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Role Identity and the Transition from Police Department to Civilian Life

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Susanne F. Tufano

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Abstract

Role Identity and the Transition from Police Department to Civilian Life

by

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MBM, Albertus Magnus College, 1998

BA, University of New Haven, 1995

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

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Abstract

An individual may internalize their role as a police officer which may affect identity when that role is changed at retirement. The purpose of this study was to measure the identity role effects of former police personnel who have transitioned from a police department to civilian life. Past research has indicated identity change with role transition. Social identity theory addressed individuals who categorize, identify, and compare themselves as part of a group. Role theory addressed behavior based on social membership, which may change when roles are transitioned. Adjustment regarding a voluntarily versus a forced early retirement from a police department was measured, along with continuation of work after retirement versus not continuing to work after retirement. Also, adjustment of retired police officers who continue employment in a police-related field versus a non-police-related field was measured along with length of retirement. A sample of 204 retired police personnel was recruited and participants completed a questionnaire. Data were analyzed to address the research questions using independent sample *t*-tests and one-way ANOVAs to determine relationships between variables. Results indicated that police officers are significantly better adjusted to a voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department, as $p < .05$. No difference in adjustment regarding continuation of employment after retirement from a police department, continued employment in a police-related or non-police-related field, or length of retirement of police officers was found. This study may potentially benefit communities in understanding that police departments could aid retired police officers with identity well-being in retirement.

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Dedication

I dedicate this academic achievement to my father, Anthony V. Ferraro, who I observed accomplish anything and everything he ever set his mind to. By watching him, I realized that I can also achieve and accomplish anything as long as I work hard at it.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Identity can define a person, and retirement can be a major life change that impacts identity for most individuals. Becoming part of a group may expose individuals to certain conforming behaviors, beliefs, and expectations with social support (Biddle, 1986). Police officers join a police organization usually with a commitment to integrate socially into the department for best functional working environment. Social membership in a police organization is important for an individual's self-esteem, and to stand in solidarity with their peer group is essential against any outside opposition that may harm a member of the group (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001). According to Chattopadhyay and George (2001), lower self-esteem and negative social identity may be associated with work-status dissimilarities between peer groups. Individuals may feel a loss of status and personal satisfaction when an important role has changed in their life (Biddle, 1986). Psychological separation from police service may prove to be difficult for some retirees when treated as civilians by the public with a loss of satisfying work, and isolation from a peer group that had previously provided them fellowship, group safety, and security (Kinnaird, 2015).

Background

Smith (2016) and Carter (2013) provided information on how identity shift can be a change in behavior dependent on role or group shifting. Wang and Shi (2014) and Dimitrova et al. (2014) provided information on well-being in retirement and identity; these were linked to relationships and resiliency. Research by Hill et al. (2015) and

Brandl and Smith (2012) addressed retired police officer length of retirement and bridge employment. Research by Asebedo and Seay (2014) and Potocnik, Tordera and Peiro (2013) showed that lower retirement satisfaction was associated with lower psychological well-being.

Problem Statement

Law enforcement officers may be more tied to their identity than employees in other positions, which can affect retirement adjustment and well-being. When retiring from a position that is linked to individual and social identity, there may be potential issues regarding the well-being of that retiree (Koenig & Eagly, 2014).

Identity is the characteristic of a person, wherein identification with a specific group of people can give strength and well-being to an individual (Belmi, Barragan, Neale, & Cohen, 2015). When police officers retire, they transition to civilian life and can lose their identity and well-being (Kinnaird, 2015). Loss of authority, uniform, and badge are linked to loss of identity for retired police officers (Sunderland, 2014). Loss of identity can often mean loss of status and family, with feelings of rejection and grief (Burns, 2015). For retired police officers, retirement means becoming a civilian and no longer belonging to a police force. Several qualitative studies addressed social identity, identity and behavior, identity shift regarding retired police officers, and collective identity and well-being. In a study by Smith (2016), the researcher sought to understand how the identity of retired police officers changed after they left the force. The two themes that emerged from the study were a shift of social identity with retirement changes (role shifters), and new job-same social identity after retirement (new job-same self) (Smith, 2016). A shift of social identity with retirement may indicate that identities

were reconstructed from previous occupational identity to post-retirement roles (Smith, 2016). New job-same identity after retirement means that the social identity was unchanged from work life to retirement because of engagement in similar employment opportunities (Smith, 2016). Some of these jobs involved employment that commanded the same respect or power from previous employment, communication with former coworkers, or community work (Smith, 2016). For police officers, this may involve working as a police dispatcher or in some type of security position after retirement. Smith recommended that future researchers consider the existence of gender differences in retirement, the retirees' understanding of the retirement phase of life, and the link between organizational communication and retirement (Smith, 2016). Carter (2013) sought to understand how identity and behavior are influenced by environmental factors; results indicated that moral identity influenced individual behavior when alone or part of a group.

Research is needed to examine the effects of the identity verification process in additional social context situations (Carter, 2013). Dimitrova, Chasiotis, Bender, and van de Vijver (2014) investigated the influence of collective identity on well-being. The researchers found that individuals with a stronger collective identity reported higher levels of well-being (Dimitrova et al., 2014). Dimitrova et al. (2014) indicated that future studies are needed to investigate the generalizability of collective identity and well-being of youth across diverse contexts.

The nature of the retirement process was studied in an annual psychological review by Wang and Shi (2014). Outcomes associated with retirement indicated that financial, physical, and psychological well-being were linked to resiliency and mortality rates

(Wang & Shi, 2014). The researchers recommended that future research should include examination of different contextual levels, causal relationships, and interdisciplinary approaches (Wang & Shi, 2014).

Other studies addressing quantitative methods involved retired police officers, bridge employment, and length of retirement. Brandl and Smith, (2012) compared length of retirement of police officers and city employees from Detroit. Results showed that retired police officers had significantly shorter retirements than city employees (Brandl & Smith, 2012). More research is needed regarding attention to health issues during and after employment to find why length of retirement is shorter for police officers as compared to other city employees (Brandl & Smith, 2012).

Hill, Snell and Sterns (2015) used a quantitative approach to understand the transition to extended work life for police officers after retirement. It was found that retired officers were more likely to participate in bridge employment when part-time positions were held in conjunction with full-time employment as police officers when compared with police officers who did not hold a part-time position while fully employed. Hill et al. (2015) stated that future research into developed identity in police officers regarding transitioning to bridge employment was needed.

Studies regarding the potential loss of identity as a person transitions from employment to retirement are important in showing maintenance of sense of self, well-being and resiliency. For individuals whose group identity was an important feature of their employment, loss of identity formed through group cohesion has been found to have a variety of consequences such as decreased psychological well-being, and increased alcohol consumption (Wang & Shi, 2014), along with loss of empathy from traumatic

experience, depression, isolation, and loss of work satisfaction (Kinniard, 2015). Police officers are more exposed and at risk to developing these life stressors than other professionals (Roach, Cartwright, & Sharratt, 2017). The phenomenon of transitioning with these possible stressors from group identity to single identity is particularly important for newly retired police officers.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to measure the effects of identity on former police personnel who have transitioned from a police department to civilian life using identity role change. The need for this increased understanding is based on Koenig and Eagly's (2014) theory of disappearance of self into a certain role, and the transition of self when that role is changed. Retired police personnel and identity transition have received minimal attention in the literature, and information regarding police identity and retired police transition has not yet been understood.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Do police officers who voluntarily retire adjust better than officers who are forced into early retirement from a police department?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a1): Police officers are significantly more well-adjusted to retirement with voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_01): There is no difference of adjustment to retirement regarding a voluntary retirement versus an early retirement from a police department.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Do police officers who continue to work after retirement adjust better than police officers who do not continue to work after retirement?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a2}): Police officers who continue to work after retirement significantly adjust better than police officers who does not continue to work after retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_{02}): There is no difference in adjustment regarding participation in continuation of employment after retirement from a police department.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Do retired police officers who continue to work in a police-related field adjust better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a3}): Police officers who continue to work in a police related field adjust significantly better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field.

Null Hypothesis (H_{03}): There is no difference regarding adjustment and continued employment in a police-related or non-police-related field.

Research Question 4 (RQ4): Do police officers that are retired longer adjust better than those who are newly retired?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a4}): Police officers who are retired longer adjust significantly better than newly retired police officers.

Null Hypothesis (H_{04}): There is no difference regarding adjustment and length of retirement of police officers.

I hypothesized that retired police officers have varying negative feelings regarding loss of identity and relationships upon termination of employment, especially if employment was not terminated on their own terms due to a medical issue or because of unbecoming conduct.

Theoretical Framework

The theories that I used in this study were social identity theory and role theory. Social identity theory addresses individuals who define themselves as part of a group to experience positive emotions (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001). Social identity theory was developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979, and includes the components of self-categorization, social identification, and social comparison. In this study, I used social identity theory to show how identity is affected as a police officer retires and transitions to a civilian. I also used the role theory in this study. Role theory addresses behavior that is guided by an individual's and others' expectations according to their membership in a social position (Biddle, 1986). When a role is embraced by an individual, the self may disappear into this role; behavior, beliefs, and attitudes may change when future roles are changed (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). The role theory was developed by Margaret Mead, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton in the 1920s, and includes structural and interactionist components. I also used the role theory in this study to address the role change effect from a police officer to a civilian.

Nature of the Study

This study was quantitative in nature and based on research of retired police officers to measure identity loss issues. I measured perceptual identity loss of former police personnel in retirement using a questionnaire. The recruited retired police officers answered the research questions via a questionnaire pertaining to transition and retirement. A sample of 204 retired police officer responses using the snowball method of electronic administration were compared after data collection and audit. This study focused on retired police officer self-report responses. I used Quantitative analysis with

SPSS software for statistical purposes in this study. This proposed study used independent samples *t*-tests and ANOVAs to compare officers' responses using a Likert Scale for significance. I selected this method to focus on measuring identity loss with role change and transition from the police department to civilian life for retired police officers.

