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Female Sergeants, Lieutenants, and Captains obtaining leadership roles in Law Enforcement

Latoya Mills
Walden University

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Walden University

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Latoya Mills

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Female Sergeants, Lieutenants, and Captains obtaining leadership roles in Law

Enforcement

by

Latoya Mills

MA, University of Phoenix, 2011

BS, University of Sam Houston, 2010

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University, 2019

Abstract

The field of law enforcement is one of the most sought-after careers. People have various reasons why they choose to embark on this field of work. There are many levels of law enforcement from correctional officers to particular agents, such as patrol officers, federal officers (FBI, DEA, IRS etc). There is a lack of females that represent the field of law enforcement in numerous police divisions nationwide. Previous studies explored these deficiencies, yet they failed to examine the perspectives of high-ranking female officers. There is a gap in the literature that analyzes female officers' academy experiences, struggles, and barriers as women in law enforcement. The purpose of this qualitative narrative was to explore the perspectives of female law enforcement officers' experiences in obtaining high-ranking positions. In this study, I interviewed 12 high-ranking women in law enforcement and revealed their skills in this traditionally male-dominated field. Theories associated with this research are advocacy coalition and sex discrimination. NVivo software was used to organize the findings. Results indicated that there is an invisible barrier that women face when they are trying to promote to leadership positions. Participants offered insights into their journey, including balancing family life, facing adversity in the training academy, in the workplace, and continued success as supervisors. The current study suggests that lines of discourse are causing organizations to change their traditional masculine styles of leadership.

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Dedication

The research is dedicated to my beloved aunt, who has always been my biggest cheerleader and to the women officers who participated in this study and showed bravery daily to keep our communities safe.

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The success and final outcome of this study would not have been possible without my committee. The completion of this study required the guidance of many people, and I am incredibly grateful and fortunate to have their support. Dr. Deborah Laufersweiler-Dwyer or Dr. D was my chair, and due to her guidance and patience, I have respect and admiration for her. There were times that I felt discouraged, but she remained positive in our journey, and her confidence in me never wavered. Dr. Glenn Starks also deserves a heartfelt thank you for his graciousness, humbled approach, and encouraged me to complete my work with perfection. I would also like to thank Dr. Jessie Lee for his mentorship. You assisted me throughout my whole program. Thank you for your dedication.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

There are many historical accounts of women in law enforcement, and as they continue to advance in police divisions, many find that female officers convey specific capacities and gifts to the profession (Padma, 2010). These advantages incorporate how women are less confrontational and possess the ability to bring a sense of calmness to an intense or hostile situation (Bennetts, 2012). The probability of women using excessive force is lower than that of their male partners. Naturally, perceptions are that women are emotional, but this perception is positive because it shows compassion and empathy to circumstances. Masden (2009) noted female officers' abilities regularly complement those of male officers, bringing about different strategic methods in favorable investigative conditions when male-female teams develop, especially when they are called to a domestic or crime scene. Excluding preferences, can only propel the development of more female officers in leadership positions, and benefit the profession. The study sought to understand women who work in leadership positions in their police departments.

This qualitative study brought attention to women who obtained high-ranking positions in a police force, such as sergeants to majors. Face-to-face interviews provided detailed information about how they climbed the hierarchical, leadership ladder. Leadership focused on the notion of a person to become a better person throughout the administration. It requires a person to get along with others and lead others to achieve the objective of the organization. Employees are encouraged to be proactive through

demonstrating initiative when striving for higher achievements. Women leaders in law enforcement require a more in-depth scope. The goal of this study was to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the women who serve and protect their communities. This study sought to implement change to increase more women in the law enforcement field and highlight the need for more women in positions of leadership. This research aimed to make an implemented change from this research is increasing mindfulness about the present roles and concerns of women officers. The findings will add to the current study by contributing to the literature of high-ranking officers with an exceptional amount of experience. It is essential to understand that having women officers in law enforcement is crucial; Lawmakers need to influence law enforcement agencies and administrations to re-examine their present systems, standard operating procedures, and policies.

This chapter covers the following topics: background, problem statement, purpose statement, the purpose of the study, theoretical framework, nature of the research, definitions, limitations, assumptions, scope of delimitations, and significance.

Background

This exploration uncovered the dynamics of women who were able to overcome obstacles and obtain various high-ranking positions in their agencies, along with the skills to maintain these positions, and any promotional barriers. It offered an ideal balance for

organizational procedures in the promotional process. Based on the gap in the literature, the research covered various levels of high-ranking female officers.

The history of women in law enforcement, in the United States, dates to the 1800s. Women serving in law enforcement began as early as 1845 in New York City jails and were called matrons (National Center for Women and Policing [NCWP], 2005). Social work was a type of position provided to widowed women as a “death benefit.” Death benefits began with Mary Owens, a Chicago woman, whose husband died in the line of duty. During this era, there were no financial death benefits for widows and family members of law enforcement, so the Chicago Police Department, out of sympathy, offered Owens a job (NCWP, 2005). However, pressure from the American Female Moral Reform Society (FMRS) opened the doors for police departments to hire more women to oversee female jail quarters (Wormer & Bartollas, 2007). However, their duties included cleaning the detention areas, escorting women to and from the courthouse, but the role of patrol officers. The first woman to break the barrier was Lola Baldwin, who was sworn in by the city of Portland, Oregon, in 1908. She was the first full-time paid female law enforcement officer who worked under civil service rules. Later, in 1910, Margaret Adams was the first woman to be sworn in by the Los Angeles Sherriff Department as a Deputy but limited to desk work (NCWP, 2005).

Women currently are underrepresented across the country in positions of authority, and in large part, they are not equitable with their male-counterparts (Hughes

& Dodge, 1997). Research has additionally stated that women bring their own set of skills to traditionally male-dominated culture (Bennette, 2010). These skills represented a new orientation that was very helpful. Knowing how law enforcement agencies can benefit from women officers, why aren't there more women leaders? While the data show women increasingly obtain employment in law enforcement, there is no explanation as to why organizations overlook women for high-ranking supervisory positions. Also, there is little support for giving women what they need to achieve career advancement. As women climb the career ladder, they often find themselves without peers. The issue is the number of women leaders in police departments: It is significantly less than male leadership. A 2013 survey conducted by the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives found only 169 women leaders in 1,500 police departments, sheriff's offices, and other law enforcement agencies across the U.S that responded (Balsamo, 2017). Women encountering obstacles as they try to gain leadership roles within police departments. For example, according to the National Center for Women in Policing, percentages for high-ranking officers have declined from 15. % to 12.2% in the years of 2015 to 2019.

Problem Statement

As leadership skills develop, people find various ways to exhibit those skills, and more challenging assignments emerge. The initiative gives individuals the determination and fortitude to explore new outside and safe place practices and better approaches to exercising leadership, such as inspire vision, motivate others to act, and stimulate

enthusiasm. (Silverstri, 2013). A lack of support and affirmation lessens self-assurance and discourages individuals from creating a formative experience. Leadership starts as a speculative, peripheral part of the self, at some point dissipates along with chances to develop growth through new work assignments and real accomplishments. After some time, an inspiring leader will reveal herself as one who could hold a higher position. Even though many women are hired as men, there is no explanation as to why fewer women than men achieve high-ranking positions for women. The aspect of women leadership is not an easily attainable process. In most cases, the higher a woman seeks to climb, the fewer women are found in leadership positions (Hughes & Dodge, 1997).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the underrepresentation's facing women in leadership positions within law enforcement agencies, such as sergeants, lieutenants, captains, and higher. This research focused on the challenges that women police departments faced while obtaining their current positions. Women officers have continued to move through the ranks and are steadily gaining representation in upper administration. However, they are still underrepresented in top administration in the state agencies. The obstacles preventing them from progressing to higher ranks in their law enforcement careers reveal the "glass ceiling." Many barriers prevent women from obtaining leadership roles with higher pay and responsibility. Minority women are underrepresented in law enforcement industry. With the help of Affirmative action, women are making progress; however, minimal facts are known about the importance of

diversity, uniqueness, and perspective minority women bring (Patitu & Hinton, 2013). The more career advancements that are available at an agency, opportunities for should be fair and just. Some organizations use questionable practices that cause women to experience discrimination, and they are thwarted from rising further.

Research Questions

The research questions guided female leadership of various rankings, backgrounds, and ethnicities in their police departments. Additionally, the study explored:

RQ1: What leadership characteristics do minority female supervisors possess?

RQ2: What strategies have female police leaders used to achieve success within their department?

RQ3: What barriers exist with career advancement for females with their department?

Theoretical Framework

The dissertation topic is about female leadership in law enforcement. The research studied the struggles of female sergeants, lieutenants, and captains regarding the process of how long it took to reach these levels and maintain these levels. The advocacy coalition framework (ACF), developed by Sabatier (1993), is a policymaking instrument that is useful in managing policy systems. It was relevant to this research because it is an instrument that was useful in managing clear strategy frameworks. The ACF encourages the comprehension of the strategies and needs that include changes in public opinion and

impacts of policy changes that arise from an administration and questionable decision-making. It fosters the connection of various levels of government and its superiors while implementing new and amending existing public policies. Sabatier (1993) stated that the different characterizing terms in the ACF incorporate strategy subsystems by gathering of individuals that communicate with a component of consistency in a domain. In this case, would be women in law enforcement and how their agencies govern them. In this manner, every one of the key players and positions of power and control of the hiring and promotion stage make-up a policy of subsystems (Sabatier, 1993). Another reason why the ACF was relevant to this context was to change public opinion, lawmakers, and administration's misconceptions of women in law enforcement. The structure bore an uncommon spotlight on the significance of explaining better policy and procedures. Coalitions that determine rules, policies, and procedures are regularly fused and made-up with government and state officials. Before addressing the issue, it was essential that the fundamental premises that constitute the ACF be specified. First, there was a need for women in this capacity. In addition to understanding policy, the change will need time. The policy subsystem utilization will require a minimum ten years to screen. Sabatier (1993) states that public policies conceptualizes these as a belief system.

The belief systems were significant to this research in that advocacy coalition was grouped through a hierarchy system during the promotional stages of an officer's career. But this depends on supported alliances gathered into a progressive system relying upon the level of and resistance to change. Some people are profoundly centered on their core

to resist policy change and some that have policy beliefs but are open to new strategies. Because of the presence of their convictions, the advocacy coalition could push their belief systems into a broad perspective and to provide different techniques for change. These convictions and primary mechanism systems are observed by driving the opinions of the coalition and prompting subsequent policy change. This change can be minor, shifting optional convictions, or major, and changing core beliefs.

The second framework implemented Rosabeth Kanter's (1977) sex and discrimination theory. This theory was relevant because it demonstrated when the administration decides to give prospective candidates a fair and equal opportunity. The administration will pick competitive and comparative individuals that align with their administration styles and system. This theory concentrates on the need for social assurance and power in numbers. It demonstrates the conduct of an organization rather than the attributes of the employees that work within the agency. As indicated by Kanter (1977), women's qualities and practices are positioned at a lower level, deadlocked positions. However, when superior positions become available to women, they excel in maximizing their full potential.

