegal activity committed by law enforcement officers. The method included published articles on police misconduct. The target population studied was male and female police officers. The study consisted of 6,724 cases of police officers who had been under arrest between 2005 and 2011 (Boateng et al., 2023, para 17). The study covered all states in the United States, including the District of Columbia (Boateng et al., 2023, para 17). Boateng et al. found that male officers had a greater likelihood of involvement in violent offenses as opposed to female officers, while female officers are more likely to commit white-collar crimes. Studies suggest male officers tend to be involved in IPV and disputes while at social gatherings (Stappenbeck et al., 2023; Stinson, 2012).

Studies of female officers suggest they are more likely to be involved in white-collar crimes than male officers (Ruhland & Selver, 2020). Studies have shown male officers are more likely to use excessive alcohol in comparison to female officers (Eskelinen et al.,2011; Houdmont & Jachens, 2020). Studies also revealed that officers who have experienced elevated levels of stress tend to use alcohol excessively, which is associated with poor relationships with the public (Anshel, 2021; Edwards et al., 2021). These findings suggest that male and female officers commit criminal offenses on and off

duty, and there may be behaviors that include alcohol use, substance abuse, elevated levels of stress, and financial gain.

Police officers who are subjected to criminal offenses while on and off duty could lead to liability issues for law enforcement agencies. Stinson et al. (2012) conducted a quantitative study of police officers who committed criminal offenses on and off official duty. I used Google News to locate articles about officers who engaged in criminal offenses. Stinson et al. found that police officers commit violent behavior at a rate of 40% while not on duty. Stinson et al. revealed that DV was committed more often than any other crime while off duty. In another example, New York Police Department officers revealed that they engaged in driving under the influence (DUI), being involved in violent altercations while intoxicated, theft, and sexual assaults while not on duty (see Fyfe & Kanye, 2006; Kane & White, 2009).

Police Sexual Misconduct

Police sexual misconduct (PSM) is a misuse of police power, and it violates police professionalism and ethics. Miller et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study using data from the Metro City Police Department. The data obtained included investigated complaints or accusations of PSM, employee personnel files, and disciplinary records of 50 cases. Miller et al. found that of the cases examined, male officers and Hispanic officers showed a greater probability of involvement in PSM.

Also, male and Hispanic officers who had been accused or reprimanded for PSM had prior armed forces training with past suspensions imposed. In addition, there were criminal cases where, on average, one PSM event occurred while officers worked. The

mass of the PSM allegations involved lower-level officers with a history of suspension of employment. Several studies found that officers accused of sexual violence contend that the violence is a result of false beliefs or ideas that originate from working within the law enforcement profession (Eschholz & Vaughn, 2001; Purvis & Blanco, 2020). Westmarland and Conway (2020) found that PSM is a criminal offense and can have drastic consequences for officers and the agency. This suggests that PSM is a form of DV and sexual violence, and that this behavior erodes citizens' trust in law enforcement, prevents officers from performing their duties, and creates civil liabilities for the agency as well.

Police sexual abuse (PSA) occurs when officers commit sexually violent acts both on duty and off duty. Sweetings et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study of 383 law enforcement officers to examine the relationship between the blue wall of silence and PSA. The methods consisted of real-life PSA scenarios. Researchers examined whether PSA violates the code of conduct, whether officers would report fellow officers for PSA, and, if so, what corrective measures should be imposed. Sweetings et al. found that officers reported other fellow officers when they believed the department policies had been breached. Male officers had a reduced likelihood of reporting incidents of PSA as opposed to female officers. In cases of PSA, female officers provided detailed accounts more often than male officers. Unwanted sexual advances were the primary violation that officers failed to report. However, officers felt more confident reporting PSA incidents to their supervisors. Studies on incidents that involve PSA could result in civil actions against the agency, mental distress of colleagues, and trauma for the victims (Brown et

al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2022). This suggests that PSA occurs in the law enforcement profession, and that the reason officers fail to report it could be because of loyalty and solidarity.

Alcohol Use and Substance Abuse

Several studies address the influence of alcohol and substance abuse on IPV. Stappenbeck et al. (2023) conducted a quantitative study to examine the influence of alcohol and substance abuse on IPV. The sample size consists of 510 individuals who were in a relationship and who had recently drunk alcohol in the last several months. Stapphenbeck et al. found that both alcohol and substance abuse were positively related to IPV. Studies on alcohol use and substance abuse could lead to violent behavior (Leonard & Ouigley, 2017; Radcliffe et al., 2021). This suggests that both alcohol and drug use play a part in IPV.

Alcohol use is a risk factor caused by stress in individuals perpetrating IPV toward their partners. Avdija (2014) found that excessive alcohol and nicotine use are significantly associated with job-related stress among law enforcement officers. Cunradi (2007) conducted a quantitative study of members of the public to examine the relationship between IPV and alcohol use among couples. The sample size included 19,035 married couples and couples living together. The methodology used was the National Household Survey of Drug Abuse. Cunradi found that excessive drinking alcohol could lead to aggressive behavior. Parrot et al. (2017) also revealed that alcohol use contributes to individuals acting aggressively toward their spouses. Parrott and

Eckardt (2018) found that alcohol use plays a major part in aggressive behavior. This suggests that large alcohol consumption is linked to violent behaviors.

The law enforcement profession is often stressful, which could lead to alcohol abuse. Argustaite et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative study of non-United States law enforcement officers to examine the relationship between traumatic experiences, stress, and alcohol abuse. The sample size included 519 non-United States law enforcement officers. The methodology used was a questionnaire. Argustaite et al. found that 4.4 % of officers were more likely to suffer from alcohol abuse. Also, significant levels of traumatic events and officers with tenure are linked to alcohol abuse. Scholarios et al. (2017) found that law enforcement officers with elevated levels of exposure to trauma could lead to alcohol abuse. Nduma et al. (2023) also revealed in a study on non-United States law enforcement officers that alcohol abuse and substance abuse are more likely to occur among this population. This suggests that stress, elevated levels of trauma exposure, and extended periods of employment in law enforcement are linked to alcohol abuse, which could lead to officers perpetrating DV.

Organization Culture

Organizational influencing factors can have an impact on how officers perform their duties. Acquadro Maran et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study to examine organizational influencing factors that impact law enforcement officers. The methodology used in the study was an in-depth search of articles from the SCOPUS, Web of Science, and Psyc Info. After removing the unwanted reports based on the researchers' criteria, the researchers selected 20 papers out of 1509. The population sampled was

police officers. Acquadro Maran et al. found that organizational support, agency culture, leadership, and chain of command impact police officers' job performance. Baka (2020) found that officers who lack administrative support are more likely to experience stress. Homan (2022) also revealed that leadership plays a leading role in how the culture within an organization is managed.

Acquadro Maran et al. also revealed widespread exposure to stress within law enforcement agencies. Dextras and Marchand (2018) also showed that OC could negatively or positively have an impact on the work environment, which could result in mental stress and poor communication within the law enforcement profession. This suggests that officers who experience negative or positive factors within the OC may be unable to perform their duties.

OC in law enforcement consists of a group's shared beliefs, values, and norms. Gutschmidt and Vera (2022) conducted a study of non-United States police officers to examine the association between the culture within the law enforcement profession and how officers cope with stressors. The sample included 152 non-United States police officers. The methodology used was the Police Stress Questionnaire (McCreary & Thompson, 2006) and the Brief Cope (Carver, 1997). Gutschmidt and Vera found that the culture within an organization is guided by the structure of the agencies and the level of exposure to stressors. Studies of workgroup values, norms, and beliefs guide police culture coping skills (Arnetz et al., 2009; Demirkel & Nalla, 2020; Paoline, 2013) found that how the work group is comprised plays a significant role in how officers behave.

This suggests that the OC of law enforcement influences officers' behavior and how they manage their coping skills.

Poor procedures, misuse of authority, and unsafe work practices could negatively affect the OC within the law enforcement workplace. Custodio (2023) conducted a mixed-method study to examine the association between poor procedures, workplace culture, and misuse of authority in law enforcement agencies. The population studied included law enforcement officers and recruits. A mixed-method approach was used to gain a rich understanding of the phenomenon. The researcher used a case study approach, surveys, and interviews to elicit participants' data. Custodio found that misuse of authority, unsafe workplace practices, and poor procedures are significantly associated with an adverse workplace culture. Custodio also found that abuse of power could negatively affect recruits' job performance within the workplace. Virgiawan et al. (2021) also revealed that leadership plays a significant role in guiding the OC. This highlights the seriousness of training officers up to code, effective leadership, and accountability to foster a positive work culture within law enforcement organizations.

Leadership and how an organization is structured can influence the OC. Cordner (2017) conducted a quantitative study to investigate officers' perceptions of their work environment based on their characteristics and on the assumption that their perceptions differ based on their work culture. The sample size included 13,146 sworn law enforcement officers from 89 different agencies. Cordner found that officers have a positive outlook on their work culture and that their perceptions differed based on the agencies in which they worked. Also, their characteristic did not influence their

perspective regarding their OC. In a study, Lorsch and Tague also revealed that an agency culture is based on leadership and how the organization's functions are conducted. Paoline and Terrill (2013) found that the chief executive officer plays a key role in the OC. This suggests that positive or negative leadership can play a significant role in an OC.

Police Culture

Police culture could be impacted by internal and external factors, which could lead to stress within the workplace. Paoline and Gau (2023) conducted a quantitative study to examine the relationship between police culture, police stress, and how officers' qualities may influence their workplace inside and outside the agency. Paoline and Gau found that officers' risk perception of dangerous situations and citizens' distrustful behavior increase their job stress. Paoline and Gau also found that job stress within their work environment decreases when officers receive support from their administrators. Paoline and Terrill revealed that external factors outside law enforcement work could lead to stress within the profession. Two studies also found that officers receiving additional support from their superiors and colleagues were likelier to experience limited stress than officers whose job demands exceeded their work (Lambert et al., 2022; Lambert et al., 2023). This suggests that police culture is linked to stress inside and outside the work environment, which could impact on the OC and officers' duties.

Officers' culture within the workplace could influence their behaviors and impact officers' overall wellness. Patterson and King (2023) conducted a quantitative study of sworn law enforcement officers to investigate the association between police culture and

officers' health. Patterson and King found that officers' commitment to norms and values within the culture influences their wellness, including mental and physical exhaustion, job contentment, and allegiance to one's job. Studies of supportive leadership show that there is a positive relationship between officers who receive supportive leadership and officers' commitment to the organization (Zeng et al.,2020). Ingram et al. (2018) also revealed that police culture and officers' beliefs and perceptions play a role in their behavior. These results suggest that police culture can affect officers' behavior and health.

Police culture can significantly influence how officers behave within the workplace. Gutschmidt and Vera (2020) conducted a quantitative study to examine how police officers' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors are linked to group characteristics and the workplace. The population studied was non-United States police officers. The methodology consisted of online questionnaires. Gutschmidt and Vera found that police culture is multidimensional, influencing the group composition and operational area. Several studies revealed that officers use discretion when facing split-second decisions while applying the law, and these behaviors are influenced by the culture that emerged among police officers (Huff, 2021; Lofftus, 2009). This suggests that officers' behaviors and composition groups can significantly impact the OC.

