

2019

# Police Culture and Perceived Service Value: Officer Perspectives on Psychological Services Utilization

Kymerli Copeland Barker  
*Walden University*

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

 Part of the [Psychology Commons](#)

---

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

# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Kymerli Copeland Barker

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

## Review Committee

Dr. Sandra Caramela-Miller, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty  
Dr. Wayne Wallace, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty  
Dr. Andrea Goldstein, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer  
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2019

Abstract

Police Culture and Perceived Service Value:  
Officer Perspectives on Psychological Services Utilization

by

Kymerli Copeland Barker

MPhil, Walden University, 2019

MA, Argosy University, 2012

BS, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1996

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Forensic Specialization

Walden University

August 2019

## Abstract

There is a noted discrepancy between police psychological services offered and services utilized. It is important to understand reasons for underutilization when creating services for officers. The purpose of this study was providing empirical evidence from the officers' perspectives to answer this question. The conceptual foundation was officers may refuse participation due to *police culture*. The conceptual framework was represented in research questions focused on officers' perspectives regarding psychological services provided by psychologists without law enforcement (LE) experience. The participants were employed law enforcement officers (LEOs) from regions across the United States. Officer participation from all 50 states was targeted to assist in ensuring demographic variability. Phenomenological methods were employed. Samples were gathered by contacting 2 police departments (PDs) per state, in arbitrarily chosen cities and rural areas. One questionnaire with pre-addressed, stamped envelopes was sent to each department indicating the research post office box. Data were analyzed by applying qualitative research data software, open coding, in-margin notetaking procedures, and individual recognition of themes. Ten to 25 participants were required and 10 were achieved. Two categories, 6 subcategories, 2 themes, and 3 subthemes emerged from the data analyses. Data analyses aligned with previous findings in 2 aspects and did not support others. Positive social change will be affected through identifying reasons for low service utilization. Agencies may begin restructuring program policies, developing more effective training, and other psychological protocols for LEOs and providers.

Police Culture and Perceived Service Value:  
Officer Perspectives on Psychological Services Utilization

Kymerli Copeland Barker

MPhil, Walden University, 2019

MA, Argosy University, 2012

BS, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1996

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Forensic Specialization

Walden University

August 2019

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Sandra Caramela-Miller and Dr. Wayne Wallace, for their support and guidance through this process. I have learned a great deal and grown as a scholar. This was achieved with many iterations and re-examination of perspectives. Their expertise was invaluable.

I also thank the police officers and administrators for taking time to assist in this study. Their candid responses provide insight into law enforcement officer perspectives regarding this important question.

Finally, I thank my mother, Nancy Wondolowski Copeland, and my sister, Nichole Copeland-Ronayne, for their continued encouragement and endless willingness to listen during this entire program of study.

## Dedication

Thank you, God, for the strength and support of the people You have given me.

This research is dedicated to my children, Edward Peter Barker (Teddy or Bear), and Spencer Thomas Barker (Rama). The children of a single mother, they have been dragged from campus to campus, while I completed my lateral entry teaching license in multiple areas. During this time, I also returned to school at night while completing my master's in forensic psychology, and my doctoral studies. My boys have been incredibly supportive, while exceling in their own studies, athletics, and other activities. They have had to be independent and resilient, going without new shoes, new clothes, and many other material items. I hope with all my heart they know they have never gone without my complete adoration, respect, and gratitude for all the hugs, laughter, and life, they have given me. I am so proud of the young men they have become. I could not have done this without them.

I love you guys.

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background.....	2
Problem Statement.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Research Questions.....	6
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Nature of the Study.....	8
Definitions.....	9
Assumptions.....	11
Scope and Delimitations.....	12
Limitations.....	13
Significance.....	14
Summary.....	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	18
Introduction.....	18
Literature Search Strategy.....	20
Conceptual Framework.....	22
Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts.....	27
Overview.....	27
Services Provided.....	28

Utilization and Necessity .....	41
Summary and Conclusions .....	54
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	57
Introduction.....	57
Research Design and Rationale .....	58
The Role of the Researcher.....	60
Methodology.....	61
Participant Selection Logic.....	61
Instrumentation .....	63
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	65
Data Analysis Plan.....	66
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	67
Ethical Procedures .....	68
Summary.....	70
Chapter 4: Results.....	73
Introduction.....	73
Setting.....	74
Demographics .....	75
Data Collection .....	75
Data Analysis.....	77
Results.....	82
Summary.....	91

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	93
Introduction.....	93
Interpretation of the Findings.....	94
Limitations of the Study.....	100
Recommendations.....	101
Conclusion .....	107
References.....	109
Appendix A: Questionnaire .....	118
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Telephone Interview Questions.....	120
Appendix C: Confidentiality and Consent.....	122
Appendix D: Request for Assistance .....	129
Appendix E: Script.....	131

List of Tables

Table 1 <i>In Vivo and Process Coding Examples</i> .....	77
Table 2 <i>Examples of Participant Statements in Category One</i> .....	80
Table 3 <i>Examples of Participant Statements in Category Two</i> .....	81
Table 3 <i>An Overview of Categories, Subcategories, Subthemes, and Themes</i> .....	904

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### Introduction

Law enforcement officer (LEO) psychological services, including mental health and psychological training services, are underutilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Ménard, Arter, & Khan, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The reasons for underutilization are not fully identified. There is a recognized need for police psychological services (Aguayo et al., 2017; Lambert, Qureshi, Frank, Keena, & Hogan, 2017). Many officers do not seek mental health or training services (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Officers previously have suggested they may not feel as comfortable in utilizing services provided by practitioners without law enforcement (LE) experience (Bloodgood, 2005). Officers' personal appraisals regarding program use may serve as tools for developing more diverse, appropriately designed protocols, by defining how to make services more attractive (Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012).

The barriers surrounding police psychological service utilization are previewed in the remainder of Chapter One. Variability in utilization has been suggested relative to service types, perceived public or personal stigma (Bullock & Garland, 2018; Haugen, McCrillis, Smid, & Nijdam, 2017; Karaffa & Koch, 2016), nationality (Ménard et al., 2016; Naz, Gavin, Khan, & Raza, 2014), gender, and rank or years of law enforcement (LE) experience (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Menard et al., 2016). Perceived service value may also be influenced by *police culture*, which was explored here as the conceptual model to explain service underutilization across demographics (Paoline & Gau, 2018; Rose & Unnithan, 2015; Woody 2005, 2011). Previously unidentified reasons for

underlying program utilization were investigated through sworn LEO's perspectives and experiences. Discovery of justifications for service underutilization may support more robust, appropriate, effective psychological services.

### **Background**

Police mental health services include personal protective factors aimed at improving officer wellness (Gumani, 2017; Soltys, 2016). Mental health services including Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), grief counseling, and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) incorporate provisions for LEOs' personal and family psychological needs (Aguayo et al., 2017; Gumani, 2017; Ménard, Arter, & Khan, 2016). Professional psychological training services utilization provides operational benefits (Brewster et al., 2016; Fleischmann, Strode, Broussard, & Compton, 2018). Police officer Knowledge, Strengths, and Abilities (KSAs) vary from officers requiring only tactical training to officers needing specialization in multiple areas necessitating psychological expertise (Gudjonsson et al., 2016; Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). Training specialties include negotiations, interpersonal communications, antiterrorism tactics, mental health, and victim services (Birdsall, Kirby, & McManus, 2017; Woods, 2000).

Confidence in occupational capability is positively correlated with an increase in job satisfaction (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin, McDevitt, & Corder, 2017). Increased job satisfaction is positively correlated with a reduction in job-related stress (Aguayo et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). Reduction in job-related stress is positively correlated with reduction in overall stress and an increase in wellness (Borovec & Balgač, 2017;

Cronin et al., 2017; Worden, Harris, & McLean, 2014). Personal ownership in creating more effective infrastructure may be reflected in greater job satisfaction and lowered stress levels (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Fox et al., 2012). Personal investment and perceived service value are critical for improving the reception to professional development (Lambert & Steinke, 2015; Miles-Johnson, 2016; Woods, 2000).

Officers' perceived psychological needs may be addressed while creating a platform for effective service program development. Officer input may promote dual benefit in providing a sense of ownership in improving programs and increased knowledge base regarding needs (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017). Information gathered may add to the existing research needed for more effective, vigorous police psychological programs. The focus may then be provision for officers' well-being (Conrad, 2017; Reavley et al., 2018). This research was necessary because the perspective provided through incorporating officers' personal views may prove an invaluable addition to the current knowledge regarding service utilization.

### **Problem Statement**

The research problem investigated was although psychological services for LEOs exist they are largely underutilized, and previously collected officer statements have included concerns providers do not have LE field experience (Bloodgood, 2005; Donnelly et al., 2015; Haugen et al., 2015). Utilization ranges from 72% to 9% for multiple psychological services (Delprino & Bahn, 1988). Recent data include values demonstrating 24% of officers would consider seeking psychological care if upset or

worried for a long time (Karaffa & Tochov, 2013). Psychological protocols like grief counseling, CISD, and training services are all underused (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018; White, 2016). Evaluations have been completed allowing officers to select an explanation for underuse from possible options in Likert scales based upon a given research focus (Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Research allowing the officers to describe their own reasoning is represented with limited elaboration (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Naz et al., 2014). The underutilization phenomenon still occurs (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Naz et al., 2014).

Empirical data exist regarding the discrepancy between services provided and those used (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Observational research including officers' personally developed responses about this phenomenon is sparse (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Reavley et al., 2018). Research into understanding how and why from the officers' viewpoint has been pursued without resolution to underutilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). There is an observed research gap in understanding the officers' reasons for not engaging in services which are known to be beneficial. This gap may be addressed by investigating LEOs' personal experiences and perceptions regarding specific perceived service value.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study represents a phenomenological qualitative investigation into noted police psychological services underutilization with a focus on officer perception of services by non-LEO providers. Previous studies addressing this phenomenon have

largely been quantitative, with a few mixed methods studies discovered in the research (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Reavley et al., 2018). Preceding qualitative studies have been focused on other disparity in service utilization aspects. Recent study considerations to note have included culture (Naz et al., 2014; Kula et al., 2017; Ménard et al., 2016), mental health care training (Horspool et al., 2016), and vicarious trauma (Gumani, 2017; Molnar, Sprang, Killian, Gottfried, Emery, & Bride, 2017). Mixed methods and quantitative studies have included focuses of stigma, pluralistic ignorance, and other features of police culture (Bloodgood, 2005; Bullock & Garland, 2018; Delprino & Bahn, 1988).

There is a recognized inequality between psychological services offered and utilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). The intent of this study was to explore, identify, and develop an opportunity for officers' presenting personal perspectives on psychological services. The study anonymity may afford LEOs the opportunity to explain their impression of services (Reavley et al., 2018). The latitude to explore variations in reasoning may be achieved through providing officers an anonymous forum for expressing their opinion (Reavley et al., 2018). It is possible underlying or previously unidentified explanations for this phenomenon may be discovered.

The phenomenon in question was LEOs' noted underutilization of police psychological services. The focus was officer perceptions of police psychological service provision by non-LEO providers (Bloodgood, 2005). Earlier studies addressed multiple potential reasons for underutilization, yet the phenomenon remains (Fox et al., 2012; Naz

et al., 2014; White, 2016). Previous research included the spontaneous notation by officers the perception of non-LEO providers might be a consideration (Bloodgood, 2005; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). This perspective has not been fully developed. Police culture and service utilization will be considered from a different vantage point than previous focuses.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question 1 - How do law enforcement officers perceive psychological services offered by individuals without policing experience?

Research Question 2 - How does officers' perception of services affect utilization?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The phenomenon investigated was police officer perception of psychological services utilization. Perception of psychological services utilization was evaluated within the conceptual model of police culture (Paoline & Gau, 2018; Rose & Unnithan, 2015; Woody, 2005, 2011). Officers immersed in police culture often do not allow outsiders closeness with themselves or their families (Harris, 2014; Paoline & Gau, 2018; Woody, 2005). Officer involvement with anyone outside of this culture may result in perceived personal or public stigma (Donnelly et al., 2015; Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Perception of personal or public stigma has frequently been considered as a potential impetus for LEOs to underutilize necessary services (Blau, 1994; Bullock & Garland, 2018; Conrad, 2017). This underutilization may not equate to officer service refusal. Officers may not utilize for a variety of reasons.

Police culture may also be a barrier to service utilization in other fashions. The nature of this work requires close-knit relationships within the law enforcement population (Lambert et al., 2017; Paoline & Gau, 2018; Young, 2016a). Officers may not be as receptive to individuals who do not have LE backgrounds (Lambert & Steinke, 2015; Woody, 2005). This reception may be transferred into officer perception of stigma (Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018; Woody, 2005, 2011). Officers may also perceive their interaction with outsiders will be unacceptable to their fellow LEOs (Paoline & Gau, 2018; Rose & Unnithan, 2015; Terrill et al., 2003). Some officers similarly indicate service utilization or mental health *labels* make them feel the same as the offenders (Bullock & Garland, 2018).

A phenomenological qualitative study was necessary for investigating this occurrence from the officers' viewpoints. The specific research questions developed were reflected in the conceptual framework, suggesting police culture might be a barrier to LEO use of police psychological services by non-LEO providers (Bloodgood, 2005). The survey organization was developed in line with previous studies while becoming focused on the research perspective (Naz et al., 2014). The original survey instrument was created to allow officers the flexibility for answering open-ended questions in a completely anonymous fashion. This format was intended to circumvent potential concerns the officers have not shared personal perspectives. A more thorough explanation of the conceptual framework is discussed in Chapter 2.

### **Nature of the Study**

The study was completed utilizing a qualitative phenomenological lens. The goal was to investigate various LEO perspectives regarding personal experiences with psychological service providers who do not have policing experience. The hermeneutic and transcendental traditions were the approaches for developing the structure and texture of the experiences. Participants answered short essay questions regarding their service awareness and evaluation. The anonymous survey format with optional interviews was chosen to help alleviate potential concerns about stigma (Fox et al., 2012; Lambert et al., 2017; Reavley et al., 2018). Application of this perspective may have afforded a more vigorous sense of the phenomenon in question.

The theoretical population studied was United States' police officers in various career stages. The accessible population was officers willing to engage in the study. It was necessary to identify a sample representing the specific, required characteristics (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The purposive sampling strategy was applied (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The sampling strategy was developed so specific geographic regions were targeted with invitations to participate thereby correcting for potential geographic limitation.

Officers agreeing to take part were afforded the opportunity for engagement via questionnaires. Participants were also provided the option to interview via telephone. The LEOs were offered the possibility to voice-text or transcribe responses to further lessen time concerns. Questionnaires were mailed to rural and urban PDs nationally.

This was intended to provide a more representative target population sample, while simultaneously affording the participants complete anonymity rather than confidentiality.

Five to twenty-five participants are suggested for phenomenological studies (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Groups such as LEOs are not particularly diverse (Alderden, Farrell, & McCarty, 2017; Maskaly, Donner, & Fridell, 2017). Code saturation in such groups occurs between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> participant (Hennick, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017; Namey, Guest, McKenna, & Chen, 2016). Meaning saturation may not occur until participants 10 to 24 (Hennick et al., 2017). Greater transferability to the population, and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon was desired. Attrition was also considered.

This suggests a sample size of 8 to 24 to gather useful and novel information from each participant (Boddy, 2016; Hennick et al., 2017; Namey et al., 2016). Participation was sought from 10 to 25 currently employed, sworn LEOs. Questionnaires were then analyzed through open coding and marginal note-taking. Data qualitative software, NVivo (v. 10, QSR International, 2014) was also employed. This was followed by review for themes during the organization process.

### **Definitions**

The following operational definitions include search strategy terms. The research terminology might bear more than one accepted definition.

*Burnout* is a stress reaction occurring over time and attributed to professionals engaged in face-to-face interactions with other humans (Aguayo et al., 2017).

*Coping mechanisms* are strategies developed to assist individuals in combating stress (Patterson, 2016).

*Critical Incidents* are incidents resulting in an overwhelming loss of control and overall sense of vulnerability (Conrad, 2017).

*Domestic Violence (DV)* or *Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)* is any instance or pattern of instances involving threatening, controlling, or coercive behavior with individuals over age 16 who are engaged in a relationship (Birdsall, 2017).

*EAPs* are programs developed for assisting agencies in providing services to officers about any personal, family, or job-related concerns (Donnelly, Valentine, & Oehme, 2015).

*Fitness for duty evaluation (FFDE)* is a comprehensive evaluation made for determining the capacity for an incumbent to perform job function obligations (Mayer & Corey, 2016).

*Hostage negotiation* is a crisis negotiation technique utilized by LE to improve communication with those who threaten violence (Knowles, 2016).

*Interrogation* is a formal conversation between officers and a suspect. It is primarily designed toward gaining a confession (Porter et al., 2016).

*Interview* is a more informal and less accusatory conversation than interrogation. It is intended to elicit information (Porter et al., 2016).

*Multicultural training* is education to raise awareness all individuals hail from different cultural backgrounds. This ideally will improve receptivity to differences in a community (Miles-Johnson, 2016).

*Officer support services* are specifically designed to assist LEOs in preparing for and navigating the career field (Harris, 2014).

*Pluralistic ignorance* is when a group member privately rejects a belief he believes is accepted by other group members (Karaffa & Koch, 2016).

*Police Community Interactions (PCI)* are engagements between police and community members (Lawrence, Christoff, & Escamilla, 2017).

*Police culture* is the encompassing dynamic of police officer attitude, relationships, and behavior (Woody, 2005).

*Pre-employment screenings* are evaluations including physical, cognitive, medical, and basic personality screens to determine potential officer eligibility (Mayer & Corey, 2016).

*Victim services* are programs developed to assist victims of crime (Young, 2016a).

### **Assumptions**

Several assumptions were critical to this study. It was assumed the questionnaires would reach the intended PDs. The officers were also expected to have the opportunity to respond. It was presumed the responses received would be from employed officers. The assumptions also included the expectation the instructions would be understood and followed with honest answers by the officers. It should not be assumed service non-utilization equates to service refusal.

It was necessary to assume the questionnaires would reach the target audience otherwise data could have been collected from inappropriate samples. The officers must have had the opportunity to comply to prevent data collection errors and inaccuracy. It was necessary to assume the respondents were employed LEOs or the data validity may

have been negated. The questions must have been presumed understood to ensure the data were evaluated against the correct criteria. These assumptions were necessary to evaluate the data provided as credible.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The intent was to investigate officer perspectives on psychological service use by LEOs rather than evaluate services, providers, instruments, protocols, or programs. Pre-employment psychological evaluations, FFDEs, and required mental health services were not included beyond recording officer perceptions of those interactions when spontaneously offered. The only psychological evaluations included during data collection were those deemed optional or in support of LEOs when presented by the officers. Required training provided by psychology professionals was considered when offered. Attendance does not confirm engagement and inclusion may help with suggesting improvements to existing programs (Miles-Johnson, 2016; Wood, 2000).

The target population was sworn, employed officers and the questions were intended to address the officers' receptivity to using psychological services. Both rural and urban officers were targeted. Sheriffs' departments, Military Police, and non-sworn officers were not included. The research was proposed for allowing the officers to speak from personal experience and describe their individual views on psychological services utilization. The results were projected for future use in LE policy and program considerations. Data evaluated are transferable to the general LEO population.