The theories that applied to this study and worked in line with both the ACF and discrimination approach was the glass ceiling theory. It involves how women are highly or equally qualified as their male counterparts, including minorities and women of color, but are often overlooked for promotions. Ćorić (2018) sought to the developments of females within the workforce and subsequent opportunities for advancement, have been,

and still are, at odds with each other. The glass ceiling theory served as another lens to describe invisible barriers that women face in their efforts to reach higher positions of leadership within law enforcement.

Nature of Study

The nature of the study was qualitative, with a focus on women in police leadership positions. The research sought to identify the struggles faced by women while moving through the ranks to achieve supervising positions, the challenges faced in the workplace, and challenges they are still meeting in their current areas. The qualitative method research was the method for investigating and understanding the significance of people and their social or human problems (Creswell, 2014). This in-depth study (face-to-face interviews with follow-up questions) provided a descriptive account of women's personal experiences. This methodological approach used research data, and a comparison of populations between counties; the target population of women included different ethnic backgrounds.

Definitions of Terms

Leadership has many meanings, such as in this study, to measure levels of leadership that women in law enforcement obtain and how it compared to their male counterparts. For some, vision, motivation, or inspiration makes a good leader. These qualities are significant in law enforcement. Leaders are visionaries. They see the big picture and enjoy sharing it with others. Motivation is the main factor for leaders. They can encourage their coworkers to reach their potential. Leaders have the tenacious desire

to inspire and be inspired. The most effective leaders can help others to achieve their goals and accomplish things beyond what they perceive their potential to be.

Transformational leaders' hypothesis is about promoting change and inspiring others to follow a vision. These leaders work under an objective approach to create job opportunities and enabling others to show flair and, to take the initiative for new ideas. Transformational leaders are gregarious individuals strategically, and they see a comprehensive view as opposed to the details (Wren, 1995). Additionally, transformational leaders were suitable for this study because they had evolving circumstances, where individuals have elevated amounts of aptitude and where the leader can afford to implicate themselves in detail.

Glass ceiling implies an imperceptible maximum point in the organizations or corporations at which it becomes problematic for minorities or women to ascend in their departments ((Ragins, Townsend & Mattis, 1998). The glass ceiling is a representation of the difficult to see barriers and hindrances that prevent women from career advancement, salary increases, and future endeavors.

Barriers constitute the hindering of employees in the workplace from progression or advancement potential. Barriers decrease a person's chances of further career progression in their chosen career paths. Most barriers usually include employers subjected to selecting people for jobs or positions who are like them, such as former colleagues.

Assumptions

There are many general assumptions within law enforcement with additional assumptions relating to the specific research methodology. The assumptions for this research were the participants of women who were current law enforcement officers that their assertions would be accurate. They reflected upon their experiences leading up to their ranking positions. Their participation was assumed to have honesty, confidentiality, and anonymity by volunteering to partake in this research. The population chosen, the analyst ensures that all information gathered was firmly examined for precision, and all data collected carefully analyzed for accuracy with ethical results.

Limitations

The qualitative study involved policewomen in a limited number of chosen police departments. Several limitations existed in this research, including limited literature, difficulty getting participants, the assumptions, sample dynamics, insider bias, secretiveness, and methodological design. As well-intentioned as this research was, there was always the tendency to isolate and separate people with shared experiences because of race and cultural backgrounds. There were additional limitations to this study based on the selected population. The research covered only a small fraction of officers that consisted of two counties and agencies in Georgia. Some of the women's accounts reflected a different viewpoint because some were currently employed or retired. Therefore, their opinions, follow-up questions, and experiences during their initial time of employment and promotional journeys were aligned. Limitations of the interviews varied

among the women if they worked in the same department. The agency is mixed with supervisors whose experiences were different as they climbed through the ranks. The conversations were face-to-face interviews so that some of the women were likely to divulge more in-depth information rather than surveys or phone interviews.

Significance

The significance of this study was for women officers to be perceived in their communities as assets, making this research more empowering. Breaking through the glass ceiling has been a challenge for most women, especially women, in higher-ranking positions. The significance showed how women patrol officers play an integral part in their precincts and how women were more effective when they were resolving or trying to avoid violent situations and diffusing issues of citizens involved in severe incidents. Communities perceive women as equals with favorable attitudes towards both sexes (Davies & Thomas,2000). Women in law enforcement convey a profound amount of dedication to the occupation, including offering diverse methods for managing conflict. Where women lack in strength, they make up in bravery, verbal skills, and creativity.

Summary

It has been almost 200 years since women could work in law enforcement and perform legal work in this sector. The skills that women bring and serve are integral to this profession, and the empirical accounts of these women raised more awareness of how they were perceived, and they believed administrations supported them and exercised enough policies for promotional standards. This qualitative research explored the

promotional aspirations of high-ranking law enforcement positions and obstacles to their career advancement. There was current literature that will support these facts, but it failed to provide a comparison among various ranks, minorities, and geographical areas. The purpose of this research was to explore the significance of women in law enforcement and how/why agencies can benefit from their presence by allowing them to display their passion, responsibility, and desire for growth. The problem to be addressed was that women were not achieving hierarchical status at the same pace or as men officers. The glass ceiling was appropriate for this study to provide an understanding of the barriers that women in law enforcement face and how agencies could reevaluate their promotional standards and practices. A research design, instruments used, and sampling process are discussed in chapter 3.

In sum, the approach to authoritative figures and leadership were women in law enforcement that propel the field past specific positions, that demonstrate to women rules of the game as established by men. Such areas prefaced on the possibility that women have been disassociated for influential positions, inadvertently undermine female leadership initiatives by urging them to center their focus on family life rather than the dangers of police fieldwork.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Sworn officers play a vital role in their profession. They put their lives on the line for people they do not know by maintaining levels of safety throughout different communities. Police agencies promote social change (Rape-Hemp, 2008). Diversity should be a priority among promotional considerations, which includes women from different ethnic backgrounds. It is essential to include women leaders in law enforcement because they bring intelligence, talent, calmness, and the ability to bring relaxation to most hostile situations (2008). Leadership is potentially a learned behavior. However, it is an innate character. It can be a replicated behavior. With that said, every woman is not built to be a leader, but she can lead with her influence. With police brutality on the forefront as a national issue, now is the time for agencies to place women in high-ranking positions to help strategize new ideas and to bring community policing back to a healthy state.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the process of how women were considered for promotional ranks from sergeants to majors. This study developed a narrative view through the lens of women who were in high-ranking positions, to obtain a clear understanding of their experiences from the initial process to their current jobs. The study brought attention to women in contemporary leadership, that is, to what it takes to maintain their status, their struggles, and barriers, beginning with the hiring process and continuing to achieve their current situation with the police department. By exploring

these perspectives, it was expected that change and transformation would occur among all law enforcement departments.

Chapter 2 addresses the theoretical foundations and how they were relevant to this research, the historical background of women in law enforcement challenges facing women in law enforcement, the glass ceiling, leadership equality, hiring, and promotional standards.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategy used through Walden University's Library and the following databases: Ebsco host, ProQuest peer-reviewed articles, the criminal justice database Best bets, and a host of scholarly literature. Key terms include *leadership*, *women*, *law enforcement*, *gender*, *gender biases*, *discrimination*, *promotional standards*.

Theoretical Framework

The advocacy coalition framework (ACF) was applied to this research for a more in-depth analysis of policy and procedures for women officers during the hiring and promotional phases of their careers. The ACF, developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), is a policymaking instrument that was useful in managing policy systems. It encourages the comprehension of the approaches and needs that are engaging with an administration of various levels between state and government while implementing strategies. Policy change forms have expanded enthusiasm in recent decades. It is evident in the number of experimental studies, as well as in a dynamic improvement of theory

and method, with following debates and discussions on the merit and weaknesses of various methodologies.

Sabatier (1993) stated that the different characterizing terms in the ACF incorporate strategy subsystems by gathering of individuals that communicate with a component of consistency in a domain. In this case, would be women in law enforcement and how their agencies govern them. In this manner, every one of the key players and positions of power and control of the hiring and promotion stage make-up a policy of subsystem (Sabatier, 1993). The reason why the ACF was relevant in this context was to change public opinion, lawmakers, and administration's misconception of women in law enforcement. The structure bore an uncommon spotlight on the significance of explaining better policy procedures. Coalitions that determine rules, policies, and procedures are regularly fused and made-up with government and state officials. Before addressing the issue, it was essential that the fundamental premises that constitute the ACF be specified. First, there was a need for women in this capacity. In addition to understanding policy, the change will need time. The policy subsystem utilization will require a minimum of 10 years to screen. Sabatier (1993) states that public policies conceptualizes these as a belief system.

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to resist policy change and some that have policy core beliefs but are open to new strategies. Because of the presence of their convictions, the advocacy coalition could push their belief systems into a broad perspective and to provide different techniques for change. These convictions and primary mechanism systems are observed by driving the opinions of the coalition and prompting subsequent policy change. This change can be minor, shifting optional convictions, or major, and changing core beliefs.

Glass Ceiling

From the time women began working, they have faced challenges with the test of breaking the biased based impediment of the glass ceiling, thus preventing them from accelerating to the highest point of the corporate ladder. Even though the glass ceiling is not as prominent as it was in previous decades, it still genuine, and it affects women and minorities. The glass ceiling labeling is a wall, barrier, or divider; they are all relative to preventing women from progressing in their professions. It has existed in the early years, and even with the assistance of equality laws, it still represents a problem today.

However, because of some remarkable women, the glass ceiling has several fractures, and the future seems brighter. It is a challenge; however, it isn't impossible. Women can break the glass ceiling and soar to the top.

For many years after the inclusion of women into the ranks of law enforcement, women were seen more in support roles such as meter maids, clerks, and other supportive parts. As law enforcement developed as a profession, women fought for the inclusion of more policing roles. With their addition, women traditionally did not, and still, today,

reap the benefits that their education, hard work, experience, and knowledge have provided them relative to their promotion to leadership roles within their organizations. The “glass ceiling” is a term coined for this phenomenon and can be described as an invisible barrier to career advancement or success (Lewis, 2017). Hoyt and Simons (2017) suggested that a contemporary organizational structure and culture may be contributing to this “glass ceiling” effect, which can cause women to experience hurdles and obstacles while attempting to climb the corporate ladder. Lord and Maher (1991) suggested that some of the most significant difficulties regarding women promoted into leadership positions were their ability to be viewed as leaders by others. The glass ceiling is also a very subtle barrier of discrimination and sex discrimination. There are different boundaries alluded to as glass barriers or glass elevators that restrict women from progressing to specific professions (Mathis and Jackson, pg. 85). As Ann Morrison discovered through her research, *The Executive Women Project*, the glass ceiling exists because of gender, and most people perceive women as incapable of handling their positions (Morrison, 2013).