Police culture and training play a significant role in influencing the OC. Custodio (2023) conducted a mixed-method approach to examine the literature on training procedures, OC, abuse of power, and improper training procedures. The methodology used was disciplinary and official documentation. The population study included multiple

law enforcement agencies and personnel, including administrators, recruits, and officers. Custodio found that abuse of power and improper training procedures leads to a negative workplace culture. Also, organizations that allow officers to engage in unacceptable behaviors during training and have unclear roles could lead to a negative OC. Custodio also revealed that positive leadership within law enforcement agencies could foster a substantial moral standard among officers. Morgan (2022) found that training practices play a significant role in the policing profession. Kappeler and Potter (2018) also revealed that recruits who experience are exposed to negative behavior during training could lead to officers' inability to perform their duties properly. This suggests that poor or positive leadership and how officers are trained could influence the OC.

Police Ethics

Police ethics can be negatively influenced by the code of silence within an organization. Westmarland and Conway (2020) conducted a quantitative study investigating the relationship between officers reporting criminal offenses and inappropriate behaviors when fellow officers fail to follow the rules. The population study included 1,509 non-United States police officers and police personnel. The methodology included online surveys with multiple real-life scenarios that officers may have encountered. Westmarland and Conway found that officers were more likely to report serious crimes such as stealing, DUI, police misconduct, and allegations of sexual misconduct, and less likely to report minor offenses.

Also, officers were less likely to report when fellow officers became romantically involved with victims they met during their work. In addition, officers were less likely to

use online reporting systems to disclose allegations of misbehavior regarding their coworkers without including their personal information because they would be portrayed as whistleblowers. Two studies have concluded that part of the police subculture includes not reporting colleagues who engage in misbehavior and crime (Westmarland, 2016; Westmarland & Conway, 2020). Kim et al. (2018) revealed that mutual trust and support exist between officers and their colleagues, that there is no way to predict the outcome of their behavior, and that there is risk involved in policing. This suggests that police ethics shape the agency's behaviors, values, and norms.

Police ethics are influenced by the culture within an agency. Pastor et al. (2023) conducted a bulletin review on police ethics, trust, and community. Pastor et al. discussed the importance of trust within police agencies, how trust derives from community relationships, and how police officers are disciplined when they violate the law or display misconduct. For the community to trust the police, they must be accountable for their actions, and the agency must lead with leadership effectiveness and practices. While culture in an agency could combat mistrust, culture could also foster trust by promoting ethical conduct. Pastor et al. found that trust in law enforcement could be negatively influenced by failing to hold officers accountable for misbehavior, poor training practices, different law enforcement policies, and depolicing. Agencies with strong ethical values and roles have the potential to combat unethical behaviors. Pastor et al. also revealed that agencies with strong moral values and practices allow officers to perform their duties highly effectively. This requires community trust and cooperation.

To enhance police ethics within the organization, the agency culture must be willing to change existing OC beliefs and embrace change regarding police reform. Agencies must be fair with their policies and the community they serve. Police actions must be aligned with the agency's vision and mission. Leaders must support linework and provide needed resources. This suggests that police ethics derive from the culture of the agencies. For the agencies to have a high ethical and moral code, officers must collaborate cooperatively with the community, be held accountable for misbehavior and criminal offenses to build trust, and the community must collaborate cooperatively with law enforcement professionals as well.

Police ethics are essential in how the public views policing in society. Cohen (2022) conducted a mixed-methods approach across 50 states to examine ethics-based curricula and how they are alike and differ. The population sampled was police recruits. First, Cohen found that of the 50 curricula and materials gathered, 47 met the criteria for the inclusion curriculum; 14 curricula did not meet the requirements for inclusion, and 39 curricula had an average of 1.27% training. Also, leadership plays an essential part in shaping the police ethics in an agency. Secondly, the public's views about the law enforcement profession can influence their trust in the police. Third, the law enforcement ethos of equal treatment and being unbiased is essential to police ethics. Last, more than training is needed to allow law enforcement officers to make ethical decisions effectively.

Studies of police ethics suggest that ethical behavior is essential for the police profession (Blumberg et al., 2018; Westmarland & Conway, 2020). Cohen (2021) also revealed that police ethics-based curricula had been constantly criticized for their

instructional materials needing to meet present-day problems in law enforcement. This suggests that training, education, and leadership are vital in police ethics. When police ethics are not shown, this erodes the public's trust.

Organizational Commitment

Job satisfaction and managerial influences in the workplace autonomy, and officers' quality of life, positively or negatively influence organizational commitment. Lambert et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study to examine how stress in the workplace, job participation, work fulfillment, and the level of dedication a person has to their job affect officers' commitment to an organization and quality of life. The population studied was non-United States police. The primary method used was surveys. Lambert et al. found that stress in the workplace negatively influences work fulfillment, and the level of dedication a person has for a job positively influences commitment within an organization.

Studies have found that individuals who are satisfied with their jobs are usually more inspired and dedicated to demonstrating a better quality of work and autonomy in the workplace (Allisey et al.,2014; Chen & Chiu, 2009; Paoline & Gau, 2020). Also, perceived organizational support, administrative support, fair workplace outcomes, and fair decisions lead to work fulfillment and organizational commitment among officers. This suggests that what officers experience in the workplace could influence their quality of life and commitment to the organization.

In law enforcement, organizational commitment is influenced by meaningful work, values, beliefs, levels of contentment, and identity. Choi et al. (2021) conducted a

longitudinal study to examine how the values and beliefs of an organization influence officers' engagement, level of contentment with the organization, organization's identity, and overall commitment. The population studied was 143 non-United States police officers. The methodology used was data from a training course on learning crime scenes for over two months. Choi et al. found that meaningful work, values, beliefs, and occupational identity could increase contentment and officers' overall commitment to the organization. Hirschi (2012) revealed in a study that work meaningfulness is positively associated with one's job profession. Several studies concluded that supervisors influence members of an organization's sense of acceptance and identity within an organization's culture (Avery et al., 2012; Lasrado & Kassem, 2021). These findings suggest that meaningful work, values, beliefs in an organization, acceptance, and identity influence one's commitment to the agency.

Code of Silence

Law enforcement officers are often negatively affected by the code of silence. The code of silence is used interchangeably with the blue wall of silence, which refers to officers failing to report misconduct or illegal behavior committed by fellow officers (Torres et al., 2023). Torres et al. explained that in cases where officers fail to report unlawful behavior or misconduct, fellow officers are not held accountable for their wrongdoings. Schuck and Rabe-Hemp (2022) conducted a quantitative study to examine how officers' perceptions of reporting misconduct or illegal behavior changed after completing a police academy. The study took place in different academies across the United States. The researchers used data derived from the National Police Research

Platform studies by Donner et al. (2018), Schuck and Rabe-Hemp (2021), and Schuck and Rabe-Hemp (2022, p.1642).

Schuck and Rabe-Hemp (2022) utilized scenarios and questionnaires in their study. The population studied was police officers. Schuck and Rabe Hemp found that knowledge gained through observations and events at the academy influences officers' perception of the code of blue. Also, the study showed that society, police wrongdoing, and agencies' regulations influence officers' attitudes regarding the blue wall of silence. In addition, female officers were less likely to follow the code of silence regarding cases of assaults as opposed to their male fellow officers.

Schuck and Rabe-Hemp (2022) also revealed that when officers completed the academy successfully, their perception of the police subculture and police wrongdoings was changed. Two studies have concluded that the police subculture, training, practices, and norms associated with bigotry contribute to developing a mindset of us versus them (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2021). These findings suggest that the academy's training, education, and social environment influence officers' perception of misconduct.

The Blue Wall of Silence remains immersed in the police subculture. Donner and Maskaly (2023) conducted a quantitative study to examine the likelihood of 645 non-sworn officers reporting unethical or illegal behavior while they were in the police academy. Methods used were pre and post-tests gathered from training academies throughout the United States to evaluate how non-sworn officers' perception of the code of silence changed from when they began the academy to when they integrated into the

police culture. Donner and Maskaly found that from the beginning of the academy until recruits were integrated into the police culture, their likelihood of reporting incidents of unethical or illegal behavior had reduced. Also, many aspects contribute to the likelihood of not reporting other non-sworn officers' behaviors, such as their perceptions of unethical behavior, policy, the situation, and disciplinary procedures. Schuck and Hemp-Rabe (2021) found that police recruits' attitudes toward unethical behavior declined over time. Wieslander (2019) also revealed that officers fail to report unethical behavior out of fear of reprisal by fellow officers. This suggests that the code of silence starts for officers during the integration process into the police academy.

Kutnjak et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative study to examine the relationship between social and cultural norms and the blue wall of silence. The sample population includes officers from "Australia, Croatia, South Africa, South Korea, and the USA "(Kutnjak et al., 2020, p.288). The method utilized was questionnaires that highlighted various situations relating to inappropriate behavior and unlawful acts of police. It is well documented that several factors impacted whether officers reported inappropriate or unlawful acts of police behavior, such as social and cultural norms, nonreligious beliefs, policing stability, the situation, disciplinary protocols, and officers' rank (Kutnjak et al., 2020; Lobnikar et al., 2016). Also, officers' rank contributes to reporting inappropriate or unethical behavior. This suggests a link between social and cultural norms and legitimacy when officers decide whether to report improper or unlawful behavior within law enforcement agencies.

Victims of Officer-Involved Domestic Violence

Victims of abuse at the hands of law enforcement officers face many obstacles (Cohen et al., 2013; Mazzola, 2013; Oehme et al., 2016; Prost et al., 2020; Russell & Pappas, 2018). Several studies address victims' perceptions of their cases not being adequately investigated because their spouses are in the law enforcement profession (Cohen et al., 2013; Pidel, 2022; Russell & Pappas, 2018). Victims may not want to cause problems for their spouses and risk losing their job security. Victims tend not to seek help because they know their spouse knows the criminal justice system and how it works and have knowledge of where DV housing and shelters are located (National Center on Women and Policing, 2013; Oehme et al., 2016; Russel & Pappas, 2018; Saunders Wetendorf, 2015). Two studies concluded that victims of abuse by law enforcement do not report abuse because they fear that fellow officers may seek revenge (Cohen et al., 2013; Duxbury et al., 2021). This suggests that DV committed by law enforcement officers drastically affects officers' families and spouses.

Florida's Model Policy for OIDV

Florida's new Model Policy for the combating of officers who commit DV was designed through a collaboration with Law Enforcement Families Partnership (LEFP), a component of the Institute for Family Violence Studies (IFVS) at Florida State University (Oehme & Martin, 2011, p.396). Florida's policy for the prevention of OIDV was designed to combat DV committed by law enforcement professionals (Oeheme & Matin, 2011). Florida's New Model Policy aims to set up regional uniform rules and regulations

to address incidents of DV committed by law enforcement officers, including sworn and non-sworn officers.