### **Limitations**

Questionnaire formats (see Appendix A) were offered initially due to the potentially sensitive nature of the data collected (Reavley et al., 2018). The written questionnaires were completed anonymously, without opportunity for clarification. Clarification was not offered during telephone interviews. Potential confusion or participant personal definition might indicate a limitation in the study. The police culture concept indicates officers to be a closed group. Officers also may not have been receptive to fielding questions from outsiders (Haugen et al., 2017; Kubiak et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). Officers who decline psychological services may be equally disinclined to answer questions. This reticence may be a limiting factor regarding officer viewpoints.

Officers might have also felt uncomfortable answering questions related to their occupation. Researcher bias must likewise be considered a potentially limiting factor. A final limitation may have been demographic variation. LEOs are typically considered a homogenic group although differences may be noted due to variations in rank or culture (Alderden et al., 2017; Karaffa & Koch, 2016). There is unequal gender, socioeconomic, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other diversity factor representation in LE (Alderden et al., 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Maskaly et al., 2017). It is not possible to interview all LEOs and this might affect transferability.

The opportunity for the interview in questionnaire format was offered to counter some potential limitations. Survey format was provided to lessen discomfort for officers disclosing requested information with non-LEOs (Fox et al., 2012). The questions' focuses were concerns regarding awareness, availability of, or experience with

psychological services. Neither operational nor other job satisfaction concerns were mentioned. The questionnaires were requested to be anonymously returned to the researcher's post office box from a remote location. This decision was made to address officers' potential professional concerns regarding confidentiality (Reavley et al., 2018). The questionnaires were submitted and subsequently analyzed without identifying the respondent, so demographic variability could not be controlled in the data interpretation.

### **Significance**

Psychological services are used to support PDs in multiple aspects (Booth et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2017; Molnar et al., 2017). Mental health services are necessary in support of the LEOs' and their families' mental health (Donnelly et al, 2015; Gumani, 2017; Klinoff, Van Hasselt, & Black, 2015). Mental health services are usually identified and offered via the EAP (Conrad, 2017; Donnelly et al., 2015) or required by the department (Mayer & Corey, 2016). Psychological training services utilization raises to the fullest potential effective communication skills, empathy, and understanding diverse populations (Masip, Alonso, Herrero, & Garrido, 2016; Porter, Rose, & Dilley, 2016; Wood, 2000). Psychological theory awareness proves beneficial in the field during hostage negotiations, interviewing, critical incidence response, and community interactions (Booth et al., 2017; Masip et al; 2016; Porter et al., 2016). LEOs who are adept at communicating for de-escalating a volatile situation or improving PCI are valuable to the department (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). Mental health and training services are closely linked in their composite effects upon officer well-being (Haugen et al., 2017; Kubiak et al., 2017; Kula, 2017).

The appropriate use of both service models is necessary for effective police psychological programs and were considered in this study (Aguayo et al., 2017; Donnelly et al., 2015). The data gathered were examined to identify themes underlying officers' perspectives about psychological services. This may afford the future opportunity to make indicated improvements in police psychological program structure. Such improvements may increase program attractiveness and optimize LEO involvement. Reduced litigation and negative PCI may additionally be achieved through improving psychological services to LEOs (Rajakaruna, Henry, Cutler, & Fairman, 2017; Tyler, 2016). The officers and departments alike may open themselves to potentially violating multiple legal standards if such programs are not successfully provided (Rajakaruna et al., 2017; Tyler, 2016).

Study benefits include identifying current or potential issues with psychological services provided while preemptively developing effective programs (Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Protocol standards constantly undergo evaluation and revision (Brewster et al., 2016). Study analysis may add to the literature regarding officers' perception of provided psychological services. An atmosphere where the officers' service perceptions are addressed may be achieved through offering appropriate programs created in response to candid officer feedback (Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012). This may assist in the possibility for developing healthier, accepted, effective, police psychological service programs.

## Summary

There is a documented necessity for effective police psychological services in many domains (Brewster et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Mental health services are provided as support for officers and families in multiple arenas (Harris, 2016; Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Police psychological training services are provided to support officers in the field (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014; Booth et al., 2017; Brewster et al., 2016). It is recorded in previous research officers are aware services are available and they are not being fully utilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The reasons for underutilization are not inherently clear and include spontaneous officer response indicating non-LEO providers may be less preferable (Reavley et al., 2018).

Officers ingrained in police culture may experience perceived service value reduction and stigma (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Woody, 2005). This may result in reduced necessary service utilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Menard et al., 2016; Woody, 2005). Studies identifying current program shortcomings are needed to make existing psychological service programs more appropriate and effective (Reavley et al., 2018). LEOs' confidence in their KSAs reduces operational stress (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017) which can reduce overall stress (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Patterson, 2016). Personal investment in infrastructure is also positively correlated with greater job satisfaction and stress reduction (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Officers who feel they have had an opportunity to engage in service improvement may benefit as well (Fox et al., 2012).

Previous studies about LEO psychological service utilization have been conducted yet the underutilization phenomenon remains. Officers' perspectives were explored in an attempt to gain greater understanding from the LEO's point of view. LEO input into correcting program failure may be invaluable in building more effective service protocols. Emphasis was placed on officer reception to services provided by non-LEO providers. The focus was organizing and assimilating recent research while evaluating directions for future research endeavors. The existing research providing detailed search strategy descriptions is reviewed in Chapter 2. This research will be contrasted to provide a foundation for understanding the current concern and illuminating existing gaps in knowledge.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

The problem researched was police officer perspectives on the discrepancy between psychological services available for LEOs and those utilized. The purpose was to identify and explore officer perception of police psychological service provision by non-LEO providers. Psychological services have been available to law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in the United States and other countries around the world for many years. There is a tremendous disproportion between services provided and services utilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). It is not clear why officers might choose to refuse such services. The qualitative research from the officers' point of view is not fully developed in the existing research although recent studies have been completed (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Reavley, 2018). Such research is necessary to identify and correct any failing aspects of police psychological services (Karaffa & Koch, 2016).

Comprehensive explanations for the phenomenon are not efficiently represented in previous studies regarding police psychological programs. Existing studies regarding LEO psychological services have been found in two primary domains including studies regarding need or utilization, and studies regarding service types. Extant research includes officer-ranked explanations for underutilization within a specified scope such as stigma (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochoy, 2013) and training topic (Miles-Johnson, 2016; Wood, 2000). Officer-identified service deficits have been suggested for

additional areas of research to further improve psychological services offered (Bloodgood, 2005; Reavley et al., 2018).

The need for services has been denoted across multiple topics (Mayer & Corey, 2016; Tyler, 2016; Worden et al., 2014). Minimal service utilization was also identified in previous studies (Lambert et al., 2017; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Services investigated include mental health services and training services in psychological applications to policing. Mental health services include grief counseling interventions, FFDEs, pre-employment screens, mental health counseling sessions, and critical incident stress debriefing (Booth et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Training services include multicultural diversity, hostage negotiation, effective communication, interview protocols, interrogation, mental health, victim services, and behavioral analysis training (Cronin et al., 2017; Forrester, Samele, Slade, Craig, & Valmaggia, 2017; Wood, 2000).

Various keyword search strategies were explored. Research surrounding police psychological services and their utilization by officers was identified. Studies detailing service variety, necessity (Brewster et al., 2016), negative repercussions after a lack of services (Harris, 2014; Masip et al., 2016; Tyler, 2016), and theories regarding service utilization were assessed (Lambert et al., 2017; Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). A thorough review of the existing literature was developed regarding both the specific study proposed and supplementary concepts. This review was utilized to evaluate a need for further investigation or studies in a new direction.

### Literature Search Strategy

A systematic investigation of the literature was completed utilizing multiple information sources. The library at Walden University, Internet providers, and various search engines were accessed. Google Scholar was engaged to evaluate case studies and additional resources. Searches were initiated from the Walden University library within psychology, criminal justice, health sciences, criminology, policing, mental health, and education. These disciplines were ultimately narrowed to psychology, criminal justice, and policing. Multiple databases within the psychology discipline, including PsycINDEX, PsycARTICLES, PsycCRITIQUES, PsycEXTRA, and SAGE were chosen.

Independent terms and Boolean phrases were included within the search items. *Police psychology, police psychological services, police training, forensic psychology, police perception of training, and police evaluation* were searched within the Thoreau multiple disciplinary database. Research was discovered noting the lack of specific service utilization and suggested further research to determine reasons for the phenomenon (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Woody, 2005, 2011). Training provision application (Birdsall et al., 2017; Booth et al., 2017; Cleary & Warner, 2016), including the correlation between professional confidence and stress reduction has also been studied (Borovec & Balgač, 2017). *Police psychological service utilization and police trauma training* were added to the search (Carleton et al., 2018; Fleishman et al., 2018).

Trauma training research results largely represented police training for response to trauma of others rather than personal trauma or vicarious trauma sustained by first responders (Horspool et al., 2016; Molnar et al., 2017). It became apparent the majority

related to the public's services perception, or services and training descriptions.

Psychology databases included the same result. Many articles were neither peer-reviewed nor empirical in nature. The focus became studies within the past five years detailing police psychological services.

Peer-reviewed criminal justice and policing database articles from 2016 to 2018 contained few trauma training articles. A search for *wellness training* resulted in studies also addressing training officers' response to others (Conrad, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Specifics, including *employee assistance programs* (Conrad, 2017; Donnelly et al., 2015), *officer support services*, *stress inoculation testing*, and *psychological training* were identified. It became clear training searches resulted in studies primarily about the training topics rather than the officers' use. These studies were utilized for providing information related to psychological training, professional capability, and related operational or organizational stress.

Searches for *officer evaluation of employee assistance programs*, *officer support systems*, and *psychological training* initially returned zero articles. Legal databases and case law were reviewed to gain an appreciation for the potential ramifications of service utilization. Cases ranged in topics including psychological training offered or received by officers, training required, officer interaction with detainees, and officer evaluations. Ultimately case law was not included as a focus due to issues regarding correlation or causation. The intent became to develop a broad, succinct explanation of the psychological services offered police officers, personally and professionally.

The goal remained to identify the impact of police psychological services and their relative utilization. The aim was to find research from the officers' perspectives clearly categorizing reasons officers do or do not utilize services. This empirical assessment and data collection are not fully developed in the literature (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Such research appears minimal apart from the studies noted. Researchers evaluating service utilization have often done so from specific study perspectives rather than allowing officers the liberty to answer freely throughout (Bloodgood, 2005; Karaffa & Koch, 2016; White, 2016). Provider LE experience has not been uncovered as a study focal point. It has been noted in research development and professional literature suggesting consideration (Blau, 1995; Bloodgood, 2005; Woody, 2005, 2011).

Research boundaries were extended beyond the primary topic regarding service utilization. This change resulted in the identified connection between mental health and training services. Peripheral scholarship was included to justify the need for research supporting claims made. These alterations were necessary to solidify the foundation for the currently proposed research. A case was built for the need to research the proposed topic.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework, police culture, provided the basis for the proposed study regarding officer perception of police psychological services (Conrad, 2017; Haugen et al., 2017; Woody 2005, 2011). The immersion in police culture has been suggested to inhibit officers' abilities to engage with outsiders, perceiving engagement a

risk for self and loved ones (Lambert et al., 2017; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Terrill, Pauline, & Manning, 2003). Police culture is often considered a masculine-dominated society focused upon control and safety wherein interaction with outsiders may be less valued (Conrad, 2017; Woody 2005, 2011; Young, 2016a). Officers may internalize and adapt to police culture for survival in LE (Patterson, 2016; Woody 2005, 2011; Young, 2016b). It has previously been suggested perceived service value (Miles-Johnson, 2016 & Woods, 2000), and stigma (Karaffa & Koch, 2016, Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018) impact LEOs' willingness to utilize psychological services. There may prove to be a connection between police culture and officers' perception of services provided by individuals not engaged in this culture (Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012; Woody 2005, 2011).

Attrition rate for officers who do not adapt and assimilate to police culture during basic training is high, indicating the culture is necessary (Harris, 2014; Patterson, 2016; Woody, 2005, 2011). Officers' self-preservation mechanisms may prohibit perceiving value in interactions outside the LE fold (Kubiak et al., 2017; Kula, 2017; Lambert et al., 2017). Officers who subsequently do not perceive value in trainings or other psychological services may be less likely to engage and this may also affect utilization (Patterson, 2016; Woods, 2000; Woody, 2005, 2011). Perceived public and personal stigmatization has been previously suggested as providing additional barriers to officers seeking mental health services when in need (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). *Pluralistic ignorance*, officers perceiving themselves as more willing to

seek help than colleagues, has been described as an aspect of stigma which further ostracizes individuals who might desire assistance (Karaffa & Koch, 2016).

Police culture and consequent coercive mechanisms may have a negative impact upon other officers on multiple additional levels (Harris, 2014, 2016; Terrill et al., 2003). Traditional police relationships and perceptions have been described to create potentially dangerous, inappropriate behaviors on the job (Harris, 2014, 2016; Terrill et al., 2003). Officers entrenched in police culture regarding accepted officer norms are suggested as less likely than other officers to step away from the expected standard (Harris, 2014). This fosters a negative relationship and ideology (Harris, 2014). Officers' perceived appropriate LEO behavior might affect their individual decisions regarding any psychological services offered (Harris, 2014).

Similar findings that police culture and subsequent coercive mechanisms exert negative forces are indicated (Terrill et al., 2003). Descriptive statistics were utilized in the Terrill et al. (2003) quantitative study (N=585) to analyze the relationship between community interaction, job perception and performance, and the pressures felt by other members of the force. Traditional police relationships and perceptions were found to create a collection of dangerous, inappropriate behaviors on the job (Terrill et al., 2003). It is possible an officer's perceived expectation of appropriate LEO behavior might affect individual decisions regarding the use of any psychological services offered (Harris, 2014; Terrill, 2003).

Personal perspective of the officers is a potential detractor from offered psychological programs (Woods, 2000). There must first be appreciation of the need for

services by those individuals the programs are intended to serve (Woods, 2000). The population for whom the services exist must first recognize the necessity for the services, then secondly have a desire and willingness to engage (Woods, 2000). The presentation formats, and the LEOs' perceived service value or topic interest are considered important factors (Bloodgood, 2005; Woods, 2000; Woody 2005, 2011). Police officers may not relate to training and other services provided by those who have no personal experience in the field (Miles-Johnson, 2016; Woody, 2005; 2011). Academic, clinical language, or posturing may be distasteful (Klinoff et al., 2015; Miles-Johnson, 2016; Woody, 2011), and unrelatable due to lack of providers' personal policing experience (Woody, 2005).

Empirical data regarding perceived service value and stigma, were found in previous studies (Haugen et al., 2017; Karaffa & Koch, 2016, Watson & Andrews, 2018). The observations included suggestions officers' perceived expectation of appropriate LEO behavior might affect individual decisions (Haugen et al., 2017; Kubiak et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). These effects might extend to LEO's psychological service utilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Woody, 2005, 2011). Police culture relating to service value perception has not previously been the primary consideration regarding psychological service use although officer concerns regarding non-LEO providers have been noted in officer responses as suggestions (Bloodgood, 2005; Klinoff et al., 2015). The data recently collected from officers interviewed may provide empirical evidence addressing officer perspectives on police psychological service utilization.

Associations exist between belonging to the "in group" of officers versus the "out group" and occupational stress (Rose & Unnithan, 2015). Regression analysis was

utilized by Rose & Unnithan (2015) to allow for potential other factors which may affect officer stress. Results included belonging to the “out group” even within police culture was a critical factor in potential risk for suicide (Rose & Unnithan, 2015). Those officers were less likely to reach out to their brothers in blue, thus placing them at a greater risk for suicide (Rose & Unnithan, 2015). Results from the large sample (N= 1632) study were aligned with previous findings from an existing investigation completed almost twenty years earlier (Delprino & Bahn, 1988). Officers’ willingness or reticence to seek support from departmental or other psychologists impacts their overall mental health (Rose & Unnithan, 2015).

Canadian mounted officers recently engaged in a longitudinal study gauging officers’ readiness for service following mental health training (Carleton et al., 2018). Officers responded to multiple quantitative surveys and a few open-ended questions (Carleton et al., 2018). The study was presented in a self- report format which the authors noted as a possible limitation (Carleton et al, 2018). Data collected included findings officers did not exhibit a statistically significant increase in coping skills (Carleton et al., 2018). Findings did include small but significant decrease in stigma and pluralistic ignorance regarding mental health awareness and utilization (Carleton et al, 2018). Authors suggested future studies reflecting this research and further developing the officers’ responses to mental health training and intervention strategies (Carleton et al, 2018).

## **Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts**

### **Overview**

The research regarding police psychological services primarily spans two fields, services provided and utilization. Services provided literature falls predominately into two categories. These categories are mental health services and training services. Mental health services can be further delineated to those required or recommended by the department or legal body (Aguayo et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018; Woody, 2005 & 2011). Mental health services include pre-employment screening and FFDEs, or those which support the officer personally. The latter includes mental health counseling, grief counseling, and CISD (Aguayo et al., 2017; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018).

Psychological training services include those which involve applying psychology to police work (Birdsall et al., 2017; Forrester et al., 2017; Rajakaruna et al., 2017). Examples of police psychological training services include those which would serve to improve officers' KSAs. Research regarding utilization generally is focused on the necessity for having services, and the inherent ramifications when services are underutilized. This includes quantitative and qualitative analyses (Reavley et al., 2018; Violanti, 1995; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Case law studies were also considered under this domain, but ultimately not reflected due to the limiting factors regarding proof of correlation or causation.

## **Services Provided**

**Mental health services.** The first interaction officers have with Mental Health Professionals (MHPs) may be during the intake evaluation for hiring (Blau, 1994; Fleishman, Strode, Broussard, & Compton, 2018). The officers' interaction with psychology professionals may be limited to this relationship. Officers may recognize the signs when a fellow LEO is experiencing stress (Fleishman et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). There may be an unwillingness to disclose, or engage, due to perceived stigma (Fleishman et al., 2018). Many Crisis Intervention Training protocols are developed intending to provide officers with caregiving training instead of focusing on their personal psychological and emotional needs (Fleishman et al., 2018). Departures from service or even suicide have been chosen paths rather than voluntarily seeking help from MHPs (Fleishman et al., 2018). The majority of officers who realized they were in crisis did seek outside assistance (Fleishman et al., 2018).

Participation in effective mental health programs has reduced negative behaviors including alcohol or other drug use, interpersonal violence, and even suicide (Klinoff et al., 2015; Soltys, 2016; Violanti, 1995). Mental health services are necessary for suicide ideation reduction (Klinoff et al., 2015; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Violanti, 1995). Officers tend to suppress their need for intervention into less constructive mechanisms which ultimately have not brought desired results (Bloodgood, 2005; Harris, 2016; Violanti, 1995). Recruits who adopted a more problem-solving, rather than emotional, approach have been typically more successful in the long run (Patterson, 2016). Emotion-based responses following officer training were evaluated as deficient, and even

possibly dangerous (Kubiak, et al., 2017; Patterson, 2016). It is unknown if this coping mechanism transfers to sworn officers.

Officer PTSD incidence has varied from 4 to 14% (Soltys, 2016). PTSD may be recognized at a sub-syndromal level in 34% of LEOs (Soltys, 2016). Adrenergic fight or flight response has been found necessary to be effective in policing (Soltys, 2016; Young, 2016a). Protocols such as CISD designed to reduce such a biophysiological response may prove ineffective at best (Patterson, 2016; Soltys, 2016; Young, 2016a). The challenge is providing effective mental health and training services designed to redirect rather than negate this response. Mental health training services, peer support services, mindfulness initiatives, and other officer wellness programs may prove viable alternatives to traditional care (Ménard et al., 2016; Patterson, 2016; Soltys, 2016).