Leadership and Ethics

The criminal justice field is an area of work that’s interchangeable and a fast-moving working environment. One of the numerous characteristics that are fundamental in this field is leadership. Leaders are special. The qualities of a leader are an innate character and learned behavior. It is mostly derived more on the person’s capabilities, aptitude, drive, relatability, ethical behavior, and integrity. Whether working as a security

guard or a federal agent, quality leadership is the pipeline of a great organization. Substantial leaders are a tremendous asset to their organizations because they set themselves on a platform, and peers admire them since they are relied upon to procure the trust and regard of their subordinates and bosses. Effective leaders influence the people around them and possess the influence to motivate others. These individuals must conduct themselves in such a way that enables them to be the standard for all. They set the direction and pace for the people they lead. The leadership provided is essential for all areas of a department, such as training, culture, and standard operations procedures.

The role of ethics and integrity in law enforcement agencies is a part of being an exceptional leader and practicing good morals. It's essential officers rest on a blend of fundamental characteristics, such as integrity and trustworthiness. Superiors that exercise sound conduct enhance dependability that builds active correspondence and social change among the group. Leadership is dependent upon the notion that the people working under a male or female can become their better selves through the changing power of the administration. Police agencies commit to encouraging newly recruited officers to develop a course of quality and underscore value, and flexibility that includes balance. There will be challenges that an officer will experience, yet it takes the persistence to remain above water. Great leaders come packed with a considerable measure of responsibility, for example, being knowledgeable about policies and procedures, and driving the active quest for organizational goals (Gottschalk, 2009).

Managers have necessities that put a spotlight on the desire to advance and carry out an ultimate vision that obliges set aspirations, perspectives, morals, and ethics. Police leadership should always command proper ethics, appropriate behavior, and throughout the agency, there is a continuum to practice integrity and discipline on the entire force. The code of ethics serves as a platform and guide for all companies, and this should be on display while on duty. Accepting self-blame is acknowledging faults and taking full responsibility for departmental actions. The capacity of codes, morals, and ethics incorporates into an officer's conduct in their working environment. When an officer works to be their best and adhere to the law of ethics, his community policing will be useful. Officers who follow the code of ethics will stimulate a safer working environment that is conducive to them. The system of ethics propels excellence in officers and the communities in which they work. Ethics can help develop high esteem for law enforcement, and in the event of a crisis, communication and vital information will be easier to extract. Ethics in any organization cultivates in public service and professionalism. Law enforcement officers and other influential positions must uphold a place of morals and nobility that summons regard.

Management Skills

Good leaders must have several skills to lead and direct people. One of the characteristics they must have is an innate ability to read individuals equipped with adequate work ethics. Robert Katz (2009), who wrote *Skills of an Effective Administrator*, identifies three qualities skills that managers must possess to be

successful: (a) technical, (b) human, and (c) conceptual. Proficiency skills are essential for a good leader, and their performance contributes directly to the execution of a given job, such as electrical skills and computers. While technical skills are more about physical capabilities, human versatility involves the ability to work well with others, communicate, and build relationships, and attention to others. Social skills include interpersonal communication because it enables and empowers their staff to work viably and effectively. Inside this adjustment, there is a requirement to propel the employees to meet expectations, accomplish goals, and achieve objectives. Conceptual skills are the ability to see the organization in its entirety and see how each piece of the business melds together. Seeing the big pictures comprehensively by obtaining interpretations and analyzations and deciphering all information retrieved from their subordinates. The conceptual skills of a manager can efficiently and precisely point out necessary changes to benefit the company and, therefore, influence different parts of the organization.

Leadership Frameworks

A leadership style refers to an individual's qualities and characteristics that are tailored to their trademark practices while coordinating, inspiring, controlling, and overseeing groups of individuals. Leaders can motivate social change through political movements and motivate others to perform, create, and innovate. In 1939, Kurt Lewin, a psychologist, leads a research team with the hope of determining the different levels of leadership. Previously written literature has suggested more distinct types, but Lewin's study took many versions of leadership and compressed it into what he believed to be the

three major styles. His research provided a springboard with a more defined approach. His three major leadership styles predicated on a leader's decision making. The three forms he identified were autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire.

Authoritarian Leader (autocratic)

This style of an imperious individual has high expectations and provides precise tasks and instructions on how work should be done or executed. This style of authority centers around both charge and control of the subordinates, and with their dictatorship work ethic, there is a likable division between this leader and the members (Gibson & Marcoulides, 1995). Authoritarian leaders settle in choices autonomously with practically no contribution from others. Analysts found that under this leadership style, there is minimal creativity for decision-making. Lewin (1939) also concluded authoritarian leaders are less subjected to change to another available style of leadership, such as the democratic leader. This leadership style is better suited under circumstances where there is little to no briefing time, and they are the more proficient member of the group. The masterful approach can be a decent one when the circumstances call for fast choices and specific activities. Nonetheless, it tends to create hostile, dysfunctional, and fragile working environments among the subordinates, often provoking the followers towards an oppressive attitude.

Democratic Style

Lewin's study discovered that the democratic style is the best administrative style. These leaders offer direction to members of the organization or a team, but they take a

more initiative approach to become more involved and permit contributions or input from others. The downside to this style is the laid-back personality, which can cause individuals working under this leader to become less productive than under the authoritarian leader, yet their commitments are of higher quality. The democratic leaders amass individuals to take an interest in being assertive but will hold the final say in the decision-making process. Under this leadership, members feel more significant, eagerly motivated, and propelled to complete their assigned work. Democratic leaders influence their group members, thus fostering the goals of the workplace.

Laissez-fair (delegate style)

Lewin's researchers found that employees who worked under the delegated administration are the least motivated and productive out of the three methods. The group members indicated little participation and were incapable of working freely, thus requiring more micro-managing. The reasons for this were because, under the laissez-fair leader, this person offers little to no direction and leaves the leadership and decision-making up to the group members. While this style can be valuable under certain circumstances, including profoundly qualified professionals, it frequently prompts small roles and an absence of inspiration. This leadership style catapults individuals to accept accountability for their work, and they begin to blame each other for mistakes, decline moral obligation, and a lack of progress.

Transformational Leader

Transformational leadership, based on the research, is the most effective leadership style. These types of leaders are intelligent, energetic, fiery, and passionate. They are not just dedicated to helping others with their accomplishments and their objectives but committed to helping others reach their full potential. Individuals working under this leadership have higher performance results in working in groups.

Transformational leadership is derived from transactional leadership and developed by Bernard. M. Bass. A transactional leadership style definition is an understanding between the leader and the subordinate with the promise of a reward and where the leaders accomplish what they need. By exhibiting energy for self-discipline and self-improvement, there can be resulting augmentation in oneself, and the development of the subordinates can routinely be innovative, which could have the capacity to influence the organization. (Bass et al., 2003). He proposes that transformational leaders accept the policy and procedures of their organization to engage their followers to support and commit to the goals. Another characteristic that transformational leaders have is a vision and the keen sensibility to inspire others to share their ideas (McKenna, 2005).

Imagination is the foundation that aids in getting people to follow you. It must be subjective, brave, and grab one's imagination. Organizations can benefit significantly from a transformational leader. The transformational leader has a more practical approach; thus, many subordinates are faithful and extremely focused on the goal, which increases productivity (McKenna, 2005). Pioneers like John. F Kennedy and Abraham

Lincoln are referenced by Bass, who believed these men showed qualities of both leadership styles. Transactional styles are better suited in a more controlled or stable environment, whereas transformational style has been observed to be more potent in a very much rapidly changing working environment.

History and Evolution

Inequality and disparity between the genders have been around for a prolonged period (Chin, 2010). In the previous year, women were not treated fair as they were denied a significant number of benefits that were afforded to their male counterparts. Women could not vote, and when they marry, all their possession was rendered to their spouses (Gender Bias, 2007). Women activists developed during the 19th century concentrated primarily on education (Foster, 2015). In the last 50 years, changes have occurred worldwide that have led women and men to believe that discrimination they face is presently a relic (Farzaneh, 2014). In truth, women will experience gender bias and discrimination at the beginning of a lifetime (Lopez & Sissokho, 2013).

A finding by Archbold and Shultz (2012) has demonstrated that throughout history, women have less career advancement than men. Working women were not considered or accepted; instead, being a wife or mother was a successful career. Things begin to improve in the 20th century as women were conceded the privileges to vote, allowing higher education, career opportunities, and to expand on their professions. Even though there was a shift in progression, earning the right to vote and controlling their bodies was hard-fought. Nothing was given to them. Instead, they fought for

advancement, accomplishments, and contended reevaluating the conventional view that was being held by society. In recent years, manufacturing plants would hire women as they would work longer hours, for less money than men. A theory identified and directed to women in law enforcement developed by Shuck denotes the impact that administration leaders have on gender diversity to implement a system that assists women with policing careers (2014). Another assessment composed by Valcore & Gomez (2011) investigated the sentiments of how male officers perceive women working in law enforcement. The study found that women faced segregated and discrimination dispositions by their male counterparts, additionally, with the lack of legislation, enactment kept them from obtaining the “law enforcement officer” title.

Law enforcement, for women today, has evolved because of women who came before them. Women were not allowed to be police officers unless it was a desk or office work. Women working in this field earned low wages. To some, women were fragile, but they battled most perceptions to the contrary by attempting to demonstrate that they were just as competent and reliable as their male counterparts. Women have faced their share of struggles in the law enforcement profession, and they have made a profound amount of progress that may not have been recognizable in the 1900s. In recent years, women officers have made an insurmountable amount of growth since the 1950s. In 1972, legislation enacted the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) act that prohibits organizations and companies from denying women in any career or position they pursue.

Even though women struggled to work in a male-dominated field, still given small roles in law enforcement, they had legislation to support them (Thistle and Molinaro, 2016).

With changes in public policies, legal implementations have provided women with more opportunities to be integral members of law enforcement in addition to many male-dominated working arenas throughout the world. In the last ten years, law enforcement agencies have been pressured to meet the demands of diversity in the workplace. Compared to the early years, agencies now have established better training during the academy process. Training officers are skilled to educate current and recruited officers on diversity and to manage issues in the community properly.

To make these changes happen, women played a vital role. Historically, women have dependably been a part of the public sector in various parts of the world, albeit in occupations that satisfied conventional female employment like nurses, teachers, secretaries, and flight attendants (Shusta et al., 2005). In 1845, the New York City Police Department was the first law enforcement agency to hire women. These women were called “matrons.” In 1888, New York and Massachusetts passed an enactment requiring communities with a populace that contained at least 20,000 to contract matrons to oversee female inmates. The history of women's occupations consisted of social, which was a requirement to work as police officers. With these qualifications met, matrons were still not given the opportunity that would permit or expect them to work patrolling the streets. Their assigned roles centered around victimized women, child abuse, juvenile

delinquency, and truancy prevention. Also, these positions and qualifications only propelled women to demand more responsibility.