Definition of Terms

Aftercare: Subsequent or follow up care.

Bridge employment: Paid work after an individual retires to provide extra income and aid in transition to retirement.

Canteen culture: Sub-cultural police talk of the world when officers are away from management.

Civilian: An individual who is not a member of a particular group or profession like a police force.

Collective Identity: Group membership, commitment, and closeness to other group members; sharing behavioral characteristics (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, Bendr & vande Vijver, 2014).

Disengagement: The process of withdrawal or separation from a particular group.

Diaspora: A social entity of individuals who identify with each other even when separated (Degli Esposti, 2017).

Group Permeability: The ease of an individual joining a group.

Identity: The characteristic put forth by a person, wherein identification with a specific group of people can give strength and well-being to an individual (Belmi, Barragan, Neale & Cohen, 2015).

Identity transition: A life change that forces adaptation to different life situations, like a change in employment status.

Life Course Perspective: Examination of life events using different variables (Bennett, Beehr & Lepisto, 2016).

Over-identification: Extreme internalization; loss of identity within an organization (Galvin, Lange & Ashforth, 2015).

Peritraumatic dissociation: A coping mechanism used to protect oneself in a traumatic situation (McCanlies et al., 2017).

Pluralistic ignorance: An individual's behavioral change in accordance with perception of what other group members support (Karaffa & Koch, 2016).

Psychological well-being: mental well-being (Asebedo & Seay, 2014).

Relational Identification: Connections with members belonging to one's workgroup (Zhang, Chen, Chen, Liu & Johnson, 2014).

Resiliency: The ability to recover quickly.

Retirement adjustment: Adapting to the period of life after leaving a job and ceasing to work.

Role theory: Addresses behavior that is guided by an individual's and other's expectations according to their membership of a social position (Biddle, 1986).

Self-categorization: To perceive collections of people and define or identify oneself as part of a particular social group (Dimitrova et al., 2014).

Self-stigma: An individual's internal fear of rejection.

Social comparison: Determination of social and personal self-worth based on perception of being like others.

Social Connectedness: Participation in social interactions with family, friends, community, and volunteering (Lancee & Radl, 2012).

Social identity theory: Individuals who categorize themselves as part of a group to experience positive emotions (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001).

Transition: The process of changing from one condition to another (Transition, n.d.).

Work centrality: The extent that an individual identifies with a work role (Armstrong-Stasson, Schooner & Zinni (2012).

Assumptions

In this study I assumed that there is negative psychological well-being regarding loss of identity for retired police officers. This assumption was due to the social identity theory and role theory wherein social roles and group identification are linked to positive social well-being (Heaven et al., 2013; Meister, Jehn & Thatcher, 2014). When an individual is part of a group dynamic, disengagement from that group creates feelings of loss. I also assumed that the population consisted of mostly male participants, and that police officers were ready to retire or of retirement age and identified with being a police officer.

Scope and Delimitations

I conducted this study to understand the impact of how identity impacts retirement among law enforcement officers. A delimitation of this study is that the snowball sample of retired police officers may not reflect the opinion of all retired law enforcement officers. Another delimitation is the amount of responses from retired female officers as opposed to male officers.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is the snowball method which relies on people's willingness to forward their former colleagues the survey, and the willingness of former police personnel to take the survey. Another limitation is that truthful information is not obtained from the survey results.

Significance of Study

This research filled a gap regarding what services, if any, retired police officers needed as part of transition from one status in society to another. It has implications for future retirement of police officers with support services, bridge employment options, aftercare health checks, and peer groups consisting of formerly retired police officers. This topic is unique as retired police personnel receive minimal attention in the literature, and possibly lack attention concerning aftercare with identity issues. The original contribution of this study was surveying retired police officers to obtain necessary information for services pertaining to retirement, identity and well-being. This research supported insight with details needed for services using a sample of the population of retired police officers from known retirees and retired police officer associations across the United States. The potential contribution of this study may be a change in policy within police organizations that may eventually impact insurance costs when correct resources are used by police departments to improve mental and physical lives of retirees by affecting resiliency in retirement. Monies can be saved on failed programs and services. The results of this study provided much-needed insights into services for retired police personnel.

Summary

For retiring police officers, turning in the badge, gun, and uniform can be detrimental to their identity, as they may no longer feel that they are part of a group or work community. The “us versus them” mentality of police officers can be impacted by the media, demographic area or community feelings regarding police officers. This mentality can unify police officers as they identify with each other, or the police officer role. Upon retirement, it may be necessary for retirees to substitute the relationships they leave behind to preserve psychological well-being and resiliency (Kinnaird, 2015). Positive retirement adjustment, satisfaction, and well-being may be related to supportive relationships (Asebedo & Seay, 2014). The literature review will analyze social identity and role theories, as well as review identity and retirement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The occupation of police officer includes exposure to severe stressors including shooting incidents, abusive violence, traffic accidents, and dead bodies (Hartley, Sarkisian, Violanti, Andrew & Burchfiel, 2013). Police officers are first responders and are exposed daily to traumatic incidents that can affect their psychological well-being (Bullock & Garland, 2017; Garbarino, Cuomo, Chiorri, & Magnavita, 2017; Jones, 2017; Heffren & Hausdorff, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2017). Police officers are expected to be adaptable when dealing with and reacting to a variety of different incidents; they are also expected to be resilient to the stress they may feel (Ainsworth, 2002).

Stress may be due to police officer's frequent reactions to perceived threats that may induce more adrenaline and result in physical symptoms of stomach ulcers, indigestion, and tiredness (Ainsworth, 2002). Environmental demands may eventually wear on an officer, which creates negative feelings and the inability to cope with daily stressors (Ainsworth, 2002). Some stress factors for police officers may be the media, the court system, and community attitude (Ainsworth, 2002).

Unpredictable incidents during employment may also lead to a high risk of threatened occupational, individual and social functioning which can be intensified by risk factors (Marchand, Boyer, Nadeau, Beaulieu-Prevost & Martin, 2015). Some risk factors are depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (McCanlies, Sarkisian, Andrew, Burchfiel, & Volanti, 2017; Hartley et al., 2017), daily strain, and suicide (Bullock & Garland, 2017), along with distress, anxiety, burnout (Garbarino et al., 2017), alcohol

dependency, drug abuse, heart disease, cancer, divorce, social isolation, and disrupted sleep patterns (Roach, Cartwright, & Sharratt, 2017).

Prior trauma may be associated with peritraumatic dissociation, a protective depersonalized coping mechanism that may occur in the face of an overwhelming traumatic situation. Peritraumatic dissociation is a symptom of PTSD and depression and increases the risk of these disorders in police officers (McCanlies et al., 2017). Higher rates of PTSD in female police officers were associated with frequency of traumatic events, while higher rates of PTSD in male police officers were associated with recent observation of assault victims (Hartley et al., 2013). These events are often re-experienced post traumatically and may not always disappear when a police officer retires (Heffren & Hausdorff, 2016).

Police officers have a lower life expectancy than others, which may be due to occupational stress and police culture (Steinkopf et al., 2015). Police culture is unique due to the daily excitement, informal practices and challenges such as power struggles within the organization and constant change in the field, and defensive solidarity of crime fighting and uniformity (Lawson, 2014). Police officers may be perceived as individuals with high self-esteem and confidence; these perceptions may influence behavior (Tewksbury & Copenhaver, 2016). Police culture guides police officer behavior (Broome, 2014). Police officers are influenced by the nature of the organizational culture in which they work, which involves perceived similarities, presented image, and perception of power that contribute to identity; this influenced identity may force officers to behave specific to the organizational expectations, hierarchy structure, and rules (Lawson, 2014). Management and organizational stressors may impact a police officer

psychologically (Ainsworth, 2002). Some of these organizational stress factors may be excessive reports, poor training and career opportunity, and lack of rewards (Ainsworth, 2002).

Organizational culture can be understood as the values, norms, and attitudes that are shared by certain employed individuals in organizations with particular purposes, an example being law enforcement (Lawson, 2014). New recruits are expected to conform to police department norms (Ainsworth, 2002). Police identity can be shaped by organizational culture, which involves interaction with the public and authoritative decisions that are made in their accepted role in the organization (Lawson, 2014). A “canteen culture” is the typical subcultural police talk of views of the world heard when officers are away from management (Ainsworth, 2002). Broome (2014) stated that police rely on other officers for safety and security, as well as approval. Shared experiences, job hazards, and official permission to use force if necessary can create a loyal police culture (Steinkopf et al., 2015). Police action is influenced through power and identity struggles (Lawson, 2014). The exertion of power and control may establish authority and determine the membership identity of a group, such as police officers, that can become a dominant presence in society which defines reality and beliefs (Lawson, 2014). A loyal police officer’s primary identity may create an “us versus them” mentality which may be useful at work, but detrimental to relationships outside of the department when the police role cannot be “turned off” (Ainsworth, 2002; Steinkopf et al., 2015). Isolation from relationships outside of the department may occur (Steinkopf et al., 2015).

The police organization has a broad purpose of authority in which police officers are influenced by and adapt to achieve membership in pursuit of their own identity

(Lawson, 2014). Organizational identity development can be influenced by an individual's personality characteristics (Galvin et al., 2015). A police organization that ignores stress without providing appropriate psychological counseling may affect a police officer detrimentally (Ainsworth, 2002). In a study by McCormack and Riley (2016), lack of organizational support directly impacted the participants who experienced a loss of self and core identity after years of dedicated service to a department considered to be family; time and hope were deemed necessary by these police officer participants to heal and redefine their lives.

Retired police officers have had exposure to work stressors, are no longer susceptible to organizational pressure to minimize stressors, and are at risk for physical health issues (Pole, Kulkarni, Bernstein, & Kaufmann, 2006). A study by Brandl and Smith (2012) regarding police postretirement mortality showed that there is a significantly shorter length of retirement and younger age at death for police officers than other retired city employees in the city of Detroit. Premature death may be explained by the loss of a strongly bonded and socially supportive subcultural network and identity status (Brandl & Smith, 2012). Additional interest in health and well-being concerns should be researched, including identity adjustment with loss of status after departing the brotherhood occupational lifestyle (Brandl & Smith, 2012).

Previous studies have focused predominantly on identity or retirement. There has been minimal research regarding police identity and retirement. The need for this research is based on Koenig and Eagly's (2014) concepts of the disappearance of self into a certain role and transition of self when that role is changed. I designed this study to measure police identity and its effect on the retirement of police officers. I conducted an

overview of current and relevant literature regarding identity that included social, role, collective, and work identity. I also conducted an overview of current and relevant literature regarding retirement that included transition, type of retirement, employment after retirement, and retirement satisfaction. I conducted an overview of current and relevant literature of police officers including organizational culture, influences, retirement satisfaction, resiliency, well-being, and the importance of social roles, and support. I obtained literature through academic databases such as Google Scholar and ProQuest. Keywords included *police, retirement, identity, psychological well-being, adjustment, bridge employment, satisfaction, transition, and resiliency*.

The literature review begins with an analysis of social identity and role theories. Identity was then reviewed as the dependent variable with respect to collective identity, work identity, and over-identification. I reviewed retirement as the independent variable with respect to voluntary versus involuntary retirement, bridge employment, retirement transition, and social connectedness. Finally, I related identity and retirement to police with respect to police stigma and stereotypes, police retirement satisfaction, retirement resiliency, and well-being, along with social roles and support.

Social Identity Theory

Individuals may strive to become unique to others, unique to a role, or unique to a social identity (Carter, 2013). I used social identity theory in this study to address the behaviors of individuals who categorize themselves as part of a group to experience positive emotions (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001). Social identity theory was developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979 and includes the components of self-categorization, social identification, and social comparison (Smith, 2016).

Social identity theory suggests that individuals seek to enhance self-esteem, self-pride, and positive self-image by becoming a member of a distinctive group, which is thought to be superior to other groups (Ainsworth, 2002). This may affect a police officer's thoughts regarding others (civilians) outside the police department, and lead to feelings of loss of this important group membership upon retirement when they transition to civilian life.

Relationships and similarities to others are of greatest importance in social identity theory (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, Bender, & van de Vijver, 2014). Relational identification assumes emotional belongingness, uniqueness, and connections with others who hold similar beliefs and values (Zhang et al., 2015). Positive emotions and a consistent sense of self may be sought by individuals by verifying identity with conformity (Carter, 2013). Relevant meaningful behavioral responses are uniform in a group in order to benefit the group (Carter, 2013).

Uncertainty reduction is a part of social identity theory in which an individual has a need to reduce uncertainty in retirement that may be related to finances, self-concept, and family (Smith, 2016). Social identity in retirement may be related to retirement satisfaction, which may be accomplished with more retirement planning.

The purpose of this research was to understand social identity changes in police retirees. Social identification involves definition of oneself with group affiliation, which can include a role-specific group (Smith, 2016), such as police officers. An individual can gain self-knowledge through organizational affiliation (Smith, 2016). Police officers can identify with the police department. An unsatisfactory transition out of the workplace can occur with loss of organizational affiliation and an individual needing to

find a new social identity (Smith, 2016). Retirement can shift identity with the role change and participants in this study changed when new roles replaced old roles with identity reconstruction (Smith, 2016). Other retirees in a new job with the same environment maintained the same social identity through working a similar job (Smith, 2016). An example of this for a police officer may be employment in some type of investigative or security role after retirement. In this study, I used social identity theory to show how identity is affected as a police officer retires and transitions to a civilian.

Role Theory

I used role theory in this study to address behavior that is guided by an individual's and others' expectations according to their membership in a social group (Biddle, 1986). The role theory was developed by Margaret Mead, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton in the 1920s, and I used it in this study to address the role change effect from a police officer to a civilian. Roles may be tied to social integration into a formal organization and the community wherein behaviors project a self-image (Biddle, 1986). Role theory encompasses predictable behavioral patterns that are expected of a person and others and adhered to in situations or formal organizations (Biddle, 1986). When a role is embraced, the individual self disappears; behavior, beliefs, and attitudes may change when future roles are changed (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). Walker and Lynn (2013) argued that role meanings are linked to an individual's social encounters and identity. More research was needed to understand the link between social networks and the self (Walker & Lynn, 2013).

Occupational roles can help determine status and are influenced by stereotypes or generalization of group behavior (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). An occupational role is a

significant source of identity for many (Wille & DeFruyt, 2014). Conformity to a role may be linked to power and enforcement of obedience by a social system over an individual (Biddle, 1986). When an individual takes on a social role or position, the individual's personality adapts to the expectancies of that role (Wille & De Fruyt, 2014). Role expectations are internalized into the self through dedication to groups that are role-based (Walker & Lynn, 2013), such as police organizations. Koenig and Eagly (2014) attempted to explain if social role theory describes accurate stereotypes of social groups, and if a change in role would cause a change in stereotype. Results indicated that expected role changes matched actual change, but not all role changes altered stereotypes (Koenig & Eagly, 2014).

Role theory maintains that well-being and self-worth are important aspects of the work role (Henning, Lindwall & Johansson, 2016). The role theory alleges that when work is central to an individual's self-identity, transition to retirement may prove to be very difficult (Damman, Heinekens, & Kalmijn, 2015). A role transition may cause stress in coping with social position changes (Biddle, 1986) and can be construed as a critical life event that affects satisfaction and psychological well-being (Hershey & Henkens, 2014). Circumstances surrounding the role change (forced, circumstances beyond control, or own volition) showed a decline in life satisfaction (Hershey & Henkens, 2014). The workforce strategy of using tools to evaluate the timing of a transition by employees from the job can aid in future life satisfaction (Hershey & Henkens, 2014). Retirement triggers a role transition for individuals which lessens the role of worker, the role of organizational member, and career role while increasing the roles of family and community member (Wang & Shi, 2014).

Identity

Identity is connected to an individual's past, present, and future projected self (Brown, 2015). An individual's total identity is made up of the self, social relations, and occupational combination (Lawson, 2014) and is tied to emotions (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014). Individuals actively shape their own identities (Kira & Balkin, 2014), which may consist of interconnected subidentities (Miscenko & Day, 2015). A positive identity is associated with resilience and good self-esteem (Brown, 2015).

Identity can be determined based on an individual's view of a situationally appropriate image of behavioral expectation (Lawson, 2014). Brown (2015) reviewed the importance of the identity work concept in organizations. Identity is made up of evolved meanings that individuals attach to themselves through social interaction and personal awareness of identity formation (Brown, 2015). Personal identity can be created and sustained through activities that support that identity (Brown, 2015).

An individual's identity may be composed of processes that may be emotionally charged (Brown, 2015). This emotionally charged identity can occur through the work identity of police officers to aid in achieving a sense of stability in an ever-changing environment. Identity work is distinctive and consistent with continuous socialization in organizational life and leads to self-examination with new professional roles, response to workplace issues, and identity threat situations or identity regulation wherein self-doubt may occur (Brown, 2015). New police recruits look to identify and are often influenced by seasoned officers to conform socially and perceive others outside of the department in a negative way (Ainsworth, 2002). This identity can be lost instantaneously with career change or role transition (Brown, 2015).

Degli Esposti (2017) reviews identity change processes of individual and collective social belonging. Diaspora is an existing social entity of individuals who are identify with and are influenced by each other even when separated (Degli Esposti, 2017). Police officers' physical identities are observed when they wear badges and uniforms, and social identity is associated with involvement of similar situation and group membership.

Social identity is linked to cooperative behavior, a sense of belonging, fair treatment, and group worth (Bradford, 2014). A study by Murphy, Sergeant, and Cherney (2015) examines the social identity role in citizen/police cooperation. Citizen cooperation with police in controlling crime was predicted by public perception of justice, and police performance (Murphy et al., 2015). Group identity and societal membership regarding same values with police is important to citizens who can be cooperative if they identify and communicate with police and are treated with neutrality, respect, and fairness (Murphy et al., 2015).

Identity behavior is influenced and activated across social situations with meanings (Carter, 2013). Identity is linked to and motivates behavior which operates from within the self and is activated across social situations when perceived meanings match their identity (Carter, 2013). Moral identity can be influenced differently with group pressure, as opposed to being alone (Carter, 2013). Results in a study by Carter (2013) showed that when moral identity was activated, behavior was influenced when individuals are alone, part of a group, and when group members coerce individuals into behaving differently than their personal identity meanings.

In a study by Belmi, Barragan, Neale, and Cohen (2015), it was revealed that threats to an individual's group identity devalued one's group, sometimes due to negative stereotyping, which may affect work attitude and performance. Status-based rejection may occur with identity threat (Belmi et al., 2015), which may also occur with involuntary retirement of a police officer.

Collective Identity

The most important part of individual identity is group membership which depersonalizes an individual with collective identification to work together cohesively for group success (Zhang, Chen, Chen, Liu, & Johnson, 2015). Collective identity is self-perceived social membership and commitment with a symbolic group (Miscenko & Day, 2015). It encompasses attachment, importance of the group to self-identification, behavioral involvement, and self-categorization as a member in a specific social group (Dimitrova et al., 2014). In a study by Dimitrova, et al. (2014), collective identity and psychological well-being in Bulgarian adolescents were measured and resulted in greater well-being in individuals with stronger collective identity consisting of the collection of the categorical identities of family, religion and ethnicity. The collection of identities can enhance belongingness and meaningfulness, which is positively related to well-being; positive identity is psychologically beneficial to an individual's well-being (Dimitrova et al., 2014).

Work Identity

Work may be considered a source of identity (Wille & De Fruyt, 2014). Work identity derives from meanings of organizational membership (Kira & Balkin, 2014), and is defined as self-meaning for an individual regarding characteristics, social roles, or

group membership (Miscenko & Day, 2015). Individuals obtain identity from work, and work obtains identity from individuals (Ashcraft, 2013). Work status is a category in which employee behavior and attitude is influenced by others in the group; similarity to the group would posit higher self-esteem and positive social identity (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001).