Predictors of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in police officers were reflected in their trauma, trauma history, and family psychiatric history (Marchand et al, 2015). Neither emotion nor problem-based coping strategies appeared to affect the potential outcome of PTSD (Marchand et al., 2015). Assessment of peritraumatic circumstances was previously completed in a prior study and collegial support was the most important factor in trauma reduction (Marchand et al., 2015). Lack of social support outside of policing and avoidance-based coping strategies appear more to blame (Marchand et al, 2015). Psychological stress debriefing was found to have either a null or positive correlation with increase in PTSD symptomology (Marchand et al., 2015). A decrease in symptomology correlated with the availability and use of free EAP services (Marchand et al., 2015). This does not provide officer reasoning regarding service

utilization, instead identifying potential positive results from service use (Marchand et al., 2015).

Suggestions for further research are to commence evaluating effective EAP programs and use of same by the officers (Marchand et al, 2015). Formal mechanisms for addressing perceived trauma have been further suggested as ineffectual due to police culture and perceived stigma (Harris, 2016). Challengers to this position suggested lack of external social support and avoidance-based coping strategies have deserved more blame (Kubiak et al., 2017). Multiple treatment strategies exist for mental health service providers working with officers. These existing strategies have largely been developed from the clinician's perspective (Blau, 1994; Woody, 2005, 2011).

Texts and training material provided have often been from the clinical psychology vantage point (Blau, 1994; Woody, 2011). Regardless how long an individual has been in the field providing such support, the lived LEO experience has been missing from the typical psychologist's toolkit. Training texts such as *Police Psychology: A New Specialty and New Challenges for Men and Women in Blue*, provided advice for working with officers to overcome daily field-related trauma (Woody, 2011). The officer's perspective was absent in most texts (Woody, 2011). Suggestions include introducing a balance between more than one suggested therapeutic program and observing movies depicting professional challenges faced (Woody, 2011).

Perceived stigma and police culture are indicated as potential reasons for previous support methodology ineffectiveness (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Observed program ineffectiveness was claimed to be due to

nonexistent relationship-building exercises within the program regimens (Watson & Andrews, 2018). There should be trust and a deeper relationship which exists due to police culture, prescribed in peer support formats (Watson & Andrews, 2018; Young, 2016a). Peer support groups or Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) interventions are suggested as an alternative mental health service which might elicit better engagement from officers (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Officers previously have been appropriately aware of warning signs but may mistake their meaning and prescribed therapy (Reavley et al., 2018). Accepted training by appropriately credentialed individuals might encourage a more effective peer response program (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Results regarding effective intervention strategies have been inconsistent and lacking in appropriate feedback from the intended population (Watson & Andrews, 2018).

Hypervigilance in civilians has been considered a detrimental attribute (Kubiak, 2017). Increased vigilance may raise stress in a laboratory environment (Kubiak et al., 2017). It may protect against other potentially negative consequences of police stress in the field (Kubiak, et al., 2017; Patterson, 2016; Woody, 2005). LEOs must constantly be aware, defending their surroundings (Kubiak et al., 2017). Vigilance has been shown to reduce officer stress while moderating the relationship between operational stress and generalized stress (Kubiak et al., 2017). This may be another aspect of police culture affecting LEO interaction and reception to outsiders. Service provision from providers without policing experience may also be viewed differently (Bloodgood, 2005).

Such misunderstanding may be a factor in LEO's avoiding mental health services (Blau, 1994; Woody, 2005). Professionals who cannot relate due to lacking an LE background may unknowingly turn officers away simply by their vernacular or posture (Blau, 1994; Woody, 2011). This potentially reduces reception to care and training (Blau, 1994; Woody, 2005, 2011). Some officers conversely report a preference for seeking help from civilian psychologists (Reavley et al., 2018). The challenge then becomes providing an appropriate standard of care.

Protective and mitigating factors inherent in police misconduct are also focal points (Harris, 2014). There are various causes for misconduct (Harris, 2014). These causes may be avoided or exacerbated differently, depending upon the individual and other pertinent factors (Blau, 1994; Harris, 2016). Support systems available to the officers have included psychological service intervention when misconduct is first noted or suspected. Early intervention is fundamental to the effective resolution of a suspected problem (Harris, 2016). The existence of such a problem may be proven acute wherein the officer may demonstrate responsiveness to intervention rather than chronic or indicating the need for dismissal (Harris, 2016).

There has been a necessity for services and standards in misconduct determination, rather than variations depending who reported the behavior (Harris, 2016). There has been a need for timely, effective psychological services (Harris, 2016). These services include both mental health and training (Harris, 2014). Psychological resources may be useful when tailoring services offered by police psychologists within a program developed to support LEOs with specific, measurable strategies, and goals. There has

only been a somewhat vague outline which makes misconduct evaluation challenging (Harris, 2016). A more appropriate form would be a distinct danger assessment for officers throughout their term on the force (Harris, 2016).

Officer misconduct and its causes have been variable across several parameters (Harris, 2016). The risk assessment tools utilized to evaluate police officers for future misconduct may be ineffective (Lawrence, 2017; Worden et al., 2014). Behavior is dynamic, not static (Harris, 2016). It may be influenced by training individuals to embrace new attitudes and thought processes (Lawrence, 2017). Information applied to make such predictions has been limited and often has not included full investigation of the evidence available (Harris, 2016; Lawrence, 2017; Worden et al., 2014). Future research may best be completed once current limitations are understood (Harris, 2016; Worden et al., 2014). Current limitations may serve as indicators toward specific criteria, criminal psychology applications, individual questionnaire responses, and daily interactions (Harris, 2016).

Officer mental health is positively affected through utilization of police psychological training services (Haugen et al., 2017; Kubiak et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). An officer experiencing poor mental health might discover this has tremendous repercussions on the job. Recognition of a negative personal lifestyle might offer insight into officer response to crisis. Human behavior comprehension is vital to understanding why given police officers behaved the way they did in emergency (Tyler, 2016). This serves to support not only the necessity for psychological services, but the disasters which can occur in their absence (Fox et al., 2012; Harris, 2016; Tyler, 2016).

**Psychological training services.** Psychological training and mental health services are both essential in assisting LEOs with reducing stress while improving behavior management (Ménard et al., 2016; Patterson, 2016; Soltys, 2016). Problems continue to grow and fester when individuals deny the need for assistance, persisting in pushing through a difficult situation (Soltys, 2016). Officer line of duty homicide has been 9 officers per 100,000 employed (Soltys, 2016). LEO suicide rate has more than doubled that total (Soltys, 2016). Officers attempted 108 suicides in 2016, which is equal to line of duty deaths (Soltys, 2016).

Research describing police training topics and protocols were evaluated in a meta-analysis from the years 1988-2012 (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). Qualitative methods were utilized in describing themes determined through categorizing police training subjects across 182 articles in 95 journals (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The goal was to ascertain any trends in police education and training (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The authors applied scientific assessment methods to answer questions regarding relevant training needs due to identified public concern over the level of professionalism in in-service training for officers (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The authors indicated this was intended to address issues noted by the International Association for Chiefs of Police (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014).

Some challenges were noted primarily regarding the consideration of the narrow allotment of sources of information (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The authors indicated the concept of comparison to other research was a near impossibility due to the lack of scientific data addressing these concerns (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). One positive

aspect of the study is that it does offer specific fields to address regarding program study and evaluation and begins to create a lexicon regarding categorization of available programs available to LEOs (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The scope of developed programs discovered appeared to be quite narrow considering the demands of the job (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). The data gathered included very specific training offered to LEOs addressing repeating themes, such as violence, psychology, education, management, and such (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014). This affords the opportunity for future research to consider more current psychological training service provision such as child abuse, bullying, and substance abuse issues (Aguilar-Moya et al., 2014).

Psychological training services have encompassed many modalities. Hostage negotiation training, behavioral analysis training, diversity training, interviewing or interrogation training, mental health training, and science applied to fieldwork fall under police psychological training services (Gudjonsson et al., 2016; Porter et al., 2016). Effective and appropriate training may occur in a formalized setting. Such settings include workshops, small groups, support from a professionally trained peer, or one-on-one (Booth et al., 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Young, 2016a, b). Some specialized psychological skills are best modeled during fieldwork (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a). Such training and resultant field preparedness has positively affected officer mental health (Cronin et al., 2017). Professional capability is paramount to success for the officer, the department, and judicial system connectivity (Tyler, 2016).

Seven of the twenty-five utilization topics studied recently were mental health services for the officers and their families (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Eighteen were

identified as psychological training services, emphasizing the need for psychology-based training protocols, which were extensively underutilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Psychologists' capacity for understanding the human psyche and modeling effective interpersonal communication has made their expertise invaluable when developing hostage negotiation strategies (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). The challenge is gaining acceptance by LEAs when the psychologist or counselor is without LEO experience (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a). One barrier for service provision by skilled, credentialed professionals is gaining access to an LEA (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a). Inaccessibility for non-LE personnel may have reduced the potential positive interaction and results following such training (Young, 2016a).

The result of perceived or vicarious trauma by sworn LEOs has been well documented (Soltys, 2016). This trauma can be career-ending, life-threatening, and may eddy into the community at large (Bullock & Garland, 2018; Fox et al., 2012; Tyler, 2016). Trauma informed program effectiveness entails officers meeting with clinicians and becoming open to more personal wellness initiatives. Aspects of police culture might make such initiatives unacceptable to many officers. Another option may be investing in trauma-training programs specifically if provided by a police or forensic psychology professional (Conrad, 2017; Gumani, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). The published research regarding trauma-informed training has been minimal (Watson & Andrews, 2018). Previous studies regarding trauma-informed training were focused outward, directed more at assisting others with their trauma, than assisting LEOs with vicarious trauma.

Wellness training has been found proactively useful in supporting police officers' maintaining positive mental health (Carleton et al., 2018; Fleishman et al., 2018). There are numerous areas where mental health competencies would directly affect policing (Kubiak et al., 2017; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Mental health wellness training should be offered to increase LEOs' overall well-being, effectiveness, and longevity with the force (Soltys, 2016). Additional psychology disciplines, including industrial/organizational psychology should be involved to achieve maximum effectiveness (Harris, 2016; Soltys, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Mentorship should ensue, emphasizing training about behaviors to avoid, such as drug and alcohol use (Harris, 2016; Soltys, 2016). Psychologists use various strategies supporting police and military service members while providing benefit to overall health (Soltys, 2016).

Some practitioners suggested trauma response peer training due to stigma surrounding utilizing outside mental health services (Gumani, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Concerns surrounding stigma could be addressed through trained peer support (Gumani, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). The program must initially be offered then monitored by a clinician (Watson & Andrews, 2018; Young 2016a). Trained peer support could ultimately reduce LEO personal interaction with clinical psychologists (Young 2016a). Close to 46% of United Kingdom (UK) officers evaluated acknowledged trauma following critical incidents (Watson & Andrews, 2018). Many officers still indicate they are unwilling to seek offered professional psychological help for reasons regarding stigma (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018).

TRiM which has been utilized in the UK, provides officers the opportunity to seek the mental health services needed, without the perceived stigma (Watson & Andrews, 2018). Cognitive avoidance tendencies rather than effective coping mechanisms are noted in many LEOs (Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). A current alternative to traditional mental health services is addressing such tendencies with a professionally-trained peer. Psychological training services such as TRiM or other models would be developed and monitored by credentialed professionals (Gumani, 2017; Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Acceptance and support by administration would be vital for effectiveness (Gumani, 2017; Young, 2016a).

Officers must be also adequately trained to elicit the necessary and accurate information in the cases they investigate. Officers may progress toward recognizing their personal, implicit bias through truths and falsehoods differentiation training (Masip et al, 2016). Education would begin with officers attending necessary training by psychology professionals (Masip et al., 2016). The officers would then be supported by recognizing such bias especially if detected early in their careers (Harris, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Psychologists are not to engage in interrogation practices, although they may offer training about appropriate and effective information-gathering methods (Porter et al., 2016). Special attention must be placed upon the differentiation between officers' interview styles when dealing with adults compared to adolescents or children, or others deemed incompetent (Cleary & Warner, 2016). Such distinction may affect the interview outcome and resultant legal ramifications (Cleary & Warner, 2016).

The approach when interviewing adolescents or those with diminished capacity must be different than when dealing with competent adults (Cleary & Warner, 2016; Gudjonsson et al., 2016). Individuals with mental illnesses, including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, have been disproportionately represented in wrongful prosecution or false confession cases (Gudjonsson et al., 2016). The likelihood is increasing police officers will meet persons suffering from mental illness through their careers due to de-institutionalizing individuals with mental illness (Cleary & Warner, 2016; Gudjonsson et al., 2016). Multiple Innocence Project cases have involved PDs, officers, and cities employing improper interrogation practices (Cleary & Warner, 2016; Tyler, 2016). It is considered LEOs learn to recognize certain mental illness characteristics and focus upon education regarding interaction with a diminished capacity population (Cleary & Warner, 2016; Gudjonsson et al., 2016).

Effective communication skills are also a necessity required in giving, receiving, and evaluating information (Cleary & Warner, 2016; Wood, 2000). Communication skills are necessary for eliciting substantial and correct intelligence (Knowles, 2016; Porter et al., 2016). Proper hostage negotiation and other crisis intervention techniques also include effective interpersonal skills (Young, 2016a, b). Social psychology is an educational platform for such skill development. This training could stock the officer toolkit regarding improving outcomes in seemingly irresolvable conflicts (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b).

*Suicide by cop* is sometimes a hostage situation extension wherein an individual has made the decision to end his or her own life by engaging an officer in a violent

episode (Knowles, 2016). An individual has determined by making overt aggressive gestures toward the police they are assured imminent death by an officer (Knowles, 2016). It is important to understand the situation, including the escalation path based upon verbal and behavioral cues (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). Effective communication in such a situation necessitates individuals' understanding interpersonal dynamics, human behavior, suicide ideology, and prevention (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). The steps involved in effectively negotiating any crisis follow the prescribed Behavioral Change Stairway Model developed by the FBI. These steps are active listening, empathy, rapport, influence, behavioral change (Knowles, 2016). Professional psychologists or counselors might be ideal for providing negotiation and communication training to LEOs (Young, 2016a).

Increased American community variation results in today's LEO necessarily developing appropriate skills for working within multicultural environments (Miles-Johnson, 2016). Such training would be uniquely effective at helping the officers appreciate daily processing diversity information and the legal ramifications to lack of training (Forte, 2017). The officers and the departments may find themselves subject to Americans with Disabilities Act violation charges or other legal standards if such guidelines are not properly followed (Harris, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Tyler, 2016). When developing training it is paramount the officers first recognize their individual need in addition to the training importance (Wood, 2000). Australian LEOs engaged in a study to train officers about the multicultural aspects within the transgender community. The officers involved did not appear comfortable with the training, suggesting a reduced

value perception or lack of interest in the subject (Miles-Johnson, 2016). Non-LEO professionals provided training, which was suggested as a reason for lack of interest, but an exit survey was not included to confirm (Miles-Johnson, 2016).

Transgender or other marginalized individuals report a higher rate of interaction and personal rights violation with police officers (Forte, 2017). This group includes individuals with mental health diagnoses. There is also a greater representation of individuals with comorbid diagnoses (Booth et al., 2017; Forrester et al., 2017; Forte, 2017). Benefits of appropriate, informed psychological training services include improved knowledge base, reduced stress levels, and improved PCI (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Tyler 2016, Soltys, 2016). Perceived value of one's work is recognized as an inhibitor to professional stress as is the perceived value of one's team (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Kula, 2017).

### **Utilization and Necessity**

A discrepancy also exists in the personal and family utilization of police psychological services (Donnelly et al., 2015). Although 50% of LEOs indicate knowledge of services and were aware of how to access, only 13% report using services offered (Donnelly et al., 2015). LEO's use of EAPs such as family counseling intervention, mental health counseling intervention, and domestic violence intervention were investigated (Donnelly et al., 2015). This research was conducted quantitatively and considered services across five domains, utilizing self-report scales to assess officer use of services provided (Donnelly et al., 2015). The study included four research

questions, beginning with determining if officers were aware of how to access said services (Donnelly et al., 2015).

Study challenges were multifold and included concerns regarding the honesty of the answers regarding gender, which lead to additional concerns regarding the officer's openness to answer truthfully on other topics (Donnelly et al., 2015). The surveys were narrow, only considering topics such as alcoholism or domestic violence affected employment (Donnelly et al., 2015). Few officers acknowledged utilization of the services, and the study did not yield a great deal in the way of explanation or evaluation of service use (Donnelly et al., 2015). A discrepancy between awareness and utilization of such programs was identified (Donnelly et al., 2015). Lack of awareness was eliminated in the data as the primary reason for the program service utilization avoidance (Donnelly et al., 2015).

LEOs from 27 states (N=256) were similarly surveyed quantitatively regarding willingness to seek psychological mental health services from their departments (Bloodgood, 2005). Officers completed the online Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help scale (ATSPPH) (Bloodgood, 2005). The study focus was officers' willingness to use psychological services (Bloodgood, 2005). Two hypotheses were considered, officer personal willingness to seek services and effect of previous service interaction (Bloodgood, 2005). Officers' previous experience with services provided was shown to significantly affect willingness to use services in the future (Bloodgood, 2005). The study did not delineate between services provided by LEO and non-LEO providers. The officers did spontaneously suggest the service

providers' LE experience was important to them (Bloodgood, 2005). This had not previously been fully explored.

The earlier study, "Psychological Services in Police Departments Questionnaire," was provided to employed, sworn LEOs (Delprino & Bahn, 1988). The survey included 17 items representing 25 most commonly provided police psychological services (Delprino & Bahn, 1988). Results from this quantitative study are interpreted to indicate between 72% and 9% officers utilize the range of services available (Delprino & Bahn, 1988). The survey has been utilized in later studies, with similar results (Patterson, 2016). Suggestions by the authors included considering officers' personal needs and injuries such that once service need is established, officers may be less likely to perceive them as being compulsory (Delprino & Bahn, 1988).

*Pluralistic ignorance* may have influence upon officers' willingness to utilize services (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Officers responded to a 47-question survey including 4 open-ended questions (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). The survey included the ATSPPH-SF and was administered online, which has been noted as a limitation to the study (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). The study intent was to elucidate reasons for identified officer underutilization of police psychological services (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). This mixed methods study was focused upon the aspect of stigma as perceived personal stigma and public stigma (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Researchers discovered officers believed their colleagues were more likely to engage in service utilization than themselves, classifying this phenomenon as pluralistic ignorance (Karaffa

& Tochkov, 2013). Pluralistic ignorance was determined to be a detracting factor for officer utilization of mental health services (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013).

Effects of perceived public stigmatization and personal interpretation of stigma may drastically reduce the likelihood of a LEO seeking mental health services when in need (Bullock & Garland, 2018; Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Utilizing psychological services is negatively correlated with perceived stigma (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). One concern is officers' reported assumption other colleagues are less likely to use services (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). The four open-ended questions in the survey were developed to collect suggestions improving police psychological services (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Officers spontaneously suggested they were not as comfortable with services provided by non-LEO practitioners (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013) as previously noted by additional researchers (Blau, 1994; Bloodgood, 2005; Woody, 2005, 2011). The police culture survey portion of the instrument was developed to evaluate officers' inculcation with aspects of police culture (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). These characteristics include aggression, emotional control, bravery, autonomy, secrecy, and distrust of others (Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013).