Women felt demoralized because they were not needed to perform essential duties. The male officers contended that it was only to protect women. Being socially adapted protectors of women, they demanded that women should not be involved and were required to remain in the car during traffic stops and dangerous seizures. However, women could help with executing arrests. Federal laws begin to evolve, mandating equal rights to genders and ethnicities, providing women the opportunity to perform patrol work, giving evidence for police work. In small towns, with smaller agencies, women represented ten percent of women officers. The National Center for Women and Policing's findings entail that approximately 90% of law enforcement agencies require some form of agility or physical fitness exams for new candidates. Women are confronted with benchmark challenges when these fitness tests are a requirement. Most of these physical exams designed for men in which tested their upper body strength, but when agencies include aptitude testing, there is a 45% increase of women on the force. Women deal with different pressures of being police officers because there are negative attitudes from men. Most women stated they were presented with the hostile conduct by male officers but did nothing about the officer's behavior out of fear of retaliation. Lewd behavior is predominant in most agencies. Provocation based on sex is an infringement of Section 703 of the Civil Rights Act, Title VII, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual advances, request

for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature” (2018). The research discovered that as many as 70% of women officers subjected to sexual harassment were reluctant to report this abuse because of the code of silence, and only 4 to 6 women reported the harassment (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2001). A survey found more than 68% admitted they were sexually harassed while on duty (Shusta et al. 2005).

When women decide to travel the path of a law enforcement career, their lives take on a radical change. Even today, the field of law enforcement is still dominated by men because of the notion that physicality and aggressiveness are male attributes (Lyman, 2009). However, when women show these characteristics, they are regularly seen as emotionless and uncaring. According to Shusta (2005), male officers relate crime-fighting to grit, bravery, and risk-taking, thus making this a “man’s” job. Based on the officer’s opinions, women are not capable of protecting a man in the face of danger. Women must prove themselves into what is perceived as a “brotherhood,” even in corrections. Some determine that if a woman performs her duties, she must show an aggressive side, develop a hard exterior, yet persecuted by her co-workers for displaying an apathetic disposition. If she is too feminine or not adequately forceful, men will minimize her role by not taking her seriously because she will not be sufficient on the job (Shusta, 2005).

The National Center for Women and Policing (2017) suggests that agencies can benefit from having women in their departments. For example, women have proven to be

competent, independent, proactive, self-assertive, and self-confident. Women are less likely to be targets of assaults and engage in the use of force by comparison to male officers. Women have a maternal instinct. Therefore, their emotional nature can eliminate or minimize confrontational situations, build interpersonal relationships with vulnerable communities as they implement community policing. Civilians are subjected to listen to women officers because some consider them trusting and display empathy towards others (Lonsway et al. 2003).

Career Advancement Barriers and Gender Stereotyping

Today, compared to many years ago, women have made progress towards senior managerial and leadership positions. Even professional success has opened many doors for women, but barriers are extensively present. The fact that women are making their way through the career ladder but excluded from the senior organizational hierarchy is called the “glass ceiling.” This term was coined to describe the hindrances that women face while ascending to the highest levels of their careers. This unfair limitation is particularly evident when one takes a microscopic look at senior positions in various disciplines. Previous research affirmed that “gendered” organizational and structural obstacles prevented women from attaining leadership positions. Moreover, it has become pervasive throughout corporate America (Woody & Weiss, 1994).

Henderson and Bialeschki (2013) completed a rigorous study that identified and distinguished the distinct boundaries that women face in their quest for career versatility. Their research expanded across a nationwide survey of women who worked in the

profession as practitioners. They compartmentalized the barriers into three general classes: individual, organizational, and family. After their examination of the three categories, they identified stereotyping and sexual orientation as the primary boundaries for women who were attempting to climb up the organizational ladder. The more significant portion of the survey indicated that the women complained of sexual harassment. Additionally, exclusion, lack of mentors, and adequate training were other barriers. Frisby and Brown (1991) conducted a study on women barriers and found that women faced obstacles as well as pregnancy or family issues and lack of support from executives to promote women.

Stereotyping has been found to influence women's careers in a negative light. Because of stereotyping, women persuade themselves that they must change to appease the male-centric culture. At times, this discernment leads to an extensive and dramatic change to reach a hierarchy status. Davidson and Cooper (1986) state that women's stress levels were higher than men because they believed they must work harder and faced constant pressure to prove they were capable and excelled at their positions. Even when women promoted to higher leadership positions, there was pressure to prove that they were as equally competent as a male and to eliminate any questions of her capabilities.

Organizational and Minority Challenges

The biggest obstacles to professional success among women are beyond their immediate control. Structural barriers are one of the main factors that remains a significant obstacle. Most organizations comprise of job assignments that women usually

are not interested in or do not pursue in their educational studies (Woody & Weiss, 1994). These positions are designed to be essential for professional success and to prevent women from ascending. Organizational structures incorporate areas they assume are tailored to women's potential. Cooper Jackson (2001) stated that a shortage of women role models was another apparent obstruction towards progression. Hierarchical authority designed for the male type of leadership blocks women's potential. A lack of female leadership can lead to minimal role models for women who can inspire other women to neutralize a male-dominated work environment. Because of gender biases and stereotyping, women began to adopt an isolated, disengaged, and discouraging dispositions because they viewed themselves as incompetent to blend in with the culture of the executive status.

Although women continue to face staggering barriers to achieving success in their career advancement, minority women face gender challenges and race. Jeane-Marie, Williams, and Sherman (2009) discuss the challenges faced by African American women in pursuing career advancement. They surveyed executive positions and found that 75% of the organizations believe that having minorities in the workplace is an asset. Minority women were interviewed and expressed the challenges. They faced prejudices regarding work style, lack of strategic networks, and constant undervaluing abilities. Collens (2009) stated the benefits that having minority women brought a diversified perspective to the company that helped to develop strategic policies that benefited all ethnicities of the company and the civilian population.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ethical leadership is not an easily attainable trait. It applies in many areas of an organization, not just to the individuals or a leader. It applies to every employee within the walls of the company. Personnel departments must exercise fair and subjective hiring practices. It is crucial because it's an immediate impression and reflection of the organization to show moral conduct concerning their corporate culture. Although women have broken through barriers, there is still a disproportionate number of women in law enforcement, especially in leadership positions.

With the "glass ceiling" as a barrier, the goal of women leadership is to attempt better improvement endeavors, to shift others mentally to the idea of women becoming effective leaders. Minority leadership is a battle and a mystery to some employers. However, many barriers dissipate. The inclusion of minorities in the workplace builds character, coalitions, and leadership skills that span across various sectors. Minority leadership leads to skill sets multiplied beyond their content and technical expertise in their respective disciplines.

Gender discrimination and double standards remain setbacks for women. Women are constantly being challenged to prove themselves in law enforcement agencies across the world. Women, frequently placed in positions, with assumptions that fit their competencies, such as social work, school programs, and matrons. Narcotics, gang units and SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) teams were not tolerant of women in these positions because of the belief that women need protection. Women faced with the

difficulties of parenting and careers are particularly challenging for women who are single parents. Women are second-guessing themselves when employers deny them for job promotions, which leave them questioning their competencies. Women bring structure and creative ways of getting things done. Men and women attack obstacles differently. Men attack an obstacle head-on to show they can handle anything, and women are very detailed and like to show the origination of a problem, why it exists, and how to prevent it from happening again. Often, women attack the problem but would instead treat the issue as a common cold and create a solution that will remove the problem entirely.

Having minorities in the workplace is beneficial because it opens the door for more opportunities and provides helpful ways to change policies and procedures, and diversified strategies to benefit the company and the populace. Today, there are several different races throughout many companies, so it suffices to obtain people of different ethnic backgrounds to relate to a person of the same ethnic origin. Minorities' working environments and various experiences are vital because it helps to delegate tasks to those that are especially familiar with that person. It helps to defeat communication barriers and effectively building trust in the communities and their administration. Chapter 3 discusses a descriptive data collection approach.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

Leadership skills predicated on many variables, such as self-awareness, motivation, social, and communication skills. These ingredients can be incorporated to improve leadership qualities. It is essential to compartmentalize managers and necessary to acknowledge the roles that leaders possess through power and authority. It is vital to take note that morals and ethics are characteristics needed to become a better leader. Leadership embodies a commitment to teaching. Effective leaders must encourage their subordinates to challenge their psychological abilities and find a way to transform it. The most vital piece of leadership is to confront the learners to investigate their contemplations and thoughts. The purpose of this study was to explore female leaders in law enforcement and their skills. Law enforcement officers must possess some form of leadership, but this research covered a more in-depth look at women who covet superior positions and the challenges to ascending to the top of their careers.

Research Questions

There were questions analyzing women's leadership of various rankings, backgrounds, and ethnicities in their police departments. In alignment with the purpose of this dissertation, there were central research questions that guided the study. Additionally, the study will explore:

RQ1: What leadership characteristics do minority female supervisors possess?

RQ2: What strategies have female police leaders used to achieve success within their department?

RQ3: What barriers exist with career advancement for females with their department?

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to explore the experiences of female police managers. This research used narratives collected through interviews with participants. Qualitative research uses assessing, estimating, and comprehension of social or human issues, as installed in a social setting including the impact of subjective suppositions, objectives, goals, or understanding (Creswell, 1998). The method utilized ranges from women of different ethnicities, high-ranking positions, and perceptions of women in law enforcement today. This phenomenological approach addressed women in law enforcement's experiences and accounts through the lens of their ranking status, their competencies, and the obstacles they had to encounter. A narrative approach was applicable for this research because it offered a coordinated perspective and rich account of the women's lived experiences.

Phenomenology means that research viewed as a procedure, and the technique involves studying a few subjects through a broad and extensive lens by creating examples and connections of meanings. It seeks to understand how people experience a situation or phenomenon. It is conducted primarily through in-depth conversations and interviews; however, some studies may collect data from diaries, drawings, or observation.

Phenomenology focuses on the participants' experiences with no regard for social or

cultural norms, traditions, or preconceived ideas about the experience. In the process, the analyst must manage his or her own biases to convey the appropriate message. The research design was aligned with this study because it provided the researcher with the opportunity to observe non-verbal language and ask immediate follow-up questions. Accordingly, this methodology was fitting, as it enabled the researcher to conduct face-to-face interviews and investigate the participants' statements regarding their encounters in managing issues of policy and procedures by supervisors. Interview questions were open-ended to allow the participants to describe their experience from their viewpoint. This approach allowed me to remain impartial and refrain from controlling the outcome of the study, yet also see the world from the perspectives of the participants (Sutton & Austin, 2015). There were central research questions aligned with the purpose of this dissertation.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative studies, the role of the researcher is to gather information through human instruments. The researcher must portray applicable parts of self, including any predispositions and assumptions, any experiences, and personal encounters to qualify his or her capacity to conduct the research (Greenbank, 2003). Moreover, it is helpful that the researcher maintains a journal explicating responses, reflections, and insights. A good researcher is proficient and capable of listening, thinking, and asking questions to allow for a more extensive and informative conversation. The role of the researcher looks to manufacture a picture utilizing thoughts and hypotheses from a wide assortment of

sources. As the only researcher in this study, I collected data from prior research studies, conducted all interviews, gathered information, and translated a written account of my findings. My role as the researcher was to observe or interact rather than participate (Cassell & Symon, 2004).