The policy statement explained the significance of officers being held to a higher standard for the public to perceive them as legitimate. The policy requires officers to receive training, preventive education, and training specific to OIDV. Also, the policy requires law enforcement agencies to partner with domestic and sexual violence agencies in efforts to combat domestic violence. Florida's Model Policy provides pre and post-screening interventions, including policy outlines for the responsibilities of the agency, supervisors, and officers, as well as incident response procedures. Additionally, the model outlines the weapon policy, victim safety, and administrative decision process.

Like Florida, New Jersey has created explicit rules and guidelines to combat OIDV (Cheema, 2016). Some state law enforcement agencies have established agency-specific rules and procedures for preventing OIDV. The states of Nashville and Illinois have established policy models to prevent OIDV (Fagan, 2012). The State of Washington passed a law that mandates law enforcement agencies to create specific rules and guidelines to avoid OIDV in addition to model policies for their department (Cheema, 2016). Also, the IACP recommends that all law enforcement agencies enact specific guidelines and rules for preventing OIDV. This suggests that there have been policies specifically established to combat OIDV.

Prevention, Intervention, and Education

In Florida, the Law Enforcement Profession responded to OIDV by developing the Law Enforcement Partnership of 2008 (LEFP) (Oehme et al., 2016). The LEFP's

primary objective is to show initiative-taking in the combating of DV and to normalize officers asking for assistance so they do not become abusers. The LEEP has partnerships with many other criminal justice organizations in the state of Florida, such as the FDLE, the Florida State University of Institute for Family Violence, and other university affiliations (Saunders et al., 2016).

The LEFP has developed a curriculum covering real-life events related to OIDV and web-based models that officers use, including pre- and post-tests in each course and assessment collection. Also, *Florida Statutes* §943.1701 requires law enforcement officers to complete 6 hours of basic instruction for DV certification (My Florida House Government, 2019). In Florida, mandatory retraining or initial training of four hours is required to maintain certification on unique topics such as DV and Mental Health and Wellness for law enforcement officers (FDLE, n.d.). In addition, most law enforcement agencies in the United States have developed a zero-tolerance policy to filter out recruits who pose a risk of committing DV before being hired (Russell & Pappas, 2018).

Congress authorized the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA) to improve how the criminal justice system addresses cases of DV (Jennings et al., 2020). The reauthorization of VAWA provides federal-funded grants from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) for law enforcement agencies to implement better resources and help initiate criminal proceedings for domestic violence cases (Ford et al., 2002; Jennings et al., 2020). Studies have shown that most crimes go unreported to law enforcement agencies, resulting in national databases not having DV crimes in their system (Duxbury, 2021; Roe, 2004).

VAWA's response to the underreporting issue is to remove challenges that make it difficult for victims to report incidents of DV by providing support to the victims where necessary, assisting with funding and follow-up services, and teaching victims how to navigate through the legal system (OVW, 2016). OVW found that law enforcement agencies have adopted several best practices to assist victims in reporting incidents of DV and providing additional resources to assist victims. This suggests that preventive measures have been implemented in the criminal justice system to help enforcement agencies with the combating of DV, yet DV is still a problem.

Past and current events in the criminal justice system have resulted in the need for mental health and wellness programs for the law enforcement profession (Taylor, 2022). The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017 (LEMHWA) was created to combat mental health issues in law enforcement. The law enforcement profession faces many stressful events that put them at risk for alcohol use, PTSD, and marital problems. Law enforcement officers' overall health must be up to standard to effectively perform their duties and keep the community safe. The LEMHA helped improve mental health and wellness resources for law enforcement officers throughout the United States (Taylor, 2022). Wieslander (2019) notes that the LEMHA proposes that all non-sworn and sworn officers receive regular evaluations for mental health.

Jetelina et al. (2020) found that law enforcement officers experience a wide range of mental health conditions, including PTSD. Studies of law enforcement officers who experience traumatic events revealed that they are more likely to be affected by PTSD (Greinacher et al., 2019; Violanti et al., 2013). These findings suggested that mental

health and wellness programs are vital for officers' overall health in law enforcement agencies.

Lautenberg Amendment

As a response to the widespread DV in the United States, the Lautenberg Amendment of 1996 was put into enactment. The Lautenberg Amendment was an addition to the Gun Control Act of 1994 (GCA), making it illegal for anyone with a civil protection order to own a firearm (Kafka et al., 2021; Nathan, 1999). Although the GCA of 1994 bill was amended, it still created controversies regarding perpetrators being allowed to purchase and own firearms. The Lautenberg Amendment posits that any person, including a law enforcement officer, found guilty of a misdemeanor DV offense is prohibited from owning a gun (Carlson, 2021; Goodmark, 2015).

Under the Lautenberg Amendment, if a law enforcement officer violates this law, he/she cannot carry a firearm and, therefore, are faced with termination of employment because they cannot perform the job functions. Also, under the Lautenberg Amendment, there is no exception for law enforcement personnel who fail to abide by the law. However, in some instances, in DV incidents where the officer is not the abuser, then the prosecutor and judge can use their discretion to plea down to a lesser offense where the officer does not have to lose their right to carry a firearm (Wetendorf, 2000).

Despite the intended purpose of the Lautenberg Amendment, which was to prevent those who commit DV and are convicted of owning a firearm, there have been barriers to addressing this issue. The Second Amendment focuses on an individual's right to bear arms and whether individuals who are convicted of a domestic violence

misdemeanor offense are afforded the same protection under the law (Pidel, 2022). One of the barriers to the Second Amendment is that the language is not clear and concise concerning the expression of the use of force and DV relationships as it relates to the Lautenberg Amendment (Pidel, 2022; Schneider, 2008). Secondly, circuit courts have an issue regarding the meaning of physical force related to the Lautenberg Amendment**.** Another issue with the Second Amendment was whether it covered those individuals who have been convicted of domestic abuse offenses and carried or owned a firearm. Even more interesting, another barrier is the historical purpose of the Second Amendment as it relates to the rights of the people to bear arms. The Second Amendment allows individuals to possess weapons and defend themselves in their homes if it has a lawful purpose. Lastly, the Second Amendment applies to individuals' conduct (Pidel, 2022; Ruben, 2020). Another issue is whether gun laws are put in place to prevent DV incidents and are used for the same purpose of protecting individuals from DV (Ruben, 2020; Schneider, 2008). These findings suggested that the Lautenberg Amendment's purpose was to prevent individuals with firearms who have a DV conviction from possessing them. However, there are still controversies regarding this issue.

Summary

Law enforcement personnel are often subjected to traumatic incidents that lead to stress. Law enforcement personnel with allegations of DV against them could lead to a damaged reputation for officers and the agency in which they serve. Also, law enforcement personnel found guilty of DV misdemeanors could lead to liability issues for the department and result in termination of employment; therefore, they are unable to

protect and serve the public because, under the Lautenberg provision, officers lose the right to carry a firearm, and therefore, they cannot perform their duties. Although some officers will commit DV incidents and have allegations against them, other officers will not. Determining what specific department policies and measures work well and which work poorly at combating DV among officers is essential. Despite that, model policies in Florida exist, including prescreening, post-screening, intervention, and prevention training; there is limited data on determining the most effective measures among officers in Florida and globally. What is known from the literature is that stress, unresolved trauma, work-family conflict, alcohol, and substance abuse play a role in officers committing DV incidents. According to research, prevention strategies, intervention strategies, zero-tolerance policies, Florida Model Policies, and mandatory training have been developed to combat DV. Despite these strategies and measures, there is a lack of research on the most effective department specific policies and measures used to combat DV among officers. It is essential to determine why some officers comply with specific department policies and measures developed, and why others fail to do so.

Conclusion

Previous research on OIDV incidents or family violence in police families includes various theories such as grounded theory, police culture, social learning theory, and role theory. This study applied the OCT to examine the study through a department policy perspective to gain insight into what measures work well and what works poorly to combat DV among Florida officers. This study explained why some officers who have

successfully completed DV training have difficulty adhering to specific departmental policies and measures in combating DV, while others do not.

This study also explained measures and specific department policies that could be improved to encourage the reporting of at-risk officers or the self-reporting of officers. Previous studies have laid a foundation for this study to understand DV in police families. The problem was the rate at which DV occurs in police families, despite officers and recruits receiving training in DV. This study provided a wealth of knowledge about the topic for LEAs to determine what specific department policies and measures they developed in their agency to combat DV incidents among their officers. Despite the information that does exist on the prevention of OIDV, there was still a lack of information on the most effective specific department policies and measures developed by LEAs in Florida for their officer in their agencies. This study used the OCT to gain insight into LEA's beliefs and expectations and how the OC helps influence officers' behavior.

This study provided information on the policies and measures used across Florida by LEAs to combat DV among their officers. This study identified areas that are lacking or need future research to enhance the body of knowledge. This study determined what departmental policies and measures work well and work poorly at combating DV among officers. The perspectives of LEAs with experience with specific department policies and measures developed in the agency across Florida can provide a wealth of knowledge about the phenomenon.

In Chapter 3, the study discusses research and rationale, the role of the researcher, the methodology, and the procedures for this study. In Chapter 3, the study also explains recruitment procedures, data analysis, and the use of trustworthiness. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary before transitioning to Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This phenomenological study examined measures developed by LEAs who have DV specific policies within their organization. This study determined what measures and DV specific policies are working well and what are working poorly. LEAs' perspectives of OIDV are often lacking in research. This study provided the criminal justice system with a wealth of knowledge on improving existing measures and policies on DV in law enforcement agencies for recruits and current officers. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology selected , the research design, and the role of the researcher. Chapter 3 also discusses data collection procedures according to Walden University, data analysis, and the trustworthiness of the research. Finally, Chapter 3 discusses ethical issues and concludes with a summary.

Research Design and Rationale

The central phenomenon was the lived experiences of LEAs of measures developed in their agency to combat DV among their officers. Qualitative research allowed people to provide meaning from their firsthand experiences (Rogo, 2024). Qualitative research allowed participants to provide their experiences as they occur in their environment (Crawford, 2016; Denzin, 2005; Kraus et al., 2022). This qualitative research allowed for meaningful insight into participants' lives. Qualitative research also focuses on human behaviors and makes sense of social issues. This phenomenology study was used to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon and how it is perceived by those who experience it. This study employed a phenomenology research design with a

narrative approach to conduct semi-structured interviews with five to 10 participants. Qualitative research has small sample sizes, and saturation is met between five to 25 participants (Creswell, 2013; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Since DV is human behavior committed by law enforcement officers and the public, LEAs' perceptions must be explored using a phenomenological design (Kraus et al., 2022). This phenomenology design allowed for a connection to be made with participants using open-ended questions to gain insight into the participants' experiences (Williams, 2021). To better understand the phenomenon, this study obtained LEAs' perspectives using a narrative approach (Ranse et al., 2020).