The size of a PD has also been identified as a mitigating factor in officers' willingness to seek psychological help (White, 2016). The Self-Stigma of Seeking Psychological Help (SSOSH), and the Perceptions of Stigmatization by Others for Seeking Help (PSOSH) were completed by officers in right-to work states (White, 2016). Officers' acceptance of psychological services provision related to the officer's department size (White, 2016). This previously unidentified relationship may have a

bearing upon future expectations for service provision. Officers may recognize colleagues as less likely to seek help for both training and mental health service provision. Those in larger departments may find this self-perceived stigma a barrier to seeking assistance (Bullock & Garland, 2018; White, 2016).

Officers from different countries offer multiple reasons for reduced service utilization (Ménard et al., 2016). United States' police officers are more likely to use services than Australian officers and less likely than Swiss officers (Ménard et al., 2016). Negative coping mechanisms have been cited with officers noting drug or alcohol use to escape rather than addressing their problems (Ménard et al., 2016). Stigma and low perceived service value were also suggested explanations (Ménard et al., 2016). Male officers were found less likely than females to seek service utilization (Ménard et al., 2016). Dependents or relationship status were related non-significantly to reduced service utilization (Ménard et al., 2016). PTSD evaluations or having sustained a critical incident were not significantly correlated although correlation was indicated between countries, suggesting a cultural factor involved (Ménard et al., 2016).

Australian officers have been more likely to seek professional psychological services not affiliated with their LEA (Reavley et al., 2018). The officers indicated appropriate awareness and recognition of mental health concerns about colleagues (Reavley et al., 2018). Officers stated mental health concerns suggest their colleague is dangerous and they do not know how to assist (Reavley et al., 2018). Concerns include the fact both studies involved large participant samples which may not have been representative of the population (Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The studies

were also offered in survey formats with specific possible options (Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The officers did not have the opportunity to expound on their answers or offer any other possible reasons (Ménard et al., 2016). Further research providing empirical evidence needs to be pursued (Ménard et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018).

Officers exhibit a high level of PTSD, alcohol abuse, and depression (Fox et al., 2012). Challenges involved with officer service utilization may be in conflict with each other (Fox et al., 2012). It is indicated psychological services on an anonymous basis are necessary to support officers and their families due to cultural factors within law enforcement (Fox et al., 2012). Officers have indicated concerns regarding services provided by the department for reasons including confidentiality, stigma, and potential career-related repercussions (Fox et al., 2012). Officers surveyed also indicated sensitivity to police culture is necessary in providers (Fox et al., 2012). Proactive officer support involving officer perspective and “buy-in” (p.6) are suggested to encourage ownership for those involved in development. This navigation may prove difficult without exploring concerns provided by the officers (Fox et al., 2012).

Officers historically seem to prefer avoiding help-seeking behavior in general (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017). Officers prefer to reach out to those close to them, such as colleagues or family (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017). Officers completing a recent survey suggested psychology professionals inside work, outside work, and direct supervisors represented the lowest means for chosen support, while friends and family ranked the highest (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017). Data were also analyzed to indicate the receptivity

to necessary service utilization may be relative to the language used (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017). Services presented suggesting self-help mechanisms are generally more well-received by police (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017). Officer willingness to engage has been improved when services rely upon officer self-help, and when the providers are perceived as trustworthy, non-judgmental, and knowledgeable about law enforcement (Heffren & Hausdorf, 2017).

There are noted variations in willingness to undergo training or other services provided by police psychologists (Naz et al., 2014). There is potentially a cultural bias affecting an officer's willingness to participate in training provided by those perceived to be outsiders (Naz et al., 2014; Woody, 2005). Psychological services utilization was assessed by both English and Pakistani police (Naz et al., 2014). There were multiple stages to evaluating responses in this mixed methods study (Naz et al., 2014). Interviews were initially conducted with open-ended questions that allowed for the development of themes (Naz et al., 2014). Once coded and organized, the researchers reassessed participants, by collecting and comparing responses to the prescribed themes indicating differentiation between the two cultures (Naz et al., 2014). The conclusion of the study was Pakistani officers were more likely to engage in formal services offered by psychologists than British officers (Naz et al., 2014).

An additional consideration is the primary contributor to officer stress, work conditions (Blau, 1994; Patterson, 2016; Soltys, 2016; Violanti, 1995). Administrative and managerial support is necessary for officer engagement to occur (Cronin et al., 2017; Kula, 2017; Tyler, 2016). Program and policy reform directed at improving

psychological services or officer involvement must begin within the police culture (Harris, 2016). Officers look to each other for validation and behavior modelling (Harris, 2016). Program validation increases the likelihood services are well-received. Effective, utilized training programs are necessary for LEOs regarding tactical measures as well as psychological training services (Brewster et al., 2016; Lambert et al., 2016; Patterson, 2016).

There are four noted types of family and work conflict. Conflict may be strain-based, behavior-based, time-based, or family-based (Lambert et al., 2017). Indian police officers surveyed to evaluate the relationship between job stress and family life indicated that job-related stress had a greater impact, ultimately compounding stress at home (Lambert et al., 2017). The interaction between strain, behavior, and family-based conflict compounds the pre-existing levels of stress in Indian officers surveyed (Lambert et al., 2017). Suggestions to combat stress included positive interventions, introduction of positive coping mechanisms, and social support (Lambert et al., 2017).

Recommendations included administration implementation of more trainings and workshops on reduction of behavior-based conflict (Lambert et al., 2017). Such training would include professional education regarding utilization of EAPs, as well as effective mechanisms when switching between roles of LEO and family member (Lambert et al., 2017).

Perceived stress has been significantly correlated to officer burnout (Kula, 2017). Internal policy and management were suggested as the most prevalent organizational stressors for Turkish National Police (Kula, 2017). Stress occurs due to multiple factors

including officers' comfort in their jobs and perceived support from supervisors (Kula, 2017). Incident complaints with LEOs negatively affected officer capacity for appropriate conflict resolution in the future, creating a negative cycle (Kula, 2017). Suggestions included greater support from administration through provided stress-management training (Kula, 2017). Operational stress had a tremendous negative impact on officer performance and PCI (Kula, 2017). Organizational stress had an even greater impact (Kula, 2017).

Croatian officers were surveyed to evaluate officer stress amongst similar variables (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017). The variables regarding socioeconomic diversity were not found to have a statistically significant impact upon job satisfaction (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017). The value of one's ability to work, perform one's job well, and receive positive, clear communication about one's performance were the important factors in determining increased satisfaction (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017). Increased job satisfaction led to decreased stress (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017). The most strategic item identified when assessing job satisfaction was the ability to communicate well with others in one's department and the field (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017). The authors recommended further research should commence regarding effective communication skills at varying department levels (Borovec, & Balgač, 2017).

Socio-economic factors, marital status, gender, number of dependents, and age do not have a significant bearing upon officer burnout when assessed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1991; Aguayo et al., 2017). Stress variations were noted regarding these factors (Aguayo et al., 2017). None were determined to be

statistically significant (Aguayo et al., 2017). Conditions like shift type, rank, and unit relations do have a bearing upon burnout (Aguayo et al., 2017). Further research into job satisfaction relating to officers' professional capability and other working conditions has been a recommended future pursuit (Aguayo et al., 2017).

Senior officers rather than psychology professionals often provide novice officers modeling and training on distress resolution (Harris, 2014). Recruits and novice officers emulate those in authority (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). The testimony of a respected peer or supervisor could have tremendous impact on recruit behavior (Harris, 2014; Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Officers conversely focus upon personal resources conservation instead of looking outward for support (Lambert & Steinke, 2015). This cultural constraint results in stress due to benefit avoidance (Lambert & Steinke, 2015). The conserved behavior due to police culture may be perpetuated through negative role modeling (Harris, 2014). This may provide a barrier to more effective resolution regarding psychological service utilization (Harris, 2016; Patterson, 2016).

Recruits volunteered to take a hand-written survey developed by Delprino and Bahn in 1988 assessing their functioning at three specific intervals during training (Patterson, 2016). Recruits have often been pressured by others to engage in detrimental behaviors, and approximately 25% drop out after the first year (Patterson, 2016). Researchers suggested recruits who developed coping mechanisms or emotion-focused coping experienced higher psychological distress levels compared to their colleagues who utilized more problem-focused mechanisms (Patterson, 2016). Results were based upon

descriptive statistics and Analysis of Variance. Time in recruit training correlated positively with life stressors (Patterson, 2016).

Field training time correlated with a decrease in emotion-based or social based solutions and recruits reported life to be less stressful (Patterson, 2016). Emotion-centered solutions for LEOs may not be effective at reducing perceived stress. Formal counseling services may not be the most appropriate solution for LE officers (Patterson, 2016). Recruits' data were evaluated in self-report surveys. Sworn officers using vigilance in their coping toolkit indicated overall stress decrease comparative to their counterparts who used avoidance-based mechanisms (Kubiak et al., 2017). Officers who reported experiencing job-related stress found stress was moderated through developing vigilance as a coping mechanism (Kubiak et al., 2017).

Reduction of job-related stress lowered overall stress (Kubiak et al., 2017). Officers adapting an increased threat awareness stance found this to be effective in reducing overall stress (Kubiak et al., 2017). Officers are continuously active and constantly processing threat-related information has been shown to alleviate many outward operational stress symptoms (Kubiak et al., 2017). It is necessary to find an effective coping mechanism reducing potential burnout, depression, or negative coping techniques (Kubiak et al., 2017). This increased threat awareness coping style is not always appropriate (Kubiak et al., 2017).

A positive aspect was officers becoming aware they need effective methods for acknowledging and coping with stress. Behavioral coping has a positive relationship with stress reduction (Kubiak et al., 2017). Avoidance coping was positively related to

stress increase (Kubiak et al., 2017). Behavioral stress reduction and modification are psychological training services effectively offered by credentialed professionals.

Directions for future research include such training protocol (Kubiak et al., 2017).

Psychological services can be further utilized to support PDs in working with administration. Officers who determine their input is valued and enjoy an open, mutual communication style with supervisors report a greater sense of accomplishment with lower operational stress (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). PCI may become more positive, with less incident reports (Tyler, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018) burnout, fatigue, negative coping strategies, displaced bias, and poor veracity judgments. Positive correlations include providing a greater standard of care, victim empowerment, understanding mental health situations, and greater reception to community members (Birdsall et al., 2017; Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Rajakaruna et al., 2017). Effective training regimen and confidence in one's professional abilities serves to decrease stress (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Patterson, 2016). The relationship between professional and lifestyle stress is positively correlated (Aguayo et al., 2017; Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017). This noted relationship is at the apex of PTSD and stress, which are the two primary concerns in officer wellness (Aguayo et al., 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2017).

The potential risk for officer suicide remains a constant concern (Chae & Boyle, 2013). It is clear the presence of an effective mental health program for LEOs is needed to reduce the potential of officer suicide (Chae & Boyle, 2013; Klinoff et al., 2015). The likelihood of officer suicidal ideation was evaluated across five domains and findings

included the presence of such an EAP would dramatically reduce the potential for suicide (Chae & Boyle, 2013). This study was an assessment of previous research and reiterated the consensus the provision of mental health services is necessary for the reduction of potential suicide ideation (Chae & Boyle, 2013). These results have been reflected in multiple studies strongly encouraging the utilization of the EAP and professional psychological services (Chae & Boyle, 2013; Soltys, 2016; Violanti, 1995).

Officer involved homicide-suicide is also a concern for multiple reasons (Klinoff et al., 2015). Domestic violence occurs within LE families as well as civilian families, but in these instances there is always an available firearm (Klinoff et al., 2015). Concerns include retirement from the force or a spouse in failing health (Klinoff et al., 2015). Such occurrences coupled with the accessibility to a firearm and reticence for help-seeking may prove a deadly combination (Klinoff et al., 2015). It is recommended PDs engage in trainings designed to introduce officers to the warning signs for PTSD, interpersonal violence, and other worries through behavioral health education (Klinoff et al., 2015). Programs with positive results are suggested as those focusing on peer-training models (Klinoff et al., 2015). Proposed future research in this area is suggested to combat psychological services resistance related to aspects of police culture (Klinoff et al., 2015).

Such responsible mental health and psychological training programs effects may ultimately be felt in public policy (Ménard et al., 2016). Mental health services' effects upon young officers' lifestyle would likely include improving their ability to navigate potentially ethically ruinous situations (Booth et al., 2017; Harris, 2016). Situations arise

in which intervention by psychologists at appropriate times could serve to protect an officer's career or life (Booth et al., 2017; Harris, 2016). These situations may include officer misconduct, depression, and even suicide (Fox et al., 2012; Harris, 2016; Klinoff et al., 2015). Negative behaviors can ultimately grow within a subculture when lacking appropriate intervention (Booth et al., 2017; Harris, 2016). The result may be fostered in each individual officer, increasing individual and collective stress (Booth et al., 2017; Harris, 2014).

Fundamental policing practice and psychological service changes are needed as described in the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing (May 2015; Tyler, 2016). Difficulties may occur in their absence (Tyler, 2016). The necessity for positive mental health support and effective training is clearly identified (Harris, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Tyler, 2016). There is the need for psychology-based training practices, in addition to other services provided by forensic and police psychologists. Detrimental effects to society will most likely increase if services are not utilized (Aguayo et al., 2017; Harris, 2016; Tyler, 2016).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The research surrounding police psychological services includes mental health services and professional training services. Mental health services include both those required and optional. Training services also may be optional or required. The literature includes services available, why the services are necessary, and opinions why services are not utilized. Research focused upon officers' point of view regarding this disparity and its potential relation to non-LEO providers was not noted.

Officers' personal and family mental health are integral to success (Aguayo et al., 2017; Gumani, 2017). It is equally important appropriate professional psychological training takes place. Hostage negotiation training, interviewing training, interrogation training, and response to trauma training, fall in this province. Training services offered by credentialed psychologists are useful to the officers, department, and ultimately, civilians (Birdsall et al., 2017; Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Conrad, 2017). These services may be offered in concert with training peer support teams (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018; Young, 2016a).

Job satisfaction is measured by one's confidence in their ability to perform their job functions effectively (Borovec & Balgač, 2017). The result of appropriate KSA level is a positive affirmation of one's professional success (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Kula, 2017). Positive professional image is correlated with a reduction in job-related stress (Kubiak et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2016; Soltys, 2016). Reduction in job-related stress is correlated with overall stress reduction (Kubiak et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2016; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017). Reduction in stress improves interpersonal interactions (Conrad, 2017; Kubiak et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2016). Effective PCI will improve community relations and perception of police performance (Harris, 2016; Ménard et al., 2016; Webb, 2017).

Further research needs to be completed regarding service underutilization, stigma (Carleton et al, 2018; Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Woody, 2005, 2011), and training application (Birdsall et al., 2017; Booth et al., 2017; Carleton et al, 2018), with the correlation between professional confidence and stress reduction (Aguayo et al., 2017;

Borovec & Balgač, 2017). Studies noted include response to Likert scale questions with additional open-ended questions (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Lambert et al., 2017; Ménard et al., 2016). This study addressed discovered research gaps by focusing upon previously identified suggestions officers may not be receptive to services provided by non-LEOs (Blau, 1994; Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012). Methodology detailed in Chapter 3 reflects multiple studies, the sampling strategy chosen, and using surveys with optional interviews due to stigma (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Lambert et al., 2017; Reavley et al., 2018).

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The case was made in the first two chapters there is a notable difference between officers' psychological service awareness and utilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Lambert et al., 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). The purpose was to explore and identify recurring themes regarding officer service utilization. Services include mental health (Aguayo et al., 2017; Bullock & Garland, 2018) and training services (Birdsall et al., 2017; Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Brewster et al., 2016). Service provider roles are often filled by both in-house and contractor psychologists (Blau, 1994). Provision includes multiple venues, employing psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, peer support, and laypersons (Blau, 1994).

The study focus was officer perspectives on psychological services provided by non-LEO psychology professionals, to gain a better understanding of such service utilization. Counseling or psychological services provided by laypersons or peers were not under consideration unless introduced comparatively by a participant. Required services apart from those provided by credentialed psychology or counseling professionals were not included unless a participant noted spontaneously. Required psychologist-provided training was included if referenced by officers because attendance does not necessarily imply engagement and these responses may indicate a relationship across both areas (Miles-Johnson, 2016; Wood, 2000). The research strategy is clearly defined in the remainder of this chapter.

The research questions were based upon an observed low LEO engagement in provided psychological services. Officer perspectives regarding potential aspects of police culture were considered as possible variables regarding underutilization (Paoline & Gau, 2018; Terrill, 2003; Woody, 2005). Officers have previously spontaneously suggested provider LEO experience may have an impact on service perception and this was the investigative focus (Bloodgood, 2005; Karaffa & Tochov, 2013). The researcher's role was unusual given the choice in methodology, but potentially even more effective. The researcher in this case functioned as an objective observer, qualitatively examining LEO perspective and experience. The chosen lens was appropriate to garner LEOs' personal lived experiences with police psychological services (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The LEOs' personal involvement with and perception of services was recorded while providing the officers with complete anonymity.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

There were two central research questions to be investigated in this qualitative phenomenological study:

Research Question 1 - How do law enforcement officers perceive psychological services offered by individuals without policing experience?

Research Question 2 - How does officers' perception of services affect utilization?

The central concepts considered in this research were the noted discrepancies between psychological services available to police officers and those utilized. Service utilization is low compared to service need (Donnelly et al., 2015; Karaffa & Koch, 2016;

Karaffa & Tochov, 2013). Services are offered for LEOs personally and professionally, including mental health services and psychological training services (Bullock & Garland, 2018; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017; Watson & Andrews, 2018). The conceptual framework, police culture, may be reflected in officers' preference for interaction within the LE brotherhood (Paoline & Gau, 2018; Terrill et al., 2003). This may bear influence upon perceived service value and stigma surrounding service utilization (Bloodgood, 2005; Kubiak et al., 2017; Young, 2016a). Theories and qualitative empirical data have previously been developed although the noted discrepancy between service awareness and use still exists.

Officers may be more inclined to engage in services provided by layperson practitioners, than professional psychologists (Woody, 2005). This may be due to multiple reasons, including dislike for academic vernacular and the sense practitioners are out of touch with police work (Woody, 2005, 2011). The current study focus was LEO perspectives regarding services provided by psychology professionals, to gain a better understanding why services appear underutilized (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The professionals primarily considered were those without policing experience. The conceptual framework was such service use may be affected by police culture impacting perceived service value and resulting in utilization reduction. The goal was allowing the officers to share and advance their opinions regarding the phenomenon.

The research tradition was guided by the intent to avoid evaluating existing LEO programs. A more humanistic approach was employed to allow more latitudinal and conceptual development. More depth was desired to understanding the disconnect

between the psychological services offered to LEOs and those utilized. The units of analysis in this study were individuals, lending the study to be most appropriately served by the qualitative narrative case study, followed closely by phenomenology (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Hermeneutic phenomenology allowing the officers the opportunity to describe lived experiences was the guiding lens (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Transcendental phenomenology was also a focus, with the intent to provide a more robust description (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The participants' textural and structural experiences were described to appropriately develop the experience's essence (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

### **The Role of the Researcher**

The researcher within phenomenological studies often must focus on the epoch or bracketing information to set aside their personal perspective (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The researcher in this case does not have policing experience and does not entertain an officer's viewpoint regarding a LEO's choice to use or decline psychological services. There are no professionally preconceived notions regarding availability within individual departments or the methods by which officers are made aware. This provided an unusual vantage point from which to objectively gather information, later coding and analyzing the data provided. It was imperative the focus was upon the larger questions allowing the data to guide and identify themes providing explanation (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

A researcher without personal ties to the community or phenomenon studied is in an exceptional position for employing scientific perspective when assessing data provided by participants. Connections were developed with a local PD, through community policing training in preparation for completing research. Insight was gained

regarding question framework and which questions would yield the most useful information. Opinions were not requested regarding the study. Information sought included question clarity, and what questions might be recommended to gain effective responses. This department did not receive questionnaires requesting participation.

## **Methodology**

### **Participant Selection Logic**

The theoretical population was United States' police officers in various career stages. The accessible population was officers willing to participate. The population under consideration was officers who have been given the opportunity to use psychological services provided by professional psychologists. This should include all law enforcement officers. The study was not focused on any officer demographics. Both genders, various ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, religions, education levels, and career developmental stages were given the opportunity to participate. The officers were given the choice to self-identify these characteristics.

Demographic variations are unequally represented in this population (Alderden et al., 2017; Maskaly et al., 2017). Characteristic disparities may be limiting factors, due to low diversity represented in this population (Alderden et al., 2017; Maskaly et al., 2017). LE females represented have increased from 7 percent to 12 percent (Cronin et al., 2017). Minority representation has increased from 17 to 27 percent, including Latino, Asian, and African-American officers (Cronin et al., 2017). Measures were taken to encourage demographic variation and general population transferability.

Participants in phenomenological research must be willing individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon and meet the criteria. The use of purposive sampling strategy requires this as an inclusion aspect for participant selection (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Criteria for this study were participants who must have engaged in a shared experience, policing, as well as the opportunity to use psychological services. Only individuals currently employed as officers were given questionnaires. Five to twenty-five participants represented the target numbers to ensure appropriate transferability (Boddy, 2016; Hennink et al., 2017).

There should have been at minimum nine participants (Hennick et al., 2017). Code saturation can occur between 8 and 16 participants within a group lacking diversity (Hennink et al., 2017; Namey et al., 2016). Meaning saturation occurs between participants 10 and 24 (Hennink et al., 2017; Namey et al., 2016). This suggests a sample size of 8 to 24 (Hennick et al., 2017). Data for this dissertation was sought from 10 to 25 respondents.

More questionnaires were distributed than needed to capture the required number of participants as there may be other considerations precluding officer participation. Typical return for questionnaire participation is 33% (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The samples were selected based upon predetermined qualifications with questionnaires including instructions sent to target locations. The goal was providing a more in-depth, textural analysis transferable to the population while gaining valuable insight from each respondent (Boddy, 2016; Hennink et al., 2017). The intent was to compare similar cases representing LEOs with experience regarding police psychological training services. PDs

were identified based upon information provided through the Federal Bureau of Investigations Uniform Crime Reporting Program (Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Agencies not listing an administrative email on their website were disqualified (Karaffa & Koch, 2016).

### **Instrumentation**

Interview is the recommended format for phenomenological studies (Boddy, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Questionnaires rather than interviews were offered in this study for multiple reasons. Willingness to participate may largely depend on fears concerning confidentiality (Reavley et al., 2018) or skepticism directed at the unknown, non-LEO researcher (Watson & Andrews, 2018; Woody 2005 & 2011; Young, 2016a). Willingness to participate may also be associated with willingness for service utilization. Questionnaires included standardized questions with an open-ended structure. Participants were able to confidentially disclose perspectives and experiences without fear of exposure or hesitation to divulge personal information.

Stigma, bias, or shame may cause a participant to minimize or omit personal experiences utilizing psychological services (Haugen et al., 2017; Karaffa & Koch, 2016, Watson & Andrews, 2018). Questionnaire utilization has been found to eliminate or minimize time constraints often found with in-person interviewing (Reavley et al., 2018). Participants had time to reflect before anonymously disclosing their answers. Anonymous, written disclosure versus being audio recorded in an interview may also decrease any acquiescent responding (Reavley et al., 2018). Content regarding types of

services utilized and reasons for utilization may be more aptly disclosed through the intentionally determined methodology.

The questions were open-ended. The use of open-ended questions allowed participants to develop their stories or statements regarding a shared experience (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). This was intended to encourage the officers to fully describe their experiences with psychological services. Telephone interviews rather than the questionnaire format were also offered. Interviews adhered to the same structured questions.

Officers may have used dictation or voice-recognition software to facilitate transcription. Although interviews are often recommended for phenomenological studies, especially those designed to explore the topic depth, surveys provide greater confidentiality with this population (Lambert et al., 2016; Reavley et al., 2018). The instrument utilized was personally developed. This instrument (see Appendix A) includes ten open-ended questions based upon the research gaps noted as well as previous research (Bloodgood, 2005; Naz et al., 2014; Reavley et al., 2018). The questionnaire (see Appendix A) included instruction participants may elect an interview format instead or in addition to the survey.

The questionnaire was developed to begin with LEOs' indicating their own service awareness (Donnelly et al., 2015). It culminated with signifying if the provider's policing experience was important to utilization (Bloodgood, 2005; Woody, 2005, 2011). The purpose was for participants to develop their responses, fully describing the phenomenon related to officer perspectives on police psychological services. This was

provided completely anonymously to encourage candor. The questions including the perception of services provided by non-LEO professionals were designed to directly address the research questions.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The plan was to study employed, sworn officers. The perspectives held by multiple LEOs were expected to offer insight transferable to the target population. Officers were approached through purposeful contact with chosen PDs. This encouraged respondent variation, without fully controlling the sample. One questionnaire was sent with a pre-addressed, stamped envelope to two PDs in each of the fifty states until sample size was achieved. One department chosen was within a city, and one was in an identified rural area. One hundred total questionnaires were sent with the intent to vary officer demographics.

The strategy was to request more responses than necessary for the required sample size, accommodating individuals who opt out or do not meet the basic LEO criterion. Criterion-based sampling was chosen. The plan involved participants representing various demographic specifications for example age, gender, and ethnicity (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). This information was not collected unless participants chose to offer. Diverse national areas were intentionally chosen to theoretically promote variety within the respondents.

Participants were selected according to survey return timeliness. There was not any enticement for participation or punitive actions against officers who declined. The considerations for the specific purposive sampling strategy were snowball and quota

(Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Data were collected from respondents' mailed questionnaires or telephone interviews, transcribed at the time. The researcher collected the data daily for three months, allowing time for all interested respondents to engage.

Data were physically recorded. Coding in-margin was applied for theme development. The researcher determined to approach known officers using the snowball sampling methodology should the necessary participant numbers not be met (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Data were collected anonymously and acutely. A study exit or follow-up was not necessary.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Data analysis involved constant theme development, with in-margin notations, memo-taking, recording, and transcribing information to store digitally. Open coding and a more personal, reflective method were utilized. A semi-structured topic guide was developed initially to assist in recognition of themes (Horspool et al., 2016). Officers were encouraged to respond at will with latitude for developing their thoughts. Topic guide creation assisted in determining points of interest necessitating focus groups (Horspool et al., 2016).

The survey or interview was intended to take place in one step. The researcher was not present with the participant and did not pursue interaction. In-margin coding was utilized to increase clarity during data organization or possible transcription of the supplemental interview. Similarity in shared experiences resulted in similar participant verbiage, encouraging pattern recognition by the researcher (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Recognition of codes, categories, and themes facilitated data organization (Ravitch &

Carl, 2015). The structured pattern of developing raw data from one organizational stage to another was then followed for clear presentation (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

Pursuit of developing themes or any noted ancillary data were acknowledged and justified (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Ancillary data are often utilized to project or predict (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). It was imperative to discern which data were not statistically significant (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Outlying items were addressed during the data cleaning process (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Data analysis also included recognizing limitations, inclusion or exclusion characteristics, intended sample sizes, actual sample sizes, and sample collection methods (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

Triangulation and qualitative data analysis software, NVivo (v. 10, QSR International, 2014) were utilized to assist ensuring validity. Framework analyses were applied to identify *a priori* and emergent themes (Horspool et al., 2016, p. 4). Key themes and sub-themes were used to identify comparative statements between participants (Horspool et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Interrater reliability concerns were non-issues because only one researcher collected and evaluated data. Those items determined to be statistically nonconforming were considered from diverse perspectives before removal from the evaluation (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Credibility was ensured through asking the participants their perception of the phenomenon being studied. The responses were deemed credible and attesting to the internal validity through the participants' criteria for engaging. Transferability was insured through involving only participants meeting the stated criteria. This also

indicated a representative sample was achieved. Results are fully generalizable although variations will be noted due to individuality of participants.

Every effort was made to recognize constantly changing parameters and adjust throughout data analysis procedures. Detailed notes regarding the entire process increased the replicability of the study. The use of a structured, open-ended survey instrument provided for comparability of the raw data (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The option provided for individuals to engage in additional or preferred phone interview was intended to be effective for developing robust, full responses to ensure external validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Any potential interview was intended to follow the prescribed questionnaire format. The use of one researcher minimized potential variation in interview format if that were chosen. Confirmability was guaranteed to the highest level possible through rechecking information gathered (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

### **Ethical Procedures**

The participants were adult volunteers who chose to participate. Volunteers were currently employed police officers, varying by age, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, education, and religion. Responses were kept confidential through the document return system employed. Participants were afforded complete anonymity as opposed to mere confidentiality. The researcher did not know participants' locations, demographic or identifying information, through control measures identified below.

An Informed Consent agreement was provided (see Appendix B) with the instruction not to sign but read for personal edification. Questionnaire submission indicated tacit agreement. Confidentiality was ensured through various strategies, for

example separating any personal information from data provided (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). There may still may have been perceived inherent risk to employment by the officers participating. This study was not intended to include job satisfaction or job performance.

The police psychological services spectrum is intricate. Those supporting officer mental health or supporting the officer professionally are related (Aguayo et al., 2017; Harris, 2016; Papazoglou & Chopko, 2017). Aspects of the job, as well as mental health concerns may have been referenced. The intent was not to address job satisfaction or personal mental health concerns.

Responses were not simply confidential. They were designed to be completely anonymous, apart from the fact the researcher knew the intended recipient departments. The questionnaires did not include demographic information or personal information. The instructions included the request responses be mailed from an undisclosed location to further protect participant identity. Questionnaires were provided only to the population in question. They were intentionally distributed to assist in procuring a diversified group, without necessitating specific demographic information disclosure.

Questionnaires were provided in pre-addressed, stamped envelopes with pre-labeled return addresses for the research post office box. The completed questionnaires were not linked to any specific department. Participants were instructed to place their completed questionnaires in non-local public mail boxes, further increasing anonymity. Equality was assured in gathering participants by requesting participation from any officer at identified PDs. Population access was achieved more extensively through open selection over distance due to other personal and professional relationships. Data will be

stored in a locked container for five years, then destroyed. Signatures and other identifying information were not collected with the questionnaires or surveys.

### **Summary**

Necessary psychological programs for LEOs appear to be largely unsuccessful at attracting and engaging the officers in the trainings or other services provided (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Many possibilities exist for the reasons behind the phenomenon. None have been completely empirically supported through a qualitative study from the officers' perspectives. The focuses of previous studies have been singular and based upon specific research goals as well. The objective in the current study was affording officers the opportunity to answer previously unresolved questions regarding LEO psychological services utilization from their own viewpoints.

A representative sample of employed LEOs was surveyed. The population under consideration was officers who have been given the opportunity to use services provided by credentialed psychology professionals. Officers ideally included all LEOs, while acknowledging characteristic variations, including time in service, gender, ethnicity, or education. Ten to twenty-five sworn, currently employed officers were sought. Transferability to the target population was increased with the imposed purposeful sampling strategy. Surveys with ten questions were provided to two PDs in each state. One rural and one urban department in each state were approached.

Open-ended questions were offered to gather feedback describing officer perspectives on psychological service utilization, personally and professionally.

Interviews are a primary data source for phenomenological studies (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Semi-structured questionnaire and interview formats were offered due to potential concerns regarding confidentiality (Reavley et al., 2018). Responses were chosen based upon questionnaire return timeliness. The purpose was to provide an understanding for reported low psychological service use, so necessary services may be effectively developed. Results include ways to close the gap between services provided and services used. Policy and practice implications are inherent.

The questions were structured to first establish each participant's knowledge base regarding availability of police psychological services. LEOs were additionally afforded the opportunity to distinguish between service types. The questions also specifically included any noted distinction between those providers without LE experience. The focus was services provided by credentialed professionals in the psychology field who do not have LEO experience although officers could contemporaneously differentiate between services provided by laymen and psychology professionals. The purpose of the questionnaire and potential interview was allowing officers to note any effect lack of provider LE experience might have on perception and subsequent utilization of services. This was intended to address the potential effect of police culture on service perception and utilization.

Chapter 4 includes discussion regarding collected data and any changes occurring during that process. Such changes are identified along with reasoning behind the decisions to alter any methodological aspect. The data collection process and iterations involved are detailed relating to the study. Variations are reflected and assessed for

future reference. Descriptors are reported to provide evaluation of the sample against the population. These comparisons take place regarding the perspectives various participants have about the phenomenon of low police psychological service utilization. They include any perceived effects of police culture, perceived training value, and stigma.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The qualitative study design served to investigate police officer perspectives on utilization of police psychological services. The questionnaire and optional alternative telephone interview in this study were developed providing officers the chance to freely state their opinion regarding service provision. Research questions were created to help ascertain if officers found a notable difference in utilizing services provided by professionals without LE experience.

Research Question 1 - How do law enforcement officers perceive psychological services offered by individuals without policing experience?

Research Question 2 - How does officers' perception of services affect utilization?

Analysis was conducted to determine themes within offer responses which might indicate a trend in perception of services offered. Potential improvements to LE psychological services provision may result.

The study development is previewed in the remainder of chapter four. Analytic strategies and coding methods are specifically outlined. Data analysis was performed by generating two cycles of coding. The two resulting categories were Notification and Service Availability and LEO Point of View. Subcategories were identified as Interventive Services, Preventative Services, Positivity Regarding Non-LEO Professional Services, Negativity Regarding Non-LEO Professional Services, Positivity Regarding LEO Professional Services, and Negativity Regarding LEO Professional Services.

Discrepant responses were identified and procedures for resolution are described. Tables are included to organize the data collected, coding methods, and interpretation of findings.

### **Setting**

Participant recruitment considerations followed Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements. This study took place across all fifty United States. The target sample population was chosen to provide a representative group of LEOs. Officers were intentionally invited from demographically distinct PDs. The time surrounding data collection was slightly over two months, with the majority of responses received in month one. Any national news reports regarding police officers and departments during this time may have unknowingly had an impact upon officer perception during the time of participation.

The setting for data collection was purposefully varied throughout the study. Data were received in one location although officers were invited from all fifty states. Officers were instructed not to disclose any identifying information. This would inhibit the ability to determine the effects of professional or personal changes during the time of participation. Some officers did not heed this instruction, and this will be discussed in more detail. None of the officers participating disclosed any personal or organizational conditions which may have influenced participation. Officers did not indicate there were recent changes to policy or work environment.

### **Demographics**

The only criterion for participation was current employment as a sworn United States LEO. The intent in developing the sampling protocol was to encourage more widely varying demographics by race, sex, education, religion, and socio-economic status. The decision was made to encourage demographic disparity by seeking participation from LEOs across all 50 United States. PDs chosen included one rural and one urban per state. The goal was to include diverse representation nationally and thereby purposefully differ participant demographics.

Participants were instructed not to disclose any identifying characteristics. This was to encourage confidentiality and comfort for officers to respond freely. Some participants indicated in responses they were male, hailed from a large department, or noted their marital status. One spontaneously included his department city in a phone interview. Some characteristics could be unintentionally predicted due to language or other clues. This will be further discussed in limitations and recommendations.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection took place from November 23, 2018 and January 31, 2019. Invitations were sent to 50 PDs across the United states, one rural and one urban, and included one questionnaire per department. Instructions included the option for a telephone interview rather than written survey. Eighteen responses to invitations were received. Ten completed surveys were submitted. Four were completed via telephone interview and six were written responses. Telephone interviews were transcribed during the interviews.

Officers utilized multiple methods for submitting responses. There was only one data collection instrument. This tool was utilized in both written and verbal form with six written questionnaires submitted and four verbal telephone interviews completed. Many officers submitting written surveys offered fully developed responses including specific examples. Officers engaging in telephone interviews gave briefer responses. All four telephone interviews were transcribed verbatim from the verbal responses provided at the time of the interview.

Written data were recorded upon receipt by the researcher. The researcher then input officer responses from written questionnaires into an Excel spreadsheet. The researcher transcribed officer verbal telephone interview questionnaire responses onto paper questionnaire documents during each interview and noted this on the documents. These were hand-written. All officers submitting written questionnaires typed their responses. There is a physical document for each questionnaire whether written by the officers or transcribed by the researcher. All responses are fully digitally recorded in an Excel spreadsheet.

The request was made for responses to be returned to the researcher mailbox from remote mailboxes. The request was made for calls to occur from remote telephones in the event a participant opted for a telephone interview. The requests were made to decrease the likelihood of officer identification and increase officer comfort. Six written surveys were collected from the research mailbox. Four officers called on the telephone to request interviews.

There were instances wherein the expected protocol for receiving questionnaires or conducting interviews did not occur. Six returned documents were indicated undeliverable or the PD had closed, and two departments administrators declined by mail, writing in their department name on the envelope and letter. Any identifying information obtained despite clear instructions were shredded per anonymity parameters. One PD administrator emailed the researcher directly requesting a change in methodology. These examples were not included in the number of questionnaires collected as they are a departure from the presented methodological plan.

Multiple variations occurred regarding the methodology. Two agencies mailed the research post office box identifying their department as noted above. The identifying information was excluded from the Excel spreadsheet. One PD administrator emailed the researcher directly and requested digital capabilities for response. This was beyond the methodological scope and the researcher declined.

Four officers called the researcher directly with visible phone numbers. One of those left a voicemail. This officer responded to a return call while in pursuit of a wanted individual. Any identifiable numbers were not documented. These irregularities will be further discussed.

### **Data Analysis**

Each survey questionnaire mailed to each PD was contained in a single page. Each of the four telephone interviews utilized the same mailed survey questionnaires. The six mailed questionnaires received were collected and manually entered into a

database. The four telephone interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The researcher manually entered collected data into the same database.

The researcher first entered all data into an Excel spreadsheet for logistical data management purposes. Use of a grid representation afforded the researcher a clear view of the responses to questions by each participant and each question number. The raw data spreadsheet contained the officers' verbatim responses in one document. This documentation method additionally served as a visual aid for the researcher to recognize distinct categories and recurring themes. The spreadsheet utilization was originally intended only for initial data organization. Detailed responses contained on one document aided the researcher's data analysis process. Responses were split, grouped, and sorted for evaluation of categories and subcategories.

LEOs' internal professional language repetition provided the preliminary categorical distinctions when observing the questions and subsequent responses. Officers utilized much of the same vernacular despite demographic differences. Direct quotes from participant responses were split and grouped. This process proved beneficial while organizing the raw data. Six different groupings of quotes were recognized as interventive services, preventative services, stigma, LE experience, non-LE experience, and service availability. The most important aspects of the quote were emphasized so the content was condensed as much as possible without compromising the integrity of the information.

Quotes were organized by category during first cycle coding. Each direct quote representing raw data was interpreted by a process code. This was accomplished by

interpreting the intent behind each response to survey questions. Process codes were developed as gerund verbs followed by a qualifying descriptor or two. The ultimate purpose of this coding exercise was to lead the researcher to the second cycle coding and underlying themes, discussed in detail later. First cycle data analysis resulted in grouped quotes having the same process code.