Additionally, it is imperative that the researcher lay a foundation of validity and dispose of any bias. If my work is to promote social change in the field of law enforcement, then the researcher's role as an analyst must be one that guarantees quality, morals, and delivers sound work. In doing such, it is essential researchers choose the appropriate methodology. A narrative and descriptive approach were implemented to gain insight into the individual's discernment, perspective, and understanding. My part is to remain detached and professional.

Method for Data Collection

The data collection process included phone and face-to-face communications to all administrative and municipalities of the chosen counties to gain access to their officers and supervisors. The selected participant decided by the researcher were to help the researcher ascertain gainful knowledge about barriers that affect women in law enforcement. The participants were selected based on their supervising and years of experience. The sample comprised of 12 women who are in high-ranking, leadership role. The participants were chosen from their county because the Metropolitan Police department has grown over an immense space. There were more women supervisors in their area than other police departments. The interview had open-ended questions that

allowed the researcher to reflect on personal situations so the participants could share a similar phenomenon. The researcher contacted the participants through emails, which included the type of research, the reason for the study, a brief explanation of confidentiality expectations, and the benefit that came from the information provided. The letter contained clarity of my responsibilities as the researcher, time and dates, and include my contact information. I initiated follow-up calls a few days after the interviews. At that time, the participant decided on the location and time of the meeting. The participants chose the setting (i.e., workplace, private environment). The recruitment letter included information about an audio-recorded interview. Participation was voluntary, and there was no compensation provided.

Instrument

For this study, face-to-face interviews was the instrument, and the participants' perspectives were assessed using a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews were selected because it allows diversions and new ideas as a result of what the interviewee says, and the researcher desires an expanded understanding of the specific topic. Given the nature of the matter, the questions concentrated on the competencies of women leadership. The researcher compared the participants' responses to obtain an expansion and a different perspective on the same topic. The discussions were face-to-face in intimate settings. The researcher had to ensure that any personal biases and preconceived ideas did not affect the findings. The interview questions developed fitting criteria for the participants who work as women supervisors in law enforcement.

However, subsequent issues evolved to pursue more in-depth clarity as the interview progressed. The researcher was careful not to impose opinions from others and maintain a neutral attitude, as the researcher does not want to cure judgment. Open-ended questions were the suggested method for this qualitative study because it allowed the respondents to speak more freely to inquiries directed to the research. The researcher interviewed participants that allowed follow-up questions to gain more clarity. Each interview was audio-recorded to ensure validity. There was also an opportunity for questions before and after the interview process. The debriefing brought a level of clarity so that more information could be retrieved. The interviews took place approximately thirty minutes to an hour that relied on the platform, the tone, and the establishment of a rapport between the researcher and the participant. Last, the participants had full knowledge of my role during this process.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability of qualitative research often questioned or debates because it does not address legitimacy and quality issues compared to quantitative methods (Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) discussed how trustworthiness applies to qualitative research. Credibility, dependability, and comfortability must be exhibited to show reliability throughout the study, and it was my responsibility to ensure that these methods were consistent throughout the study (Creswell, 2009). Guaranteeing infallibility required me to inspect and appropriately code all information. Credibility ensures that the researcher extracted data from credible sources. Open-ended questions were used to

facilitate participant honesty and integrity. Following the interview, I conducted a debriefing meeting with the participants.

Dependability rests upon honesty, consistency, and unwavering quality of the research, while confirmability requires that the discoveries and encounters originate from the participant as opposed to the analyst (Shenton, 2004). While using the phenomenological approach, the analyst is required to remove any partialities through a strategy known as bracketing (Creswell, 2009). Several methods, such as face-to-face interviews, audio recordings, and field notes, were used. In conclusion, I exercised the same consistencies in the process, including the accounts regarding qualitative formatting, as well as creating an atmosphere free of influence. Confirmability requires the findings to come from the participants rather than the researcher. Confirmability was established to minimize investigator bias (Shenton, 2004).

Ethical Considerations

The researcher assessed ethical considerations before initiating any contact with the participants. My goal was to make the participant feel comfortable even while considering ethics and subsequent data collection. Although I did not anticipate ethical encounters, I took the necessary precautions to protect the participants. Moreover, I adhered to ethical standards, such as Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB). With the understanding of ethical considerations, the concentration must remain on the comfort of the participants. The researcher must ensure that their participation, confidence, and experience must not compromise the research (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the safeguards

of each participant were essential, such as signed consent forms from each participant, which included identity protection of personal information. To instill participant comfort, I disclosed previous and current work in the criminal justice field. The hope was that the participants would perceive me relatable. By ensuring the confidentiality of personal information, each participant was coded to shield their identity. I transcribed personal data using a USB flash drive with password protection, which will remain in my possession for five years, with no access to the files. After this time, the researcher will follow all protocols and remove the data. The researcher provided contact information for any questions or concerns.

Conclusion

The success of a study requires the researcher to conduct extensive research and ask the correct questions, being able to refrain from infusing your answers into what the respondents wish to provide, and not influence your thoughts to change the mind or alter of the involved participants. If this happens, the study loses validity. The researcher must be able to control their opinions and biases because this allows the researcher to make a difference. Chapter three outlined the design and methods used to do this study. The study researched various skillful women who were in leadership positions. The study explored women's experiences, starting from their initial inquiry into law enforcement and leading up to their current jobs. In this chapter, the researcher provided detailed information about the data collection process. The participants comprised of 12 law enforcement women officers who are supervisors. The women described their social

experiences as supervisors and family life. The researcher provided the participants with the necessary information about confidentiality, such as how their identity. A discussion covered a data analysis plan, instrumentation, the role of the researcher, evidence of trustworthy, and ethical standards. A presentation of the data collection and findings presented a detailed analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Analysis of Data

Gender equality and women rights in the workplace has improved. Females officers have removed barriers that hindered women from excelling in achieving higher status in their agencies. Although the numbers have grown, the percentage is still low compared to their male counterparts. According to the NCWP (2017), there are 18,000 police departments in the United States. In major cities, women officers make-up only 20% percent as high-ranking officers. The purpose of this qualitative study was to provide a definitive understanding of the lives of female officers. The selective method was used to extract various law enforcement women who hold leadership positions. This method was used to gain insight into their roles as leaders. The instrument used to collect the data was the researcher. I spoke with several women throughout the study. The study utilized open-ended questions to gain in-depth information about female leadership in their current positions.

Using an audio recorder was the best way to capture data in this qualitative study. It ensured accurate, descriptive, and valid accounts of the information provided. With the participants' permission, an audio recorder was used to avoid misinterpretations, ascertain clear understandings, and use it as a reference for my results. During the interview process, I took mental notes, which included noting body language such as, self-assurance or confidence, timidity, and annoyance when some of the women spoke of their experiences. After collecting the data, I carefully listened to each interview and

transcribed them. I used the method of Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen to eliminate personal biases, assumptions, and prejudgments. This procedure was necessary to guarantee that I precisely ascertain the participants' meaning and not impose my views on the implications of the data.

Settings

Before meeting with participants, I allowed them to determine the environment, so they felt comfortable, and so that it was convenient. As Faber (2016) stated, by selecting the proper setting, the researcher will get the most out of the interview, which allowed me and the participants to establish a rapport and access the participant's background and experiences. It was easier to build rapport and obtain the client's history and skills when the participants could select the environment. The interviews were scheduled based on the availability of the participants. For example, meetings were on weekdays, during their work hours and at various times for their convenience. The in-depth interviews were one-on-one, in quiet private offices. Some of the rooms were meeting rooms, and some had a laid-back atmosphere. This set up encouraged the participants to remain relaxed, calm, and be their true selves. Once an established rapport developed, I was able to direct my line of questioning and communication. Participants were not made aware of who was participating in the research and did not personally know each other.

Data collection

The research study included women of different ethnicities, geographical locations, and leadership positions. There were 12 original participants. I carefully chose the participants to make sure they all met the criteria of the study. The invitation letters outlined the research. The data collection was a 7-day process. I used coding numbers to identify the participants without compromising confidentiality. Before each interview started, I asked for permission to use a recorder. I also shared personal information, how I related to the research, and why I conducted this study. The researcher informed the participants that they could ask questions during the interview and discontinue the session for any reason. The participants and I talked about their experiences as women in law enforcement. This approach benefited both parties because it led to effective rapport building. The interview schedules were during the week and for one hour. However, some discussions exceeded this time. As the questions and answers began, and with the help of sharing personal details about ourselves, the women spoke freely and disclosed their life and career histories in full detail. I paid careful attention to hand gestures, eye contact, and body language when discussing sensitive topics. I took mental and written notes of my observations and color-coded them for transcribing.

Data Analysis

There were 12 female officers interviewed and asked several questions about their current positions as leaders, the ability to balance family life, and barriers faced ascending to their jobs. Not everyone received the same line of questioning. For example,

each question used depended on the participant's career path, whether they had children, and were married. After collecting the data, I listened to the interviews and began transcribing them. I carefully omitted specific descriptions about each candidate to keep their identity protected. NVivo software used was to organize and categorize the findings. The tool located catchphrases and electronically stored essential data. The software also guided the improvement of topics related to the questions and participants' viewpoints and encounters. Before using the software, the first step was to compartmentalize their answers and hand code the data by extracting essential words and expressions (Moustakas, 1994). The subsequent coding involved perusing the information again and assembling the starting marks into fundamental classifications. NVivo allowed me to create individual folders for the participants throughout the coding procedures. Additionally, the software helped me develop themes and code the participants' perspectives and experiences. I repeated the same for each interview.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The approach for rigor in research is credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). There are different methodologies that qualitative researchers use to ensure the validity of data. It involves such tactics as triangulation, persistent observation, and peer review (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Credibility reflects on the researcher's truths and findings and brings to light the accuracy of those findings. Triangulation is the most common method in qualitative research because it involves different ways to collect data (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

This method is not used to cross-validate but rather to build the degree of learning about something and reinforce the researcher's point of view from different viewpoints. This study used open-ended questions to ensure the accuracy of the participants' honesty and conducted member checking. Transferability is how the researcher illustrates their findings and consistency throughout the study (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative researchers can use depiction to demonstrate the exploration of the study to apply to different settings, such as contexts, situations, and circumstances. Confirmability is the lack of bias in the research findings. It requires collected information derived from the participant's experiences rather than the predispositions or personal motivations of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). For example, ensuring that the analysis does not skew the participant's responses to fit a specific narrative. For a researcher to establish validity, he or she can provide a rationale which features how the information was obtained and give reasons how individual reached their decision. Dependability includes trustworthiness, reliability, and consistency. The research should be detailed, understandable, and should demonstrate replicability. In other words, if another researcher wanted to recreate a similar topic, there should be enough data to support the results and findings. Finally, it is significant that analysts use reliable techniques during the data collection process. I kept the personal accounts of the study, methods, and challenges I experienced throughout the data collection

Findings

The findings are essential to the research. It organizes the research questions to explain the barriers to ascending in a hierarchical, male-dominated organization, as well as, the promotional structure of women leadership in law enforcement and their way of balancing career and home life. The research focused not only on career paths but on the female officer's ability to overcome obstacles or events that were coinciding in their lives. There were times when certain events made the respondents second guess and consider the resignation of their current positions within their agencies. Even though unexpected life circumstances occur in life, some of the participants were pressured to remove themselves from their jobs.