Role of the Researcher

This study used the researcher as the instrument within the study and gathered participant data (Collins & Stockton, 2022). This study used a cellular device to record answers to interview questions and use thematic analysis of those responses. This study sought to create a trusting environment where the participants feel safe and open to sharing their experiences without judgment. The study acknowledged any biases affecting the study's outcome. Informed consent was obtained before collecting information from participants and safeguarding participants' privacy (Godskesen et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2020). This study ensured that the research was performed with ethical standards and that participants could withdraw from the study without being penalized. This study explored different concepts and ensured no harm to participants (Collins & Stockton, 2022; Godskesen et al., 2023). The study reported any affiliations the researcher may have with the participants in the agencies participating in the study,

including personal relationships with participants and awareness of sensitive subjects (Collins & Stockton, 2022; Karagiozis, 2018).

The study had no current personal affiliations with the participants in the study. However, I have had relatives who worked for one of the agencies who retired over 25 years ago. There may be potential bias because of the sensitivity of the social issue being studied. This study evaluated the research questions to ensure that the questions had no judgments and were appropriate for the study. This study used bracketing to manage researchers' bias, which is used in phenomenology research designs (Thomas & Sohn, 2023; Tufford & Newman, 2012). For the research, any judgments or assumptions about the topic were written down and placed aside so as not to affect this study's outcome by influencing participants' perceptions (Thomas & Sohn, 2023). Therefore, no conflict of interest compromised the judgment within the study.

This study showed that I had experience interviewing individuals and gathering clients' information throughout the study. This study demonstrated that I had gained the knowledge, skills, and morale necessary to conduct this study. This study also demonstrated that I was an active listener, critical thinker, and effective communicator, and could conduct scholarly research as required at the University of Walden. Since 2002, I have been responsible for assisting with coordinating DV programs and providing direct support to clients in the nonprofit area.

Methodology

This study employed a phenomenological research design using semi-structured interviews of between five to 10 LEAs to obtain a wealth of knowledge until no more

concepts emerged. When no more information arose, saturation was reached in the study (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). As mentioned, sample sizes of around five to 25 are used in phenomenology designs (Creswell, 2013; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). LEAs are considered a vulnerable population because of the prominent levels of stress and traumatic experiences that they encounter regularly (Enang et al., 2019; Murray et al., 2018). Since LEAs oversee the department and its operations, gaining their insight is necessary (Fulambarker, 2020).

This current study used purposeful sampling to access information about LEAs. This study used phenomenology research to determine the meaning of LEAs who have developed measures and have departmental specific policies for combating DV among their officers (Ataro, 2020). Snowball sampling was also used because it allows for the selection of LEAs who have experienced the phenomenon and could provide a wealth of knowledge about the topic. This study used a phenomenology design to select participants who met the chosen criteria before conducting the research study (Ataro, 2020; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The criteria chosen for participants included male or female LEAs, no allegations of DV pending, participants must have completed training for DV, have specific department policies on OIDV, and or have developed measures in their department for combating DV.

This study succeeded because of the information obtained from LEAs across Florida, which have firsthand experience with the phenomenon. This study used Google and different state and county websites and directories to locate LEAs in Florida. This study required contacting different law enforcement agencies, providing them with an

introductory letter, and seeing if they were interested in participating in the research. This study requires sending out personal emails to ensure privacy and provide predetermined criteria, contact information, and reassurance to keep the study confidential. This study required an introduction letter that explained that no incentives for participation in the research would be provided. This study included that the information was solely voluntary and that participants could withdraw from the study without being penalized.

Participant Selection Logic

This study used criteria for participants that included male or female LEAs, no allegations of DV pending; participants must have completed training for DV, have specific department policies on OIDV, and or have developed measures in their department for combating DV. This study used a phenomenology design to select participants who met the chosen criteria before conducting the research study (Ataro, 2020; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). This study used the recruitment of participants who are currently employed as LEAs across Florida. Participants with less than 6 months of experience in law enforcement will be excluded. This study employed purposive sampling and snowball sampling to recruit individuals with various backgrounds and demographics to include diverse perspectives. This study required an ethical awareness that LEAs are considered a vulnerable population because of the prominent levels of stress and traumatic experiences that they encounter regularly (Enang et al., 2019; Murray et al., 2018). Since LEAs oversee the department and its operations, gaining their insight was necessary (Fulambarker, 2020). Purposeful sampling and snowballing sampling were used to obtain participants with a wealth of knowledge about the topic and

who have experience with the phenomenon. This study used a phenomenology research design to provide meaning from LEAs with firsthand experience with the phenomenon (Ataro, 2020).

Instrumentation

This study used the researcher as the instrument in the qualitative study and gathered data from participants using semi-structured interviews in person, by phone, or by Zoom if participants could not meet face to face (Collins & Stockton, 2022). Semistructured interviews are appropriate for the research because they are used in qualitative research and allow the researcher to ask participants questions already developed before the interview (Burgdorf et al., 2022; DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). This study used an interview guide to ask questions, which will help uncover different phrases and themes as they emerge in my research. This study asked questions that may be asked in a different order than those displayed in the interview guide to allow for an open ended approach and flexibility while conducting the interviews (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

This study required recruiting LEAs from across Florida with firsthand experience with the phenomenon. This study used Google and different state and county websites and directories to locate LEAs in Florida. This study required contacting different law enforcement agencies, providing them with an introductory letter, and seeing if they were interested in participating in my research. I sought to send out personal emails to ensure privacy and provide my predetermined criteria, contact information, and assurance to

keep my study confidential. Also, I sought to send emails and an introductory letter that indicated no incentives for participation in the research would be provided. This study was solely voluntary, and participants could withdraw from the study without being penalized.

Data Analysis Plan

This study ensured that the research questions were designed to capture the concepts of what was being studied without biases (Maeda et al., 2023; Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). I conducted interviews for an estimated 45 minutes to 1 hour or less, face to face, by phone, or by Zoom. I sought to gather data in a setting or environment where LEAs can share their perceptions. I interviewed LEAs individually using an interview guide and a cellular iPhone device for recording that is password protected for participants' privacy and accuracy of the recording (Roberts, 2020; Rutakumwa et al., 2020). This study respected participants' rights if they wished to end the recording while conducting the study; then the researcher would comply (Roberts, 2020).

This study stored all data in a secure location to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants (Morina, 2021). This study also stored all data and recordings for 5 years to follow the University of Walden's requirements and for scientific integrity. I sought to complete all interviews with LEAs and allow participants to review their transcripts for accuracy. I completed a debrief report after individual interviews with participants. I conducted peer debriefing with another researcher from Walden University to ensure the study was conducted ethically and to identify any issues

that may have gone unnoticed (Simoni et al., 2019). Also, this study allowed participants the opportunity to proofread their transcripts.

This study used manual coding of participants' data since it is widely used in social science (Clarke et al., 2021; Nelson et al., 2021). I manually reviewed participant transcripts and placed the data in various categories. This study used manual coding in a document in Microsoft Word to organize the data using thematic analysis. I provided a brief overview of the study, explained how long the interview is expected to last, and discussed the participant's right to withdraw at any time. This study allowed participants to be asked research questions in the same order and allowed for open ended responses.

Interview Questions

The following research questions were addressed:

RQ 1: How often do you find incidents of domestic violence among your officers? If you find incidents of domestic violence, how severe is it?

RQ 2: How often do domestic violence allegations result in arrest or charges being filed?

RQ 3: Tell me what your internal policies are concerning OIDV.

RQ 4: Is there a way for an officer to overcome being charged with domestic violence and return to the force?

RQ 5: Are officers suspended or put on administrative leave pending the outcome of the allegations?

RQ 6: What policies and measures do you find in your department to be the most effective?

RQ 7: Which policies and measures do you want to eliminate?

RQ 8: Which internal policies and measures do you want to add?

RQ 9: How difficult is it to change internal policies and measures?

RQ 10: Do you have to work with your city or county legal team to change policies about domestic violence within your department?

RQ 11: When you become aware that an officer has been involved in domestic violence, how does this affect other officers, or how do they act or respond? Do the other officers try to hide it or bring it forward?

RQ 12: How do you protect officers who report to other officers and come forward with self-reports of being at risk themselves?

RQ 13: What measures and domestic violence-specific policies have been developed in your agency for combating DV among officers?

RQ 14: How do LEAs perceive the effectiveness of measures and domestic violence-specific policies in their agency to combat DV among their officers?

RQ 15: What key factors help boost officers' morale and decode the code of silence to reinforce the importance of reporting at-risk officers for DV?

Issues of Trustworthiness

This study established trustworthiness in the qualitative study through credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmed, 2024; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Zia UI Haq et al., 2023). Another way this study established trustworthiness was through the methodology and the truthfulness of the findings of this study (Cyress, 2017; Stahl & King, 2020). Qualitative trustworthiness issues include researchers' biases, the inability to generalize findings across other studies, and subjectivity in interpreting participants'

data (Zia UI Haq et al., 2023). This study furthered the establishment of trustworthiness by engaging with participants and establishing a trusting working relationship.

This study also established credibility through the results and findings from the qualitative study. This study established credibility by ensuring a thick description of the phenomenon understudy (Dodgson, 2019; Lincoln & Guba,1985). This study presented the findings plausibly and comprehensively (Nassaji, 2020). Another way this study ensured credibility was to interview participants until saturation emerged. This study allowed open mindedness and unbiasedness and maintained a reflection journal to ensure the credibility of the findings (Stahl & King, 2020). In addition, this study used triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing to enhance the quality of the research findings. This study validated its credibility by ensuring that the participants could answer the research questions selected for the interviews based on their experience with the phenomenon and the concepts developed (Stahl & King, 2020).

This study established credibility through triangulation by conducting interviews, observing participants throughout the interview process, and using detailed field notes (Natow, 2019). To enhance the study's credibility, this study gathered data from multiple law enforcement agencies and various LEAs to gain multiple perspectives and ensure the findings were credible. Triangulation is essential to credibility in research because it will minimize bias and provide a comprehensive approach to understanding the phenomenon understudy (Ahmed, 2024). This study is transferable to other settings, contexts, and populations by providing detailed information about the research process and procedures (Drisko, 2024; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This study provided a detailed description of LEAs employed at different law enforcement agencies, where the interviews will be conducted, and a thick description of the research methods and design used in the qualitative study (Drisko, 2024; Younas et al., 2023). Transferability applies to qualitative studies, and therefore, this study cannot be generalized to other studies. Generalization applies in quantitative research studies (Drisko, 2024; Nassaji, 2020; Roald et al., 2021). This study is transferable to other studies because other researchers can use these findings under different situations, contexts, populations, and times and apply them to their research.

This qualitative research has dependability, which has the same function as reliability. Nonetheless, reliability has been used in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nassaji, 2020). This study established dependability by providing a detailed description of the inquiry process and reporting the findings in a manner others can apply to similar settings at various times so that the results of their study yield comparable results (Ahmed, 2024). This study used dependability in research through transparency, detailed records, audit trails, member checking, and peer debriefing.

This study used confirmability of the research by being unbiased while interpreting the data and the findings. This study used peer debriefing, member checking, reflexivity, and created an audit trail (Ahmed, 2024; Ghafour & Ofoghi, 2016). This study used thematic analysis on a Microsoft Word document to capture phrases and identify patterns and themes. This study used peer debriefing to minimize biases in the research and ensure LEAs' perspectives are accurately captured to enhance the credibility of the findings (Ahmed, 2024). This study used LEAs to review their transcript to ensure

their perspectives were accurately captured. This study used conformability by using a reflective journal to record daily notes after interviews.