When employees define and internalize themselves in terms of the organization, they identify with that organization (Miscenko & Day, 2015). Occupational identification is when an occupation is internalized within the self (Miscenko & Day, 2015). In a study by Wille and De Fruyt (2014), occupational socialization was reviewed, in which personality traits shape individuals over time.

In a study by Ashcraft (2013), evidence that an occupation is tied to social identity was sought. Occupations are unique social and collective identities (Ashcraft, 2013), and for some individuals, self may be defined by occupational work, which can also affect identity outside of the workplace (Ramarajan & Reid, 2013). Organizational and occupational culture, structure, policy and practice can posit work-related pressure (Ramarajan & Reid, 2013).

Individuals are interested in how others perceive them at work which affects their internal and group identity (Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014). Meister et al. (2014) reviewed how mistaken identity at work affected individuals, and how important it was to them that their true identity, desired and perceived image was recognized, not just their selective professional identity. Misidentification at work can influence relationships and well-being and be destructive to the work-group (Meister et al., 2014). Preferred work

identity is used to show an individual's emotional reaction to work (Kira & Balkin, 2014).

Personality is predicted and predicts work environment (Wille & De Fruyt, 2014). Millward and Haslam (2012) surveyed 314 participants and measured the identity fit of organization, workgroup, and career in a private and public healthcare facility. Employee perception of their individual identification and sense of self can be affected by culture in the organization and altered by leadership (Millward & Haslam, 2012). Exclusive workgroups are preferred by most individuals in an organization for identity fit, meaning, and function (Millward & Haslam, 2012). An example of an exclusive workgroup may be a specialized unit in a police department.

A job title may be important for an individual's satisfactory work identity experience. Self-reflective job titles are symbolic social and cultural identity badges, symbols of status, and they construct images which are presented to the world (Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014). In a study by Grant et al. (2014), employee involvement in job title creation was said to reduce stress, reduce emotional exhaustion, and develop meaningful employee identity in an organization. Identity is expressed and recognized by others, which reduces emotional exhaustion in a stressful work environment and increases psychological safety (Grant et al., 2014).

Work identity may be associated with relationships, memberships, and roles that can reduce uncertainty of who an individual is (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014). Events, like retirement, can trigger a change or disruption in the work environment, which creates uncertainty and modifies the meanings attached to the self (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014). This forces the individual to find a new emerging internal identity to regulate

emotions for identity stability with feedback from others in the social environment (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014).

Identity and work environment influence each other (Miscenko & Day, 2015). Kira and Balkin (2014) reviewed how work and identity can influence organizational performance and individual well-being. Misalignment of work and identity may posit negative emotional consequences (Kira & Balkin, 2014).

Miscenko and Day (2015) reviewed over 600 articles regarding identity exclusiveness and identity change in work-related behavior. Interpersonal work identity is relationship oriented with affirmation from peers in a workgroup which can improve productivity (Miscenko & Day, 2015). Lower turnover rate, job satisfaction, and positive involvement in employment stems from a strong workgroup identity (Miscenko & Day, 2015). Zhang et al. (2014) review collective (shared characteristic) versus relational (role relationship) identification in workgroups and found that they are separate ideas. Job satisfaction can occur with a strong professional identity, self-worth, and internalized meaning attached to a certain role (Miscenko & Day, 2015).

Over-identification

Over-identification may increase when an individual's perception that others believe the individual's performance is associated with the organization becomes relevant to an individual's sense of self. Over-identification is extreme, and may occur when the self is diminished, goals of the organization are internalized, and where an individual's well-being is sacrificed for the organization (Galvin, Lange, & Ashforth, 2015). The individual may be lost in the organization's identity, and he/she may take psychological ownership (Galvin et al., 2015). An individual may highly identify with being

interchangeable, have a perception of oneness, or being central to an organization, and the organization defines the self with power, authority, and interest (Galvin et al., 2015). Loss of this over identification from an organization due to retirement may be detrimental to one's psychological well-being.

Retirement

Retirement may be considered a period of life that begins at the end of a career, and may include physical decline, freedom, limited possibilities due to monetary constraint, or loss of status and responsibility (Sargent, Lee, Martin, & Zikic, 2012). It may also encompass an individual's emotional withdrawal from work into other activities (Feldman & Beehr, 2011). Retirement is not only physical withdrawal, but also psychological and behavioral withdrawal from the workplace (Wang & Shi, 2014). Psychological security in retirement is considered an important need for individuals to maintain relevance with purposeful living, and life satisfaction (James, Matz-Costa, & Smyer, 2016).

Retirement is a turning point in life which posits new status, changes in living conditions, and possibly relief from work (Wetzel, Huxhold, & Tesch-Romer, 2016). It is one of the most significant life transitions, which can impact life satisfaction and well-being due to transition anticipation (Abolhassani & Alessie, 2013). This lifespan transition may be influenced by the path taken to accomplish the transition, and contingent on status and role held (Wang & Shi, 2014).

Retirement is considered an important factor in the life course, where social factors can become influential (Phillipson, 2012). The life course perspective predicts a

positive post retirement life for some individuals which includes a decrease in psychological commitment and physical demand (Wang & Shi, 2014).

Retirement planning may be financial, psychological, or behavioral (Asebedo & Seay, 2014). Asebedo and Seay (2014) and Feldman and Behr (2011) reviewed three stages of retirement planning and decision making. Three stages of retirement planning may encompass pre-retirement, transition, and post-retirement planning (Asebedo & Seay, 2014). Thoughts regarding retirement and retirement planning classes may be part of the pre-retirement stage, phased retirement may be a part of the transition stage, and satisfaction in a post-retirement stage may be related to positive psychology, meaning in life, accomplishment, and family support (Asebedo & Seay, 2014). Retirement decision making is cognitive in nature and includes imagining the future, assessment of past work history and deciding to depart the workforce, while acting on transition (Feldman & Behr, 2011).

The choice to retire is a major life event or life stage in which the action of retirement is desired or matches an individual's self-image or role (Wang & Shi, 2014; Pettican & Prior, 2011). If an individual does not have that choice due to an involuntary or medical retirement, no motivated choice can be made, and this may become a negative adjustment in life for the retiree.

Voluntary versus Involuntary Retirement

Workers can better anticipate transition and are well prepared when voluntarily retiring (Abolhassani & Alessie, 2013). Older workers may feel forced to retire because of informal pressures from the organization due to higher organizational costs of health care, higher wages, or lower performance (Bennett et al., 2016). Contrary to this, a study

by Henning et al. (2016) posits individuals who retire at an older age experience increased well-being. A study by Abolhassani and Alessie (2013) reviews life satisfaction of German participants during unemployment, involuntary, and voluntary retirement. Results indicated that higher satisfaction derived from higher income, and that unemployment has a significantly negative effect on life satisfaction at first, but increased satisfaction after adaptation to a new life situation after 5 years, while involuntary and voluntary retirement has no significant effect on anticipated life satisfaction (Abolhassani & Alessie, 2013).

Involuntary retirement can occur due to health status changes, company buyouts and organizational restructuring (James et al., 2016). Unemployment or early retirement may affect satisfaction because it is a deviation from the norm (Wetzel et al., 2016). Early retirement can occur when there are physical and mental health issues (Anderson, Papazoglou, Arnetz, & Collins, 2015; Feldman & Beehr, 2011). Early or delayed retirement influences transition from work to retirement (Phillipson, 2012) with anxiety and depression risk factors due to early retirement (Tuohy, Knudsen, & Wrennall, 2005). A study by Rhee, Mor Barak, and Gallo (2016) examined the effects of involuntary retirement among 1,195 participants, aged 50 and older. One third of retirees perceive retirement as involuntary, or forced, therefore affecting financial stability, identity, and well-being which are needed for life satisfaction (Rhee et al., 2016). Results indicated a negative association with health and well-being due to finances, but positively associated financial stability with voluntary retirement (Rhee et al., 2016).

Individuals who retire for health issues and retire earlier than expected are likely to experience decreased psychological well-being (Wang & Shi, 2014). Police officers

who are discharged early from their department often have decreased psychological well-being. In a study by McCormack and Riley (2016), all participants from police departments had varying feelings of isolation, weakness, failure, internalized guilt and shame, disappointment, eroded self-worth, loss of sense-of-purpose, loss of sense of self, disconnection and rejection from the department, betrayal, and lack of support after discharge. Negative feelings of self and confidence due to a previously ingrained police identity posited poor adjustment and psychological distress; this can last for years and negatively affect recovery from PTSD (McCormack & Riley, 2016).

Involuntary transition from the workplace can affect life satisfaction. A 6-year study by Hershey and Henkens (2014) explores changes in life satisfaction of older Dutch workers in a process of voluntary versus involuntary transition. Results showed that life satisfaction was lower with involuntary transition, and higher satisfaction with voluntary transition (Hershey & Henkens, 2014). Involuntary retirements posited negative effects on health, well-being, depression, physical disability, increased consumption, and smoking (Hershey & Henkens, 2014).

Bridge Employment

Bridge employment is phased retirement and helps retirees ease into retirement (Wang & Shi, 2014), while delaying the retirement transition (Henning et al., 2016). Bridge employment is a reinvention and new transition to retirement, wherein employment is sought after retirement mostly among younger retirees (Sargent, Lee, Martin, & Zikic, 2012). Engagement in career bridge employment was more likely sought by healthy younger retired males than older retirees, women, or individuals with health problems (Wang & Shi, 2014). Some who partake in bridge employment may do

so to continue professional identity, to resist aging, to be challenged, to be socially engaged, and to retain status and power for the self (Sargent et al., 2012). Bridge employment can be beneficial as a productive activity for older workers, reduce age discrimination, contribute to quality of life, promote personal and social positive psychological identity, new role structure, personal accomplishment, and retirement and adjustment satisfaction while maintaining life continuity (Topa, Alcover, Moriano, & Depolo, 2014).

Bennett, Beehr, and Lepisto (2016) examined decisions of individuals to fully retire versus engage in bridge employment. In this study, 482 older participants were surveyed regarding retirement decisions (Bennett et al., 2016). It was found that the decision to retire may be predicted dependent on non-work variables including family and marital satisfaction, sex, gender role orientation, role overload, and psychological distress (Bennett et al., 2016). Individuals who have learned skills from their former jobs are more likely to engage in bridge employment along with high career goal achievement, high role overload, high pressure to retire, high traditional gender role orientation, and low psychological distress (Bennett et al., 2016).

Police officers have a unique skill set, work life, and work identity. Job-related skills and experiences can be utilized and transferred into other activities while adapting to retirement (Henning et al., 2016). A study by Hill, Snell, and Sterns (2015) reviews the factors which lead retired police officers to bridge employment (extended work life) using a survey of 211 retired officers. Skills, knowledge, and ability from part-time work is important to obtain in future career endeavors when transitioning in retirement (Hill et al., 2015). Many officers have an early option for retirement in their 40s, and bridge

employment can aid in transition and adjustment for officers who define themselves through work and socialize through work (Hill et al., 2015). Results showed that full-time police officers who also held a part-time position were more likely to participate in bridge employment compared to police officers who were full-time without part-time employment (Hill et al., 2015). Bridge employment may also aid retired officers with a continued sense of accomplishment and structure for those not ready for retirement (Hill et al., 2015). Respect and recognition were important factors in continuing to work, with high rank predicting job satisfaction and meaningfulness (Hill et al., 2015). Hill et al. (2015) suggest future research in developed identity in police career and transition to bridge employment.

Retiring from a stressful job can be a positive experience, and satisfaction with retirement can mean less likelihood of retirees wanting to return to the work force (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2012). Armstrong-Stassen, Schosser, and Zinni (2012) found that individuals had interest in returning to the same organization they retired from after experiencing financial and role loss, while Wang and Shi (2014) found that bridge employment in a different field was sought by individuals who worked in physical and psychologically stressful jobs. Working in retirement is normal to retain security, growth and social ties (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2012). Armstrong-Stassen et al. (2012) believe that future research regarding work centrality (the extent an individual identifies with a work role) is needed along with relevancy to retirement.

Retirement Transition/Adjustment/Satisfaction

Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly (2014) reviewed emotional reaction to identity loss due to transition from a work role. Identity tied to the workplace may be occupational or

organizational wherein team membership and work groups align (Conroy & O’Leary-Kelly, 2014). Loss of a work role may become an interruption of an existing identity which can create instability and a need for development of a new identity (Conroy & O’Leary-Kelly, 2014). The identity transition process includes separation from old identity, transition, and reincorporation to a new identity (Conroy & O’Leary-Kelly, 2014).

Identity plays an important role in an individual’s adjustment or identity shift into retirement. Smith (2016) reviewed identity shift in retirement using 23 participants and identified role shifters and new job-same self retirees. An identity shift in retirement may be known as a role transition wherein identity changes due to a change in work status and recreated with a new work position or redefined professional identity (Miscenko & Day, 2015; Feldman & Beehr, 2011). Identity transition in retirement may be associated with group permeability, which is the ease of joining and connecting with a group that holds positive images for an individual (Feldman & Beehr, 2011).

Educational background and preparedness can aid in retirement transition and bridge employment (Hill et al., 2015). A study by Wetzel et al. (2016), used German Socio-Economic Panel information to understand short-term social status change and long-term resources affected by education in retirement adjustment. It was found that life satisfaction was consistent with individuals who held more education, but a decline in individuals with less education (Wetzel et al., 2016). More education provided better opportunities in retirement and adjustment to retirement (Wetzel et al., 2016).

Adjustment from a governmental position to a civilian can be difficult. Military war personnel adjustment to civilian life may be hindered or fail due to disassociation and

avoidance of stressors (Ferrajao & Oliveira, 2016). A study by Damman et al. (2015) aims to understand adjustment to loss of work role in the life course. Results indicate that retirement adjustment issues vary, with loss of status considered a difficult adjustment (Damman et al., 2015). Two challenges in retirement may be adjustment to loss of work role, and retirement satisfaction (Damman et al., 2015). Loss of work role may encompass loss of social contacts, income, and status, especially for retirees who are divorced or who are highly devoted to their work without alternative roles to fall back on (Damman et al., 2015). Results also indicate that the longer individuals are retired, the less likely individuals are to miss social contacts from work due to less importance over time, or because of having other social contacts in their life (Damman et al., 2015).

Henning et al. (2016) reviewed well-being and continuity in the transition to retirement. Results suggested that most retirees maintain well-being due to life time experiences that helped retirees cope with mental and physical health later in life, although lack of social support and strong attachment to the workplace compromised these results (Henning et al., 2016). Also, more adjustment issues arise with individuals who are forced to retire (Henning et al., 2016). Interventions and adaptive strategies are needed to cope with loss of well-being due to retirement by developing a satisfying post retirement lifestyle (Henning et al., 2016). Financial and social resources can predict negative well-being at first, but positive changes in a retiree's well-being later (Wang & Shi, 2014).

A study by Asebedo and Seay (2014) investigated retirement satisfaction and positive psychology. Retirement well-being was linked to positive psychological factors of positive emotion, positive relationships, meanings, and accomplishment (Asebedo &

Seay, 2014). Significant evidence encompassing family support, optimism, purpose in life, and perceived mastery supported positive psychology and retirement satisfaction (Asebedo & Seay, 2014). Pettican and Prior (2011) found that satisfaction in retirement involved renegotiation of routines wherein participation in meaningful employment was sought when desired, and not structured.

Social Connectedness

Social connectedness influences retirement (Lancee & Radl, 2012). The decision for retirement transition is dependent on an individual's social network (Phillipson, 2012). Leaving a social role can mean great loss to an individual by leaving important relationships. Social connectedness is quality social life participation (Lancee & Radl, 2012).

Police officers have to promote cooperation within social groups in society. A study by Bradford (2014) examined how social identity related to police procedural justice and social groups to promote cooperation of citizens they are to represent and protect. Cooperation may be predicted by group membership status, and fair treatment (Bradford, 2014). Inclusion and value in a social group is important in encouraging cooperation, prosocial behavior, affiliation or shared identity, and support of group representatives (Bradford, 2014). When citizens feel like they identified with police officers, and felt included in their group, and officers treated them well, there was an increase in citizen cooperation with police (Bradford, 2014).

Social connectedness prevents loneliness (Lancee & Radl, 2012). Family and friends can be a substitute for work relationships (Wang & Shi, 2014). Lancee and Radl (2012) reviewed how social connectedness affected work life and the timing of retirement

transition. Results depicted that the impact of social connectedness depended on age and participation (formal or informal). Formal participation delayed retirement to prevent role loss (Lancee & Radl, 2012). Social gatherings were part of informal participation, which suggested earlier retirement (Lancee & Radl, 2012).

Police Identity and Retirement

A police officer's identity may be tied to his/her law enforcement career and grieving for this loss of identity, status, self-worth and work family in retirement may be necessary when transitioning to a regular citizen (Burns, 2015). Loss of identity can result from loss of a structured work role due to work-related injuries (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014).

The police personality is an adaptation to certain attitudes wherein there is constant potential for danger or violence which causes stress; this can affect officer self-regard (Tewksbury & Copenhaver, 2016). Psychological disengagement from situations may make an officer feel deprived of self-esteem (Tewksbury & Copenhaver, 2016). Tewksbury and Copenhaver (2016) found that officer self-regard was predicted by amount of fast food consumption, sleep, work shift, depression, and exercise in a sample of state police officers.

In a study by Broome (2014), self-identity feelings changed after involvement in a shooting situation with personal understanding or meaning of the event and how police officers view themselves. Another part of meaning-making of a shooting using deadly force for a police officer is necessary or justified to save lives (Broome, 2014).

Police Stigma and Stereotypes

Stigmas and stereotypes place people into categories by characterizing members of a group identically (Ainsworth, 2002). This takes away an individual's differences and simplifies to a group of people; police are often categorized as a group (Ainsworth, 2002).

The public often questions police authority (Inzunza, 2015). Rantatalo (2016) reviews how the media influences and is influenced by police identity, and police work. The media points out meanings of specialized police practices with work identity wherein social environmental experiences influence and manifest occupational identity (Rantatolo, 2016). Police departments may also try and influence media reports of policing as the public perception of police is dependent on this information for confidence in the organization, and also change policies; 18 specialized unit officers narrate their story in a case study to limit stereotyping (Rantatalo, 2016).

Police officers may not report PTSD and depressive symptoms (McCanlies et al., 2017), and are reluctant to ask for or receive mental health intervention for fear of others perceiving them as weak (Ainsworth, 2002), or discovering and labeling them (Watson & Andrews, 2017). While Heffren and Hausdorff (2016) find that police officers feel comfortable seeking aid from friends and family members, Vogel, Bitman, Hammer, and Wade (2013) fear public stigma. In a study that took place over three months, Vogel et al. (2013) reviewed that public stigma can negatively impact and predict an individual's internal sense of self. Individuals do not seek treatment for mental health concerns due to perceptions of negative public stigma or stereotyping, which leads to self-stigma of mental illness (Vogel et al., 2013). Self-stigma is an individual's internal fear of rejection, or anticipation of that rejection which may lead to isolation (Bullock &

Garland, 2017). This can damage a police officer psychologically, wherein they devalue themselves, and negatively impact self-esteem and confidence which can affect their jobs and work performance.

Coworkers may also question police status with negative stigma and stereotype labels associated with an officer. A study by Steinkopf, Hakala, and Van Hasselt (2015) states that police officers are influenced by culture and mentality which may hinder them from receiving needed psychological and physical interventions, but also reviews that motivational interviewing may be effective in improving well-being and performance of duties. A mental illness prejudice may posit discrimination and loss of status in the eyes of coworkers, also with negatively stigmatizing reliability, commitment, character, integrity, and ability issues; along with perceived incompetence and cowardice (Watson & Andrews, 2017).

Karaffa and Koch (2016) and Bullock and Garland (2017) review that police officers often avoid seeking mental health services for various job stressors which may not be socially acceptable due to public and self-stigma which may impact their sense of identity. This coincides with the concept of pluralistic ignorance, wherein an individual may change behavior in accordance with what they perceive other group members support (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Police officers are expected to put aside feelings to make responsible decisions, be dependable, and control their stress with the ability to cope with pressure in critical situations (Inzunza, 2015; Bullock & Garland, 2017).

Mental illness stereotyping for police officers may be detrimental to recovery as they may be viewed as incompetent, dangerous, and unpredictable, and a negative stigma can be viewed as a social identity (Bullock & Garland, 2017). Police officers perceive

that their coworkers receive less mental health support than in reality, and that this negative attitude towards mental health support may change with reduced public and self-stigma, so that officers may seek treatment (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Decreasing public stigma can aid individuals with reservations regarding obtaining needed treatment for prospective life satisfaction and well-being. Public stigma of police personnel with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and barriers to seeking support can be reduced with the aid of peer supported programs like Trauma Risk Management (Watson & Andrews, 2017).

Police Retirement Satisfaction/Resiliency/Well-being

Police occupational stressors including injuries, deaths, felonies, assaults, and homicides can negatively affect health and wellness, and also possibly lead to drug use and alcoholism (Tewksbury & Copenhaver, 2016). Retirement satisfaction may be affected by unresolved or irreversible emotional impact that has changed the officer after involvement in threatening or deadly situations in which the officer tries to maintain normal societal social structure (Broome, 2014).

Attaining personal goals in employment with promotion may positively be related to retirement satisfaction. Identity satisfaction for a police officer may also mean completion of a maximum length of service (Hill et al., 2015).

Resiliency is healthy functioning and stability of physical health, mental health, and interpersonal relationships in adverse situations (Pole et al., 2006). Resiliency is physiological and psychological flexibility, awareness, control, and recovery during hostile conditions (Anderson, Papazoglou, Arnetz, & Collins, 2015). This includes an officer being aware of when he/she needs support, and when he/she can continue to

function and manage threats without support (Anderson et al., 2015). Anderson et al. (2015) reviewed resilience and stability among military and police personnel after traumatic conditions. Psychological resiliency after involvement in threatening or deadly situations and extremely disruptive daily events may be contingent on and circumvented with mental preparedness training and experience (Marchand et al., 2015; Broome, 2014; and Anderson et al., 2015). Resilience training starts with mental preparedness, and may encompass goal setting, visualization, positive self-talk, and tactical breathing to improve health and well-being (Anderson et al., 2015).

Resiliency in police officers may be linked to an individual's personal characteristics. A study by Pole et al. (2006) found that significant resilience in a sample of retired male Michigan police officers was linked to being married, less neurotic personality, less history of family mental illness, less exposure to trauma, less distancing and escape avoidant coping strategies, less safety concerns while performing their duties, less administrative issues, and less hiding aspects of work from support groups like family and friends.

Well-being is successful psychological adjustment to retirement (Wetzel et al., 2016). Well-being is negatively affected when a retiree experiences major role loss due to failure of replacing the work role to a non-work role, such as with family and community member roles (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2012). Beneficial psychological well-being in retirement is related to post-retirement activity including bridge employment, leisure activities and volunteering (Wang & Shi, 2014).

Social Roles and Support

Social roles are linked to well-being, and may provide an individual with structure, identity, worth, and purpose (Heaven, Brown, White, Errington, Mathers, & Moffatt, 2013). Departure from a social role can mean great loss to an individual by leaving important relationships. Loss of status, identity, social isolation, and aimlessness can occur during retirement transitions (Heaven et al., 2013). Roles and identity may need to be redefined during transition and lifestyle adjustment which can affect well-being (Heaven et al., 2013). Heaven et al. (2013) reviewed that the promotion of meaningful social role interventions in retirement is important for positive health and well-being that may have been lost after retirement. Maintaining meaningful social relations including social ties, engagement, integration, participation, connections and connectedness is associated with positive health (Heaven et al., 2013).

Social support can be an important coping strategy (Roach et al., 2017) which can aid with recovery from PTSD with feelings of well-being toward the future (Ferrajao & Oliveira, 2016). Hart (1995) reviews that emotion-focused coping contributed to negative work experiences, while Carter (2013) posits that an individual can experience positive emotions when others confirm or verify behavior, which motivates the individual's morality, even when influenced by social forces.

Fellow police officers can act as a family support system in police departments (Hill et al., 2015). Retiring police officers may have difficulty departing a job, whether it is a voluntary or involuntary retirement due to medical, age, or discipline. Loss of this police subculture, may mean a loss of social support, camaraderie, fellowship, isolation, and accessible dependence on another for empathy (Kinniaird, 2015). Changes may include a loss of police power, police family, and attached identity that may have long

lasting effects on an individual even after retirement (Kinniaird, 2015). Loss of excitement when responding to new situations can also negatively affect an officer upon retirement, as well as physiologically when losing the police role. Disability retirement is most traumatic with loss of police identity, and substitution for the police subculture is necessary for well-being in retirement.

Police and military service members are similar roles that deal with violence and PTSD. In a study with a sample of 60 military veterans by Ferrajao and Oliveira (2016), perceived social support for Portuguese war veterans was lacking for participants who had not recovered from PTSD; this created psychological and social environmental problems such as social withdrawal and symptoms of moral injury. Moral injury was related to personal betrayal and failure of individual moral standards and military role which affected mental health (Ferrajao & Oliveira, 2016). Moral injury is also the feeling of betrayal from an organization while damaging trust, which may occur over years of employment and limit an individual's growth and psychological well-being (Shay, 2014). Recovery may entail moral repair, and mentalizational ability or understanding the mental state of the self after the occurrence of traumatic experiences (Ferrajao & Oliveira, 2016). Higher mentalization ability posits higher social support, social competence, and lower distress for military members (Knetig, 2013). Retired military members can miss the lifelong identity, culture and traditions of the military life including status, training, customs, lines of authority, and uniform representation (de Medeiros & Rubinstein, 2016). Some retirees may decide to live near military facilities and keep long distance relationships with other service members (de Medeiros & Rubinstein, 2016).

These findings may also transfer to include police officers. McCormack and Riley (2016) discuss moral injury and PTSD of seven retired police officers, wherein officers were discharged due to the diagnosis of psychological distress. Integration into civilian life after medical discharge without organizational support may be difficult, but at the same time, police culture observes seeking social support negatively, which may later affect families (McCormack & Riley, 2016). Familial identity is the perception that an individual has an extended family's social, emotional, and committed support to the family relationship which is associated with positive adjustment and well-being (Dimitrova et al., 2014).

Summary/Conclusion

This review of the literature was the foundation for the current study. Although there seems to be information on identity and also on retirement, more research was needed on how identity affects retirement for police officers. Social identity theory suggests that personal identity is influenced by group relationships, which may be important to police officers regarding cohesiveness. In retirement, this group identity may be lost, which can affect an individual's personal identity, making retirement a negative experience for that individual. The role theory suggests that a work role can change behavior and personality expectations, which may be linked to status and power of that role. Police officers who self-identify or over-identify with their work role may feel stress and negative well-being with the role transition in retirement. Social identity theory and role theory may be tied to an individual's emotions, and loss of identity or role due to retirement transition and may bring forth negative feelings of psychological well-

being and dissatisfaction. A new life role and personal identity may be necessary for some police retirees to have a positive retirement experience.

Retirement is withdrawal from the workplace and is a significant life transition for most police officers who strongly identify with that work role. Increased unsatisfactory feelings with a forced retirement over a voluntary retirement may occur with loss of the loyalty and solidarity of the police culture. Bridge employment may be an option for retired police officers to aid in this critical transition.

After review of the literature, it seemed that social connectedness and support from family, friends, and the police organization were optimal for retirement satisfaction and well-being. This research advanced information needed by retrieving responses from questionnaires of retired police officers to find out how identity affected retirement satisfaction.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter includes a description of the purpose, the research design, the sample, instrumentation, data analysis, reliability, and ethical considerations. I will also present an overview of the purpose of the study and the selection of the research design. I will also review the characteristics of the sample and the instrumentation, along with data analysis, reliability and ethical considerations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to measure the effects of transition on former police personnel from police departments to civilian life using identity role change. The need for this increased understanding is based on Koenig and Eagly's (2014) disappearance of self into a certain role, and the transition of self when that role is changed. Retired police personnel and identity transition have received minimal attention in the literature and information regarding police identity and retired police transition has not yet been understood.

Research Design and Approach

I used a quantitative design to understand police officer identity in retirement. The theories that I used in this study were social identity theory and role theory. Social identity theory addresses individuals who categorize themselves as part of a group to experience positive emotions (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001). In this study, I used social identity theory to show how identity is affected as a police officer retires and transitions to civilian life. I also used the role theory as a foundation for this study

developed by Margaret Mead, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton to address behavior that is guided by an individual's and other's expectations according to their membership in a social position (Biddle, 1986). The self may disappear into a role when embraced by an individual; behavior, beliefs, and attitudes may change when future roles are changed (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). I utilized the role theory in this study to address the role change effect from a police officer to a civilian.

Sample

Participants

This was a quantitative correlational study. The participants were drawn from a sample population of retired police officers dispersed throughout multiple states in the United States. I recruited a group of 204 retired police officers for this study using the snowball method. I sent the link for the questionnaires via e-mail to retired police officers who were known to myself and my chair. I asked those police officers to forward the link to the questionnaire to other retired officers. The inclusion criteria were: any former police officer with a minimum of 5 years in a career in law enforcement who had retired (either regular or medical retirement). I defined retirement as anyone who was no longer working as a law enforcement officer regardless of whether full retirement had been granted by the institution. Officers who were terminated from a department due to conduct issues were not included in this study.

Procedures

I developed a police identity and retirement scale questionnaire based on the scientific literature to find possible impact to the retirement adjustment of police officers. I used the questionnaire as a pilot project as it encompassed opinion questions to obtain

responses that became the primary source of data. This questionnaire is an experimental instrument that has not been normed as of yet, but in future research it may have face and construct validity. The role theory and social identity theory guided the research regarding police officer transition from the police department. I measured retirement adjustment based on retirement status, along with how officers function in retirement dependent on continuation or discontinuation of work status. Finally, I measured how retired police officers function dependent on length of retirement. Data collection procedures using the snowball method included sending and retrieving questionnaires to retired police officers as they were a difficult population to reach. This study relied on the snowball method. Retired officers may not have been easily accessible due to possible relocation after retirement or limited computer use. I recruited participants through a snowball method starting with the researcher and the researcher's chair forwarding a link to known retirees, who in turn forwarded the link to other retirees. I gave participants an informed consent to read and submit before participating in the study. Due to the concerns regarding confidentiality with this population, submission of the informed consent served as consent. I used Qualtrics software to collect the data, with access and storage limited to myself and my dissertation chair.

Instrumentation

I developed the instrument for this study called the Police Identity and Retirement Scale, which is a self-report written questionnaire in a fixed format. I developed this instrument specifically for this dissertation and it was completed by participants to gather anonymous response information regarding retired police officers. This instrument contained eight demographic questions, and 18 Likert Scaled items. The ratings on the

Likert Scale had a 5-point range (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Scores were reversed for eight items. The possible range of scores was 18–90. Higher scores indicated strong police identity and less retirement adjustment and well-being. The research interview questions in the questionnaire were based on concerns addressed in the scientific literature.

Data Analysis

Quantitative research was the most appropriate approach for answering the research questions in that there was a certain number of participants used in the study and statistical analysis and interpretation of results. The target population was 75 retired police officers from various agencies across the United States recruited using the snowball method. Data were collected by using computer questionnaires via Qualtrics software. The research questions were used to address different aspects of retirement including timing of retirement (early versus late), post-retirement employment status, and the effects of length of time since retirement. The independent variables in this study were type of retirement, post-retirement employment status, and length of retirement. The dependent variable was identity.

I used quantitative analysis and SPSS software for statistical purposes in this study. I used Independent Samples t-test and ANOVAs to compare retired officer responses and find any significance in this study. I selected this method to focus on measuring identity loss with role change and transition from the police department to civilian life for retired police officers. Data analysis plans included organizing, reading, coding, interpreting, and validation of information. The data helped in understanding the possible effects of transition on former police personnel from a police department to civilian life. These

results may not be generalizable to all retired law enforcement population. The research questions, alternative hypotheses, and null hypotheses are listed below for review.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Do police officers who voluntarily retire adjust better than officers who are forced into early retirement from a police department?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a1): Police officers are significantly more well-adjusted to retirement with voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_01): There is no difference of adjustment to retirement regarding a voluntary retirement versus an early retirement from a police department.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Do police officers who continue to work after retirement adjust better than police officers who do not continue to work after retirement?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a2): Police officers who continue to work after retirement significantly adjust better than police officers who does not continue to work after retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_02): There is no difference in adjustment regarding participation in continuation of employment after retirement from a police department.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Do retired police officers who continue to work in a police-related field adjust better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a3): Police officers who continue to work in a police related field adjust significantly better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field.

Null Hypothesis (H_03): There is no difference regarding adjustment and continued

employment in a police-related or non-police-related field.

Research Question 4 (RQ4): Do police officers that are retired longer adjust better than those who are newly retired?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a4}): Police officers who are retired longer adjust significantly better than newly retired police officers.

Null Hypothesis (H_{04}): There is no difference regarding adjustment and length of retirement of police officers.

Ethical Considerations

An ethical consideration of this study consisted of carefully choosing appropriate questions to the retired police population for the Police Identity and Retirement questionnaire. All participants were given informed consent, but no consent forms were signed in this study due to confidentiality. By participating and completing the study, participants understood consent acknowledgement that was included in the invitation.

Avoiding pain or emotional distress in research is imperative (APA, 2010). There were no physical risks, and minimal possible emotional risk to the participants in this study. When engaging in research, clarification of the use of the research is needed. Standard 8.02 of the APA guidelines reviewed informed consent to research, including the purpose, the right to decline, potential risks, benefits, incentives, and the limits of confidentiality (APA, 2010). This questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous and the participant could cease participation at any time. No financial incentives were offered.

Participants were given an informed consent in the questionnaire link. Due to the concerns regarding confidentiality with this population, the participants clicked on an “I consent” button in the invitation to the study, but remained anonymous. Information

about how to request the outcome of the study was included in the informed consent. I used Qualtrics software to collect the data. Access to the data was limited to myself and my dissertation chair. The data could not be withdrawn after sent in to me due to participant anonymity.

Data were reported in this study without identifying participant information. The data were handled in accordance with APA ethical standards.

Summary

This chapter provided the research questions, the design method, the participant selection process, data collection, and ethical considerations. This quantitative study measured the effects of identity loss on former police personnel who have transitioned from a police department to civilian life. The participating retired police officers filled out questionnaires with 18 questions designed to understand possible identity loss in retirement. I discussed the benefits of the study on this retired population of participants. The results of this study are further discussed in Chapter 4. Recommendations will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

I designed this study to measure police identity and its effect on the retirement of police officers and focuses on the effects of retirement on police identity. This chapter includes an analysis and explanation of results from the questionnaire.

The goal of conducting this quantitative study was to assess if there is a connection between identity and retirement transition in police officers. Researchers have shown that behavior may be guided by an individual's and others' expectations according to their membership in a social group (Biddle, 1986). Koenig and Eagly (2014) reviewed the possible disappearance of self into a certain role and the transition of self when that role is changed. However, very little research has been conducted to address the relationship between police identity and how retired police transition to civilian life. I designed this study to address a gap in the literature regarding police identity and retirement. The independent variable was retirement, and the dependent variable was identity.

I designed this research to assist in identifying resources regarding retirement transition from one status in society to another. This topic was unique, as retired police personnel receive minimal attention in the literature in regard to identity issues. The original contribution was surveying retired police officers to obtain necessary information pertaining to retirement, identity, and well-being. This information could be useful in the development of future services for police officers in retirement transition.

The research questions that guided this study were:

1. Do police officers who voluntarily retire adjust better than officers who are forced into early retirement from a police department?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a1): Police officers are significantly more well-adjusted to retirement with voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_01): There is no difference of adjustment to retirement regarding a voluntary retirement versus an early retirement from a police department.

2. Do police officers who continue to work after retirement adjust better than police officers who do not continue to work after retirement?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a2): Police officers who continue to work after retirement significantly adjust better than police officers who does not continue to work after retirement from a police department.

Null Hypothesis (H_02): There is no difference in adjustment regarding participation in continuation of employment after retirement from a police department.

3. Do retired police officers who continue to work in a police-related field adjust better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a3): Police officers who continue to work in a police related field adjust significantly better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field.

Null Hypothesis (H_03): There is no difference regarding adjustment and continued

employment in a police-related or non-police-related field.

4. Are police officers who are retired longer adjust better than police officers who are newly retired?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a4}): Police officers who are retired longer adjust significantly better than newly retired police officers.

Null Hypothesis (H_{04}): There is no difference regarding adjustment and length of retirement of police officers.

My hypothesis was that retired police officers have varying negative feelings regarding loss of identity and relationships upon termination of employment, especially if employment is not terminated on their own terms; this being a medical issue or injury.

In this chapter, I will discuss the descriptive statistics as well as the results of the Independent Samples t-tests and the ANOVAs.

Demographics

Demographics included in the questionnaire contained current age, years on the job, age at retirement, gender, years retired, type of retirement (normal versus forced), and career and type of career (police-related vs. non-police-related) after law enforcement. The participants were between 32 and 89 years, with a median of 65 years. Participant years on the job were between 8 and 44 years, with a median of 25 years. Age at retirement was between 25 and 65 years, with a median of 48 years. Regarding gender, there were 174 male participants and 28 female participants (two responses in this category were missing). Out of the 204 participants, 49 were retired between 1–5 years, 26 were retired 5–10 years, 19 were retired 10–15 years, and 110 were retired 15

or more years with a median of 37.5 years. About 54% of the population was retired more than 15 years. Out of 204 valid responses, 156 participants had a normal retirement, while 48 participants retired due to a medical issue or injury; about 77% of the population had a normal retirement. One hundred and forty-eight participants (72.5%) continued with a career after law enforcement, while 56 did not. Out of the 148 responses of continued career after law enforcement, 79 participants (about 54%) continued employment in a police-related field, while 68 participants continued employment in a non police-related field (One response not recorded).

Demographic information is shown below in Table 1:

Table 1

Demographics of Retired Police Officer Participants

<u>Factor</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>Median Years</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Current Age	204	65	
Years on the Job	204	25	
Age at Retirement	204	48	
Gender			
Male	174		
Female	28		
Missing	2		
Length of Retirement		37.5	
1-5 years	49		53.26
5-10 years	26		51.96

10-15 years	19	56.21
15+ years	110	53.96
Type of Retirement		
Normal	156	52.77
Medical Issue or Injury	48	58.44
Career after Law Enforcement		
Yes	148	54
Police-Related Field	79	54
Non Police-Related Field	68	53.79
No	56	53

Note. n=number of participants.

Data Collection and Analysis

I used a snowball sampling method and contacted retired police officer associations across the United States via e-mail. I provided a brief introduction in the e-mail invitation and a link to the questionnaire was provided through Qualtrics (Appendix A). I developed and used an 18-item questionnaire using a Likert Scale to identify levels of police identity. Cronbach's Alpha showed a score of 0.62 for 10 items, excluding the eight items with reversed scores. This shows that the questionnaire developed had minimal internal consistency and reliability. An eight-question demographic questionnaire included questions on current age, years on the job, age at retirement, gender, years retired, type of retirement, career and type of career after law enforcement. I collected quantitative data for this study through the administered questionnaires via a

unique link. Participants completed the questionnaire at their convenience. Retired officer participation was voluntary and anonymous.