Research Questions Revisited

RQ1: What leadership characteristics do minority female supervisors possess?

The purpose of this question was for the researcher to gain a better understanding of the barriers that women leaders face in law enforcement. All of the participants noted they faced obstacles of prejudice, thus, having to prove themselves on a larger scale. The five respondents stated that self-confidence, advancing in higher education, self-determination, and self-motivation were characteristics that most supervisors possessed. However, based on their experience, they believed that minority candidates were weighed differently during promotional considerations.

RQ2: What strategies have female police leaders used to achieve success within their department? The purpose of this question was to understand the participants' paths

of ascending to the top of the job chain and what skills assisted them. All the participants stated that their lived experiences (i.e., working in the military, in male-dominated arenas, and around law enforcement officers) conditioned them to work harder and stronger to excel in their careers.

RQ3: What barriers exist with career advancement for females within their departments? The purpose of this question was to gain a better understanding of the obstacles that currently exist for women. Other areas that the participants noted were nepotism and inferiority complexes. The participants expressed how they felt a lack of fairness from their agency. One respondent stated that her lack of willingness and proficiency approach to her job decreased. Some of the respondents believed that most agencies were still under the “good ole boy” system in the workplace, and the glass ceiling maintains as a barrier. The officers that had been on the force for many years could recall prejudices and biases that were a distraction. Veteran officers stated they had seen vast improvements in the agency, but there was still room for improvement. The newer officers (10-20 years’ experience) were going through similar negative experiences, but those experiences could not compare to what the veterans had experienced. The problem with this question was that it seemed that the novice officers were not disclosing situations that made them feel uncomfortable because they were afraid of retaliation from their superiors.

Considering a Career in Law Enforcement

During my research, I asked the participants a variety of questions. One important question I wanted to address was their inspiration to work in law enforcement. The answer varied to include working in the military, following their parents' footsteps, or watching television shows, such as *Charlies Angels*, *Cagney and Lacey*, and *Police Woman*. These shows depicted women in law enforcement, but the respondents stated that these shows were just as influential in pursuing a career in law enforcement as their family members. For those who were not influenced by the media, participants who were in the military said that working with the public or engaging in civil work prompted them to be a police officer. Three of the participants in the military stated that military experience benefited them during the academy and field training. The participants influenced by television shows worked as dispatchers and record clerks. These positions helped them because they were already building rapport and relationships with current officers, and had observed women officers and imagined themselves as police officers. One respondent stated, "working as a dispatcher, I realized I could do the patrol job." The commonality between the participants enforced them towards law enforcement careers in different ways, but ultimately had the same starting point and career goals.

Training Academy

There were many questions directed towards the participants' training academy experiences. Some of the participants were asked about women's leadership in the academy, and some responded that women trainers were in attendance. The women who

taught some of the courses were constructive and accessible to assist with completing the academy. All of the participants explained that having women train with them and instructing some of the courses provided more comfort and support. One participant commented, “the male cadets, in most cases, were helpful, but at times, felt the need to treat me delicately.” Some of the participants’ training experiences were not smooth. A couple of the respondents felt dismissed by their male counterparts. The male cadets isolated female cadets during classroom activities, and the trainers appeared annoyed whenever asked to expand on a subject matter or event. However, women instructors offered practical information that aided the female cadets’ ability to pass training. For example, one respondent stated that two female trainers who promoted to the academy provided their experience in firearms training to those recruits who had a lack of knowledge about weapons. The participants believed that having women in training facilities illustrated hope for career advancement and symbolized women's leadership. One captain stated, “when I was a recruit, there were many supervisors that taught different courses, but one particular captain had the most significant effect on me. She was confident, bold, presented a professional and amazing attitude. She stood firmly in her convictions as she spoke.” After speaking with the ladies about their training academy experience, the sample was split in half when we talked about feeling isolated and treated unfairly. Realizing this was a commonality among some of the participants, I asked them if some female officers or supervisors inspired them during their training.

They agreed and said those women gave them an inspirational vision for their futures in the male-dominated arena.

Balancing Family Life

To effectively achieve advancement within a police agency, opportunities must be accessible. However, it does not mean that when opportunities are available, promotion is guaranteed. Participants explained various conditions that made kraurotic moments necessary for their ascending career path. The respondents stated that multiple people and situations benefited their progressions, such as family support, internal agency support or role models, and past associations that prompted and aided the creation of the moment. Almost all the respondents reflected on how their families (i.e., parents and husbands) were the most essential and essential reason for accepting an advancement in their careers. One respondent who applied for a sergeant's position explained how her mother was more excited about the lateral movement. The respondent stated that her mother showed her excitement by washing and manually pressing or dry cleaning her uniforms. She would also polish her shoes, babysit, drop off, and pick her up from work. "This process went on for three years. I did not ask her to do these things, but she knew how difficult my initial process was and how important it was for me to promote." This support from all angles motivated and encouraged the respondents effectively. Help from co-workers, however, created a sense of increasing urgency from the legislature to require employers to accommodate single parents. Many of the participants revealed they contemplated whether to take the supervisor exam. For women with children, support

from a life partner was fundamental to the decision to pursue a higher career status. Any career change requires support from life partners or spouses. Women with children will need to make appropriate arrangements and rebalance their home life, but help does not come easy for everyone, especially when smaller children are involved. A captain reminisced on when she was promoted to sergeant and explained to me the troubles of balancing her career and arranging childcare:

“My husband and I had our first child, and we agreed that we did not want strangers taking care of our child. So, we decided to figure out a plan to make it work. I was working days, and he was working the night shift. Often, we met up at my job or his job, and sometimes a random parking lot and handed off our son from his car to mine. I felt bad. But as our routine became habit-forming, we began to enjoy it and our son, too.”

Barriers and Preparing for Promotions

The officers I interviewed occupied high-ranking positions. One of the supervisors that stood out the most was a major who was preparing for retirement. She expressed that her road to success was not as easy as it is now, but it made her a better officer, leader, and mentor to other women who wanted to become supervisors. She set the stage for most of the supervisors who worked under her, including some that she promoted. One participant stated that she waited five years before she considered taking the exam because her chief told her she would never qualify for the promotion. She waited for the right time to make a lateral move, and that meant waiting for a paradigm

shift. She decided that she would wait for a female chief to take office before making a step forward. She stated:

“I wanted and was hoping a female would take over our department as Chief of police. When this happened, I applied for the Sergeant position. I waited for the right moment, and they announced it would be a female Chief, I was ecstatic and took time off from work to study for the exam. The Chief promoted me, and the vibe shifted. Some of my male and female co-workers and were disappointed. But I took full advantage and seized the moment to make a lateral move that male supervisors said that I would never get.”

One participant stated that any woman who said they she was treated equally after a promotion “is living a life of delusions.” Overall, one thing the participants had in common was feeling pressure or proving themselves. One of the participants reported that “these feelings are internalized and not necessarily of the agency.” The respondents stated their career advancement was their best accomplish; however, their male counterparts were not the problem. Their obstacles came from women who work as patrol officers, administration, and higher-ranking officers. It is clear when someone makes a promotional move, that it can create a disturbance in the water, setting new waves in motion. Many of the respondents said part of their preparation was to obtain higher education by earning a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Pursuing higher education was a catalyst because this looked good on their resume and made them more competitive. The respondents claimed that higher education was only part of the battle.

A few of the participants stated that even with obtaining higher education, budget limitations, and blockage due to their gender were problems. Advanced training prepared the participants and provided them the necessary tools for the job, which made them viable candidates for the high-ranking positions. Finally, the respondents expressed how their journeys did not go unblemished without a small dosage of discrimination and unfair treatment. For example, one respondent remembers her male supervisor suggesting that she lose weight. The participant could not go into grave detail, but she stated: “There were severe implications for his actions.” Another participant stated: “I asked my supervisor about policies for pregnant mothers staying out on maternity leave? He said, well first you have to lose all that baby weight and possibly lose your position.” The participant said she believed that was a discriminatory comment but did not know how to respond to that because he gave her a recommendation. The participant stated that for a while, she decided against having children or covering because she believes this would affect her career trajectory. After some time, she chose not to report him, and this delayed her desire for wanting to start a family. Eventually, she decided to investigate pregnancy and discrimination in the workplace and realized this behavior was against the law. This respondent is now a major and still works in the same department. She decided to stay and help alleviate the injustices that existed in her agency.

Revisiting Women Leadership

When speaking about women's leadership, the idea of the “glass ceiling” is a concept that often takes precedence. In this unique circumstance, unfair limitations allude

to a hindrance that women have faced. The “glass ceiling” represents preventive measures that some companies use to keep women from achieving hierarchy positions. Some contend this broken barrier is still relevant. Today, we see more women ascending to leadership positions, but a labyrinth is part of the problem (women face numerous deterrents rather than excelling as men do). The lack of women leadership and attaining them was the topic of this study and offered some insight on barriers, such as the “glass ceiling.” The participants shared feelings, concerns, and attitudes about stereotypes and promotional opportunities. A qualitative design was appropriate because the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews, and there was hope that law enforcement agencies would implement training, leadership/ mentoring programs for women. Equality, in connection to fairness, should strictly uphold procedures for race and gender. For example, companies should use the same guidelines and expectations for potential candidates. Accomplishing positions of power, require decision-making, aptitude, and the ability to assume responsibility.

According to the literature, effective leadership requires that a leader acknowledge themselves as such, and despite that in comparison to men, women often are overlooked. A literature review conducted on women's leadership addressed concerns about the capabilities of women leadership, their impact, and influence to lead successfully in various positions (Baird & Bradley, 1979). In recent decades, being a leader has not been congruent with women's leadership and has been contested in different work environments in the public arena and proceeds even the twenty-first

century (Gibson, 1995). In numerous ways, women are traditionally qualified or viable leaders, but this premise was dependent on hierarchical status and stereotypical ideologies in an organization (Beckwith, 1986). Recent research suggested that having a productive, well-established organization with diversity in the workplace may lead to positive outcomes. For example, past studies demonstrate that business arenas have reported moderately higher financial performance. There are many working in the political and business sector; however, there is still an unbalanced number of women in high-ranking positions who are enduring less pay compared to their male counterparts.

Gibson (1995) maintained his position that as more women continue to achieve high ranks in their careers, employers will begin to recognize them for their skills and qualifications. Women leaders are growing in various organizations across the world, which has led to an expansion in demographics and diversity makeup within organizations. This concept has caused employers to choose women leaders who demonstrate initiative. Different associations have various procedures by which to prepare and instruct their employees on effective leadership. When women continue to encounter negative reception in the workplace, this is a sign that employees have not addressed these behaviors, and such matters require a spotlight on their activities, job perception, and performance.