Ethical Procedures

This study followed all criteria set forth by Walden University. This study used all required documents to ensure that IRB requirements were met. The study applied the Respect for Persons principle outlined in the Belmont Report by obtaining informed consent from LEAs and ensuring no data was collected prior to acquiring consent (Morina, 2021; Pritchard, 2021). This study required emailing informed consent forms before the study and having the consent obtained via email (Xu et al., 2020). This study required explaining to the participants that the research study is solely voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The study provided no incentives for participation. This study kept all participants' data protected and stored for up to 5 years, which aligns with Walden University's IRB criteria. This study used codes and pseudonyms to ensure participants' data is confidential (Morina, 2021). The study was conducted in a safe setting where the participants were comfortable and had privacy. This phenomenological research best suits the population and research question under study. This study examined the greatest possible outcomes and benefits of LEAs' participation in the research study for society. Gaining an in-depth understanding of the most effective measures that LEAs use in their agency to combat DV among their officers, because law enforcement professionals are the first to respond to incidents of DV.

Summary

This study used a qualitative phenomenological research design to align the study. This study used LEAs' perceptions from across Florida to establish what policies and measures developed by LEAs work well and work poorly at combating DV among their officers and recruits. I sought to conduct multiple interviews of LEAs from different law enforcement agencies to gain different perspectives. The perceptions of LEAs were invaluable to the criminal justice system, officers, officers' families, recruits, and the public. This study adhered to the components required for ethical research. I thoroughly described the phenomenon understudy transparently and comprehensibly. Chapter 3 covered the research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, and the methodology. Chapter 3 presented the study instrumentation, data collection instrument, and research questions. Chapter 3 also explained the procedures, recruitment, data collection, analysis, and transition to Chapter 4. Chapter 4 summarizes the research findings.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This study aimed to examine measures developed by LEAs who have DV specific policies within their organization. The study aimed to determine what measures and specific DV policies are working well and what is working poorly. The data obtained were used to answer the essential question. The essential question inquired in this study was: What is the perceived impact of OIDV on LEAs? Chapter 4 also presents the setting and applicable demographic material related to this study. Chapter 4 describes how the data were analyzed, the evidence of trustworthiness, and the results. After the summary, this section transitions to Chapter 5.

Setting

The study was conducted in Florida in the Spring semester of 2025. Three participants chose in-person in public places, such as a private library room or a community center in a private room, and three chose phone interviews. No participants chose Zoom as an option for the interview to be conducted. There were no distractions or interruptions from people coming into the room. However, the interview consisted of LEAs, and therefore, there were occasions when they would have to respond to a call over the phone.

Demographics

There was a total of six participants. However, only five participants chose to provide their ages, ranging between 38 and 54. Only one participant chose not to disclose their age. All participants had some measures or procedures in place for combating or

preventing DV among their officers in their agency, in case DV occurs. All participants had been in law enforcement for between 15 and 41 years. All participants were in their current LEA positions for 6 months to 17 years. Five participants identified as African American, and one participant identified as other. Participants differed in their educational background statuses, ranging from a high school diploma, some college, associate's degree, master's degree, bachelor's degree, to a doctoral degree. The participants' responsibilities to their agency as administrators varied in their duties and rank.

Data Collection

This study consisted of six participants: three men, two women, and one person who identified as other. Three face-to-face interviews were conducted, and three phone interviews were conducted. During each interview, I was the instrument in the study used to obtain data from participants. I sent out invitations and used snowballing to recruit participants. Participants were asked to forward email invitations about the study externally to their workplace to participants who met the criteria. Participants responded by email regarding their interest in participating in the research study. Each participant consented to the research study before the researcher could obtain any data. Each participant selected their preferred interviewing method and the time suitable for their schedule by email.

Saturation was met at six participants, consistent with phenomenological qualitative research. This study aimed to interview between five and 10 participants until saturation was reached. Although the sample size was small, the researcher obtained a

wealth of knowledge. The study used an iPhone 15 device to record audio for each participant's interview. Participants were informed that the interview could last between 45 minutes and one hour or less, and there would be no incentives. However, a thank you letter for participating in the research study was emailed to participants after the transcription and coding of the audio recordings. Each interview varied in time between seven minutes, 30 seconds, 22 minutes, and 48 seconds.

After each interview, I emailed participants a copy of the transcript to review for accuracy, errors, or feedback. I provided each participant with two weeks to respond to the debriefing. I coded participants' personal identifying data with pseudonyms. Paper documents were kept separately in a secure cabinet, while audio recordings were password-protected and placed safely in another cabinet. During the recording, on two occasions, participants shared examples that may have been sensitive to discuss among others and asked me not to disclose that information. One participant provided me with a hard copy of their policies on OIDV and other related documents to review regarding the protocol for DV committed by law enforcement officers in their agency. However, the interviews did not last 45 minutes to 1 hour due to officers' work schedules and having to find a day to work me in when they were off. Unforeseen circumstances include participants receiving calls during the interviews and having to pause and take the calls. Also, one interview was conducted during a time when a tornado watch warning had been issued.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected, as the research instrument in the study, I used multiple forms to assist in the data analysis process. I used an interview guide, field notes, transcripts, audio recording, and Microsoft dictation. The first part of the data analysis process involved dividing the interview into two separate parts. The first part of the interview examined policies and measures used in law enforcement agencies to combat DV among officers. The second part of the interview questions examined the demographic information of LEAs, including their ages, race, ethnicity, how long they have been employed in law enforcement, and how long they have been in their current position.

Following each interview, I used hand-coding while listening to the iPhone 15 audio recording and field notes from the interview guide. I also used Microsoft Dictate to correct any discrepancies in the recording process. After each interview was transcribed individually, I used a Microsoft Word document for each question. I recorded key phrase patterns and keywords as they emerged during transcribing. The second part of the data analysis process involved creating themes as they related to the research questions. At the onset of each interview, I began with a summary to help the participants understand the phenomenon in the study. I reviewed the participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality and informed them they could end the recording and interview without penalty. In addition, I asked the participants if they could continue with the interview and audio recording. All interview questions and demographic questions were asked in sequence.

Research Question 1 asked the participants how often they find incidents of DV among their officers. Two participants reported that there are very few or very rare incidents of DV among their officers if reported to their agency, which is a minimum. One participant reported there were two incidents they knew of that were reported. One participant reported no incidents of DV among their officers that they knew of. One participant reported that they knew of one incident in the last 4 to 5 years among the officers in their agency. One participant reported three different numbers first, the participant reported 5% to 10% that is reported, and then the participant reported that they do not know if it is less than 3% to 5%, it may be less than 1% to 3% of DV reported among their officers in their agency. Common theme, phrases, and keywords: one, less than one to three percent, two incidents not that severe, very few if reported, one incident in the last four to five years.

Research Question 1 also asked participants if they had found incidents of DV and how severe it is. Four participants had not found or heard of any incident of DV among their officers that was severe. One participant had not heard of any in their 18 years that were that severe. Two of the six officers reported that they had never been involved in DV incidents personally. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: not fatal or severe, and never being involved in an incident themselves.

Research Question 2 asked participants how often DV allegations result in arrests or charges being filed. Two participants had not heard of any in their agency. One participant reported that charges were filed both times. Two participants reported 100% of the time, because of the way Florida law is and or Florida statutes. One participant said

one in the last 10 years. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: follow the law 100% of the time because of how Florida law is written and Florida statutes.

Research Question 3 asked participants to tell me what their internal policies are concerning DV. Three participants reported that their internal policies included internal investigations and criminal investigations depending on the situation, charges, and or allegations. Two of the three of those participants also reported that there was some sort of chain of command to be followed, including notifying their agency reporter, sergeant, supervisor, supervisor on duty, and then internal affairs, and then their chief. One participant reported that their internal policies include due process, administrative hearing, and a threat assessment that would include multiple people, such as human resources, the union, the head of custody, and a psychologist.

Also, there will be a fact finding that will take place to determine if criminal charges need to be filed. If charges are filed, the state attorney's office will handle that. One participant reported officers will be placed on administrative leave, and criminal charges will not be filed until the criminal aspect is over, then the internal affairs investigation. One participant reported they would follow the spirit of the law. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: internal investigation, administrative leave, due process, state attorney, criminal charges, criminal aspects, threat assessment, supervisor on duty, notify sergeant, officer on duty, chief violations depending on the situation, and allegations.

Research Question 4 asked participants if there was a way for officers to overcome being charged with DV. Five participants reported that officers could

overcome being charged with DV, depending on the allegations, actual investigation through due process, officers' bill of rights, and Florida statutes. One of the five participants reported that based on the oath investigation of the criminal aspect determines whether charges will be dropped by the state attorney and, depending on the criminal investigation, if probable cause is not met. In addition, depending on the chief. Also, if the individual or person is sustained, exonerated, or the incident is unfounded. One participant reported that they doubt that, very seriously, there is a way for officers to overcome being charged with domestic violence. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: yes, exonerated, sustained, probable cause, unfounded, criminal investigations, investigation, and allegations.

Research Question 5 asked participants if officers are suspended or put on administrative leave pending the outcome of allegations. Three participants reported yes, officers are placed on administrative leave. One of the three reported officers is suspended. One participant reported yes and no, depending on the chief's discretion. Two participants reported yes and no, depending on the severity and nature of the allegations or complaints. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: yes, yes and no, administrative leave, suspension, severity of allegations, complaint.

Research Question 6 asked participants what policies and measures they find to be most effective in their department. Three participants reported that mental health wellness initiatives, EAPs, and being able to speak with a psychologist. Two of the three participants reported training, and one of the three participants reported losing their jobs and dealing with day-to-day encounters of DV. Two participants reported that nothing

works or deters DV, and people will do what they want to. One participant reported that administrative leave is effective. Common themes, phrases, and patterns: training, mental health wellness, and EAPs. (See Table 2).

Research Question 7 asked participants which policies and measures they wanted to eliminate. All participants reported no policies or measures that they would like to eliminate. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: no, none, they are okay; most participants used seminal verbiage or language in answering this question.

Research Question 8 asked participants which internal policies and measures they would like to add. Five participants reported there was nothing to add. Everything works well, and two of the five participants reported that it is on a case by case basis. One of the five participants reported that counselors are at their agency daily, and a wellness aspect has been added. One of the five participants also reported no biases and consistency. One participant reported that legislative adjustments would be made if they found out something new, then it would need to be added. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: case by case basis, nothing to add, everything works well.

Research Question 9 asked participants how difficult it is to change internal policies and measures. Five participants reported that it is not difficult to change internal policies and measures, and one of the five participants reported that it is a matter of getting along with the accreditation department. One of the five participants also reported that it is up to the board, and you must see what fits your agency by looking at other agencies' demographics and sizes. One of the five participants added that changing internal policies and measures depends on what needs to change. One participant reported

that they had no idea how difficult it is to change internal policies and measures within the agency, and that it was a captain or above decision. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: not difficult, case by case, depends on what needs to be changed.