The survey question responses were divided into two distinct categories, Notification and Service Availability and LEO Point of View (see Table 1). Subcategories subsequently resulted in officers' describing the type of services provided and the officers' perspectives regarding the type of services provided. The Notification and Service Availability category has three process codes, limiting resource awareness, restricting training opportunities, and counseling shortages. The category has subcategories describing the type of service provided to LEOs, Interventive or Preventative. The LEO Point of View category has process codes normalizing communication, stigmatizing perceptions, denying personal relevance, acknowledging expertise, discriminating proficiency, insinuating need for trust, and implying resentment. The category has subcategories describing perspectives regarding the type of services provided by non-LEO experienced professionals and by LEO experienced professionals.

Second cycle coding was conducted by the researcher to determine clearer classification of subcategories and interpretation of emergent themes. LEO Point of View subcategories were further divided into positive and negative perspectives. The four subcategories included positivity regarding non-LEO experienced professionals, negativity regarding non-LEO experienced professionals, positivity regarding LEO

experienced professionals, and negativity regarding LEO experienced professionals. Second cycle coding also allowed the researcher to determine an interpretation of the emergent themes. Themes were found to reflect officers' willingness to utilize services, their opinion regarding provider competence, and their opinion regarding context of the services provided.

Themes were then divided into the subthemes, less information regarding services, receptivity to services within a gradient, and concern about confidentiality and trust. These themes and subthemes will be further developed in Chapter 5. Responses from one officer bore marked distinction from the others in most categories. These responses will be regarded as ancillary data. They will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Table 1  
In Vivo and Process Coding Examples

In vivo code	Process code	Category
<p>“[Not] encouraged and available”  “Services [should be] suggested more often”  “Never heard anything negative”  “Isn’t anything I’ve heard talked about”  “[Need] training for certain issues and populations”  “No time off for trainings and you pay out of pocket”  “Need more people in EAP”</p>	<p>Limiting resource awareness</p> <p>Restricting training opportunities</p> <p>Counseling shortages</p>	Notification and Service Availability
<p>“Peer support broke down barriers”  “Relieved to know services are available”  “Helping to bridge a gap”  “[Men] not willing to seek help”  “LEOs don’t like going to therapy”  “Admitting weakness”  “Beneficial to some”  “This wasn’t therapy though”</p>	<p>Normalizing communication</p> <p>Stigmatizing perceptions</p> <p>Denying personal relevance</p>	LEO Point of View
<p>“Better understanding of life as a couple”  “Was beneficial”  “I recommend the services to my coworkers”  “Quick and had different skill sets”  “Good to get an outside perspective”  “Training in mental health awareness”  “Easier to discuss certain elements”  “Great with issues other than work-related”  “Went a couple times due to marital issues”  “With more personal things they were great”  “Personal issues”  “Super easy and confidential”  “No fear of information released to department”  “Easier to take part without the stigma”  “Point of therapy is not being judged; LEOs judge each other”</p>	<p>Acknowledging expertise</p> <p>Discriminating proficiency</p> <p>Insinuating need for trust</p>	<p>Subcategories</p> <p>Positivity regarding non-LE Professional Services</p>
<p>“Stress on the job disconnect not helpful”  “Difficult to discuss professional things”  “Can’t possibly understand different stressors”  “Might help if non-LE went through BLET”  “Forced”  “Did not need or want to speak about incident”  “Did not offer much”</p>	<p>Discriminating proficiency</p> <p>Implying resentment</p>	Negativity regarding non-LE Professional Services
<p>“Not trying to explain everything”  “Unless you walked through it, you don’t understand”  “Easier to talk about job with experienced LE”  “Easier for Peer Support to handle everything”  “Familiar with the counselors vetted through Peer Support”  “Easier to talk to them”</p>	<p>Acknowledging expertise</p> <p>Insinuating need for trust</p>	Positivity regarding LE Professional Services
<p>“Trying to cover their ass”  “Judging you for not being able to keep your shit together”  “Difficult to open up to”  “No experience with a therapist with LE experience”</p>	Insinuating need for trust	Negativity regarding LE Professional Services

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Credibility was ensured through asking the participants how they felt about police psychological services utilization. Participants were officers experiencing the phenomenon. It was expected the target sample population was reached and the officers answered truthfully and clearly. Responses were notably similar across the targeted sample population. This afforded the opportunity to expect the responses were credible.

Only participants meeting the stated criterion were invited to participate. This suggested a representative sample was achieved. There was specific effort to sample from across the target population. Variations will always be noted due to individuality of participants. Transferability can be expected due to the noted population homogeneity.

Data analysis occurred throughout to ensure any changing parameters would be addressed. The replicability of the study was increased through the utilization of detailed notes as well as the spontaneous inclusion of the spreadsheet format. Comparability of the raw data was facilitated by the use of a structured, open-ended survey instrument (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The optional alternative telephone interviews were functional in allowing further thought development to ensure external validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). The use of one researcher and repetitive response and record checking reduced the likelihood of inaccurate coding and increased confirmability.

### **Results**

The research questions investigated were:

Research Question 1 - How do law enforcement officers perceive psychological services offered by individuals without policing experience?

Research Question 2 - How does officers' perception of services affect utilization?

All ten officer participants indicated a knowledge of the mental health services offered. Only three indicated knowledge of training services. Five officers stated they received their service awareness during the hiring process, four stated supervisors supplied information, four specified the EAP provided this, and one indicated the providers simply show up after a critical incident. Five officers noted access via the EAP, four via technology such as online or the employee portal or calling a phone number, one officer stated their insurance supplied an in-network list. One officer stated providers simply show up following a critical incident (see Table 2).

Two LEOs provided full, detailed responses regarding utilization and access:

We are fortunate enough to have a Peer Support Program, coordinated by a police officer who is also a social worker. At our police department through Peer Support Program, we offer the following services (for entire families) and trainings: Services Financial Veteran Assistance Employee Assistance Program (licensed counselors) Peer Counseling Housing Assistance with Educational Incentives Trainings: Interpersonal Relationships, Adults and Children Peer Support and PTSD Forums (for LEO's families also) Lunch and Learns Financial Workshops (ie. buying vs. renting, budgeting, retirement, credit) Stress Management, Mental Health First Aid for adults and children.

Another participant stated the following:

Psychological services available to officers in my agency include an agency employed psychologist...In addition to the department psychologist, we have the availability of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist employees who may be encountering other issues requiring counseling or therapy. Additional mental health services can be obtained by the employee utilizing their medical insurance, partially paid for by the employer. Training related to mental health consists of mandatory courses such as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training or Mentally Ill Developmentally Disabled Training (MIDD).

Four officers replied they have not utilized services beyond the required intake or CID (see Table 2). One individual described the experience as negative, "The service provider delved more into how the incident affected my sex life." Six officers indicated they had utilized services, with five describing positive experiences (see Table 3). Five officers indicated services provided by non-LE practitioners, with positive results:

I don't think that I would even want to talk with someone with LE experience. I also don't think it would be helpful to LEOs to talk with someone in LE because the whole point of therapy is not being judged. LEOs have this unspoken feeling that we judge each other, especially if you weren't handling a certain aspect of your job very well. You would feel like the therapist with LE experience would be sitting there judging you for not being able to keep your shit together.

Another participant responded, “I found it easier to discuss certain elements of my experiences with a non-law enforcement counselor as there is no fear of information being released to the department.”

Table 2

*Examples of Participant Statements in Category One*

Category One	Sample statements
<p>Questions (Q) 1-3 Notification and Service Availability</p>	<p><b>Question (Q)1 -What types of police psychological services are made available to officers and their families?</b></p> <p>“Licensed MH professionals”</p> <p>“Peer Support Program coordinated by a police officer who is also a social worker”</p> <p>“Financial Veteran Assistance Employee Assistance Program (licensed counselors), Peer Counseling Housing Assistance with Educational Incentives Trainings: Interpersonal Relationships, Adults and Children Peer Support and PTSD Forums (for LEO's families also) Lunch and Learns Financial Workshops Stress Management, Mental Health First Aid for adults and children.”</p> <p>“agency employed psychologist who is available to see employees either voluntarily or mandatorily following a critical incident such as an officer involved shooting or high-profile event.”</p> <p>“Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist employees who may be encountering other issues requiring counseling or therapy.</p> <p>“Mandatory courses such as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training or Mentally Ill Developmentally Disabled Training (MIDD).”</p> <p>“a. Life Service EAP (Employee Assistance Program) b. Monthly newsletters on ways to handle stress.”</p> <p>“Any services are available. None are required except intake and CID.”</p> <p>“We have a lot of services available but only 1 EAP for about 900 LEOs.”</p>
	<p><b>Q2-How we you made aware of these services? Q3-How are they accessed?</b></p> <p>“Usually not until after traumatic incident has occurred.”</p> <p>“During the Academy before becoming a LEO, the Peer Support Coordinator has a four-hour time block to discuss with us what this program is and gives us all his business cards. They also send out newsletters departmentally with this type of information quarterly. They send out announcements on holidays. It is pretty hard to get Peer Support out of your head because they are always around and engaging with us.”</p> <p>“On hire or by requirement from my supervisor.”</p> <p>“My employer makes us aware of these services when we are hired. They do not remind you very often, but there are fliers around and it's easy to find he information if you go looking.”</p> <p>“They arrived for a "debriefing" incident.”</p> <p>“We all can directly call Peer Support 24 hours, 7 days a week on their city cell phones. If we want to talk to a licensed counselor, we can go through Peer Support, but do not have too. We also have a direct number to the Employee Assistance Program if we do not want to go through Peer Support. It is easier, however, for us to let Peer Support handle everything.”</p> <p>“Contact supervisor.”</p>

Table 3  
Examples of Participant Statements in Category 2

Category Two	Sample statements
<p>Q 4-10 LEO point of view</p>	<p><b>Q4-Have you used any psychological services? Why or why not? Q5-What has been your experience using police psychological services?</b></p> <p>“Yes. After a shooting incident where we were shot at.”</p> <p>“Yes, I have utilized psychological services. For one, we get six free sessions. Secondly, we are familiar with the counselors vetted through the Peer Support Program. It makes it easier to talk to them.”</p> <p>“No. I have not felt the need to...it has been beneficial to coworkers.”</p> <p>“I have utilized the department psychologist after witnessing and supervising an officer involved shooting scene. I was also directed to speak to the departmental psychologist following another incident in which I witnessed an individual shoot himself in the head following a pursuit. I have called the psychologist in to speak with employees involved in back to back critical incidents to assess their well-being.”</p> <p>“Horrible. Provider delved more into how the incident affected sex life.”</p> <p>“For any issues other than work-related, it was great. I actually went to them a couple of times due to marital issues. I loved it. However, when I went to talk to them about stress on the job there was a sort of disconnect there. I did not find it helpful.”</p> <p>“I had difficulty in feeling responsible for my employees being placed in a position where a life had been taken. Talking with the psychologist was beneficial.</p> <p>“I was forced to call the psychologist against my desires. I did not need or want to speak with him at the time and did not offer much.”</p> <p>“Would like them to be more encouraged and available.”</p>
	<p><b>Q6-Have you used services provided by providers without LE background? This could be a counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist. Why or why not?</b></p> <p>“Most of the people that I utilized had military experience but not LE experience. It was much more difficult to discuss professional things with them. With more personal things (i.e. marriage, finances) they were great.”</p> <p>“Yes, none of the therapists available in my agency are involved with the police at all. They are just random private practices which are "in-network."</p> <p>“Yes. Marriage counseling with touches of what I do for a living. I found it easier to discuss certain elements of my experiences with a non-law enforcement counselor as there is no fear of information being released to the department.”</p> <p>“Only for the intake services I used. I know some training sessions are provided by non- LE.”</p> <p>“Yes, my training in MH awareness, my ride-along advocate.”</p>
	<p><b>Q7-What is your experience with services provided by a psychologist without LE experience? Q8-Would you use in the future? Q9-How would you compare services provided by professionals without LE experience to services provided by individuals with LE experience?</b></p> <p>“It worked out well...for my second marriage. Gave me a better understanding of life as a couple, blending two individuals and our different upbringings, under one roof.”</p> <p>“I don't think that I would even want to talk with someone with LE experience.”</p> <p>“Trying to explain to the professional without the LE experience what everything is...unless you walked through it, you really do not understand it.</p> <p>“Anyone can gain knowledge, but it is the experience of an individual-which brings a sense of understanding and relatability.”</p> <p>“An individual without LE experience can't possibly understand the different stressors placed on LE during shooting incidents, pursuits, etc.”</p> <p>“Non-LE treat based on text books whereas experienced treat based on text books, understanding, and experience.”</p>

A couple concerns officers noted included having to explain to a non-LE provider the intricacies of the job. These statements were expressed as suggestions for improvement rather than negatives. One officer suggested having non-LE practitioners complete Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) for facilitating understanding. Further comments by the officers included concerns for a large department with only one EAP representative and lack of personal funds or time to attend training. This officer expressed disappointment the PD did not provide training freely and did not provide time off for officers to participate. The reception to these questions and officers stated desires to be helpful were positive in nature.

The most common process code for Notification and Service Availability is Limiting Resource Awareness. The two most common process codes for the category LEO Point of View are Normalizing Communication and Stigmatizing Perceptions. Acknowledging Expertise was most common to both Positivity Regarding Non-LE Experience and Positivity Regarding LE Experience. Officers interviewed acknowledged expertise for both non-LE and LE professionals. Insinuating a lack of trust was communicated for all subcategories except Negativity for Non-LE Professionals.

Participating officers did not express a lack of trust in disclosing personal information to non-LE professionals. Discriminating proficiency was exclusively communicated regarding non-LE professionals. Officers acknowledged the credibility of non-LE professionals then qualified their statements by the type of expertise offered. Most responses centered on personal or marital issues. Officers distinguished between

provider competence with these issues and lack of competence regarding LE related content (see Table 4).

Table 4

*An Overview of Categories, Subcategories, Subthemes, and Themes*

Categories	Subcategories	Themes	Subthemes
Notification and Service Availability Question (Q) 1,2,3	Interventive Services	Most officers expressed willingness to utilize services again. Less specific about the effect of previous services	
	Preventative Services		Less information about psychological training services
LEO Point of View Q 4-10	Positivity re: non-LE Professional Services	Context matters when subjectively determining competence	Officers expressed receptivity to psychological services within a gradient
	Negativity re: non-LE Professional Services	Context matters when subjectively determining competence	
	Positivity re: LE Professional Services	Context matters when subjectively determining competence	
	Negativity re: LE Professional Services		Officers care about confidentiality and expressed trust issues

## Summary

Police psychological services utilization is a complex topic for multiple reasons. The research design and subsequent interview question development were created to aid in determining if officers articulated a distinction in utilizing services provided by professionals without LE experience. There are two primary categories of pertinent investigation surrounding services offered, mental health services, and training services. These categories are intertwined as evidenced by responses to the questions provided. The questionnaire was developed to guide responses through answer development. Questions started with initial queries regarding knowledge about services provided, moved to service accessibility, and ended with pertinent knowledge regarding service utilization, provider differentiation, and considerations affecting future utilization.

The resulting responses to questions contained information reflecting more than one answer. Raw data analysis generated from the interview questions was performed with a two-cycle coding process. The first cycle coding resulted in two categories and six subcategories. Four tables were included to disseminate the raw data results and data analysis. The results are in contrast to the expectation based upon previous research.

Some officers verbalized contradictory responses from that regarding preconceived notions of stigma or distrust in non-LE persons. Others verbally refuted the noted occurrence of officers declining services. The primary recorded information provided by participants indicates LEOs are aware of many services, not all services. The data also contain information suggesting there is tremendous variation in PDs, the

services provided, as well as officer awareness. Considerations should be made in retrospect regarding these results.

These findings will be developed more fully in Chapter five with consideration given to expected results and actual results. Reflection on the process for sampling and questionnaire administration will be discussed in full. Officer participation and ancillary data will be considered in review as compared to previous studies on the topic. Limitations will be addressed and subsequent suggestions for future research will be developed referencing knowledge gained through study completion. Finally, implications for law enforcement, psychology, and society at large, although inherent, will also be acknowledged.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

A qualitative phenomenological inquiry was conducted into LEO perspectives and experiences regarding police psychological services utilization. Police psychological services are historically noted as underused (Donnelly et al., 2015; Watson & Andrews, 2018; White, 2016). The reasons for underutilization are unclear. Exploration of lived experiences may add to what is currently known regarding noted discrepancies between officer service awareness and officer psychological services utilization. The hermeneutic and transcendental traditions were employed as approaches for developing the experiences' structure and texture. The intent was to allow officers the opportunity to explore and describe their personal perspectives regarding police psychological services utilization, specifically focusing upon those services provided by practitioners without LE experience.

LEOs' responses were qualitatively examined, using police culture as a lens. Questionnaire surveys and optional telephone interviews were employed to document perspectives of, and experiences for LEOs regarding service provision. Data previously found during searches were supported in two areas. Participant data collected were in contrast to expectations based upon previous research in multiple areas. Many officers suggested receptivity to service utilization and one officer specifically spontaneously negated perceived stigma as a barrier. Officers also indicated recognition of expertise from providers regardless of previous LE experience. Multiple officer responses

included statements signifying preference in working with non-LE providers, with the concern noted as lack of field experience.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The research questions were considered from the police culture perspective. The conceptual framework includes suggestions officers are not receptive to help-seeking or other intervention strategies (Harris, 2016; Naz et al., 2014; Paoline & Gau, 2018; Woody 2005, 2011). The police culture conceptual model also supports negative aspects regarding officers' desire to avoid building relationships with those not involved in LE (Fox et al., 2012; Haugen et al., 2017; Woody 2005, 2011). Previous researchers have suggested officer perception of non-LE individuals might affect perceived stigma, pluralistic ignorance, and other police culture concerns reducing willingness to participate in services (Bloodgood, 2005; Delprino & Bahn, 1988; Karaffa & Koch, 2016). Results from this study did not fully support these concepts.

Responses were initially divided into two categories, Notification and Service Availability and LEO Point of View. Notification and Service Availability were necessary to establish officers had knowledge of services available. The intent was to rule out lack of awareness as a reason for underutilization. Officers participating in the study indicated awareness of mental health services and training services. There was an awareness range in the responses and this will be addressed further regarding limitations and recommendations. Findings concerning service awareness were consistent with those found in the literature. Officers are aware of services to varying degrees (Bloodgood, 2005; Carleton et al, 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018).

The Notification and Service Availability category was separated further into two subcategories, Interventive Services and Preventative Services. Interventive Services, based upon officer responses, includes those psychological services directed at officer and family support. Multiple officers identified the availability of interventive services in response to a traumatic incident, shooting, critical incident, or traumatic event. Officers were able to distinguish standard protocol from supervisor referral or counselor recommendation. Services identified ranged from the EAP to critical incident counseling, critical incident debriefing, and a 24-hour emergency hotline. All participants identified awareness and training in Interventive Services access and utilization. There was a wide range noting accessibility and provision between PDs.

Three participants independently acknowledged multiple Interventive Services offered such as:

Financial, Veteran Assistance, Employee Assistance Program (licensed counselors), Peer Counseling, Housing Assistance with Educational Incentives, Trainings: Interpersonal Relationships, Adults and Children Peer Support and PTSD Forums (for LEO's families also), Lunch and Learns, Financial Workshops [sic] (ie. buying vs. renting, budgeting, retirement, credit), Stress Management, Mental Health First Aid for Adults and children.

Officer service description led to the second subcategory, Preventative Services. The Preventative Services subcategory included psychological training services utilized in the field. Officers were markedly less versed in the identification, availability, and access regarding these services. There was also a notable distinction between levels of

awareness between participating officers. The observed difference could not be evaluated due to the lack of demographic information collection.

Officers noted preventative or training services in Mental Health (MH) and one officer mentioned a “ride-along” partner. One officer referenced two mandatory trainings in MH. One mandatory training was with the Crisis Intervention Team, the other was a Mentally Ill Developmentally Disabled training. Routine trainings were not commonly discussed. Multiple participants identified a hiring process of evaluating ability with little to no continuous pursuit involving training or counseling. Several officers noted the requirement to pay for training services “out of pocket” as represented in previous studies (Bloodgood, 2005). Some officers indicated time was not given from work to complete training as has also previously been suggested (Bloodgood, 2005).

Questions were purposefully not leading regarding any types of services. The intent was to assess officer knowledge base regarding service availability (Donnelley et al., 2015). Officers did not contemporaneously suggest training services such as hostage negotiations, interview, behavior analysis, DV, or multicultural training. Responses may indicate an area for improvement in service provision or awareness. The questions may also have been unclear or too vague. There is also the possibility there was lower response due to police culture (Fox et al., 2012; Klinoff et al., 2015). The potential for police culture impacting police responses to the questionnaire could not be verified from the data as collected.

LEO Point of View was integral for the study to assess officers’ perspectives on service utilization (Fox et al., 2012). Service utilization has often been previously

represented quantitatively or utilizing mixed methods approaches (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Recent studies noted earlier have included mental health care training (Horspool et al., 2016), vicarious trauma (Gumani, 2017; Molnar et al., 2017), and culture (Naz et al., 2014). Mixed methods and quantitative studies have included features of police culture like stigma, and pluralistic ignorance (Bloodgood, 2005; Bullock & Garland, 2018; Karaffa & Koch, 2016). It is not possible to simultaneously address all potential perspectives in one study although the open-ended question design was chosen specifically to encourage latitude in responses.

LEO Point of View was further delineated in four subcategories reflecting positivity or negativity regarding services provided by psychology professionals with LE experience and those without LE experience. Officers participating in this study were receptive to police psychological services in general, although the topic was not thoroughly developed. Receptivity to services has been noted in previous studies (Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012). Seven of ten responding officers stated they used services, Preventative or Interventive, with either LE or non-LE providers. Two indicated the service utilization was mandated. Six participants replied they had personally utilized services and two noted they knew someone who had, which does not reflect the ideas of underutilization, perceived stigma, and pluralistic ignorance (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). The reported results and willingness to engage again were generally positive with the exception of one respondent.

Stigma has been consistently reported as a barrier to officer psychological service utilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Data analyzed in this

research do not support previous findings regarding stigma. Many participating officers did not indicate concerns regarding self-stigma or stigma against fellow officers due to service utilization. One participant did imply judgments levied internally in their department, “LEOs don’t like going to therapy because they are admitting weakness...we judge each other.” This response was qualified with the preferred prospect of seeking psychological services from a non-LE experienced professional.

Another respondent specifically and spontaneously referenced stigma as a thing of the past, “peer support kind of broke down barriers.” The positive impact on police and psychologist relations following previous research may be one of multiple explanations for this occurrence. Stigma and pluralistic ignorance (Karaffa & Tochov, 2016) were not expressed by officers, as also noted in recent studies (Carleton et al., 2018). Officers who might internalize stigma may not participate in such a study. The effect of internalized stigma and participation was originally addressed in limitations.

Police culture has also been noted in research as a potential barrier to officer relationship-building outside the fold (Reavley et al., 2018; Woody 2005, 2011). Officers have been described as reticent to interacting apart from the policing domain whether for safety or comfort (Lambert et al., 2017; Paoline & Gau, 2018; Young, 2016a). Data analysis again does not align with previous research. Officers participating were gracious with their time and responses, some writing detailed answers, expressing support, and adding wishes for good luck. Agency administrators declining participation did so in writing expressing regret due to methodological reasons such as the non-digitized questionnaire. Some officers shared contact information without request and stated

availability as needed. The researcher's background was disclosed within the invitation although lack of LE experience was not explicitly stated.

Police culture concerns in previous research extended to a reduction in the officers' perceived service value (Bloodgood, 2005; Klinoff et al., 2015; Miles-Johnson, 2016). Officers may feel disconnected from practitioners without LE experience and those offering only textbook clinical support (Bloodgood, 2005; Miles-Johnson, 2016; Woody 2005, 2011). This previously identified concern was supported in the data. Participating officers indicated discomfort with non-LE service providers was due to their inability to relate regarding the technical matters as previously suggested (Bloodgood, 2005). One officer recommended the police psychological service providers complete BLET. Some officer responses included statements suggesting a preference for providers without LE experience, as noted in Chapter 4.

Knowledge gained from previously existing studies may have been critical in reducing concerns regarding police psychological service utilization. Previous recommendations may have been incorporated in program improvement. Officers participating in this study indicated a reduction in stigma associated with service utilization as opposed to "the past." Data collected during this study could reflect a positive change in perspective resulting from past professional development in this field. The majority of participants surveyed indicated support for service utilization.

One participant did notably deflect from the more positive responses noted by the officer's peers. The data collected from this respondent may be considered ancillary as it contained marked differentiation from colleagues in tone and tenor. This officer

indicated having utilized services in the past from both LE and non-LE licensed providers. The officer stated services from the LE professional MH counselor were “horrible” and the only interest was how the shooting incident affect the LEO’s “sex life.” The participant stated the non-LE provider was very helpful regarding marital and personal concerns and this knowledge was useful in the officer’s second marriage. The officer stated the provider with LE experience, “was just trying to cover their ass.” This perception was not conserved in any other participant responses.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study results are generalizable to the target population. Participant recruitment occurred as described to provide diversity across demographics. Officers were invited to participate through surveys sent to 2 departments in the 50 United States. Officers were afforded complete anonymity although some did not choose to accept. Anonymity contained drawbacks to the extent further analysis regarding respondents cannot be made. Location, socioeconomic status, education, or PD size may have had an impact upon responses.

The paper questionnaire format may also have reduced participation. One agency administrator contacted the researcher directly to request a digitized version which was outside the methodological scope. Digitization may have represented a more agreeable fashion for officers to respond. Personal interview may have also provided greater response. Four officers requested a telephone interview, utilized recognizable phone numbers, and self-identified or mentioned their PD or city. Most participants appeared

comfortable being identified in some fashion. A more forward recruiting method and less anonymous data collection may have resulted in greater participation.

Responses from officers across the United States were desired. Travel was not possible to all 50 states. The intended and expected methodological data collection approach did not completely occur as planned. Participation procedure may have appeared too complicated and time-consuming. Officers simply may not have been concerned about stigma from study involvement and would have preferred personal engagement. Methods intentionally chosen to secure officer anonymity may have negatively affected data content.

The sample was specifically designed to be nationally representative. Disparity in some responses regarding available services indicate this may have been achieved yet that is not conclusive. Current employment as a LEO was the only criterion for participation. Career status was not included during the interview process and this might have offered greater insight to responses. There are additional demographics which may have had an impact on results. Demographics were intentionally not controlled or collected with the hopes of increasing officer responses due to anonymity.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations for future study are founded in the methodology and scope limitations. Multiple secondary questions surfaced when analyzing the data collected. Disparities in regional demographics were not investigated. Departments were intentionally chosen as both rural and urban across the country and future studies should include these demographics in data analysis. Questions have now arisen regarding PD

size, budget, and program availability. Future research on this dissertation topic would be enriched with qualitative and quantitative insight into such comparisons.

A beneficial research direction could be comparing LEO responses based on demographic information like geographical location. Comparative research may also prove beneficial in generating a more comprehensive understanding relative to rural versus urban PDs. Comparisons may also be made pertaining to male versus female perspectives. Service utilization as a direct result of service accessibility was not qualitatively addressed. Perspectives on psychological service utilization correlated to any specific LEO demographic were not qualitatively addressed.

Officer time in service and career status were not analyzed. The intent was to allow officers the freedom to express their perspectives regarding service utilization without concern for recrimination. Comparative knowledge useful for future studies may have been sacrificed in this decision. Future research is recommended into the length of time officers had opportunity to utilize services. Officers were also not asked to describe any noted changes in service provision. Officer experiences with service provision evolution or devolution during time in service might provide useful information.

The resulting data suggesting officer receptiveness to engaging in police psychological services were unexpected and the secondary departure from anticipated results. Research is recommended to further ascertain if the LEO population at large is receptive to engaging in services. Previous data shared represents underutilization comparative to awareness (Donnelly et al., 2015; Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Investigation should proceed quantifying current service utilization

levels and seeking unguided explanation by officers. Officers responses from previous studies may only reflect direct answers to questions without the chance for elaboration. Recent efforts to improve services, awareness, and relationships may be proven effective in increasing officer awareness and receptivity.

The disclosures suggesting amenability to and sometimes preference for non-LE service providers prompted an unexpected interpretation regarding police psychological services training. This was the primary noted departure from previous research and counter to the conceptual framework as the premise for the current study. Multiple participants suggested there may be a preference for utilizing services providers without LE experience. One officer indicated perceived reduction in stigma from a fellow officer, “Services provided by psychology professionals are easier to take part in without the stigma of seeking help from those who have been involved in LE previously.” Another perceived increased expertise and concern from non-LE providers “Night and day, based on my experience. Non-law was much more interested in helping to bridge a gap where law experience was just trying to cover their ass.”

Alternative suggestions in previous studies have included utilizing non-LE psychology professionals as consultants rather than team members (Knowles, 2016; Young, 2016a, b). Some officers participating in the current study suggested improvement in the professionals’ knowledge of LE procedure:

There is definitely a difference. For one, you're not sitting there trying to explain to the professional without the LE experience what everything is...unless you walked through it, you really do not understand it. It is my belief that anyone can

gain knowledge, but it is the experience of an individual which brings a sense of understanding and relatability. For instance, a person who has lost a child can relate to someone who has lost one vs a person who has never even had a child. Losing a child is a different type of loss than losing a sibling. I could not fathom the extent of what that even feels like. Therefore, I am left with knowledge. The same is true for law enforcement.

Another officer specifically noted:

The only way I can really answer that question is to say that an individual without LE experience can't possibly understand the different stressors placed on LE during shooting incidents, pursuits, etc. Non-LE would treat based on text books whereas experienced would treat based on text books, understanding, and experience.

Future research might be directed at incorporating this training for providers. Considerations might include resources available and the likelihood for psychology professionals to engage in the necessary training. Future studies might include focus groups to investigate this potential.

### **Implications**

Additional research can further intellectual and psychological discourse regarding LEO psychological service utilization (Bullock & Garland, 2018; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018), nationality (Ménard et al., 2016). Contributions could be made by focusing research on national and international service provision discrepancies (Ménard et al., 2016; Naz et al., 2014; Kula, 2017). Continued research on improving

and making readily available police psychological services for mental health and training may influence legislation (Rajakaruna et al., 2017; Tyler, 2016). Research may also shift LE protocols in multiple demanded expertise areas for officers. Specialties now expected for LEOs include hostage negotiations (Knowles, 2016; Young 2016a, b), mental health (Porter et al., 2016; Tyler, 2016; Webb, 2017), working with marginalized individuals and communities (Forte, 2017; Miles-Johnson, 2016), and interviews and interrogations (Gudjonsson et al., 2016; Porter et al., 2016).

LEO psychological services research includes focus on the quantitative aspects of service utilization (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). Fewer studies incorporate qualitative or mixed methods investigation (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Karaffa & Tochkov, 2013). The interpretations of these research findings focus on the qualitative information expressed by the participating officers. The specific interpretations of the research findings pertain to perception of services provided by non-LE psychology professionals. The qualitative orientation does not account for officer demographics, funding, region, or career status variations. Officer time in service or PD funding may mediate the relationship between awareness and utilization.

The goal in initiating this research was greater understanding regarding officer perspectives on services provided and services utilized. Development of further research on general service provision may lead to creating more appropriate, robust programs providing necessary services to LEOs. LEO feedback is necessary for this development (Bloodgood, 2005; Fox et al., 2012; Klinoff et al., 2015). Interpretation of these findings indicates officers are interested in utilizing services. Further studies may provide specific

methods for service improvement, including notification and structure. Programs may then be created adapting officer input regarding training for providers.

Such positive response may return more comprehensive program development. Improved programs might encourage even greater involvement by officers. Greater involvement by officers might improve personal investment perception, which in turn may improve officer confidence and performance (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017). Improved officer confidence and performance may lead to greater job satisfaction, less burnout, fatigue, family issues, and decreased mental health issues or even suicide (Borovec & Balgač, 2017; Cronin et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2017). Each factor noted may improve PCI (Masip et al., 2016; Rajakaruna et al., 2017; Tyler, 2016).

Results contrasted to expectations based upon previously conceived notions should imply the need for more detailed study in this arena. There may be previously unacknowledged LEO perspectives not addressed in the study. It is also important to recognize services may have been improved following previous studies. Now it is necessary to determine if service improvement is reflected from the officers' point of view. Future studies should be developed to address the differences noted here so researchers can determine the genesis for these discrepancies.

The results from this and future research could add to the body of knowledge regarding training not only for officers but also for service providers. A greater understanding about psychological services provision from the LEO vantage point might inform future professional development for psychology professionals. This might provide the impetus to improve training for forensic and police psychologists.

## Conclusion

A qualitative phenomenological study was designed to collect data on LEO perspectives and experiences regarding police psychological services utilization. There are ambiguous reasons in the current body of literature for police psychological services underutilization (Ménard et al., 2016; Patterson, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018). Police culture was the lens through which participant responses were viewed. The study was focused upon officer perspectives regarding service provision by professionals without LE experience. Results as established by current expectations, were not fully reflected in the participant responses.

Stigma regarding psychological services (Bloodgood, 2005; Delprino & Bahn, 1988; Karaffa & Koch, 2016) was not expressed. This finding is similar to some recent research (Carleton et al., 2018). Lack of policing expertise (Bloodgood, 2005; Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018) was also not a deterrent for LEO receptiveness to non-LE Professionals. Expertise was particularly noted in reference to seeking psychological services for marital and personal issues. Multiple officers distinctly indicated a preference for working with non-LE psychology professionals. Some officers offered suggestions for improving LE knowledge base for non-LE psychology professionals. Officers cited lack of financial and temporal resources as barriers to service utilization. Service awareness disparity across the country may also be an obstacle.

Lack of awareness was not an identified reason for psychological service underutilization. Negative perceptions due to the influence of those enmeshed in police

culture (Reavley et al., 2018; Watson & Andrews, 2018; Woody 2005, 2011) was also not identified in the data collected. LEO Point of View was the predominant category classification for participant responses. Previously established sentiments in the research regarding non-LE professionals having a disconnect to LEO experiences (Bloodgood, 2005; Miles-Johnson, 2016; Watson & Andrews, 2018) was supported in the raw data. Officers did not describe the experience disconnect as a deterrent for seeking help and suggested strategies for overcoming this barrier.

Officers appear open and receptive to utilizing police psychological services. The officers participating in the study from across the 50 United States indicated their desire to partake. Officers have also clearly described obstacles to service utilization as availability and resources. Officers in this study further indicated a willingness for working with non-LE psychology professionals for multiple reasons. It is beholden upon psychology professionals to evaluate and improve service provision and LE knowledge based upon feedback and identified deficits. The incorporation of officer feedback based upon their personal and professional experience in the LE field can only serve to improve such programs. Officer feedback will afford professionals the opportunity to develop more robust, appropriate programs designed to support the men and women in blue.

## References

- Aguayo, R., Vargas, C., Canadas, G. R., & De la Fuente, E. I. (2017). Are socio-demographic factors associated with burnout syndrome in police officers? A Correlational Meta-Analysis. *Anales de Psicología*, *33*(2), 383-392.
- Aguilar-Moya, R., Melero-Fuentes, D., Navarro-Molina, C., Aleixandre-Benavent, R., & Valderrama-Zurián, J. (2014). Disciplines and thematics of scientific research in police training (1988-2012). *Policing*, *37*(4), 696-711.
- Alderden, M., Farrell, A., & McCarty, W. P. (2017). Effects of police agency diversification on officer attitudes. *Policing*, *40*(1), 42-56.
- Birdsall, N., Kirby, S., & McManus, M. (2017). Police–victim engagement in building a victim empowerment approach to intimate partner violence cases. *Police Practice and Research*, *18*(1), 75-86.
- Blau, T. H. (1994). *Psychological services for law enforcement*. New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Bloodgood, E. (2005). *Law enforcement officers' previous experience with, attitude toward, and willingness to participate in mental health services*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/pqdtglobal/docview/304912109/F634A645B2245C4PQ/1?accountid=14872>
- Boddy, C. R. (2016). Sample size for qualitative research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, *19*(4), 426-432.
- Booth, A., Scantlebury, A., Hughes-Morley, A., Mitchell, N., Wright, K., Scott, W., &

- McDaid, C. (2017). Mental health training programmes for non-mental health trained professionals coming into contact with people with mental ill health: a systematic review of effectiveness. *BMC psychiatry*, *17*(1), 1-24.
- Borovec, K. & Balgač, I. (2017). Contribution of internal communication in predicting job satisfaction among police officers. *Kriminologija & Socijalna Integracija*, *25*(1), 17-33.
- Brewster, J., Stoloff, M. L., Corey, D. M., Greene, L. W., Gupton, H. M., & Roland, J. E. (2016). Education and training guidelines for the specialty of police and public safety psychology. *Training & Education In Professional Psychology*, *10*(3), 171-178.
- Bullock, K., & Garland, J. (2018). Police officers, mental (ill-)health and spoiled identity. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, *18*(2), 173–189.
- Carleton, R. N., Korol, S., Mason, J. E., Hozempa, K., Anderson, G. S., Jones, N. A., ... Bailey, S. (2018). Corrigendum: “A longitudinal assessment of the road to mental readiness training among municipal police.” *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy*, *47*(6), 529–533.
- Chae, M., & Boyle, D. (2013). Police suicide: prevalence, risk, and protective factors. *Policing-An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, *36*(1), 91-118.
- Cleary, H. D., & Warner, T. C. (2016). Police training in interviewing and interrogation methods: A comparison of techniques used with adult and juvenile suspects. *Law And Human Behavior*, *40*(3), 270-284.

- Conrad, S. (2017). Protecting the protectors: The benefits of peer support groups in law enforcement. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11875/2284>
- Cronin, S., McDevitt, J., & Cordner, G. (2017). Police supervision: Perspectives of subordinates. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 40(1), 26-41
- Delprino, R. P., & Bahn, C. (1988). National survey of the extent and nature of psychological services in police departments. *Professional Psychology: Research & Practice*, 19(4), 421-425.
- Donnelly, E., Valentine, C., & Oehme, K. (2015). Law enforcement officers and employee assistance programs. *Policing*, 38(2), 206-220.
- Fleischmann, M. H., Strode, P., Broussard, B., & Compton, M. T. (2018). Law enforcement officers' perceptions of and responses to traumatic events: a survey of officers completing Crisis Intervention Team training. *Policing & Society*, 28(2), 149-156.
- Forrester, A., Samele, C., Slade, K., Craig, T., & Valmaggia, L. (2017). Demographic and clinical characteristics of 1092 consecutive police custody mental health referrals. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology*, 28(3), 295-312.
- Forte, K. (2017). Building an LGBTQ culturally humble defense practice. *GPSolo*, 34(1), 66-67.
- Fox, J., Desai, M. M., Britten, K., Lucas, G., Luneau, R., & Rosenthal, M. S. (2012). Mental-health conditions, barriers to care, and productivity loss among officers in an urban police department. *Connecticut Medicine*, 76(9), 525-531.

- Gudjonsson, G. H., Sigurdsson, J. F., Sigfusdottir, I. D., Asgeirsdottir, B. B., González, R. A., & Young, S. (2016). A national epidemiological study investigating risk factors for police interrogation and false confession among juveniles and young persons. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, *51*(3), 359-367.
- Gumani, M. A. (2017). Vicarious traumatising experiences among South African Police Service members in a rural setting: An exploratory study. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, *27*(5), 433-437.
- Harris, C. (2014). The onset of police misconduct. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, *37*(2), 285-304.
- Harris, C. J. (2016). Towards a career view of police misconduct. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *31*, 219-228.
- Haugen, P. T., McCrillis, A. M., Smid, G. E., & Nijdam, M. J. (2017). Mental health stigma and barriers to mental health care for first responders: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, *94*, 218-229.
- Heffren, C. D. J., & Hausdorf, P. A. (2016). Post-traumatic effects in policing: perceptions, stigmas and help seeking behaviours. *Police Practice & Research*, *17*(5), 420-433.
- Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2017). Code saturation versus meaning saturation: How many interviews are enough? *Qualitative Health Research*, *27*(4), 591-608.
- Horspool, K., Drabble, S. J., & O'Cathain, A. (2016). Implementing street triage: a qualitative study of collaboration between police and mental health services. *BMC*

*Psychiatry*, 16(1), 313-325.

Karaffa, K. M., & Koch, J. M. (2016). Stigma, pluralistic ignorance, and attitudes toward seeking mental health services among police officers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 43(6), 759-777.

Karaffa, K. M., & Tochkov, K. (2013). Attitudes toward seeking mental health treatment among law enforcement officers. *Applied Psychology in Criminal Justice*, 9(2), 75-99.

Klinoff, V. A., Van Hasselt, V. B., & Black, R. A. (2015). Homicide-suicide in police families: An analysis of cases from 2007-2014. *Journal of Forensic Practice*, 17(2), 101-116.

Knowles, G. J. (2016). Social psychological dynamics of hostage negotiation: Forensic psychology, suicide intervention, police intelligence/counterintelligence, and tactical entry. *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, 6(1), 16-27.

Kubiak, J., Krick, A., & Egloff, B. (2017). Keep your eyes open: Dispositional vigilance moderates the relationship between operational police stress and stress symptoms. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 30(5), 598-607.

doi:10.1080/10615806.2017.1329930

Kula, S. (2017). Occupational stress, supervisor support, job satisfaction, and work-related burnout: perceptions of Turkish National Police (TNP) members. *Police Practice and Research*, 18(2), 146-159.

Lambert, E. G., Qureshi, H., Frank, J., Keena, L. D., & Hogan, N. L. (2017). The relationship of work-family conflict with job stress among Indian police officers:

A research note. *Police Practice & Research*, 18(1), 37-48.

- Lambert, A. D., & Steinke, C. M. (2015). Negative perceptions of asking for support in law enforcement: Potential impact on benefit avoidance. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 17(2), 134-144. doi:10.1177/1461355715583004
- Lawrence, D. S., Christoff, T. E., & Escamilla, J. H. (2017). Predicting procedural justice behavior: Examining communication and personality. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 40(1), 141-154.
- Marchand, A., Nadeau, C., Beaulieu-Prévost, D., Boyer, R., & Martin, M. (2015). Predictors of posttraumatic stress disorder among police officers: A prospective study. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice And Policy*, 7(3), 212-221. doi:10.1037/a0038780
- Masip, J., Alonso, H., Herrero, C., & Garrido, E. (2016). Experienced and novice officers' generalized communication suspicion and veracity judgments. *Law and Human Behavior*, 40(2), 169-181.
- Maskaly, J., Donner, C. M., & Fridell, L. (2017). Police CEOs and subordinates' perceptions of workplace misconduct. *Policing*, 40(1), 57-70.
- Mayer, M. J., & Corey, D. M. (2016). Current issues in psychological fitness-for-duty evaluations of law enforcement officers: Legal and practice implications. *Police Psychology and Its Growing Impact on Modern Law Enforcement*. 93-117. Hershey, PA: IGI Global publications.
- Ménard, K. S., Arter, M. L., & Khan, C. (2016). Critical incidents, alcohol and trauma problems, and service utilization among police officers from five countries.

*International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 40(1), 25-42.

- Miles-Johnson, T. (2016). Policing diversity: Examining police resistance to training reforms for transgender people in Australia. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 63(1), 103-136.
- Molnar, B. E., Sprang, G., Killian, K. D., Gottfried, R., Emery, V., & Bride, B. E. (2017). Advancing science and practice for vicarious traumatization/secondary traumatic stress: A research agenda. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 129-142.
- Naz, S., Gavin, H., Khan, B., & Raza, M. S. (2014). Cross cultural variations in attitude towards use of psychological support among police officers. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, 6(1), 31-46.
- Namey, E., Guest, G., McKenna, K., & Chen, M. (2016). Evaluating bang for the buck: A cost-effectiveness comparison between individual interviews and focus groups based on thematic saturation levels. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 37(3), 425–440.
- Paoline III, E. A., & Gau, J. M. (2018). Police occupational culture: Testing the monolithic model. *Justice Quarterly*, 35(4), 670-698.
- Papazoglou, K., & Chopko, B. (2017). The role of moral suffering (moral distress and moral injury) in police compassion fatigue and PTSD: An unexplored topic. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 1-5.
- Patterson, G. T. (2016). A brief exploratory report of coping strategies among police recruits during academy training. *Psychological Reports*, 119(2), 557-567.
- Porter, S., Rose, K., & Dilley, T. (2016). Enhanced interrogations: The expanding roles

- of psychology in police investigations in Canada. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 57(1), 35-43.
- Rajakaruna, N., Henry, P. J., Cutler, A., & Fairman, G. (2017). Ensuring the validity of police use of force training. *Police Practice & Research*, 18(5), 507-521.
- Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2015). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Reavley, N. J., Milner, A. J., Martin, A., Too, L. S., Papas, A., Witt, K., &...  
LaMontagne, A. D. (2018). Depression literacy and help-seeking in Australian police. *The Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 4867417753550.
- Rose, T., & Unnithan, P. (2015). In or out of the group? Police subculture and occupational stress. *Policing*, 38(2), 279-294.
- Soltys, S. M. (2016). Officer wellness: a focus on mental health. *Southern Illinois University Law Journal*, 3, 439-445.
- Terrill, W., Pauline III, E. A., & Manning, P. K. (2003). Police culture and coercion. *Criminology*, 41(4), 1003-1034
- Tyler, T. R. (2016). From harm reduction to community engagement: Redefining the goals of American policing in the Twenty-First Century. *Northwestern University Law Review*, 111, 1537-1566.
- Violanti, J. M. (1995). The mystery within: Understanding police suicide. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 64(2), 19-23.
- Watson, L., & Andrews, L. (2018). The effect of a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) program on stigma and barriers to help-seeking in the police. *International*

- Journal of Stress Management*, 25(4), 348–356.
- Webb, F. M. (2017). Criminal justice and the mentally ill: Strange bedfellows. *Texas Tech Law Review*, (4), 817-846.
- White, A. (2016). Perceptions of law enforcement officers in seeking mental health treatment in a right-to-work state. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 31(2), 141–154.
- Woods, M. J. (2000). Interpersonal communication for police officers: Using needs assessment to prepare for skeptical trainees. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 63(4), 40–48.
- Woody, R. H. (2005). The police culture: Research implications for psychological services. *Professional Psychology*, 36, 525–529.
- Woody, R. H. (2011). Bringing psychology into law enforcement. *PsycCRITIQUES*, 56(42), doi:10.1037/a0025717
- Worden, R. E., Harris, C., & McLean, S. J. (2014). Risk assessment and risk management in policing. *Policing*, 37(2), 239-258.
- Young, A. T. (2016a). *Fight or Flight: Negotiating Crisis on the Front Line*. Chambersburg, PA: eGenCo. ISBN: 978-1-68019-964-2
- Young, A. T. (2016b). Police hostage (crisis) negotiators in the US: A national survey. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 31(4), 310-321. doi:10.1007/s11896-016-9193-x

## Appendix A: Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Please be honest and offer as much information about your answer as possible without identifying yourself, your police department, or other officers. You may add additional pages or write on the back if necessary. You may use dictation or voice-to-paper programs to make this as comfortable as possible. You may also request a telephone interview in place of completing the questionnaire. Instructions for requesting a telephone interview are also in the consent form. If you choose a telephone interview please call the researcher telephone number provided from an unidentifiable telephone and do not identify yourself or your KSA.

The more information you can provide to help explain your experiences and thoughts on police psychological programs, the better:

- 1) What types of police psychological services are made available to LEOs and their families? Please list as many as possible, including mental health services and training services.
- 2) How were you made aware of services?
- 3) How are they accessed?
- 4) Have you utilized any police psychological services? Why or why not?
- 5) If you answered yes to question (4) what has been your experience with using police psychological services?

- 6) Have you utilized psychological services provided by a psychology professional without LE experience? This could be a counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc. Why or why not?
- 7) If you answered yes to question (6) what is your experience with services provided by a psychologist without LE experience?
- 8) Do you believe you might at some future point use such services? Why or why not?
- 9) How would you compare services provided by psychology professionals without LE experience to services provided by individuals with LE experience?
- 10) Is there anything you would like to add?

## Appendix B: Semi-Structured Telephone Interview Questions

### Exactly as Appendix A: Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Please be honest and offer as much information about your answer as possible without identifying yourself or other officers. This telephone interview is identical to the survey and is offered in the event you prefer not to write your answers. In that case, please call the researcher phone number located on the consent form, from an unidentifiable phone number, and the researcher will transcribe your responses. Please do not identify yourself or your police department.

The more information you can provide to help explain your experiences and thoughts on police psychological programs, the better:

- 1) What types of police psychological services are made available to LEOs and their families? Please list as many as possible, including mental health services and training services.
- 2) How were you made aware of services?
- 3) How are they accessed?
- 4) Have you utilized any police psychological services? Why or why not?
- 5) If you answered yes to question (4) what has been your experience with using police psychological services?

- 6) Have you utilized psychological services provided by a psychology professional without LE experience? This could be a counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc. Why or why not?
- 7) If you answered yes to question (6) what is your experience with services provided by a psychologist without LE experience?
- 8) Do you believe you might at some future point use such services? Why or why not?
- 9) How would you compare services provided by psychology professionals without LE experience to services provided by individuals with LE experience?
- 10) Is there anything you would like to add?

## Appendix C: Confidentiality and Consent

Participation in Research:

Police Culture and Perceived Service Value: Officer Perspectives on Psychological Services Utilization

### 1. Introduction

You may be eligible to take part in a research study. This form gives you important information about the study.

Please take time to review the information carefully. If you decide to take part in the study, you will not be asked for your signature.

Please be sure you understand what the research study is about, including the risks and possible benefits to you.

You do not have to take part.

You are being asked to be in a research study entitled, *Police Culture and Perceived Service Value: Officer Perspectives on Psychological Services Utilization*.

There are multiple study sites for study participant recruiting, through various police departments.

You have been asked to take part in the study because employed Law Enforcement Officers have valuable information regarding experiences with the use of police psychological services of any sort.

Your participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will not result in any punishment or loss of benefits. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether to take part in the study.

Your decision will not affect your future employment and will not be shared with anyone. All responses are kept completely anonymous. Instructions are provided. The goal is to gain candid and honest responses.

## 2. Purpose, Duration, Participants

The purpose is to learn about the experiences officers have had with police psychological services. Information desired is the types of services, access, and your perception of the services provided. Participants will be employed, sworn law enforcement officers.

During the study, you will have one survey questionnaire to complete without follow up or further obligation on your part. Completion of this survey questionnaire or telephone interview will require 10-20 minutes of your time.

## 3. Screening process

One questionnaire has been sent to your police department. The first law enforcement officer to choose to complete the questionnaire will remove it and all attached information.

## 4. Process

Your police department received the participation invitation letter, Confidentiality and Consent form, questionnaire, and pre-addressed, stamped envelope. The Confidentiality and Consent form is not to be completed or signed, only read. This will indicate a tacit agreement to participate, and an understanding of the study. If you choose to participate, please keep the consent form copy for your personal reference.

If you choose to participate, please complete the questionnaire without signing or self-identifying. Please enclose in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope provided. Please return via U.S. Postal Service from a remote location.

If you wish to participate but prefer a telephone interview, please call the researcher's phone number provided at the end. Please do so from an unidentifiable phone number. Please do not identify yourself or your police department. The researcher will write your responses to these exact interview questions.

#### 5. Risks

The possible risks and discomforts from being in this study include a feeling of concern you may be identified as a participant. The following are potential risks and their intended solutions.

Privacy risks- Privacy risks such as being identified as a participant, would be avoidable by following instructions to not include personal information or descriptors and to return the form from a remote location so not even the PD would be identified.

Psychological risks- Psychological risks, such as remorse or anxiety would be avoidable as the questionnaire does not include personal questions. Please do not include any such personal information and this will further minimize this potential risk. Should you wish to speak regarding such concerns, the researcher phone number and PO Box are provided as well as the Research Participant Advocate contact information at the end of this form.

Relationship risks- Relationship risks, such as disclosure of personal information potentially upsetting to a loved one or partner, would be avoidable as the questionnaire

does not include relationship information or address relationship issues. Please do not include any such personal information in your responses to further minimize this risk.

Economic/professional risks- Economic/Professional risks such as problems arising from sharing departmental information would be avoidable because the questionnaire does not include any performance or job-related information beyond perception of psychological service value and knowledge of services offered. Please do not include any such professional information and this will further minimize this potential risk.

Questions do not include any relating to job satisfaction or performance. The questionnaires do not include any identifying information and will not be shared with police departments.

#### 6. Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in the study. You may benefit from the knowledge you are helping advance the mission of the law enforcement agencies, fellow Law Enforcement Officers, and the field police psychology. The information gathered may help improve the services police psychologists provide. No benefit can be guaranteed for you or your police department.

#### 7. Alternatives

Your alternative is not to participate. You may also choose a telephone interview of the same questions with the telephone interviewer transcribing your responses. If you choose a telephone interview, please call from an unidentifiable telephone and do not identify yourself or your police department.

#### 8. Compensation

There is no form of compensation for agreeing to answer the questions.

#### 9. Costs

There are no costs to you for taking part.

#### 10. Researcher information

This research is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Forensic Psychology.

#### 11. Sources of funding

Personal funds are being used to facilitate this research.

#### 12. Location of research

The research will occur at each of the police departments invited to participate. The surveys may be completed at the site or in another location, sealed in the provided stamped, pre-addressed envelope, and mailed to the research Post Office box indicated above. Telephone interviews, if chosen, will occur via telephone lines. If you choose a telephone interview, please call the researcher's phone number below from an unidentifiable telephone and do not identify yourself or your police department.

#### 13. Disclosure of financial interests and other personal arrangements

There are no financial disclosures or interests to note.

#### 14. Privacy and Confidentiality

The researcher will make every effort to protect your privacy and confidentiality. There are always risks of breach of information security and information loss. To protect your personal security, you will not sign any forms. You will not self-identify and your

name will not be attached in any way to this study. If you choose a telephone interview, please call from an unidentifiable telephone and do not identify yourself or your police department. The research will transcribe your responses directly to a survey form and will not record the telephone interview or phone number.

By completing the survey, you give your permission information gained from your participation may be published in literature, discussed for educational purposes, and used generally in science. You will not be personally identified; all information is presented anonymously. A one to two-page summary of the findings will be sent to each police department that receives an invitation.

This is not a psychological evaluation. It is your opinion of, and experience with, services provided. This information will not be connected to you, nor will it be shared you participated. Your name will not be identified anywhere.

#### 15. Long term use

The researcher has requested to save selected data collected from your participation for possible use in future research. This information will not contain any identifying characteristics and will be maintained in a locked file for five years.

#### **Researcher**

The researcher is available to answer any questions throughout the study.

**Institutional Review Board Office**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or if you have concerns or complaints about the research study, please contact the researcher listed above.

You may also contact the University Research Participant Advocate.

## Appendix D: Request for Assistance

Dear Department Administrator,

Good afternoon. I am a psychology doctoral candidate with a specialization in forensic psychology. I am in the process of completing my dissertation relating to police psychology. The study involves the utilization of police psychological services, including mental health and training services. I am considering the relationship between police culture and perceived service value for services provided by professionals without law enforcement experience. I request participation from sworn, employed United States Police Officers.

I ask that officers are not assigned or required to participate but are simply offered the opportunity to take part in a brief, ten question open-ended questionnaire survey or semi-structured telephone interview utilizing the same questions. The questionnaires would be completed on paper then mailed to the research address from a remote mailbox. My request is you announce this study to your department and provide the questionnaire someplace inconspicuous where an officer could choose to take part without observation. I am the only researcher and results will be maintained in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years. There will not be any identifying information and results will be completely anonymous.

The request includes an informed consent document and description of the study. I further request officers do not sign any document or self-identify in any way. The first officer to see the information and choose to participate would remove it from its location and follow the instructions for participation including keeping the consent form. This

should take only 10-20 minutes of the willing officer's time and may positively impact the provision of services in the future. My belief is by offering officers across the United States an open forum to describe their perception of services provided, more robust, appropriate services may be developed in the future. Thus, individual and departmental needs may be better met.

Should you choose to accept this invitation and make such an announcement, please read the enclosed Script as it is to your department's police officers during a departmental meeting. Please then post the Confidentiality and Consent form, Questionnaire, and pre-addressed, stamped envelope in a place where an officer might feel comfortable removing to complete.

I thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. Make it a great day.

Respectfully,

Encl: (4)

Appendix A Questionnaire

Appendix B Semi-Structured Telephone Interview Questions

Appendix C Confidentiality and Consent

Appendix E Script

Pre-addressed, stamped return envelope

## Appendix E: Script

Good afternoon. Your Department Administrator is reading a script regarding an invitation for participation in a research study. I am a psychology doctoral candidate with a specialization in forensic psychology. I am in the process of completing my dissertation relating to police psychology. The study involves the utilization of police psychological services. I am considering the relationship between police culture and perceived service value for services provided by professionals without law enforcement experience. I request participation from sworn, employed United States Police Officers.

If you are interested in taking part in a brief survey by completing a ten-question open-ended survey on paper or semi-structured telephone interview utilizing the same questions, please complete the following steps. Remove the information provided, which includes the Questionnaire, Consent form, and pre-addressed stamped envelope. Complete the paper questionnaire then mail it in the provided pre-addressed stamped envelope to the research address from a remote mailbox. I am the only researcher and results will be maintained in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years. There will not be any identifying information and results will be completely anonymous. If you prefer to complete the survey in a telephone interview, please call the research phone number noted on the consent form from an unidentifiable phone number to set a telephone interview.

The information provided includes an informed consent document and description of the study. I further request officers do not sign any document or self-identify in any way. The first officer to see the information and choose to participate should remove it

from its location and follow the instructions for participation including keeping the consent form. This should take only 10-20 minutes of the willing officer's time and may positively impact the provision of services in the future. My belief is by offering officers across the United States an open forum to describe their perception of services provided, more robust, appropriate services may be developed in the future. Thus, individual and departmental needs may be better met.

I thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. Make it a great day.