A total of 204 retired police officers responded to the study invitation and accessed the online survey. Of the 212 initial respondents, eight answered the consent form but did not answer any of the questions so I excluded those data sets from further analysis. A total of 204 participants completed the survey, which met and surpassed the initial sample size of 75 participants. The time frame for data collection was approximately 2 weeks.

I used an Independent Samples *t*-test for RQ2 and RQ3 to analyze and compare means. I chose a one-way ANOVA for RQ1 and RQ4 to study the effect and interaction of two or more independent variables and test for significance between groups.

Research Question 1

RQ1 was: Do police officers who voluntarily retire adjust better than officers who are forced into early retirement from a police department?

A significant number of participants had a normal retirement ($n=156$) as opposed to participants forced to retire with a medical issue or injury ($n=48$). An ANOVA was conducted to compare identity in normal retirement and retirement due to a medical issue or injury. I used cumulative identity as the dependent variable and normal retirement versus retirement due to a medical issue or injury (type of retirement) as the independent variable. I randomly selected participants for the purposes of analysis; every third participant was selected so that both groups had an equal number of participants. The overall *F* test did show significance; $F(1, 68) = 8.957, p = 0.004$. The variance between groups was 8.957 with 1 degree of freedom. The variance within the sample is larger at

3269.675 than between groups at 430.668, which means that the variance across the two groups vary significantly. This had a small effect size at $d=0.116$. There was a 95% confidence interval that the mean difference of retirement was not less than 50.79 and not greater than 61.66. For a normal retirement, the mean was 52.76 and the standard deviation was 7.078. For a retirement due to medical illness or injury, the mean was 58.44 and the standard deviation was 6.482. The analysis supported a relationship between a normal retirement and retirement due to a medical issue or injury, as $p < .05$. The effect size was calculated ($d= 0.116$), which signified a small effect size. These results suggest that the null hypothesis was rejected, and that police officers are significantly better adjusted to a voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department.

Research Question 2

RQ2 was: Do police officers who continue to work after retirement adjust better than police officers who do not continue to work after retirement?

A significant number of participants obtained bridge employment after retirement from a police department ($n=148$), as opposed to participants who had no career or bridge employment after retirement ($n=56$). An Independent Samples t -test was conducted to compare identity in police officers who continue to work after retirement and officers who do not continue to work after retirement from a police department. There was not a significant difference in the scores for career after retirement ($M=54.01$, $SD=6.98$) and for no career after retirement ($M=53.05$, $SD=6.32$); $t(202)=.90$, $p=0.37$. The effect size was small as $d < 0.2$ (0.14). There was a 95% confidence interval that the mean difference regarding career after law enforcement is not less than -1.1459 and not greater

than 3.0658. Results showed that the null hypothesis could not be rejected, and that there was no difference in adjustment regarding participation in continuation of employment after retirement from a police department.

Research Question 3

RQ3 was: Do retired police officers who continue to work in a police-related field adjust better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related field?

Out of the participants who had a career after law enforcement, slightly more of the population kept a job in a police-related field ($n=79$) as opposed to employment in a non-police-related career ($n=68$). An Independent Samples t -test was conducted to compare identity of officers who continue to work in a police-related field versus a non-police-related field. There was not a significant difference in the scores for police-related field ($M=54.00$, $SD=6.62$) and for a non-police-related field ($M=53.79$, $SD=7.21$); $t(145)=.18$, $p=0.86$. The effect size was small as $d < 0.2$ (0.03). There was a 95% confidence interval that the mean difference regarding police-related and non-police related fields is not less than -2.0506 and not greater than 2.4624.

The null hypothesis could not be rejected as there was no difference regarding adjustment and continued employment in a police-related versus a non-police-related field.

Research Question 4

RQ4 was: Do police officers that are retired longer adjust better than those who are newly retired?

For the one-way ANOVA the data was independent, had equal variances, and was

distributed normally. The cumulative identity was used as the dependent variable and years of retirement (categorical) was the independent variable to find significance between groupings. Post hoc tests were not conducted as the overall F test did not show significance, as $p > 0.05$; $F(3, 200) = 1.559$, $p = 0.201$. The variance between groups was 1.559 with 3 degrees of freedom. The variance within the sample was larger at 9183.525 than between groups at 214.725, which means that the variance across the groups vary significantly. This had a small effect size at $d = 0.02$. For 1–5 years retired, the mean was 53.26, and the Standard Deviation was 7.350. For 5–10 years retired, the mean was 51.96, and the Standard Deviation was 7.039. For 10–15 years retired, the mean was 56.21, and the Standard Deviation was 8.148. For 15+ years retired, the mean was 53.96, and the Standard Deviation was 6.174. This result did not support a relationship between years retired and adjustment into retirement as $p > .05$. There was no difference regarding adjustment and length of retirement of police officers.

Summary of Results

The results were significant for RQ1, but not for RQ2, RQ3, or RQ4. The independent variable of type of retirement did have a relationship with identity. The independent variable of career after law enforcement did not have a relationship with identity. The independent variable of career in a police-related field versus a career in a non police-related field did not have a relationship with identity. Finally, the independent variable of years retired did not have a relationship with identity.

The interpretation of the findings from this study is included in Chapter 5 along with study limitations, recommendations, and implications for this research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to measure the effects of identity on former police personnel who have transitioned from the role of a police officer to civilian life. The need for this increased understanding is based on Koenig and Eagly's (2014) theory of disappearance of self into a certain role, and the transition of self when that role is changed. Retired police personnel and identity transition have received minimal attention in the literature, and information regarding police identity and retired police transition is only beginning to be addressed.

Research Findings

RQ1: Do police officers who voluntarily retire adjust better than officers who are forced into early retirement from a police department? Findings suggested that police officers are significantly more well-adjusted to retirement with voluntary retirement versus a forced retirement from a police department. The effect size was calculated ($d=0.116$), which signified a small effect size

RQ2: Do police officers who continue to work after retirement adjust better than police officers who do not continue to work after retirement? Findings suggested that there is no difference in adjustment regarding participation in continuation of employment after retirement from a police department.

RQ3: Do retired police officers who continue to work in a police-related field adjust better than retired police officers who continue employment in a non-police-related

field? Findings suggested that there is no difference regarding adjustment and continued employment in a police-related or non-police-related field.

RQ4: Do police officers that are retired longer adjust better than those who are newly retired? Findings suggested that there is no difference regarding adjustment and length of retirement of police officers.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this questionnaire study was that it may not represent all cultures or all police in the United States. Female participation was lacking due to the underrepresented number of women in law enforcement. Another limitation was that participants may not have responded to all questions candidly. Also, the questionnaire may not have addressed all of the pertinent questions needed to assess overall well-being in retirement. It should also be noted that this sample may not reflect the attitudes of all retired police officers.

Recommendations

The current study results suggest that retired police officers may need to have transition services available to aid officers upon retirement. This research may support additional aid with transition services for officers forced to take early retirement due to a medical issue or injury. The potential contribution may be services within the police organization for retirement transition. This may eventually impact insurance costs when resources are used to improve identity issues retirees may have by increasing well-being in retirement. The results of this study can provide much-needed insights into police services inclusive of identity transitioning into retirement for early retirees.

Social Change Implications

Positive transitioning of police officers into retirement was my overall goal for this research. This study may contribute to society by helping retired police officers and departments to improve the effects of the retirement transition process on police officers. Police officers are often offered services during employment after critical incidents, but society and municipalities may not consider the well-being of officers that are entering the retirement process. The implications for social change may include a reduction of suicide, and emotionally stable retired officers in communities. This could lead to transforming lives for retirees who may be dealing with mental, physical, or social issues after serving their communities. Positive social change may occur with focus on aftercare for retired police officers through an understanding of the former officer's survey result assessment. This may help guide future programs and support practical application in usefulness. The potential change using this study would be to improve lives by aiding program designers and policy makers with information about what services retired police personnel need, which can lead to positive retirement adjustment and resiliency in retired police personnel (Patterson, Poole, Trew & Harkin, 2012). This research can contribute to the community and improve society by creating a better environment for police officers transitioning to retirement due to a medical issue or injury.

Future Research

Future research may include a qualitative sample of retired police officers who retired due to a medical issue or injury to better understand and identify their issues in transition. Future research could also focus on officers who sought out psychological services after a medical retirement from a police department.

Conclusions

Some police officers continue to work after retirement, while others do not. If there is a continuation of employment, some decide to continue in a police-related field, while others are employed in a non-police-related field. Identity does not seem to be affected by continuation of work. Length of retirement and adjustment also does not seem to affect identity in this population. A voluntary versus forced retirement may affect retiree well-being and adjustment. In this study, I found that retired police officers who have a normal retirement adjust better than officers who are forced into retirement due to an illness or injury. After review of the literature, information obtained suggests that social connectedness may aid with transition and well-being for police officers in retirement. These findings are important as police departments may decide to adopt transition support services for retirees who are forced to retire due to a medical issue or injury based on these results.

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Appendix A: Police Identity and Retirement Scale

Police Identity and Retirement Scale

Current Age:_____ Years on the job:_____ Age at retirement:_____

Gender: Male_____ Female_____

Retired 1-5 years_____ 5-10 years_____ 10-15 years_____ 15+ years_____

Normal retirement_____ Retirement due to medical issue or injury_____

Career after law enforcement: Yes_____ No_____

If Yes, police-related field_____ Non police-related field_____

Items

1. I miss working for the police department.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

2. I enjoy retirement.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

3. I have easily adjusted to retirement.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

4. My family is happy that I have retired.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Agree

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

12. I have lost contact with all my former work friends as a retired person.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

13. I am too old to make new friends.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

14. Most of my friends are still my former co-workers.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

15. I don't have much in common anymore with my former co-workers.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

16. It has been difficult to replace my friends from work.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

17. Retirement is great and it has forced me to make new friends.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly
Agree				
1	2	3	4	5