Research Question 10 asked participants if they had to work with their city or county legal team to change policies about DV within their agency. Five participants reported that they do not have to work with their city or county legal team to change policies, and one of the five participants reported that the agency handles it. Two of the five participants also reported that their agency works independently within themselves or by their jurisdiction, and either the sheriff or the chief handles it. One participant noted that the agency must be aligned with departmental, city, and sometimes federal policies. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: no, interdependent, entity jurisdiction, chief, or sheriff runs their agency.

Research Question 11 asked participants, when they become aware that an officer has been involved in DV, how does this affect other officers, or how do they respond? One participant reported that they had never dealt with an officer who had been involved in DV, and they could not speak about it. Three participants reported that they would be shocked, surprised, or that different emotions would be expressed or not expressed. Two participants reported that they would be instructed to take swift action or respond to the situation, and that officers are instructed not to discuss investigations, and if the officer discusses the investigation with someone, they are subject to an investigation themselves. One participant reported that officers were going to speak about the incident, but they try to prevent officers from speaking about the incident until the investigation is complete.

Common themes, phrases, and keywords: shocked, surprised, different emotions expressed or not expressed, ask or instruct officers not to speak or discuss the investigation until it is complete.

Research Question 12 asked participants how they protect officers who report to other officers and come forward with self-reports of being at risk themselves. One participant reported that they would deal with it like any other report because of the whistleblower act. Three participants reported that they would either do a nondisclosure of information or take administrative leave so that other officers would not be subject to the investigation, and the officers would not talk to the witness about the investigation. One of three participants also said to notify the chain of command. Two participants also reported that they would use a confidentiality form or confidentiality so the officer would not know where the information came from.

One participant reported that they would get the officer's help because they would assume they needed help, as they had to follow the law. They will write it up and get the state attorney's office to review it for probable cause, and the judge will review it. The officer's spouse will be spoken with to see if the officer did or did not do what was alleged. If the officer did what was alleged, then the officer would sign a packet because it would not have happened in the other officer's presence. Then, the packet is taken to the state attorney's office to obtain an arrest warrant. If there is enough evidence for an arrest, the officer will be placed under arrest. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: nondisclosure, confidentiality, and confidentiality form.

Research Question 13 asked participants what measures and DV specific policies have been developed in your agency for combating DV among officers. Three participants knew there were policies, but could not specify what they were for sure, and reported that no specific policy states what to do to combat OIDV. Still, procedures are in place to follow if OIDV occurs, and continued training, training, and mandatory training through the FDLE every two to four years. Three of the participants also reported that when officers are subject to investigations, arrest, termination, loss of employment, suspension, not being able to work at another law enforcement agency is slim to none, loss of pension, and overall loss of everything they work for is enough to keep officers from committing DV. Common themes, phrases, and keywords: continued training, policies, subject to arrest, termination, suspension, administrative leave, fear of losing everything you work for, and loss of pension.

Research Question 14 asked participants how LEAs perceive the effectiveness of measures and DV specific policies in their agency to combat DV among their officers. Four participants reported that policies are easy to understand, clear, straightforward, excellent, have zero tolerance, and are receptive. One participant reported that officers perceive policies as not applicable, and one participant reported that officers perceive the measures as a joke. Common themes, phrases, and keywords policies and measures are straightforward, clear, easy to understand, and zero tolerance.

Research Question 15 asked participants what key factors help boost officers' morale and decode the code of silence to reinforce the importance of reporting at-risk officers for DV. Five participants reported that they do not believe the code of silence

exists anymore. One of the five participants reported that it is a new generation and that is why the code does not exist anymore, and people speak about whatever they see, and however they see, and silence is pretty much gone. One of the five participants also reported that the code of silence was long gone. Four of the six participants reported that the key factors in boosting officers' morale are accountability, as if the officers did it themselves, and the officers have a duty to act. One participant reported that the key factors in boosting officer morale are listening to them and offering EAPs for anything the officer may be dealing with. One participant also reported that the key factor in boosting officers' morale is the loss of certifications, and officers do come forward and want to do the right thing. Common themes, phrases, keywords: no code of silence, the code of silence does not exist anymore, and the code of silence has been long gone.

Also, I used inductive coding for all participants' data. Most of the participants used similar words or phrases throughout the interview. During the coding process of the participants' data, each interview was separately analyzed sentence by sentence, with participants explaining their perceptions of OIDV on law enforcement administrators. The researchers saw themes, phrases, and keywords that emerged during the interviews. Participant three did not share the same perceptions as other participants for question six, regarding the polices and measures found in their department that deter OIDV the most. Participants 3 reported "nothing people, are gonna do what they want to do". Participant 3 did not share the same experiences as the other participants in question 14. Participant 3 reported officers perceive the effectiveness of measures and DV specific policies as "Pretty much as a joke." None of the other participants said the policies and measures

were perceived as a joke. Participant two is the only participant who mentioned the whistleblower act regarding how officers are protected when they report to other officers and come forth with self-reports of being at risk.

Demographic Question 1 asked participants how long they have been employed in law enforcement. All participants had been employed in law enforcement between 15 and 41 years. Demographic Question 2 asked participants how long they had been employed in their current position. All participants were employed in their current position for between eight months and 17 years. Demographic Question 3 asked participants what factors led them to develop measures in their agency for DV, if any. Five participants reported N/A, or they have not developed any. One participant reported that the fact that they have a hardline and they have to follow Florida statute that keeps the guard rails for us, that we were going to follow the law.

Demographic Question 4 asked participants what the highest level of education they have completed. All participants varied in their education completion statuses, ranging from a high school diploma, some college, an associate's degree, a master's degree, some master's but not completed, and a doctoral degree. One participant reported that they had their high school diploma. One participant reported that they have some college experience. One participant reported they had an associate's degree. One participant reported they had their master's degree, and one reported they had completed some master's degree work but had not completed it yet. One participant reported that they had their doctoral degree.

Demographic Question 5 asked participants how they would describe themselves and their ethnicity. Three participants described their race and ethnicity as African American, men. Two participants described their race and ethnicity as African American, females. One participant described their race and ethnicity as others and reported that they do not answer those questions.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Chapter 3 described credibility strategies and adjustments. This study proposed a sample size of five to 10 participants, consistent with qualitative phenomenology research. Creswell (2013) and Hennink and Kaiser (2022) indicated that saturation occurs between five and 25 participants in phenomenological research. In this study, saturation was met after the sixth participant was interviewed because no new themes occurred during the data collection process from which inferences could be drawn. Throughout the study, the participants used similar or like verbiage to describe their perceptions and interpretations of the phenomenon. This study established trustworthiness through the methodology by following all procedures reported in the proposal (Cyress, 2017; Stahl & King, 2020). For any bias that may have been present, a reflection journal and bracketing were used to mitigate subjectivity in the findings after each interview was conducted (Stahl & King, 2020; Thomas & Sohn, 2023; Tufford & Newman, 2012; Zia UI Haq et al., 2023). Also, field notes were used to enhance credibility (Natow, 2019).

To establish trustworthiness between the participants and me, I ensured that the purpose of the study was explained and understood, participants' rights were respected, the process was straightforward, the researcher was transparent about the research

process, and maintained confidentiality throughout the entire study (Dodgson, 2019; Lincoln & Guba,1985; Nassaji,2020). In this study, member checking was used by emailing participants a copy of the transcripts and allowing them two weeks to respond with corrections for accuracy. Also, this study ensured the research questions were asked in a manner that participants could understand (Stahl & King, 2020).

Transferability

In Chapter 3, this study described transferability and any implementation strategies that may have occurred. In Chapter 3, this study reported that the researcher would conduct all interviews in law enforcement agencies. However, consistent with the Walden IRB, this study required the researcher to obtain agency permission unless participants were recruited externally; therefore, participants were recruited externally. I conducted three interviews by phone and three in person in a library and a private room in a community center. I gained informed consent from all participants. This study used transferability because a representative population of six participants met the criteria for the research study.

The chosen participants provided a detailed description of the phenomenon under study. Also, this study provided a well-defined description of the process and procedures to be carried out in the methodology section. This study reported any limitations that may have affected the study's outcome, such as the officer having to schedule around off days when they were not so busy. Some officers had to take phone calls while the interview was conducted, and one was conducted during a tornado warning. Multiple forms of triangulation were used to ensure the study findings were credible and transferable. This

study maintained ethical considerations throughout for participants and the research. Another researcher could use the findings or results of this study and apply them under different situations, contexts, populations, and times, and yield similar results (Drisko, 2024; Lincoln& Guba, 1985).

Chapter 3 also described dependability and adjustments to strategies. To ensure dependability was maintained in this research, a detailed description of the phenomenon and the inquiry process was provided so that any researcher in a similar setting at another time could apply the results, and they should be similar (Ahmed, 2024). In addition, this study maintained detailed records throughout the study. After each interview, a note was made in a reflection journal, which created transparency and an audit trail of the data. Member checking was also conducted after each interview. A transcript was emailed to each participant after it was transcribed, and each participant was provided two weeks to reply with feedback, errors, and verify accuracy. Member checking was used to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research. Peer debriefing was also used after each interview to ensure that the research was credible and trustworthy by gaining a peer debrief perspective to minimize or reduce any biases that might have been formed.

In Chapter 3, confirmability strategies were described. I maintained an audit trail throughout the data collection and analysis to establish confirmability. I also used field notes and reflectivity to ensure that the narrative emerged from the findings based on participants' perceptions. I examined personal experiences with volunteering with victims of DV and being a survivor of DV.

Results

The results of this study demonstrated that LEAs in the state of Florida have a zero tolerance perception toward OIDV. Despite law enforcement agencies' efforts to develop DV specific policies, measures, and EAPs for responding to incidents of DV still frequently occur among law enforcement officers. To combat and prevent incidents of OIDV, officers must have a willingness and motivation to seek help for learning how to cope and respond to high levels of stress, how to identify warning indicators of being at risk for committing DV, and have a understanding of the drastic impact that DV could have on an officers' careers, families, spouses, communities, and the agency in which they serve. Also, there are mental health wellness initiatives for those officers who may be at risk themselves or know of others who may be at risk for committing DV. Mental health services are offered internally and externally to the organization, and some agencies offer services 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Mental health services are available for both personal and professional challenges faced by officers and their families.

After I examined the data, some intriguing perceptions regarding LEAs developed. The research questions will be discussed, followed by the background and demographic questions. Section one of the interview focused on the planned interview questions and LEAs' perceptions of OIDV. I emphasized that participants' body language or tone of voice changed when RQ 1 asked partcipants how often do you find incidents of DV among your officers. If you find incidents of DV, how severe it is. Four participants were straightforward, and you could tell that OIDV was a serious issue. Two participants

seemed hesitant about answering the question. Participant 2 said they "have not heard of any." There was a discrepancy in Participant 5's answer because it changed three times regarding how often DV occurred among their officers. First, Participant 5 said, "5 to 10 % that's reported. So, let's do it another way. I don't know if it's 5 to 10 %, it could be less than 3 to 5 %." The other four participants reported an average of either one or two incidents, very few, or that DV did occur among their officers in their agency but did not disclose the number of incidents. All participants reported that they had not heard of any DV incident that was fatal or severe in their agency.

RQ 2 asked participants how often DV allegations result in arrest or charges being filed. Participant 5 said they will "follow the law 100%." All participants seemed straightforward and appeared to have a zero tolerance perspective. Participant 2 said, "the way Florida statutes are written, it's not up to the officer's discretion." Participant 3 said, "Charges were filed both times." RQ. 3 asked participants to tell me your internal policies concerning OIDV. All participants described some internal policies and measures in their agency concerning OIDV, depending on a case by case basis, and or situation. Participants described the chain of command that they follow when an allegation of DV has been made against their officers. Most officers are required to notify their department supervisor or the sergeant on duty, and then multiple people are notified, including the sheriff or the chief. Most participants reported that criminal charges are not filed until the criminal aspect of the investigation is over. Most participants described some form of internal investigation, administrative investigation, or board concerning internal policies about OIDV. Participant 5 said, "100% there is no looking the other way. There is

absolutely we are going to follow the letter and spirit of the law in domestic violence 100%."

Participant 1 said:

> A supervisor will be in route according to policy. Depending on what's going on, the internal investigation may open up, and officers investigating the officer will be put on administrative leave, depending on the circumstances of what's going on with that. As far as if criminal charges are filed, we don't do anything until the criminal aspect is over with, and then we will proceed with our internal investigation through internal affairs unit as far as the allegation and interviewing, and so forth.

There was a discrepancy in the way Participant 3 said they handle internal policies concerning DV it differed from the other five participants. "We go through like a kind of threat assessment with multiple people, inside it's like a round table situation with HR, you have the union, psychology, and head of custody."

RQ 4 asked participants, is there a way for an officer to overcome being charged with DV and return to the force. Participants described that there is both a chance that an officer will and will not overcome being charged with DV and return to the workforce. There was a discrepancy in Participant 5's perception in this question. Participant 5 said that they "doubt it very seriously." Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 all described yes and no, depending on the actual investigation and criminal aspect. Participant 4 said, "Yes, through our due process and procedures, we have in place the officer's bill of rights that we have to give them, you know, according to the Florida Statutes." Participant 6 said:

> It's possible, but it is based on findings of oath investigations from the criminal aspect of it, where if it's determined that the charges are going to be dropped by the state's attorney's office or the criminal investigation does not produce probable cause. Once an administrative investigation of internal affairs is done, if the person is sustained or exonerated or the incident is unfounded, then there is a possibility.

RQ 5 asked participants are officers suspended or put on administrative leave pending the outcome of the allegations. Most participants reported that officers are suspended or placed on administrative leave depending on the severity of the allegations. RQ 6 asked participants what policies and measures do you find in your department to be the most effective. Most participants reported that mental health wellness, or mental health initiatives and EAPs, are effective. There was a discrepancy in the answers of Participants 2 and 3. Participant 2 said, "Nothing is effective, people are going to do what they want to." There is a discrepancy between Participant 2's answer to the question and RQ 8, in which Participant 2 discussed that their agency had just added a Mental Health Wellness program, which was available Monday-Friday. Participant 3 said, "I don't think anything deters it." Participant 6 said:

> I don't think there is necessary a policy that prevents domestic violence. However, an officer's training and knowledge of what could happen is what prevents a lot of problems. It's, umm, I guess a double-edged sword, you know, by dealing with your day to day tasks in the job of domestic violence. Umm, a

potential of hey, I can be arrested, I can lose my job. Everybody is aware of that. Everybody in law enforcement knows that.

RQ 7 asked participants which policies and measures do you want to eliminate. All participants described no policies they would like to eliminate for their agency. RQ 8 asked participants which internal policies and measures do you want to add. All participants except Participant 2 described that either everything works well, or the agency has counseling, and policies are to be added on a case-by-case basis. Participant 5 said, "What we always do is if there are legislative adjustments or amendments or anything like that, we are going to capture those in our polices." RQ 9 asked participants how difficult is it to change internal policies and measures. Four out of six participants reported that it is not difficult to change internal policies and measures, depending on what they are. There was a discrepancy in perception in two participants. Participant 3 said, "It's difficult enough because it goes up to the central office, and the central office handles everything, so that's like a bureau wide thing. So, it's nothing that's handled at our institutional level." Participant 2 said, "That will be a captain or above level" regarding who makes those decisions dealing with changing internal policies.

RQ 10 asked participants, do you have to work with your city or county legal team to change policies about DV within your department. Participants 1-5 described that they did not have to work with the city or county legal team to change policies and that they were independent or they worked within their own jurisdiction. Participant 6 described how their agency has a legal advisor who is under a city umbrella, and that their police department has a code enforcement officer. All policies and measures must

be reviewed that are policy related, because they must be aligned with departmental policy, city policy, and sometimes federal policy.

RQ11 asked participants, when you become aware that an officer has been involved in DV, how does this affect other officers, or how do they act or respond. Do the other officers try to hide it or bring it forward. Most participants described that they would express or not express some form of emotion, like being shocked or surprised. Also, two participants described that they would take swift action, and they would be subjected to an investigation if they discussed the investigation themselves. There was a discrepancy in Participant 2's answer to the question. Participant 2 said, "I don't know what their reaction would be; I never dealt with it before."

RQ 12 asked partcipants how do you protect officers who report to other officers and come forward with self-reports of being at risk themselves. One participant described that they handle their case like any other case because of the whistleblower act. Three participants said that they would do a nondisclosure form of information, and the administrative officers would not talk with the witness. Two participants described that they would use a confidentiality or confidentiality form. Participant 5 and 6 both provided a clear example of the steps they used in their agency, such as ensuring that no one is in jeopardy of a DV incident or allegations. Participant 5 also described Step 1 as taking immediate or swift action. Step 2 involves whether the officer committed DV. If so, they will be arrested, and then they will speak with the victim and make sure they're alright. There is going to be a checklist for every step to ensure that both the victim and the suspect are heard.

Participant 6 described the importance of using confidentiality in investigations using this example:

> So, it's confidentiality. Again, let's say we can't have a general conversation about it. If I know Officer A has been involved in a domestic situation and Officer B reports it, as a supervisor, it does not leave me to just go and say we got a squad meeting, we got a domestic situation. I cannot talk about it because of the way our policies are and the investigations that are goanna take place thereafter. Because I am required, as well as that officer, to notify the chain of what's going on, and I may not be aware of it until after it's over, because at that point it's public record, and then we can technically talk about it, or that individual or the individuals involved can talk about it.

RQ 13 asked participants what measures and DV specific policies have been developed in your agency for combating DV among officers. Participant 1 described a clear description of what procedures could happen to prevent OIDV. Participant 1 described officers' fear of losing their jobs, what they see daily when responding to incidents of DV, loss of pension, and losing everything they work for, and having a slim opportunity of getting hired within another law enforcement agency. Participants 2 and 3 knew that their agency had policies but could not specify what they were. Participant 4 said their policy is "Continued training that we have to take through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement every two to four years." Participant 5 described their agency as having a zero tolerance policy on numerous occasions concerning the reports of DV among officers. Participants 5 and 6 described that their policies are basically

investigations, probable cause, termination, suspension, and arrest warrants, on a case-by-case basis.

RQ 14 asked participants how do LEAs perceive the effectiveness of measures and DV specific policies in their agency to combat DV among their officers. Most participants described their agency's policies as straightforward, easy to understand, officers are receptive to them, and policies are zero tolerant. There was a discrepancy in Participant 3's answer. Participant 3 said their officers see the policies as "Pretty much as a joke." Participant 2 said "N/A."

RQ 15 asked participants what key factors help boost officers' morale and decode the code of silence to reinforce the importance of reporting at-risk officers for DV. All participants said that there was no code of silence. Participant 4 described the importance of morale among officers, listening to the officers, and making EAPs accessible to the officers so that they do not feel like they must result to DV. Participant 1 described that officers have a duty to act and that they are basically helpless. Participant 5 described officers as having the responsibility as if they did the act themselves; they have the instinct to do what's morally right and acceptable because they want to be exemplary. Also, if officers found out that something fatal had happened, then they would have wanted to respond. Also, if officers have knowledge of an incident and fail to do anything, then they suffer consequences as well.

Three participants identified as African American men, two as African American women, and one participant identified as other for both race and ethnicity. All participants had a rank of a sergeant or above and had an education level of a high school

diploma or above. Participants' duties and responsibilities to their agency as law enforcement administrators varied. No participant had developed polices or measures personally in their agency to combat or prevent DV among their officers. However, all agencies had measures and policies to use as a response to domestic violence. All participants had undergone DV prevention training for law enforcement in the state of Florida. Participants described that they had been employed in law enforcement between 15 and 41 years, and in their current position for 8 months to 17 years. (See Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic /Background

Age	Race	Ethnicity	Education	Time worked in current position	Time worked in law enforcement	Factors leading to participants' development of DV measure in the agency
42	Black	Male	Bachelor's/Some Master's	8 months	19 years	N/A
38	Black	Male	High school Diploma	3 years	15 years	N/A
45	Other	Other	Master's	2 years	21 years	N/A
58	Black	Female	Some College	17 yrs	35 years	N/A
N/A	Black	Male	Doctoral	3 years	41 years	N/A
54	Black	Male	Associates	6 years	18 years	N/A

Table 2

Most Effective Measures and Departmental Policies for OIDV

Participants' perceptions of measures and policies on OIDV	Most effective measures and policies used for OIDV	Least effective measures and policies for OIDV	Example quotes
Straight Forward	Administrative leave		"Administratively means if they are found guilty, they will be terminated ". (P#5)
Clear	Internal investigation		"In internal affairs, when there is an investigation or administration investigation of that nature, that person is given a letter and instructed not to discuss what's going on with anyone." (P#6)
Transparent	Mental Health Wellness Initiatives		"There is a counselor here every day, Monday-Friday." (P#1, age 42)
Easy to understand	Employee Assistance Programs		'Well, talking to them and listening to them, I think it's very important as far as morale, offering them EAP (Employment Assistance Programs)." (P# 4)
Receptive	Continuous training		"We have to take through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement every two to four years, that's mandatory" (P#4, age 58)
Zero-tolerance	Procedures		"It is based on what the law says, you know, domestic violence, and its clear cut; we will make an arrest. "(P# 5 age N/A)
Joke		The unwillingness to be receptive to measures and policies for OIDV	"Pretty much they see it as a joke." (P#3 age 45)

Summary

I conducted interviews with six participants through narrative interviews and observations. After the sixth interview was completed, the researcher determined that saturation had emerged, and no more new data would occur. I proposed a sample size of five to 10 participants, consistent with qualitative phenomenological research.

There has been an increased effort to have DV preventive education, training, mental health wellness initiatives, and EAPs within law enforcement agencies. Also,

there has been a shift in the way officers can seek mental health wellness, through counselors who are available at some agencies 24 hours 7 days a week and others Monday to Friday. Based on the analysis from across the state of Florida, the most effective DV specific policies and measures for officers and new recruits include mental health wellness programs, EAPs, administrative investigations, internal investigations, continuous training, intervention, and preventive education for domestic violence.

This study does not try to duplicate what other researchers have done before. However, this study aimed to gain a wealth of knowledge from participants who have developed DV specific policies and or have measures they use in their agency to combat or prevent DV among their officers. The overarching theme that emerged during the collection of the data was that there is no code of silence that exists among officers; officers are going to report if they have knowledge of DV incidents and not say anything because they will be held accountable as if they committed the act themselves. I also concluded that officers must have a willingness to do what is morally right under the law, and their actions must align with the agency's OC values.

In Chapter 5, I interpret the findings of the study. This study also extends knowledge to the discipline by interconnecting the findings from Chapter 2. I analyze and interpret the theoretical/conceptual framework. This chapter describes the limitations of the study as they relate to trustworthiness. I also provide recommendations, implications for positive social change, and implications for further research. Chapter 5 concludes with the key lessons learned from this research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain a wealth of knowledge about measures and specific DV policies used among LEAs across the state of Florida to combat OIDV. This study was conducted to determine which specific DV policies and measures are working well and what is working poorly to combat DV among officers and recruits in the efforts to decrease the frequency of DV among officers and recruits and to improve polices and measures used by LEAs based on their perceptions.

The study data analysis revealed seven key factors: (1) The code of silence does not exist among law enforcement officers as it relates to DV, (2) the OC impacts officers perceptions toward DV, (3) OCT is still widely used in the social science field and remains a credible theory, (4) LEAs have specific domestic violence policies and measures used in their agency but they vary in how they were able to articulate what the policies direct state; however, LEAs are fully informed on how to explain the measures used when allegations and complaints are made against an officer for committing DV, (5) officers are more likely to report incidents of DV for fellow officers who may be at risk because if they know something and do not say anything their held accountable as well, (6) preventive training, continuous education, mental health wellness initiatives, and EAPs are key components in combating DV among officers and recruits, and (7) loss of employment, termination, loss of pension, and the inability to work for another agency.

Interpretation of the Findings

The data from this study confirmed prior research in Chapter 2 on the frequency with which OIDV occurs. This study's findings confirmed that OIDV occurs at a rate of about 5%, which is consistent with the literature in that there is no way to accurately determine the actual rate at which OIDV occurs. Since data on OIDV are usually obtained through self-reports. Something noteworthy happened when the researcher asked participants how often they find incidents of DV among their officers. Some participants' voice tone changed by becoming hesitant, while others were straightforward in answering the question.

Another noteworthy event occurred after one of the interviews was completed; one of the LEAs provided the researcher with a hard copy of their agency's policies on OIDV and related documents on DV. The researcher assumed that there was a code of silence and that officers would fail to report fellow officers who committed DV because of loyalty and solidarity. This finding was disconfirmed; the current data showed that there is no code of silence that exists among the LEAs interviewed regarding DV among officers in Florida, and they are not negatively affected by the code. The data from this study also showed that officers would report incidents of fellow officers who may be at risk of committing DV or who have allegations against them of DV.

The previous data in Chapter 2 showed that officers who fail to report unlawful behavior would not be held accountable for fellow officers' misconduct. This finding was disconfirmed; the current data from this study showed that when officers commit

wrongdoing and their fellow officers have knowledge of it and fail to report it, then they are held accountable as if they committed the act themselves.

In Chapter 2, the data confirmed that preventive education, mental health wellness initiatives, training, and EAPs are key factors in combating DV among law enforcement officers. The data in Chapter 2 also confirmed that Florida has Model Policies and measures specific to combating OIDV. The Florida Model Policies also include the procedures officers must take when responding to OIDV. The data confirmed that officers must notify their sergeant or the sergeant on duty, and then a chain of command will follow. Participants in Florida discussed how they have mandatory training for DV every 2 to 4 years.

Also, those participants who reported that if officers commit DV, then it could result in loss of employment, termination, loss of pension, and the inability to work for another agency; they thoroughly understand the consequences of DV. Many of the participants took DV allegations and DV complaints seriously because of the nature of the crime and the officers' responsibility to uphold the law as public servants.

Chapter 2 further described that OCT is one of the vital parts of an organization that LEAs use to guide their agency. This data confirmed the literature in Chapter 2 on the OCT. The data confirmed that LEAs have a zero tolerance policy perception toward OIDV; therefore, there is an environment where those individuals who violate the law or specific departmental policies on OIDV, and measures developed will be held accountable for their actions under the law. The literature suggests that there is a common and control culture that may be present within law enforcement, but the data was

unconfirmed. OCT includes patterns, behaviors, values, and beliefs that help shape participants' perspectives of their agency and what is morally acceptable and not. Participants were well-informed of their agency's procedures regarding responding to OIDV. In an OC, participants have a pattern within their agency of self-reporting fellow officers who may be at risk of committing DV or have allegations or complaints against them. Those participants who believed that their department's policies and measures are effective, clear, and straightforward expressed more confidence in the procedures the agency follows.

Limitations of the Study

After reviewing the findings, the researcher identified some limitations in this study. The recruitment process was difficult due to the nature of the study and the stigma associated with OIDV and officers' comfort level in participating in research on the topic. The aim of the study was to use a purposeful sample size of five to 10 participants. Despite the proposed sampling size, the interview process was completed after six interviews, in which saturation emerged. The researcher used a phenomenology design, in which saturation generally occurs in around five to 25 participants (Creswell, 2013; Hennink & Kaiser,2022). The study included male and female LEAs who have developed specific DV policies and or have measures in their agency to combat DV.

This study could not identify any measures or policies that worked poorly, other than the perception of a participant who perceived policies as a joke. Also, another criterion was that LEAs were required to have completed some form of DV training and have no allegations of DV pending. Results of this study may differ in other states,

regions, and geographic areas because the study was conducted in the state of Florida. Other states, regions, and geographic areas may utilize different specific DV policies and measures for their agencies.

Recommendations

This study was relatively small; however, it yielded plausible results. I recommend conducting a quantitative study of other countries, regions, and or geographic areas that allow for more data on participants using surveys or questionnaires. I recommend recruiting through the law enforcement agencies and offering an incentive for participation and inquiring about whether the agency could share a hard copy of their policies and measures used for combating OIDV. Offering incentives could increase the number of participants who may be willing to participate. I further recommend replicating this qualitative study, including questions on officers' stress levels, work-family conflict, trauma, alcohol, and substance abuse.

I also recommend that the researcher ask LEAs if there is anything else that they would like to add to the interview regarding OIDV. In addition, I recommend a sample of officers instead of LEAs to see if there is a difference in their perceptions of the most effective policies on OIDV and what works well and what works poorly for officers and recruits from their perspectives.

I also recommend that LEAs not only know the measures used in their agency as a response to OIDV but could articulate the policies transparently and effectively. Derived from the results of this study, I recommend more open communication, one-on-one staff meetings, building rapport, doing regular well-checks with officers, and

ensuring that officers understand the agency's policies on OIDV. Additionally, there are recommendations for activities that are tailored made for officers' families, recruits, spouses, and the community in which they serve to reinforce trust and encourage the importance of reporting DV allegations or any form of misconduct. I recommend continuous mandatory training, mental health wellness programs, EAPs, zero tolerance policies, and conducting an anonymous survey among officers to determine if there are resources that they would like to see developed in the agency to combat OIDV.

I also recommend the continued use of administrative investigation, internal investigation, administrative duty while the investigation is pending the outcome, and, depending on the situation, on a case by case basis. Furthermore, I recommend continuous holding those officers who commit DV be held accountable under the law as any other citizen, Also, I recommend LEAs continue to contact the chain of command as a response to OIDV incidents and reinforce the importance of maintaining the confidence of officers who report fellow officers who may be at risk.

Based on the literature in Chapter 2, I recommend that research be conducted on the lack of databases for the frequency of OIDV and the inconsistencies of reporting. This is consistent with prior research in that there is no database that tracks the number of OIDV incidents and the inconsistency of methodological issues (Mennicke & Ropes, 2016; Moran & Hodge, 2021). Future research is needed to provide law enforcement agencies with a better understanding of the impact that psychological abuse and sexual offenses have on officers' performance of duty and OC (Willaimson, 2021).

More research is needed on the impact OIDV has on officers' performance of duty, as well as enforcement agencies' OC (Brennan et al., 2023). To add to more research is needed on LEAs and policymakers to determine what measures are more effective in having officers comply with interventions and be at ease with their policies in their agency (Craddock & Telesco, 2022). To conclude with the recommendations, I recommend continuing interagency cooperation among LEAs to determine the most effective policies they use to combat OIDV among their officers, both locally and globally.

Implications

Based on the findings of LEAs in Florida, there are severe potential impacts for positive social change. First, officers are thoroughly vetted on how to respond to incidents of OIDV or allegations made by fellow officers. However, law enforcement agencies should reconsider ensuring LEAs, officers, and recruits can articulate and understand their specific department policies on OIDV and all measures used. At an organizational level and individual level, when LEAs, officers, and recruits can articulate and explain departmental policies and measures effectively, this reinforces departmental compliance and how officers respond to decision making when an incident occurs or allegations have been made.

In addition, at an organizational level, law enforcement agencies should conduct an annual review of the oath of officers, which should be included for all officers regardless of rank. Another implication would be to increase DV training from annually or every 2 years to every 6 months and provide incentives for those officers willing to

receive additional training. Also, at every level, regardless of community, organizational, or individual, additional resources for DV education and prevention could further aid in combating DV. Adding resources will assist with the efforts to ensure that the departmental values and mission are aligned. Evidence of transparency and clarity of policies and measures encourages officers' willingness to come forward with reporting incidents and allegations of DV, which has helped diminish the code of silence over time. In incidents where allegations or reports of DV by fellow officers are made, this improves the OC and the agency's morale, demonstrating that officers will be held accountable if they violate the laws and that there is a zero tolerance perspective towards DV.

Conclusion

Although there is a high frequency of incidents of DV in the state of Florida, incidents of DV among law enforcement professionals occur as well. The criminal justice system has developed OIDV specific policies and measures, such as Mental Health Wellness Initiatives, EAPs, prescreening, education, and training to prevent and combat DV among officers. There has been a limited amount of research on OIDV education and training for the prevention and combating of DV. Despite the Florida Model's Policy on OIDV and resources for law enforcement professionals' guidance, DV still occurs among LEPs. Officers' knowledge of the consequences of allegations or complaints of DV could lead to termination, arrest, loss of pension, and the inability to be gainfully employed at another law enforcement agency, which plays a significant part in law enforcement careers.

OIDV is a serious crime that seriously impacts the officer, the officer's family, the victims, the community, and the organization in which they serve. Officers already deal with behavior problems on a regular basis among people who violate the laws; therefore, they should be able to maintain their emotions because they are public service employees held to a higher standard; they accept an oath of office and are bound by a code of professionalism. However, law enforcement professionals' willingness to seek help when faced with challenges and stressful encounters could have a lasting impact on their behavior and play a significant role in the right direction.

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