Career and Leadership

Leadership is relevant and always interchangeable, so it is difficult to have one definition. It constitutes vision, influence, motivation, inspiration, and accomplish set

goals in an organization (Daft & Kendrick, 2010). It is used as an apparatus to achieve goals and the actions of a person's inner motivation. Leaders encourage individuals to achieve their objectives using specific methods. Leaders do not directly point and give direction. They must also take an interest in their employees' ideas, become visionaries of their future, and work with passion and purpose. Mentorship is a fundamental tool that takes a less experienced person under their wing, provides support, coaching, and challenges by spearheading the path to success. Mentoring is helpful, but most organizations do not offer programs to encourage women to pursue managerial positions. Mentoring offers many variables to assist with their career goals, and it should be used equally for men and women. Both the individual and association profit because they play an essential role. A career-driven person exponentiates an organization; insomuch, there are benefits for both parties. A person's desires and competencies are critical to the development of the individual and organization.

Leading with Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to manage and evaluate one's own emotions and regulate them judiciously. Author Daniel Goleman, who coined the term "emotional intelligence," suggests that to be an effective leader a person must possess critical traits, such as self-awareness, self-motivation, self-regulation, and social skills (2015). A person possesses directness, analytical thinking, with an abundance of creative ideas. A person without EI will not be an effective leader (2015). EI aims to help a person sustain and increase significant connections and unique opportunities.

Self-Awareness

When speaking of leadership and having control of one's emotional intelligence, self-awareness is the most valuable. This competency is relative to administration because self-awareness is being conscious of your skills and what you are capable of yet still allowing yourself to learn. For example, a participant stated, "I have 13 years working the beat and eight as an administrative Sergeant, but I know there is more information for me to take in." Also, a leader takes responsibility for their actions. Self-awareness plays a role on an interpersonal level because acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses gains the trust of others. One participant reported that "to be an effective leader, I believe you must know yourself, your personality, your likes and dislikes, your strengths and weaknesses. If you know these things about yourself, you can better serve your people." An effective leader must be able to identify, understand, and manage emotions. A leader's mindfulness of self-awareness develops a culture of continuous growth and development by recognizing strengths, weaknesses, and biases in one's self and others, which allows one to enact change, foster trust, and be a more influential leader.

Self-motivation

Self-motivation is a characteristic that enables an individual to achieve their goals. A leader's role is to influence initiative qualities that impact inspiration and hard work. As a leader, one should know the needs of his subordinates and understands that supervisors and employees must possess leadership characteristics and motivation. A strong leader is

aware of his subordinates' goals and drives them to expectations, as well as their own. For example, a participant stated, "being self-motivated shows initiative, tenacity, drive, and it is a behavior that can separate you from someone else. People who take on more and do more without being asked will stand out and rise to the top much faster than people who are always invited to complete tasks.

You must know what motivates you to perform, to inspire others to be successful. As a leader, one must not only push themselves to achieve their goals but also their team members. Being able to motivate oneself allows you to plan and execute your goals independent of others.

A participant believes when you are self-motivated, leading becomes easier as others believe in your leadership. As a leader, you do so by example, causing others to adopt your style of motivation when tackling responsibilities.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation typifies how relevant emotional intelligence is a necessity in leadership. There may be times when a supervisor believes their subordinates do not respect them, listens to them, or mistreats them. Self-regulation helps a person to control negative biases in their brain. Negative biases lead to poor decision-making, taint morale, and relationships in the workplace. Much like self-awareness, the participants believe self-regulation is an essential skill that one must master. No matter who you are, what industry you work in, and who you work with, it all comes with its own set of challenges.

Being able to recognize your emotions allows you to make better decisions. For example, a respondent stated, "if you get chewed out by your manager for a problem, one of your subordinates caused, and now you must address the issue with that individual. It is best to know how you feel and how to control your emotions to treat this individual with a level head." Due to this fact, being able to regulate emotions can make them an effective leader.

Social Skills

Social skills have a direct correlation to a leader's success. To survive, grow, and prosper, leaders must have excellent social skills. The only thing that stands between having a positive or negative experience is one's ability to make a human connection. For example, as a leader, you have a team member who is voicing an issue with a product line. Having adequate social skills allows you to acknowledge what is important and signal that their concern is understood; this allows the team member to feel their opinions and suggestions are essential.

Working in an environment that requires teamwork is where possessing social skills is imperative. Social skills are our way of adequately communicating with others. A leader who has cognitive control can convey their thoughts and is open to suggestions. The research showed how the participants believe that social skills are imperative for a healthy work environment. Collectively, they believe showing empathy to your work colleagues will help build people and communication skills, but generally it's significant because

people like to feel cared for by their employer or supervisors. Understanding your subordinates and what motivates them, having passion and insight, understanding their ambitions, and how they work is effective. Effective leaders must be able to communicate with their subordinates to accomplish a common goal. But you must first deal with emotional intelligence before understanding people around you.

Summary

Chapter 4 presented data collection and data analysis of women leadership in law enforcement. The research was a qualitative study that included interviews of women officers who held positions from sergeants to majors. This chapter described in detail the setting where the meetings took place. The study included 12 participants currently employed as law enforcement officers. Among them, the women collectively had 80 plus years of experience. Participants chose interviews, times, and settings. The discussions featured open-ended questions so that participants would speak freely. However, each participant because they varied in their journeys and life experiences. For example, the interview questions designed towards balancing demanding careers and children, training academy experience, overcoming barriers, how emotional intelligence affects leadership, and derailment factors. The interview questions derived from the research questions that were relevant to the study:

RQ1: What direction characteristics do minority female supervisors possess?

RQ2: What strategies have female police leaders used to achieve success within their department?

R3: What barriers exist with career advancement for females with their department?

The interviews were uploaded for coding and transcribing into NVivo software.

Chapter 5 will discuss limitations, implications, and recommendations. This chapter revisited women leadership, emotional intelligence competencies, such as self-awareness, self-motivation, self-regulation, and social skills and how it applies to leadership

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This section of the study will provide a summation of the purpose and include the research questions, discussion, implications, and findings. The purpose of this qualitative, Phenomenological study was to examine the lives of women leaders who held high-ranking. Positions in law enforcement. The results derived from 12 women who participated in semi-structured interviews. The inquisition, and in some in some instances, were based on the participant's responses. A literature review of the officers' experiences was an integral part. Previous studies on the subject matter inspired the direction of interview procedures. Some research analysts who studied women supported the belief that women were inadequate and did not meet the physical capacity to do police work. The participants provided accounts of their experiences (negative/positive) and explained why it is essential that police departments promote diversity and equal opportunity. This study hoped to encourage policymakers to implement different recruiting and promotional measures.

Interpretation of Findings

The most significant explanation in this qualitative study is the invisible barrier that women face when they are trying to promote to leadership positions. In this study, women participants expressed their views, feelings, opinions about the “glass ceiling” phenomenon, barriers, and struggles of working in a male-dominated arena. The women offered insight into their journeys, including balancing family life, facing adversity in the

training academy, in the workplace, and continued success as supervisors. As discussed in chapter 2, Morrison (2003) believes one barrier women face is how organizations segregate women, underrepresentation, and lack of support from internal administration. Based on the findings, the research concurs that the participants provided instances where job assignments were not distributed evenly on a daily base. Some of the women believed their work weighed heavily on their gender. The findings included a difference in job titles, promotions, and training opportunities.

The research study presented a catalyst why there are not many women leaders promoted to leadership positions in law enforcement. Lord and Maher (1991) believe women lack mentors and self-confidence for them to lead. If women seeking to break the glass ceiling, they must internally employ self-perseverance to have support from the people that lead them Hoyt & Simmons, 2017). Leadership skills are an essential attribute for any person conducting a team of individuals. Women undoubtedly must prove they possess the qualities of problem-solving, learning behavior styles of people, and communication skills.

Padma (2010) discovered that women are not comfortable and sure of themselves to designate, which is an essential quality in leadership. By lacking those skills, women are viewed as bad managers. Gender stereotyping happens in every job market today. Women who seek more significant achievements in the workplace, limitations become stricter such as unblemished backgrounds, and higher-education is required to compete against men.

When such restrictions are placed on women, they begin to struggle with internal conflict. There is support revealed of the findings suggesting mentorship during the training process and after completing the academy is a necessity. Some of the results contradicted the Shelly& Rabe (2011) study claiming that during the academy, women are afraid to show support to one another, fear of not being accepted by the men. The current findings were not parallel to this claim. The participants stated they were supportive of each other and were not in of fear male cadets ostracizing them.

The focus of this study was not limited to the ‘glass ceiling’ but to magnify how women are not in fear of cracking the glass vase, unfair underrepresentation’s, and leadership. This study was hoping to encourage women to break through limitations, leave behind barriers, and a controlling, oppressive stigma. But this would result in taking a risk, shard pieces of glasses cascading out of control, and possibly cause retaliation to themselves or women that follow. The research analyzed the framework and identified problematic central areas for women officers working in leadership positions.

Limitations

The qualitative study included 12 participants who work in law enforcement. The interviews were face-to-face. One of the limitations of this study was that some women-imposed barriers to themselves or other participants. I discovered that some participants believed inexperienced officers should have a required amount of longevity before supervisory consideration. For example, if a candidate decided to apply for a sergeant’s

position, she should have the previous supervisory experience. However, some respondents did not feel this way about male officers.

Another limitation was that the participants' hiring, academy, and promotional experiences were not aligned. There is a gap in years of service; therefore, some of the participants did not experience the same barriers. Limitations placed on women officers came from women themselves, which did not help break the glass ceiling.

Additionally, at no time did I influence the thoughts or contribute any comments to any participant. The uploaded transcripts and data files are accessible only to the researcher and are confidential for five years. I discovered that some of the supervisors waited several years before applying for high-ranking positions due to many organizational barriers. There was limited research on women in law enforcement at the upper-administration level, such as directors and CEOs. Aside from my research, there were no collective studies conducted on sergeants to chiefs of police.

Recommendations

This section provides suggestions for new strategies and tactics that can assist with hiring promotion procedures for women. All 12 participants provided insight on how to improve internal barriers for women. One of the participants suggested that law enforcement offices should set up reliable methods for enlisting women into the profession by making it appealing. I concluded that the representation of women is on a smaller scale than male officers. Law enforcement Television shows do not do female officers justice because they often depict an inaccurate picture of women in law

enforcement and expectations of them. A prescription that I suggest is that departments should pair new and senior officers together. Pairing both parties is beneficial because they can learn from each other. Hiring recruits offer a different perspective, new ideas, and help the agency to grow. By promoting current employees into mentoring positions provides recruits with an abundance of knowledge and experience from senior officers who are familiar with the organization's needs and goals. The imperative novice is that officers are partnered with experienced trainers to ensure quality training. Another participant suggested that experienced officers should be more proactive, progressively friendly, and less challenging. Also, a reliable support system during shift changes, meetings, and mentorship would help reduce discrimination.

I discovered that expanding representation and diversity in the workplace for career advancement, acceptance, and acknowledgment of women officers, such as skills, education, aptitudes, widen their search when looking for the right people to lead, and experience offers more opportunities and shows support to minimize job-related barriers. Organizations can use equality planning to increase diversity. The recommendations are distinguished to the correlation of race and gender contrasts as mirror impressions of the community. The findings in this section were relevant to the study because they provided proposals for law implementation. A recommendation for future research is to expand to retired supervisors, to broaden the knowledge of unbalanced treatment during the initial phase (i.e., application process), to executive levels within their departments. Second, a research recommendation is to secure equality for men and women's gender roles and to

address deficits towards the lack of assistance for single parents. The hope for this specific study was that law enforcement departments could use the results to make others aware of the negative stereotypes about women and for others to grasp how difficult it is to overcome those stereotypes and the glass ceiling. I recommend that agencies provide resources to single parents for childcare assistance. The results of this study suggested that agencies should examine their employees' perceptions of the work environment and how positive/negative attitudes can impact the assertiveness of women.

Implications

Future implications are important regarding women leadership, but it extends beyond gender diversity. The first objective of companies should be to carefully examine their applicants thoroughly for future promotions and utilize essential practices to recognize diversified leadership behaviors within the entire organization. It is necessary, for example, that the criteria for career advancement procedures should include measuring a person's skills as well as their technical abilities. To achieve this goal and minimize stereotypes in the workplace, the administration must assess critical challenges and strategies. Constant observation of their staff's profiles and current leaders will aid them in identifying potential growth or deficits that may surface. This process is imperative because leaders are developed and not born. It is essential to understand that these individuals evolve and are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. To assist employees in developing the skills to become their better selves, the implementation of leadership training programs should have a profound impact that will lead them to evolve

in practices and preferences. Mentoring programs are beneficial to this fieldwork. At the initial phase of training, cadets are dependent on the experience and knowledge of the trainers. Implementing mentoring programs during an officer's training, post academy, and long-term support can reduce attrition rates and a free environment. One way to ensure quality outcomes is by preparing men and women for a leadership role in the future, and companies must have guidelines that illustrate leadership behaviors and administrative consequences for misconduct issues. The most significant future implication that can potentially affect an organization is biological assumptions (Oakley, 2000) that rest upon the idea that women and men are not equal in terms of thinking, and men devalue women. Researchers who investigated the Theoretical Advocacy Framework of this assumption found that male leaders naturally possess leadership qualities, values, and often, these are deficiencies of women. My research led me to conclude that with the possibilities of women increasing leadership roles, they are mitigating barriers every day. These assumptions suggest that lines of discourse are causing organizations to change their traditional masculine styles of leadership. This new perspective opens new channels for significant implications for further research.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the lived experiences of women in law enforcement and their leadership skills. The researcher wanted to understand the perception of women who were high-ranking officers and conducted face-to-face interviews with 12 participants. The participants were selected based on the

current supervising positions, (sergeants to majors). The researcher asked the participants about any barriers or obstacles that may have slowed down their progression to a higher rank. The sample was chosen based on the participants' experience and knowledge.

The research subject matter was about high-ranking women in leadership positions in law enforcement and their journeys to achieve their status. However, the point I wanted readers to understand was that women leaders are often inexplicitly resented. In law enforcement, there is a big problem that the administration should come to terms with, whether it includes the masses or a small group. I read several literature reviews that covered the same topic, and their findings were inescapable and pervasive throughout many organizations. The literature review provided adequate proof that bias and discrimination do exist. The research on this issue solidified what I believed about the misrepresentation of women in leadership in the workplace. The findings solidified how some perceive women's leadership in the workplace. The topic that bothered me the most was that men firmly believe that women are not built for leaders because we are too emotional or that men make better leaders, and depending on the occupation, women should not be supervisors. However, some women adopted the same erroneous attitudes toward women. While this is the attitude of most companies, these dispositions illustrate how things are pushed aside or swept under the proverbial rug. I found that more women were too afraid and intimidated to apply for executive positions because they were made to believe law enforcement work was for men. These same women recognized that there was a lack of women leaders in the workplace yet chose not to make waves. The hope is

that women take the initiative in their respective workplaces. Women who keep issues hidden and do not wish to raise trouble should not expect a paradigm shift; thus, the problem will remain intact. With a tenacious drive, with accomplishments through passion, perseverance, determination, a person can achieve their success. If a person is looking to be a leader, it is about respect, the choices you make, and integrity. A powerful and strong woman must believe that she is everyone's equal, no one's superior. Women must show bravery, be more confident, and competitive. I encourage women to look at obstacles as feedback and opportunities because it is about being at the right place at the right time. If a person doesn't make themselves available, then they will be forgotten. A climb up the corporate ladder is not without challenges, but I hope for women that it gets better.

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Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Flyer

Research Study Participants Needed!!!

- **Title:** Women leadership in law enforcement among Sergeants, Captains, and Majors.
- **Purpose:** A qualitative study about women in law enforcement experiences, leadership, and their journey ascending to their ranking positions.
- **Data Collection:** All data will be collected through interviews. All participants will remain anonymous (no names will be required) and their identity will be kept confidential. Each participant will be asked a series of questions and to further elaborate on their experiences with the Police department. All information will be in a secure and safe where only I will have access to it.

****The study will address women in high-ranking positions, and a narrative approach is applicable for this research as the women explain their life experiences. The rationalization for this study is that it will provide an in-depth and meaningful collection of narratives based on the experiences of female officers. This study will attempt to implement change to increase more women in the law enforcement field and highlight the need for more women in positions of leaders. This research aims to make a profound social impact by highlighting women in leadership. Insert appendix here. Appendices are ordered with letters rather than numbers. If there is but one appendix, label it Appendix, followed by the title, with no letter designation.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. Tell me what interested you in becoming a law enforcement officers.
(Probes: Tell me about your training experience.)
2. Describe your relationships with other cadets while in the academy.
3. Tell me about the reception of your male and female co-workers:
4. Describe how this career has changed you.
5. Tell me about your relationship with your supervisors.
6. Can you describe a time where you had to complain about a co-worker?
(Probes: How was the relationship like between you and that person?)
7. Tell me about your overall experience working as law enforcement officers.
8. Take me through your journey from a patrol officer to your current position.
9. Tell me about your current role.
10. Tell me about the struggles of obtaining your ranking positions and maintaining them.
11. Tell me about a time where you felt discriminated against because of sex or ethnicity.
(Probes: How did you handle this with your supervisors?)
12. If the respondent is married or has children: Tell me about the struggles of balancing family life and your current position.
13. Provide your explanation of leadership.
14. Tell me about some of the issues you believe women face moving up the career ladder.

15. What is the toughest part of being a woman working in a career that is considered a male-dominated field?

(Probes: How do you feel about the “glass ceiling,” such as, if you believe as a woman there are limitations their success? Describe if you think sex hindered you from previous positions you applied to.)
16. Describe how the men in your department perceive you as their leader.
17. Describe a time where you felt some of your subordinates didn’t respect your rank because of your sex?
18. Regarding the hiring and promotional selection, what areas do you believe improvements can be made to promote more women?
19. What is your perception of the lack of females as field training officers?
20. Describe your perception of the lack of females in the position as a police chief)?

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

Dear _____,

My name is Latoya D. Mills, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Public Policy and Administration Department at Walden University. The reason I am contacting you is that I am conducting a study to explore the current issues facing women when trying to obtain leadership positions within law enforcement agencies, such as Sergeants, Lieutenants, Captains, and higher. This research will focus on the challenges the women in Dougherty and Dekalb County, GA police department faced while obtaining their current positions. I have selected your department based on how your county has grown over the years. I was interested in smaller counties that have many women who hold high-ranking positions. I obtained your name and contact information through a personal and public source such as your website. I am currently seeking volunteers to participate in this research study. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in one 30-minute personal interview that takes place in a safe and private location of your choice. The researcher can obtain a conference room at a local library if you prefer. The interview comprises of several semi-structured questions and will include follow up questions. Sample questions include:

- Let's begin with you telling me about yourself:
- Tell me what interested you in becoming a law enforcement officers:
- Tell me about your training experience:

Your participation is voluntary. If you decide now that you are willing to participate, you can change your mind later. If you want to stop all involvement, you can. The study poses no risk to your safety and wellbeing. Throughout the data collection process and dissertation, your identity will remain anonymous, including your name and job description. You will be asked to sign a consent form before participating in the study and only I will know your personal information.

The study benefits current and potential women who are interested in ascending into higher leadership positions and for those women who are interested in becoming Law Enforcement Officers, with the desire to exponentiate their career advancement as a high-ranking officer in a male-dominated field.

If you are willing to be a participant in this study or have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or phone. You will receive a follow-up call in a few weeks inquiring about your participation in the study. If you prefer to receive further communication regarding this research study, please email me at latoya.mills@waldenu.edu and let me know.

Appendix D: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study about Women Leaders in Law Enforcement, such as Sergeants to Majors. The researcher is inviting key officials of Dekalb and Dougherty County police departments to participate in the study. I obtained your name and contact information through your administration department. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Latoya D. Mills, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. I will be using face-to-face interviews because this method builds rapport, provides a relaxing relationship environment with hopes the interviewee feels comfortable to speak more freely in her own personal and intimate setting.

Background Information:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the current issues facing women when trying to obtain leadership positions within law enforcement agencies, such as Sergeants, Lieutenants, Captains, and higher. This research will focus on the challenges the women in Dougherty and Dekalb County, GA police department faced while obtaining their current positions.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to:

- Participate in a 60-minute interview at a safe and private location of your choice. My research is extensive, and the questions will require detailed information on your journey. The researcher can obtain a conference room at the local library if you prefer.
 - The interview will be recorded on the digital recording device.
 - Transcripts of the meeting will be provided to you.

Here are some sample questions:

- Let’s begin with you telling me about yourself:
- Tell me what interested you in becoming a law enforcement officer:
- Tell me about your training experience:

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is optional. No compensation will be provided for your involvement in the research. You are free to accept or turn down the invitation. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you choose to be in the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this study would not pose a threat to your safety or well being.

The study benefits current and potential women who are interested in ascending into higher leadership positions and for those women who are interested in becoming Law

Enforcement Officers, with the desire to exponentiate their career advancement as a high-ranking officer in male-dominated field. Being interviewed for the amount stated above, with interview questions filled with detailed questions. You may become fatigued or uncomfortable with the process. If this should happen, you have the right to end the interview at any time.

Privacy:

Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as name and job title, also will not be shared.

The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project. Data acquired through the interview process will be kept on a password protected external hard drive. Data will be kept for at least five years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email at latoya.mills@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call the Research Participant Advocate at my university at 612-312-

1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **03-07-19-0639176** and it expires on

March 6th, 2020.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Obtaining Your Consent:

If you feel you understand the study well enough to decide, please indicate your consent by signing below.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature
