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Officer Perceptions on Armed Campuses

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and Criminology

by
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December 2018

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Keywords: Campus Security, Armed Campuses, Perceptions, Concealed Carry

ABSTRACT

Campus: Security Perceptions on Armed Campuses

by

Paul Steven Perry

This research was intended to investigate the perceptions of firearm policies and the views held by campus security personnel regarding student or teacher carry on campus. The purpose of the interviews was to investigate campus security officer's perceptions and how they differ based upon individual belief systems. The goal, therefore, was to understand how their perspectives on campus carry could impact interactions with students and faculty. Exploring a representative sample of current firearm policies, both on and off campus, established a framework that exposed the opinions of campus security personnel and gave some insight into the potential impact that might occur from implementing various policies. As a result, the coverage of these materials was pivotal regarding firearm policy and to show how unique perspectives can develop and create a better understanding of campus policing. This was especially true given the dearth of research into violence on campuses and the perspective of individuals that are tasked with the protection of the institutes.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Debate

There has been a history of debate concerning gun policy in the United States of America. The wide spectrum of views is evidenced by the varying gun policies from state to state and trumpeted by their respective liberal and conservative political philosophies. Fueled by shootings on high school and college campuses, the debate over whether college students and professors should be allowed to carry firearms on campus has been highly publicized recently. In Tennessee, the issue has been brought to the forefront with new legislation that allows for armed professors and instructors in classrooms (provided that they meet certain requirements). As a result, information on how campus security officers feel about an armed campus needs to be more thoroughly studied and understood. By understanding the varying perspectives of campus security officers towards campus carry, either by students or professors, better policy can be developed for the future. Thus, review of prior research regarding campus carry perspectives by high ranking police (Bartula & Bowen, 2015) and campus security directors (Hosking, 2014) can create a bedrock for this study. Therefore, outlining the lack of research regarding campus security's perspectives on campus carry calls for more research into violence on college campuses. Furthermore, understanding the perspectives of individuals that are tasked with maintaining a safe and functional learning environment could help with focusing future research.

Problem & Purpose Statement

This research was intended to investigate the perceptions of firearm policies and the views of campus security in regard to students or teachers carrying firearms on campus. The reason for the research was the lack of knowledge on the beliefs and perceptions held by

frontline security personnel. The broader research focused on firearm use by civilians in regard to right-to-carry laws and the implications of increased gun ownership in conjunction with mental illness, suicide, binge drinking, and domestic violence that has been studied extensively in conjunction with campus carry. The purpose of this study was to explore, describe, and explain rationales for the opinions of those that are charged with the protection of college campuses. This study used a mixed method research design, utilizing semi-structured, open-ended interview questions with campus police officers at East Tennessee State University. The study followed an interpretative phenomenological analysis similar to Hosking's study (2014) for the qualitative method of inquiry to guide data analysis (Smith, 2012). Following an interpretative phenomenological design, the data analysis examined campus police officer responses for patterns, trends, and themes that existed within the collected data. The study's analysis used personal experience and details derived from the campus police officers' responses to describe the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of participants in the form of themes. These themes were reinforced with a qualitative analysis of the data acquired.

The study focused on a single campus in Northeast Tennessee and interviewed campus security about general beliefs, views of firearms on campus, personal views of firearms, and the reasoning behind said views. Limitations of the study included the limited generalization of any findings to the population of Tennessee campus security due to the limited study population. Another limiting factor was the minute amount of prior research on campus security perceptions regarding armed campus carry and violence on campus. As a result, the purpose of each interview was to investigate the officer's perceptions and how they may differ based upon individual belief systems. The goal was to understand the opinions that campus security officers held and how their perspectives might impact interactions with students and teachers if they

chose to carry a firearm. In the coverage of materials that are pivotal to firearm policy, a representative sample of current firearm policies, both on and off campus, can give perspective on the issue. A foundation for the current study is solidified from discussing federal law through state law and their impact on college campuses in conjunction with similar prior research.

Definition of Terms

East Tennessee State University uses particular definitions for firearm policy to maintain safe, educational, and working environments for both students and employees. These policy definitions established by ETSU are listed below in Table 1. (East Tennessee State University, 2017)

Table 1: *Definitions* (East Tennessee State University, 2017)

Carry	means to physically transport a firearm or other weapon on or about the body.
Concealed	means not visible to ordinary observation.
Employee	means all faculty, executive, administrative, professional and support staff employed in the service of and whose compensation is paid by East Tennessee State University. "Employee" does not include independent contractors who provide goods or services to the institution or student workers as defined in TBR Policy 5:01:01:00.
Full-time Employee	includes all faculty, executive, administrative, professional and support staff who are employed on a full-time basis by ETSU, but does NOT include a person who is enrolled as a student at ETSU, regardless of whether the person is also an employee. A full-time employee is one who has a regular work week of at least 37.5 hours, or who is scheduled to carry a full teaching load or its equivalent. This includes full-time modified fiscal year (MODFY) employees, temporary employees and term appointees who have a regular work week of at least 37.5 hours or are scheduled to carry a full teaching load or its equivalent. "Full-time Employee" does NOT include independent contractors who provide goods or services to the institution. For example, if an institution contracts for food services, the contractor's employees are NOT allowed to carry a handgun on the premises, even if they work on the premises full time.

Enrolled as a Student	as used in the definition of "Full-time Employee" means to be registered for an academic offering at ETSU, whether or not the academic offering is offered for credit or is not for credit.
Firearm	means any weapon designed, made or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or any device readily convertible to that use.
Handgun	means any firearm with a barrel length of less than twelve inches (12") that is designed, made or adapted to be fired with one (1) hand.
Institution Property	means all land, ground, structures, and any other real property owned, operated or controlled by ETSU
Motor Vehicle	means a motor vehicle as defined in T.C.A. § 55-1-103.
On or About the Person	means carried concealed on the person or carried concealed in a handbag, briefcase or other carrying case that remains within an arm's reach of the person at all times.
Parking Area	means property provided by ETSU for the purpose of permitting employees, students, or invitees to park motor vehicles.
Possess	means either: (1) direct physical control over a firearm or other weapon at a given time; or (2) the power and intention at any given time to exercise dominion and control over a firearm or other weapon. Examples of possessing a firearm or other weapon include, without limitation, the presence of a firearm or other weapon on or about the person of the employee or in the employee's motor vehicle, desk, lunch box, locker, tool kit, bag, purse, cabinet, or office.
Student	means any person who is admitted and/or registered for study at ETSU for the current academic period. This shall include any period of time following admission and/or registration, but preceding the start of classes for any academic period. It will also include any period which follows the end of an academic period through the last day for registration for the succeeding academic period, and during any period while the student is under suspension from the institution.
Valid Handgun Carry Permit	means a current handgun carry permit issued by the State of Tennessee under T.C.A. §39-17-1351 or issued by another state that has been given reciprocity under T.C.A. §39-17-1351(r).
Weapon	means firearm; explosive; explosive weapon; bowie knife; hawk bill knife; ice pick; dagger; slingshot; leaded cane; switchblade knife; blackjack; metal knuckles; razors and razor blades, except those used solely for personal shaving; any sharp pointed or edged instrument, except unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food instruction and maintenance; or any other weapon of like kind,

not used solely for instructional or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes.

Research Questions

All research must be guided by focused and defined research questions. This study was guided by the following research questions (Table 2):

Table 2: *Research Questions*

Research Q1:	Does carrying a firearm daily off duty have a differential impact on campus police perceptions of campus carry?
Research Q2:	Does the age of a campus police officers have a differential impact on campus police perceptions on campus carry?
Research Q3:	Does the level of education have a differential impact on the Campus police officer's perceptions on campus carry?
Research Q4:	Does prior police officer experience have a differential impact on perceptions campus police have on campus carry?
Research Q5:	Do supervisory positions as a campus police officer have a differential impact on perceptions on campus carry?

Limitations

In understanding this study, one must remain cautious of reductionism. In applying the findings, one simple answer does not respond to the complex question of why campus police officers either support or do not support campus carry. There is not a one-factor answer for the dispositions for or against the different types of armed campuses. There are biases against open and concealed carry that relate back to the larger macro-level problem. Although the relationship

between campus police officers' perceptions and campus carry is multivariate, there are multiple independent variables that affect each individual officer's perceptions. The small sample size of ETSU campus police limits the applicability of the study to the wider population, however, the information gained can help to construct directed future research and provide information in regard to individual officers to help formulate future policies.

Since this study does not follow a true experimental design relying on evidence of temporal order causality cannot be established. There is no pre-test and post-test to establish temporal order in conjunction with the interview for what variables affect perceptions. Though the study does not allow for a change to be observed, one way to combat the problem is to repeat this study's design in the future when direct correlation can be controlled. This would establish results that are not spurious. The external validity of the small sample size of ETSU campus police limits the applicability of the study to the wider population.

On the contrary, the study has strength in terms of face validity. Many of the variables, such as age, age when first fired a firearm, level of education, prior work experience, birth place, as well as gun ownership are all self-explanatory in their strengthening of facial validity. These variables allow for their impact on individual campus police officers to be evaluated more easily. Furthermore, the reasonable measurement and facial validity of the variables allows the variables to explain a factor thoroughly by correlation. The variables that focus on criterion-related validity, such as number of officers, student enrollment, and local gun ownership, can be used to display predictive variables regarding individual officer's predispositions toward campus carry. Though criterion-related validity can only be possible if spuriousness is controlled for with causality. Construct validity is created by different variables, such as prior military experience, prior police experience, and campus carry, which correlate to each other by the link to gun

ownership. External validity examines the current sample to see if it is truly representative of the larger population in the perspectives of police officers on open and concealed carry. There are mixed results dependent upon geographical location on support for open or concealed carry in regard to traditional police. Since campus police officers are modeled after the local police, inferences can be made upon their disposition, matching local officers' opinions of concealed carry (Ferrandino, 2012).

Summary

The debate regarding whether firearms should be allowed on college campuses revolves around varying views about civilian use of a firearms. Within the civilian firearm debate is the discussion of the ability of a legally armed person to successfully use a weapon to prevent or stop a criminal act, versus the likelihood that they themselves may use it in a criminal capacity. Although, the larger gun debate typically focuses on, campus security directors, faculty or student's beliefs pertaining to the impact of firearms on campus. This study was intended to understand how the belief systems of campus police influence their perspective on campus carry. Very few studies have focused on the views of campus police and their perceptions of the effects of firearms on college campuses (Bartula & Bowen, 2015; Hosking, 2014).

Also, college-aged individuals are at a greater risk of violence, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, suicide attempts, and overall risky behaviors. These dangers already exist on college campuses without the introduction of firearms that increase the risk of lethality in many instances. Even if firearms have a reduction effect on rape and mass shootings, would the cumulative effect of firearms on college campuses be positive? As an added note, it is hard to calculate the actual data regarding self-defense firearm use reports, because interpersonal altercations can be exceedingly

subjective (Lott, 2010). However, this study focused only on the perceptions of those that risk their lives for the safety of the community and their college campus, campus security.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Even though campus police would be among the most-impacted, there has been little research about campus police perceptions on campus carry. Most modern college campuses have staffed campus police on location to handle emergency situations (McElreath, et al., 2013). As such, there is a need for a better understanding about police agencies' perceptions towards campus carry. Without understanding campus police officers' perceptions, precise policy implementation is detrimentally impacted. To understand campus police and possible perceptions, a macro-level explanation on firearm regulation funnels to individual perceptions based upon their experiences and belief system. It is possible that individual perceptions of campus police officers could reflect the larger campus police belief system that mirror those of the larger law enforcement and gun owner populations.

Gun Policy Scope

The variations in policy regarding gun legislation usually follow one of three varying perspectives: making firearms illegal, unregulated policy, or limited regulation. These different stances can vary depending on pro-gun or anti-gun ideology. Kleck and Gertz (1998) conducted a study that found there were 16.8 million adults in the United States that carry a gun. This total included those who carried on their person or vehicle. These numbers are in conjunction with Jang, Dierenfelt and Lee (2014) who presented further research that showed 2.7 million Americans carry a firearm daily. Furthermore, in a study by Winkler (2011), there are about 300 million firearms owned by civilians in America, or roughly one firearm per person.

Firearm laws are multi-faceted and vary from state to state, but firearm policies are also impacted by the federal government. In theory federal law is supposed to be impartial and track the intent of the Founding Fathers as set forth in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The independence of the individual is reflected in two Supreme Court decisions: *District of Columbia v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago*. These two court cases declared that federal and state governments must respect the Second Amendment of the Constitution (Cole & Gertz, 2013).

In the United States laws pertaining to firearms may be implemented on the federal, state or local level. Federal law on firearms comes primarily from the Gun Control Act of 1968 and its amendments. Although the federal government could pass sweeping policy, the Gun Control Act of 1968 contains language declaring that Congress does not intend for federal firearm laws to supersede state firearm laws (18 U.S.C. § 921 et seq). By not expressly trumping state law the federal government ensured its policies acted as a foundation, setting minimum standards instead of maximums (Webster, Donohue III, Klarevas, & McGinty, 2016; 18 U.S.C. § 927).

There has only been one federal gun law that has superseded state level and that is the Gun Free School Zones Act that prohibits the carrying of firearms in school zones (18 U.S.C. § 922 (q)). The Act has certain exclusions, however, based upon the definition of schools which are defined as “elementary or secondary education, as determined under state law” (18 U.S.C. § 921 (a) (26)). Colleges and universities, therefore, are not covered under federal law prohibiting firearms. Even though the requirements federal government has enacted some legislation, state law has the highest degree of influence on firearm policy that affects gun owners. Most laws regulating firearms are produced at the state level. Every state currently permits the carrying and ownership of firearms in some situations and establish some criteria for a lawful firearm owner

to apply for a carry permit. Some states have stricter policies, but no state currently outlaws firearm ownership.

Gun laws in America have started to move toward a more lenient form of gun control. For example, there is proposed legislation called the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (H.R.38, 2017) that would allow citizens that legally meet the requirements in their home state to carry a firearm in any state. A universal carry permit would create greater flow of armed citizens, instead of each state deciding if nonresident citizens meet their state requirements. Currently, a law creating continental carry has been proposed, called the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (H.R.38, 2017).

The majority of gun laws at the state levels are broken into four categories: 1) gun bans on certain variants; 2) restrictions on how to buy and sell; 3) punishment enhancement; and 4) ownership/carry restrictions. At the regional level, some localities have created their own firearm laws that differ from the state level. Thus, many states have created firearm laws preventing localities from regulating some particular forms of firearm law. However, more states each year are decreasing regulation and allowing citizens to keep firearms nearby, such as Tennessee passing law to allow non-enrolled citizens without a license to keep firearms in private vehicles (Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1307). Furthermore, the state of Tennessee has passed legislation to allow full-time employees of institutions of higher learning to carry on college campuses (Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1309; Cole & Gertz, 2013).

Tennessee State Campus Carry Policy

In 2016, the Tennessee legislature amended Tennessee Code Annotated §39-17-1309 to permit certain individuals to carry handguns on the property of certain postsecondary

institutions. The amendment allows for authorized employees “to carry on property owned, operated, or controlled by the public institution of higher education at which the employee is employed” (Tenn. Code Ann. §39-17-1309, 2016). The statute has several prerequisites that must be met before an authorized employee can carry at an institution of higher education: 1) provide written notice to law enforcement; and 2) possess a carry permit. In addition, authorized employees that wish to carry may be required to take an extra training course decided by the individual institution of higher education. There are still locations, specified by the statute, that even authorized employees are not allowed to carry at: school-sponsored events, meetings regarding disciplinary matters, tenure meetings, medical facilities, and any place prohibited by federal law. Also, any employee that is enrolled as a student, even if they are a full-time employee, may not carry on campus (Tenn. Code Ann. §39-17-1309, 2016).

East Tennessee State University Policy

East Tennessee State University follows federal and Tennessee state law regarding campus carry with very few differences. Overall, firearm carrying is generally prohibited at ETSU, except as provided in campus policy outlined by T.C.A. §39-17-1309. These exceptions include full-time employees with a valid carry permit, individual use for instructional or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes, civil officers in the discharge of their duties, United States military personnel in the discharge of their duties, and post-certified, active duty law enforcement officers on or off duty. Although full-time employees may carry, a part-time employee of ETSU may not carry or possess a firearm on campus. Fulltime employees who do wish to carry on school grounds must apply to the ETSU Department of Public Safety in person. Any full-time employee who elects to carry a firearm must always have their handgun permit in

their immediate possession and when provide it upon demand by a law enforcement official.
(East Tennessee State University, 2017)

Full-time employees of ETSU who possess a carry permit and are not enrolled as students are able to apply to carry on campus. Handguns are not allowed at the University School, the veterans campus, the Baslar Center for Physical Activity, child care facilities, and all health care facilities. Full-time employees that do carry are required to ensure that the firearm is not visible by ordinary observation. Furthermore, the firearm must remain on or near their person, within arm's reach at all times. Any full-time employee who does carry on campus is not eligible for workers compensation for injuries resulting from carrying or use of a handgun and is not exempt from personal liability. (Department of Public Safety, 2017)

Variance in United States

The larger gun debate impacts the discussion on smaller, but equally important topics, such as college campus carry. Some states take a neutral stance, leaving the policy in regard to campus carry in the hands of individual schools. Therefore, many states have turned the decision regarding campus carry over to individual administrators, which can lead to bias based upon individual perceptions. Policy makers at the university normally create their particular university's policy instead of state law banning firearms on campus. These university policy makers are often influenced by school organizations either in favor or against firearms on campus. Which has resulted in a movement to allow concealed carry permit holders to have the freedom to carry on school campuses (Armed Campuses, 2017).

In recent years, discussion of allowing firearms on college campuses has increased dramatically. Several different state legislatures have debated allowing students, faculty and even

visitors who have concealed carry permits to be armed on college campuses. In certain states, legal battles in the state legislature have already taken place over allowing firearms on campus. The core of the argument on allowing firearms on college campuses is whether institutions of higher learning are essentially different from the larger society and have the authority to prohibit firearms on college campuses. A complicating factor is that society's perceptions on firearm possession has changed over the previous decades.

In recent years the pendulum of public opinion has shifted in favor of gun ownership. For over two decades, gun control typically outweighed gun rights, however, that changed in 2014 (PEW Research Center, 2016). PEW Research Center asked the question: "What do you think is more important—to protect the rights of Americans to own firearms or to control gun ownership?" In 2014, fifty-two percent of survey participants supported protecting the rights of Americans to own firearms. In comparison, forty-six percent of surveyed participants said gun control was more important. The following year, PEW research reported that opinion supporting the rights of gun ownership had decreased to forty-seven percent and support for gun control increased to fifty percent. The following year, 2016, saw support swing back again in favor of the rights of gun ownership at fifty-two percent to forty-seven percent for gun control. With opinion on gun control swinging back and forth, the impact on college campus must be expected (PEW Research Center, 2016).

Today's gun policy is trending towards a more lenient position, thereby allowing for greater numbers of carry licenses, as well as allowing open carry by citizens if they are not a felon and meet the state standards. This movement away from stricter gun laws has resulted in college campuses allowing campus carry. A few states explicitly allow concealed campus carry by law: Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Texas and Tennessee. Several states, meanwhile, allow campus

carry but leave the choice of campus carry in the hands of individual school policy makers: Oregon, Kansas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Delaware, Maryland, and Wisconsin. On the other hand, ten states allow concealed firearms only in locked cars in parking lots: North Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Ohio. Seventeen states allow schools to decide gun policy: Washington, Nevada, Arizona, Montana, South Dakota, Iowa, Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Vermont, Alaska, Alabama, Connecticut, Hawaii, and Maine. The remaining ten states ban campus carry in all forms: California, New Mexico, Wyoming, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Louisiana. Even with many states legally allowing some form of carry on college campuses, for the most part, college campuses are still one place where the majority of firearms licenses are invalid (Armed Campuses, 2017).

Gun Law Effect

The proposed problems of campus carry include: increased violence on campus, increased degree of violence, increased chance of death through suicide and homicide, more interpersonal conflicts and/or difficulty expressing oneself without fear in the classroom. The proposition that decreased restrictions of firearms on college campuses would increase crime has not been studied enough to be considered factual, since there is limited research. There has been conflicting research on the effects of legal concealed carry by individual civilians off campus. Lott and Mustard (1997) found that increased concealed carry deters violent crime. Donhue and Aryes (2003) disagreed, stating that the data used by Lott and Mustard was faulty considering its limitations. Thus, there is no research to reflect on concealed carry increasing or decreasing crime in the general population without significant limitations.

Increases in the number of concealed carry permits, even when not located on college campuses, have not had a positive effect or shown a deterrent effect on violence rates (Kovandzic & Marvell, 2003). There are no substantial measurable crime deterrence statistics, yet on an individual level, it decreases the chance of harm coming to the potential victim if they or their attackers are armed. There is also an implied psychological effect from carrying a concealed firearm (Kovandzic & Marvell, 2003).

In conjunction with firearm carrying, Plassmann and Tideman (2001) presented a study on the analysis of the effects of right-to-carry laws in ten different states: Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia with controls on geographical location to reduce traditional biases. The research utilized data acquired from 1977 to 1992, with results that indicated reductions in certain types of crimes in those states with lenient carry laws. For example, murders, rapes, and robberies decreased. Other criminal activity, however, such as property crimes increased.

A limitation of the study found that the effects of concealed carry laws differed across crime category, state, and historical time. Thus, the impact of differing variables reduced the standardization and application of the findings onto other states. One proposed rationale behind the variance in crime is the differing cultures and stereotypes associated with crime reporting. This limitation of the study, in regards to criminal reporting, decreases the applicability of the findings even though the study itself showed a significant deterrent effect on the number of reported murders, rapes, and robberies. (Plassmann, & Tideman, 2001)

Legislatures have passed many laws aimed at curtailing crime that are oftentimes well thought out and well-intentioned. On occasion, however, laws are rushed through in a knee-jerk

reaction to moral panics. Legislators also use scare tactics to frighten the public into believing that there is a need for new policy when there is actually no credible information or statistics to show that the new policy will work. Moral panics and scare tactics have been used in various ways and have created different policies throughout the United States (Cole & Gertz, 2013).

In response to recent mass shootings in the United States, gun control advocates employed different methods to combat firearm violence such as stricter laws aimed at reducing firearm ownership. Studies conducted by Kleck and Patterson (1993), however, indicate that there is no reduction in crime from methods such as increased waiting periods and stricter gun registration. Furthermore, sentencing enhancement for committing a crime with a firearm has also been found to be unsuccessful (Kleck & Patterson, 1993). When gun control is discussed, the majority of the focus is on increasing gun control laws, not on the possible effects of decreasing gun control laws. Although, both should be studied because 32 states have decreased gun control from 1986 to 2010; this allowed for non-criminal adult individuals to acquire permits to carry concealed firearms and acquire firearms (Cole & Gertz, 2013).

College campuses have been a place where firearm possession has been restricted consistently for many years. The two main forms of firearm restrictions on college campuses are the specific prohibition in dorms and living quarters and the prohibition against carrying weapons onto school grounds. States that do not prohibit possession of firearms in dorms and living quarters cite hunting as a student past time in rural areas. The trend of allowing firearms in dorms lasted up until the 1970's and was most often noticed in primarily rural states such as Alaska (Cramer, 2014). One of the main arguments that has been used in limiting firearms in dorms and college living quarters (either on or off campus) has been that university owned housing is not considered to be a home. The reason being that a person who simply rents housing

under the condition of being a student “has no title, interest, or estate in the university owned housing” (Tribble v. State Board of Education, 2011).

In the United Kingdom limiting firearm ownership has been shown to be ineffective in reducing crime, though current policies have heavily focused on gun control. In the United Kingdom, outlawing firearms as a law has already been implemented. In application, restricting firearm ownership has not decreased violent crime. Rather, restricting firearm ownership changes the methodology of how criminals commit crimes. Criminals may use different instruments to threaten or harm individuals. Yet, even with restrictions on firearms, the truly dangerous criminals will still have firearms regardless of the law. The reasoning behind criminals still having access to firearms is the mass number of firearms in circulation in America (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). In an attempt to limit criminals’ access to firearms, new laws restrict law abiding citizens access to firearms going against the desired effect for which the legislation was proposed. With the act of making firearms illegal, it is thought that criminals will not have access to firearms or that it will make it harder for criminals to obtain firearms. This is wishful thinking; studies have shown that criminals usually will find a way to access what tools they desire in order to commit crimes (Kleck, 1997; UCR, 2015). At the core of the argument is that “gun free” zones attract those that wish to do harm on a large scale, and that the perpetrators seek out areas with fewer armed individuals, such as college campuses.

A survey of 417 campus police chiefs conducted in 2008 focused upon perceptions and practices concerning selected issues of firearm violence. Of the campus police chiefs, 75 percent had worked in the criminal justice field for over 21 years. Furthermore, the majority of campus police chiefs, 86 percent, believed that student carry on college campuses would not prevent or lower campus homicide rates. At the time of the study, 97 percent of the campuses prohibited all

firearms on campuses, even though only 32 percent of faculty were regularly trained in what steps to take during an active shooter situation. To further compound the issue, only 30 percent of faculty are trained to know who they should inform and how to identify troubled students. (Thompson, Price, Mrdjenovich, & Khubchandani, 2009)

Reasoning For Harmful Effects

The existence of firearms in conjunction with excessive alcohol use, invulnerable mental state, hormonal changes and disagreements that culminate in fights may well increase homicides at universities. Prior studies have shown that alcohol use has been linked to risky behaviour and poor decision making. Furthermore, research has already established that increased firearms presence directly correlates to an increase in inadvertent firearm deaths (Miller, Azrael, & Hemenway, 2001; Miller, Azrael, Hemenway, & Vriniotis, 2005; Price, Thompson, & Dake, 2004). For each lethal unintentional discharge, there are ten additional individuals injured enough to need treatment in a hospital (Vyrostek, Annet, & Ryan, 2004).

Many university professors believe that if they were to carry a firearm and used it to defend themselves that they might miss and hit another individual by accident (Thompson et al., 2013). Another popular cause of concern is the possibility of being mistakenly be perceived as the “campus shooter” by first responders. The likelihood of being mistakenly identified, even by the police, occurs in eighteen to thirty percent of all police shootings (Aveni, 2003). This happens when an unarmed individual is shot because the police thought they had been armed. With such a high percentage for trained individuals to mistakenly fire, misidentification of the threat would likely occur more often when someone less firearms training than a campus police officer with was trying to stop a shooter.

Campus versus Traditional Policing

There are some differences between traditional policing and campus policing, including the enhanced atmosphere of trust, respect, and the perceived safe shelters associated with being on a college campus. Campus policing is associated with the same law enforcement values as traditional policing but is also known for non-law enforcement interactions as well. Campus police frequently participate in a non-law enforcement capacity at student created events and affairs, such as mentoring and assisting students who are locked out of vehicles. These extra services supplied to college communities are not always found in traditional policing and are what differentiate them, thereby ensuring successful campus policing operation. (Wilson & Wilson, 2011)

During the 2011-2012 school year, sixty-eight percent of the 900 law enforcement agencies serving four-year universities and colleges with 2,500 or more students, employed sworn law enforcement officers. These sworn officers on campuses have full arrest powers granted to them by the state or local government. The number of sworn officers employed by public schools was approximately 92 percent, more than double the percentage at private schools. Sworn campus police officers were authorized to use deadly force (94 percent), OC-spray (94 percent), and a baton (93 percent) if necessary in fulfillment of their official duties.

Furthermore, during the 2011-2012 school year, roughly sixty-six percent of nationwide campuses employed armed officers. Public campuses employed more armed officers at ninety-one percent, while private campuses only employed thirty-six percent. Only eleven percent of agencies that employed only non-sworn officers allowed for them to carry a firearm. Also, in agencies that employed both sworn and non-sworn officers the nonsworn officers were only four percent less likely to carry a firearm in comparison to agencies that only employed non-sworn

officers. The difference in arming non-sworn and sworn officers can be traced to different levels of training, as sworn officers had almost four times more than non-sworn officers. (Reaves, 2015)

Campus policing is roughly modeled after traditional policing and follows many of the same hiring procedures. Campus policing, however, often requires a higher minimum education level. Campus policing usually requires a minimum of a two-year degree and prior experience in similar employment (Bromley & Reaves, 1998). Most campuses conduct mandatory training and background checks that match or exceed their local public counterparts. Campus policing has for many years been found to advance and bear a resemblance to local complements in both structure and procedure (Sloan, 1992).

Campus police officers are usually an after-the-fact publicly observable entity, whose main mission is to deter criminal behavior and maintain societal order. Security and safety on campus is a crucial concern for students, parents and college faculty, since higher academic settings are not immune to acts of violence (Troxal & Doss, 2010). Recent shootings on college campuses such as the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech that killed thirty-three people have helped to bring debate over guns on campus to the forefront. Furthermore, the nature of a college university is to be open to students, parents and the general public. Thus, preserving common order and deterring criminality is often accomplished through compliance and influence as a replacement for open enforcement. (Sheffield, Gregg & Lee, 2016)

Clery Act

The seminal legislation on campus crime is the Clery Act. Originally known as the Campus Security Act, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus

Crime Statistics Act (20 USC § 1092(f)) is the landmark federal law that requires all colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses.

Reports support the notion that there is significantly less crime on college campuses than in the general population. Birnbaum (2013) examined reports of crime on college campuses and compared homicide victimization on college campuses to being struck by lightning. The overall finding was that lethal violence on college campuses is extremely rare. In addition, between 1990-2008, the Secret Service, Office of Education, and Federal Bureau of Investigation compiled and evaluated 272 occurrences of violence on college campuses and found that firearms were used in 54 percent of cases. In addition, other studies found that the majority of the victims had known their assailants and that deadly stranger crime on college campuses is minimal at most. (Bromley & Reaves, 1998; Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010; Hummer, 2004; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011; Sloan, 1992; Patten, Thomas, & Wada, 2013).

Role of Campus Police

The requirements of campus police officers, public safety officers and security officers enacted by state and local legislative bodies are generally unknown by the general public. The majority of states have statutory language defining the position, requirements, powers established, and authority with which the majority of public institutions of higher learning comply (Wilson & Wilson, 2011). Although there are guidelines established for campus law enforcement, many states leave implementation to the individual college's controlling agent (e.g., President, Board of Education) on the exact policies to be implemented. In Tennessee, the

power to control campus carry rests with the state legislature. As a result, the legislation that allows full-time faculty to concealed carry may impact other legal issues on college campuses.

According to Carlan and Lewis (2009), police officers have an above average professionalism attitude in reference to Hall's 1968 Professionalism Scale. Furthermore, college students on track to become police officers hold the opinion that policing is a profession, not just employment (Bumgarner, 2002). The view of increased professionalism in policing references campus police agencies impacting policing policies and practices. The majority of campuses model their police agencies after local, county, and state counterparts regarding arrest powers and law enforcement training. Thus, many views and perspectives held by individual officers may be reflective of traditional police, but the correlation has not been thoroughly researched.

Many modern college campus law enforcement agencies provide the same services and occasionally more than traditional police agencies. Campus police are often either viewed as a necessary evil or as a positive addition to the community that reduces crime (Grant, 1993). Many college campuses are vast geographical areas thus making it inherently harder to provide security (Newman, 1996). Despite this handicap, campus police are still first responders who are responsible for investigating all campus-related crime, including sexual assaults, suspicious persons, vehicle theft, fights, and weapon offenses (Wilson & Wilson, 2011). Campus policing has changed overtime from custodial guard-type, which used to be the majority of campus policing, to dealing with increased sexual assaults, thefts and homicides.

The decision to use deadly force is a topic that all police officers take seriously, regardless of whether they are community law enforcement or campus police. The ability to decide, such as in an active shooter scenario, occurs in a chaotic high stress environment and normally ends in a matter of minutes, if not seconds (Engel & Smith, 2009). Campus police and

police officers know this and understand that civilians trying to use a firearm would have to evaluate the situation in seconds, create a positive line of fire, maintain accuracy, and possibly take a life. Because all these decisions and actions occur while in pandemonium, officers have extensive training for just these situations. (Webster et al., 2016)

Campus police and police officers often deal with high stress/high threat environments, such as: armed robberies, traffic stops, home/dorm invasions, drunk and disorderly, suspicious circumstances and etcetera. To believe that students, faculty or any civilian could shoot as accurately as a police officer with all their training in high stress environment is questionable. Furthermore, when officers finally reach the scene of an active shooter, how are they to differentiate between the shooter or a legal carry permit holder. (Webster et al., 2016)

The issue of firearms on college campuses is more complex, however, than just active shooter scenarios. Although active shooters do occur on college campuses, they are rarely the cause of death in such environments (Greenberg, 2007). A campus police officer is far more likely to encounter a firearm in the context of a disorderly conduct, substance abuse, alcohol abuse, suicide, intimate partner violence, grade disputes, trespassing, and fights. These different events deserve more focus in any discussion on firearms because responses will change when there could be firearms present on college campuses. (Webster et al., 2016)

The exact number of firearms that could be present in the future on college campus is impossible to predict, if campus carry was passed (Bouffard, Nobles, Wells & Cavanaugh, 2012). Logically there would be an increase in the number of firearms. This increase could trigger officers to take extra precautions that would change the dynamic on college campuses between campus police and those they are charged with protecting. Campus police would shift

their perception and assume there might be a weapon present, especially in situations that involve a group or large crowd.

The majority of campus police often respond to incidents with limited information. Incidents such as emergency call hang-ups, alarm calls and suspicious persons are normally not dangerous, but they can be resulting in the loss of life. Firearms on college campuses will change campus police tactics, increase the seriousness of most calls, and change how they respond to emergency calls. These tactical changes could include greater reliance on back up which would reduce response time. Furthermore, firearms on campuses could increase the level of aggression used by campus police to resolve threats. These same problems could impact local police when they are asked to assist with a situation on college campuses. As a result, the increased presence of firearms on college campuses could increase the risk of shootings by campus police or local police. (Webster et al., 2016)

ETSU Public Safety Officers

Campus security officers at ETSU are called public safety officers and are commissioned in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-7-118, and the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Policy No. 5:01:07:00 (Department of Public Safety, 2017). These commissioned public safety officers are granted full police powers by the state and are trained with all the regulations of the Tennessee Board of Regents. ETSU public safety officers are certified first responders and firemen for any campus emergencies. These certifications and powers mean that public safety officers have authority on all college campus facilities and roads connected to the university. (Department of Public Safety, 2017)

Individual Perspective

Gun policy differs from state to state and is constantly evolving, based upon many different variables and circumstances. Individual views on firearms as a means of self-defense can be affected by variables such as tradition, race, gender, geographical location, age and college major. Today an average of forty-six percent of households in the United States report having a firearm in the home. With the reluctance of people to self-report, however, the actual numbers could be higher (Kleck & Patterson, 1993). Furthermore, in 2011 there were over 320 million privately owned firearms, with thirty-six percent of them being handguns. This number will only continue to grow higher every year as more guns are purchased. Currently, with gun ownership patterns in the US, there is a correlation of increasing ownership patterns with decreasing violence rates. (Cole & Gertz, 2013)

Geographical Location

Ownership rates vary by location in the United States. As a result, there are varying cultural perspectives on firearms based upon the traditions of various geographical locations. Furthermore, traditions usually revolve around the acceptance of firearms in a hunting culture to maintain a food supply and not just self-defense. Throughout history, the use of firearms as a hunting tool has been more prominent in the South and West.

The acceptance of firearms is dependent upon more than simply the location of the state, but also upon the density of the population and if the region is mountainous. If the community has a closer connection to the use of firearms as a tool, rather than a weapon, then the laws are more lenient. Viewing firearms as a tool results in a greater likelihood of acceptance for concealed carry in the states in these geographical locations compared to the rest of the United

States (Jang et al., 2014). Moreover, in rural areas and small towns, ownership of a weapon is common, even though the act of carrying the weapon is higher in urban areas (Kleck & Gertz, 1998).

The propensity to own/carry a firearm could be rationalized to be higher in the southern United States and it would be right to believe so. The reason for the closer bond is linked to the fact that people in the South and West have a positive disposition towards firearms, because of the closer relationship to firearms for hunting or protection. Thus, the view of a firearm as a tool results in a greater likelihood of acceptance for concealed carry in the states in these geographical locations compared to the rest of the United States (Jang et al., 2014).

Race

Race also plays a factor in individual views on firearms. Historically, in smaller rural areas or small towns, racism has been prevalent. Racism has had a direct impact on the requirements for firearm ownership throughout the history of this country (Leitner, 2012). Racism is a factor that focuses on hate between certain ethnicities and results in biased treatment of one group or other. For example, out of fear, many groups of white Americans after Emancipation Proclamation did not want freed black slaves to be armed. Racist white legislators proposed laws with requirements that newly freed black slaves could not meet. These new laws resulted in blacks not being able to legally own a firearm.

Racist legislators argued that if someone owned or wanted to own a firearm that person must be criminally deviant. Therefore, during the emancipation era there was proposed gun legislation to confiscate, reduce and make illegal certain firearms or features of a firearm for certain races. With new legislation regarding campus carry, racism may influence the ability to

carry for some individuals because of bias regarding race. Law enforcement across the country, including campus police officers have been criticized for actions that have been perceived as racial profiling. This perceived racism could impact how individuals on campus carry.

The impact of geography and race on college campus carry has not yet been studied. The reason for it not being studied is there are not enough states that allow campus carry. (O'Brien, Forrest, Lynott, & Daly, 2013)

Yet, with the focus on race, most research focuses only on black and white ethnicities to date and the findings are mixed. However, what research has been conducted found that Whites are more likely to illegally carry concealed weapons on campus according to Miller, Hemenway, and Wechsler (1999) and Miller, Hemenway, and Wechsler (2002). Yet, Jang et al (2014) found it was more prevalent for black individuals to carry concealed illegally.

Gender

The gender of an individual can play an integral role affecting personal opinions (i.e. subjectivism) and affect their position of authority. Therefore, the variation of policies and views on concealed carry vary through both social norms and actual governmental policy. Gender also plays an important role in determining how campus police officers view concealed carry. Many small towns and rural areas still perpetuate the stereotype that women are the weaker sex and would not know how to properly operate a firearm. Regarding differences between males and females on college campus, however, studies have shown that males are more likely to illegally carry firearms on school campuses (Forrest, Zychowski, Stuhldreher, & Ryan, 2000). If a female owns a personal firearm, her likelihood of carrying is more than the average male gun owner when off campus. Males have a higher propensity to defiantly carry a firearm on school

campuses for the purpose of protection compared to females. With campus carry implementation, there could be unforeseen consequences either for males or females and their interaction with campus police officers (Kleck & Gertz, 1998.)

In other words, though, males may be carrying the firearms onto campus out of fear, female students on campuses have a higher propensity for fear and believe that they will be targeted more by criminals. This fear leads to a higher likelihood of having some form of self-defense protection for females other than firearms and increases the mentality to seek a form of protection compared to males through a legal means. Little is known though about the impact fear has on individuals taking precautions for self-preservation (Woolnough, 2009). According to Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, and Lu (1998), most criminal acts that occur on campus are in regard to sexual assault focused towards women. If campus carry was implemented, it could decrease the amount of forcible rapes. On the other hand, it could also increase death rates on campuses as students take matters into their own hands instead of leaving it up to trained campus police officers.

Education

On college campuses, the programs offered can change the population of the schools' perceptions on campus carry. Similarly, the type of school or degrees that are offered can impact the larger acceptance of concealed carry by campus police or administrators. College students with a major in criminal justice are more likely than other majors to own a firearm which impacts their desire to obtain a concealed carry license. The increased desire to carry was most apparent if the student did not have confidence in the police for support and if the student was generally concerned with crime. The chances of applying for a license also increased if the student was

white or a male, as well as for any individual in the criminal justice field. If the student had a history relating to the police or military, odds increase again. With all of these compounding factors, an increase in the desire to acquire a concealed carry license is not significant on college campuses, showing that there is not an extreme outcry for more lenient or strict carry laws on college campuses (Bouffard et al., 2012). Yet, college students that keep a firearm on school campuses have a higher chance for criminal tendencies, and ownership of a firearm has been proven to indicate higher usage rates of drugs and alcohol (Miller et al., 2002).

Age

There are a variety of ages on college campuses, but most students are between eighteen and twenty-four years. The different ages can affect students' acceptance of firearms through historical time and place. Since the legal requirement to carry a firearm off campus is twenty-one, the most prevalent age for carrying a weapon on or off campus is reported as being twenty-one or over (Miller et al., 2002; Miller et al., 1999). According to Jennings, Grover, and Angela (2007), however, victimization increases at the age of eighteen and matches the typical traditional college student's age, resulting in a higher risk of being a victim of violent crime. With the addition of armed faculty or students, campus police may be more cautious of older individuals since they would be the ones more likely to carry.

Campus Carry Effect on Officers

Miller, Hemenway, and Wlecher (2002) concluded college students who own firearms are more likely to live off campus grounds and be a white male. These same white males also had increased deviant behavior than their counterparts who did not own firearms. For example, driving after drinking, vandalizing property, binge drinking, and getting in trouble with law

enforcement were all higher in this statistical group. College students who kept a gun on campus illegally were more likely to occur in mountainous regions in the south and reported an increase in being threatened with a firearm while on campus (Miller et al., 2002).

Given the correlation between individuals who carry and increased deviant behavior, campus police officers would likely have rougher interactions with those that did carry on college campuses even if it was legal. These rougher interactions could impact community relations resulting in a negative self-image, increasing stress for each officer. One possible method a negative self-image could be created is by officers wanting to be liked by peers and supervisors. Those supervisors could catch backlash from a hostile public because of officer interactions with the public. This could create a loop of feedback to the officer, affecting their self-image if the supervisors or fellow officers condemned their actions (or even if the individual officer thought they did). There is a connection or bond established between the other officers and supervisor. A sense of brotherhood built into the subculture of police officers, all campus officers face the same dangers and deal with the same dilemmas. These dilemmas create the ideology of the “blue line” that protects society. Thus, the group has a sheepdog mentality and indirect control of how the officers should act. The ideology of protecting society creates an attachment of not wanting to disappoint their fellow officers, supervisors, and the community, resulting in increasing stress levels (Lilly, Cullen, & Ball, 2014).

Increased negative feedback to officers may generate from supervisors that deal with the stress of university politics and community forums. In opinion poll of undergraduate students, seventy-eight percent of students were not in support of concealed carry on campus, nor would the students wish to obtain a license to carry if it was legal. The individual college students had an increased disgust for campus carry if they were females, did not personally own any firearms,

or had no prior experiences with firearms, and were not afraid of becoming a victim (Thompson, et al., 2013).

Campus carry policies, especially after recent school shootings, show trends for fear. Students that have been a victim of violent crime are more likely to support concealed carry on campuses (Forrest et al., 2000). Students admitted to carrying a weapon on campus illegally after increased campus crimes showing a heightened fear and a belief that campus security is inadequate to deal with threats (Forrest et al., 2000). Bartula and Bowen (2015), found that students and faculty would have a higher level of fear on college campuses if campus open carry was allowed. The finding did not mean that crime increased, only that fear of victimization increased with firearms in plain sight. As a result, pro-gun advocates propose that if the firearms were out of sight the harmful effects be negated while keeping the positive attributes (Bartula & Bowen, 2015).

Studies have also shown that students who keep weapons on campus have an increased likelihood of being threatened with a weapon (Miller et al., 2002). This has the potential to create a perpetuating cycle, whereby the students originally scared carry firearms illegally and get caught. This in turn creates more scared students who then decide to carry. Students may keep a weapon on campus because they know someone who was recently a victim, have an internal belief that crime is high in their area, have been a victim before, do not have faith in campus security, or believe that they can only put faith in themselves for safety (Jang et al., 2014).

One problem surrounding concealed carry on campus is the chance for error in threat assessments/shootings. This error can be made by either campus police (first responders) or other concealed carry individuals who may act quickly due to an adrenaline rush. With such high

stakes, one mistake can result in the loss of life. For example, a concealed carry holder could shoot someone not acting in a criminal capacity, but because they were scared. Similarly, campus security could shoot a legally armed professor, mistakenly believing them to be an active shooter. One reason for mistakenly shooting could be from the heightened reasonable fear of personal injury that can cause decreased fine motor skills and reduced cognitive awareness in stressful situations. This reduction to the most basic gross motor skill and cognitive ability can result in the shooting of someone who is not breaking the law. Most colleges do not want any of the risk of an armed campus because of the increased insurance that would be needed for their officers and the negative publicity that would occur. In conclusion, this makes the liability for campuses go up, resulting in more money being spent. Colleges are usually against higher spending if unnecessary (Kelly, 2008).

Bedrock of Study

There has been prior research regarding campus carry perspectives held by top ranking police officials (Bartula & Bowen, 2015) and campus security directors (Hosking, 2014). Review of this research helps to understand the variables and outline the perspectives held by higher ranking individuals charged with campus safety. In 2015, Bartula and Bowen conducted a study of Texas based universities regarding top campus police officials' perspectives on the effects of open carry on "campus crime, firearm incidents, and fear of victimization among students, staff and faculty." Their study included a total of one hundred and fifteen surveys being sent out to top police officials in the state of Texas with forty-seven being completed and returned. Bartula and Bowens (2015) study concluded that the top police officials believed that crime rates and number of firearm related events would remain the same even if campus carry was enacted.

Although, top police officials did note that the fear of victimization would increase in their opinion.

Interestingly, ninety-one and a half percent of top ranking police officials who responded to the survey were against any form of open carry on college campuses. Opinions held by top campus police officials regarding open campus carry included: “ability to intervene in a shooting situation, which rarely occurs”; “does offer a visible deterrent”; “those carrying believe they can protect themselves and others but their training is limited”; “I do not see a benefit”; and “there are no advantages to open carry on college/university campuses” (Bartula & Bowen, 2015).

Furthermore, top police officer responses gathered by Bartula and Bowen (2015) regarding the potential risk associated with open carry on Texas campuses reinforced their belief of not supporting open campus carry: “1) The liability of an officer responding to a situation in which he or she has to decide who is the CHL holder or suspect; 2) The ability of the officer to identify who has a CHL or not. Based on PC or reasonable suspicion and the legal ramifications as a result of questioning the CHL holder; 3) the new law will create more fear on campus than before; and 4) enough funding to train each officer in verbal de-escalation tactics.” The research conducted by Bartula and Bowen (2015) helps to establish a baseline for predicting what frontline officers in this study may believe. (Bartula & Bowen, 2015)

In a similar study conducted by Hosking in 2014, campus security directors were interviewed regarding their perceptions of concealed carry firearms at public community colleges in the state of Wyoming. The study included seven different campus security directors for each Wyoming district. These seven different participants were interviewed using a phenomenological style to analyze and compile the data. The data was acquired through individual

interviews focusing upon perceptions of firearms on college campuses. In the state of Wyoming each individual campus security director has the authority to decide if firearms are allowed on their campuses districts in accordance with state law. Hosking's (2014) findings concluded that the consensus by campus security directors is that concealed firearms on campuses would have a negative impact. There were caveats, however, stating that with proper training and proper vetting college campuses could possibly be safer. Some of the participants stated that possession of a concealed firearm would not have any discernable effect on the likelihood of being a victim. (Hosking, 2014)

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

This study's purpose was to explore a field that has scarcely been studied using mixed methods to analyze campus police officer's perceptions and attitudes toward campus carry. The qualitative phenomenological style used focuses on detailed descriptions of ordinary conscious experiences of everyday life (Schwandt, 2007). This study, therefore, sought to examine these different perspectives and how they may impact or influence situations involving a firearm on college campuses. This study was created to look at frontline officers based on a deeper look at Bartula and Bowen's (2015) research of campus police chiefs and Hosking's (2014) research regarding campus security directors. The methodology for this study was constructed around Hosking's (2014) research regarding campus security directors. The study reviews past research and builds on it with the goal of understanding and comparing frontline officers versus higher ranking officials.

Even though there has been research on top police officials' perceptions on open carry, there have not been any studies conducted on campus police officers' perceptions on firearm carrying. Furthermore, the only study that has been conducted to date regarding campus police and firearm carrying was on open carry conducted in Texas by Bartula and Bowen in 2015. They *focused* on top police officials only, who have different duties and responsibilities in comparison to regular duty officers. Similarly, there has been research conducted regarding higher ranked officials such as campus security directors' perceptions on concealed firearms on college campuses conducted by Jeff Hosking (2014). Once again, the research focused solely on higher

ranked individuals and not regular duty officers that are in contact with students and faculty. As a result, more in-depth research into individual officers should be conducted. Moreover, both of the prior studies are in limited geographical locations with different political and individual perspectives, thereby creating a greater need for research in the field to broaden its applicability.

Tennessee currently has several laws touching on firearms on campus, such as: firearms in vehicles on college campuses, full-time college employees possessing a carry license can carry concealed on campus, and proposed legislation that would allow students who possesses carry licenses to carry on college campuses. As discussed in the literature review, there is a limited amount of research regarding university faculty and student perceptions of firearm carry on campus. There is an even smaller amount of research regarding campus police perceptions. There has only been one study that came close to asking front-line campus police about their perceptions on carrying a firearm and it only asked top university police officers (Bartula & Bowen, 2015). Bartula and Bowen (2015) was not focused on the individual officers that would be dealing with individuals carrying daily on college campuses. Therefore, there is a call for more information on the individual campus police officers' perceptions on open and concealed carry on campuses. With the need of understanding campus police officers' perceptions on campus carry, the research question is: "Do campus police support any form of campus carry?"

Sample

This study utilized a convenience sampling technique, meaning that whoever met the criteria and agreed to an interview was included. The study used a non-probabilistic sample composed of subjects that met the requirements to participate. The sample was comprised of twelve campus public safety officers at East Tennessee State University who agreed to

participate in the study. East Tennessee State University employs twenty campus safety officers on their main campus in Johnson City.

As an exploratory study, there is not a control group, since there is not enough knowledge about the subjects' perceptions to have directed research. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the perceptions of campus police officers regarding concealed campus carry. The sample is completely comprised of public safety officers from East Tennessee State University (ETSU) which is a public university in the state of Tennessee. There are twenty officers total that work for ETSU that could be in the population, including the chief and deputy chief (public safety, 2017). The interviews were conducted between April 12, 2017 and March 1, 2018, with results from twelve officers (a sixty percent response rate).

Demographics

The demographics of campus police officers interviewed can be used to run univariate statistics. The independent variables used in this study can be evaluated upon face validity, such as race, gender, and age of the participant. Race was defined with purpose of clearly defining the interaction of race based upon participant's choice between: white = 0 or non-white = 1. Therefore, race is defined on a nominal level of measurement. Gender is defined on a nominal level of measurement coded as either male = 0 or female = 1 from participants and has strong face validity. Age is defined in the survey and measured on a continuous scale of interval/ratio.

Table 3: *Individual Demographic Variable*

Variable	Attributes
Gender	0 = male 1 = female
Race	0 = white 1 = non-white

Location

The sample is comprised of public safety officers from East Tennessee State University, which is in Northeast Tennessee. The main campus is in Johnson City Tennessee with approximately 15,000 undergraduates, graduate, and professional students. The general population for Johnson City, Tennessee is approximately 63,000 in the northeastern tip of the state, bordered by North Carolina and Virginia (n.a., 2017).

Research Questions

The research questions (TABLE 2) are listed with the focus on the possibility that campus safety officers may have a predisposition regarding campus carry. The reason that these research questions need to be answered is because it will allow for analyses that focus on age, supervisory position, police experience, military experience, private security experience, firearm ownership, daily routine in regard to firearms, routine of wearing a bullet proof vest, political affiliation with firearm groups, level of education, and age that they first fired a firearm. In a comparison of these different experiences, a relationship may be established with the correlation

either positively or negatively towards individual officer's perspectives on carrying on campus by either faculty or students.

Research question one suggests that if officers carry a firearm off-duty, then they would support the second amendment and individual rights. This means that individual security officers believe that people should be able to be armed whenever they choose. The second research question states that older campus safety officers will support campus carry if they are over the age of forty. This conclusion can be based on survey data that concludes older individuals are more likely to own firearms. If a campus police officer has attained a higher education, however, then they may have been socialized into the ivory tower ideology that firearms are not necessary at a university. As the third research question proposes, prior police experience, on the other hand, may curtail this ivory tower ideology. The fourth research question suggests that campus police officers with experience would support individual protection. This could be theorized because the individual officer has decided that they cannot always be around to protect individuals on campus (Sherman, 2000). The fifth research question proposes that campus police in supervisory roles are less likely to support campus carry due to the level of risk and liability an armed campus would create for public safety.

Table 4: *Independent Variables*

Variables	Attributes
Education	0 = No High-School 1 = Some High-School 2 = High-School/GED 3 = Some College 4 = Trade-School 5 = Associates Degree 6 = Bachelor's Degree 7 = Master's degree 8 = PHD

Table 5: *Independent Variables*

Variable	Coding Method
Carry Firearm Off Duty?	0 = No
Supervisory Role?	1 = Yes

Table 6: *Carry Student Support*

Variable	Coding Method
Student (Enrolled)	0 = No
Ex-Police Officer or Current (Student)	1 = Undecided
Ex-Military or Current (Student)	2 = Yes

Table 7: *Carry Faculty Support*

Variable	Coding Method
Faculty (Full-Time)	0 = No
Ex-Police Officer or Current (Employee)	1 = Undecided
Ex-Military or Current (Employee)	2 = Yes

Role of Researcher

The data collected was compiled by contacting participants using school emails to schedule meetings and snowball sampling from prior interviews to contact new officers. Upon scheduling an interview time, the interviewee came to either 201 Roger Stout Hall conference room or made use of the conference room in the station house. The interviews were conducted in-person, one-on-one, and conducted in an unbiased setting where the interviewees were not in danger and without the possibility of coercion or intimidation. The participants were personally interviewed using open ended questions as part of a semi-structured interview. One question at a time was asked. After they had answered, discussion took place with the participant to attempt to understand the reasoning for their response. After completion of a question, the next question was asked, repeating the previous process until completion. Upon completing the interview, the interviewee was thanked and dismissed from the interview.

Materials

The data on individual campus police officers' perceptions was collected by interview scheduled through university email. The study is a mixed model of explorative and descriptive,

using face to face interview, comprised of standardized, open-ended questions. The study's goal was to evaluate campus police officers' perceptions on open and concealed carry by either faculty or students. Using standardized, open-ended structured interviews allowed for a more informal feeling that increased completion rates. The negatives of the personal interview are that the sample size will be smaller, time-consuming and resource intensive.

The interview questions in appendix one, were developed in reference to prior research conducted by Bartula and Bowen (2015) and Hosking (2014). The interview questions were open-ended to facilitate expanded reasoning of why the campus security officers held a particular belief. In example participants prior military or police experience could impact personal perceptions of campus carry. One reason that experience in either capacity can impact perceptions on campus carry is due to the level of training that is required in each background. Also, the amount of time spent as a campus police officer could impact the perception of students and teachers being unfit to carry based upon personal interactions showing lower levels of responsibility. Furthermore, interactions could showcase the lack of firearm education and training that may be perceived by campus police.

Research Design & Treatment

The study of campus police officer's perceptions on campus carry is an exploratory study, using a qualitative phenomenological style inside of mixed methods. The treatment for the studies qualitative data uses a deductive approach for group data and then looks for similarities and differences. The interview data will be noted for the purpose of making comparisons between other officer's perceptions. The framework of the study was guided by the research questions to structure, label, and define the data. This allowed for descriptive analysis of the

range of responses in each category and identify recurrent themes. Themes of causality may exist and can be identified by noticing patterns and trends in the data. Therefore, using thematic analysis allows for interpretation and mapping of patterns, associations, concepts and explanations for campus police officers' perceptions.

Research is viewed as a method of knowing and understanding based upon systematic investigation (Mertens, 2010). Thus, a qualitative phenomenological framework was picked to explore and describe the perceptions, experiences, and beliefs of campus police officers at ETSU. Phenomenological research focuses on the personal perspectives of the participants (Roberts, 2010). Incorporating the qualitative phenomenological method means that researchers collect data in the form of words, instead of quantitative numbers, to describe participants perceptions (Roberts, 2010). Researchers attempt to produce a holistic portrait of the topic that is being studied with open-ended questions (Roberts, 2010). Different individuals have specific characteristics or experiences that can be evaluated, allowing for a better understanding of the individual predispositions on college campus carry. Although, evaluation of perceptions is accomplished with inferences being made on the reasoning why an individual either supports or does not support armed campuses. As an example, a background in any branch of the military may increase or decrease support for armed campuses. Furthermore, prior police officer experience may impact the reasoning for their perspectives regarding campus carry.

In using interpretative phenological analysis different themes emerge from the data. These themes are broken down further into superordinate themes that identify patterns in the data. More specifically, these superordinate themes contain smaller patterns and constructs referred to as subthemes that flush out their description. Through the use of superordinate themes and subthemes, an understanding of the perception of campus police officers can be created and

better understood. Applying these methods the researcher was able to acquire information pertaining to the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes of campus police officers from directed questioning. This direct information was obtained through the exact words of the participants, without constraint or formality. The raw data was then compiled and categorized into broad themes, which are then ordered into all-inclusive constructs.

Univariate

The demographics of campus police officers interviewed can be used to calculate univariate statistics: frequencies, descriptives, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion. Univariate analyses are used to describe one variable at a time to determine the characteristics of that variable within the sample. In analyzing one variable, it does not focus upon the significance of relationships; its main purpose is to summarize the data allowing patterns in the data to be noticed. Univariate statistics allow for frequencies and descriptive information to provide figures on the sample to maintain generalizability to the population. The main objective of univariate analysis, therefore, is to describe and summarize the data.

Bivariate

Bivariate analysis tests the significance of the relationship between two variables. This results in a comparison tested with correlation that is used to describe the association and strength of the independent variable to dependent variables. Nonparametric Mann-Whitney test are used to test research question one to determine if there is a significant relationship between a campus police officer carrying off duty and support for student or faculty to carry independently. Correlations are used to test research question two and three. Question two is testing the relationship between participants' age and perceptions on campus carry support for either students or teachers independently. Research question three is tested using correlations of the

level of education the participant has obtained and their support for either student or faculty carry independently. Research question four uses a one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov testing if a student or faculty has prior policing experience and looks at whether it has a differential impact on campus police supporting them carrying. A Mann-Whitney test is used to test research question five to determine if there is significance between campus police in supervisory roles and their perceptions of either student or faculty carry independently.

Data Analysis

The study made use of mixed methods utilizing quantitative and thematic analysis in an explorative approach to identify emerging themes from the materials from the individual interviews (Schwandt, 2007). The reason that this study utilizes thematic analysis is that it is optimal to analyze and organize qualitative data into patterns.

The researcher read all interview notes to get an overall picture of the data from each individual participant. Then the researcher analyzed the information contained within the interview notes regarding campus police officers noticing themes evolving (Willig, 2013). The developing themes were clustered containing patterns organized into superordinate themes (Willig, 2013). A superordinate theme is one in which recognized themes and identified patterns are placed together (Shinebourne, 2011). This allows subthemes that can be perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and principles of East Tennessee State University campus police officers, to be organized in an efficient manner. Table 9 is a visual representation of superordinate themes and associated subthemes.

The first superordinate theme is that the presence of legal firearms on college campuses could increase campus safety. In the act of organizing the data five different subthemes became

apparent that highlighted the first superordinate theme. Subtheme one was that the campus police participants felt that there needs to be a higher level of training for those that wished to concealed carry on college campuses. Secondly, there was a subtheme of an increased vetting process that checked the individuals mental and physical ability to carry. There are three other subthemes for superordinate one, including: 1) that there is a possibility of some firearms carried onto campus already illegally; 2) concealed carry on campus increases the liability and cost for the school; and 3) that those that would legally carry concealed may use firearms as a means of self-defense.

The second superordinate theme is that the presence of legal firearms on college campuses could decrease campus safety. There are four subthemes that detail why legally concealed carried firearms on college campuses could decrease campus safety. These subthemes are: 1) the possibility of misidentification of the shooter; 2) disputes turning deadly; 3) fear by students; and 4) fear by faculty.

The third superordinate theme stated that the presence or absence of legal firearms on college campuses does not influence the level of safety on college campuses. This superordinate theme is fleshed out by two subthemes: 1) that illegal concealed firearms are already on campus; and 2) that currently there are few violent crimes on campus already.

The fourth superordinate theme is that many college campus police support retired or current police officers carrying on college campuses. This superordinate theme has five subthemes expanding upon the reasoning behind this type of carry support. The participants noted that police officers have been supplied with training on the correct methods to handle violent encounters. Second, officers usually have experience in handling violent encounters. The

third subtheme was that participants noted that police officers undergo a more stringent background vetting and mental review than concealed carry holders. Fourth, participants indicated that retired and active duty police typically take a proactive stance toward security of their self and others either from duty or their belief system. All the previously mentioned subthemes are moot, however, because POST-certified, active-duty law enforcement officers, either on or off duty, may possess and carry their service firearm on college campus property.

Summary

The building blocks of qualitative research is not the same as quantitative. Instead, qualitative research is focused on trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Creswell, 2007). Quality, therefore, is a central theme in this research and acts as an umbrella that encompasses trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility. The researcher consulted many different fitting sources to ensure quality of the data acquired in the manner of interviews. The interviews were conducted by using semi-structured, open-ended questions allowing participants to completely explain their belief, perceptions and experiences.

This research, therefore, explored the belief, concepts, experiences, attitudes and perceptions of campus police officers towards campus concealed carry. There is a significant void in scholarly writing that focuses upon the existence or nonexistence of concealed carry of firearms on college campuses in Tennessee. The participants of this study are those that are charged with the protection of East Tennessee State University. The data was acquired using phenomenological inquiry and tested using both thematic analysis and qualitative methods.

The use of qualitative analysis allowed for examinations of the core beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of ETSU public safety officers in realistic and rich description. The data compiled

allowed for development of superordinate themes to emerge in relation to the participants perceptions. The superordinate themes that presented and were able to be quantitatively coded were then calculated in IBM SPSS Statistic for significance to highlight and showcase trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility in the data.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to understand and explore the perceptions and beliefs of East Tennessee State University campus police officers regarding campus carry and firearms. This phenomenological explorative study attempts to observe and understand campus police perceptions and the impact that these perceptions may have on campus carry. Many of the results provided in chapter four are in a direct quote format representative of research data relevant to the overall opinions of participants interviewed. Twelve campus public safety officers from East Tennessee State University participated in the individual, personal interviews. When suitable, the researcher pursued data based upon nonverbal communication resulting in a more personal depth in the individual interviews. Each of the interviews was steered using semi-structured open-ended interview questions that were asked in the same order each time. The data acquired from the interviews was condensed into superordinate themes and subthemes that are supported by selected direct quotes by participants. Each superordinate theme is expanded upon by explanatory subthemes that contain quotes representative of the sample data. After discussion of qualitative review of the data, quantitative measurements are discussed to outline measurable responses. The quantitative results used are univariate and bivariate analyses from the current study. In action, descriptive statistics were compiled for each of the relevant independent and dependent variables. Descriptive statistics consisted primarily of demographics, level of education, student carry support, and faculty carry support. Bivariate correlations were conducted to test for relationships between independent measures. In addition,

nonparametric one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to compare two different groups of campus carry support, ““student is current or former police” to “all student carry measure” and “faculty is retired police” to “all faculty carry measure”. Finally, a nonparametric Mann-Whitney test were conducted on both the supervisory role impact on student or faculty carry and carrying off-duties impact on student or faculty carry

Demographics

To keep all participants anonymous, and information acquired confidential, no names or identifying information is disclosed. Participant demographics information is, therefore, supplied in the aggregate format. As per the aggregate demographics supplied in Table 8 the participants demographics were varied.

Table 8: *Aggregate Demographics*

Gender	10 Male and 2 Female
Race	All participants were Caucasian
Age	Age ranged from 30 to 69
Education	Highest level was a master's degree in business, five possessed a bachelor's degree, one associates, two had technical, two had some college credits with no degree and one had high school.
Military background/time in service	4 had prior military service ranging from 4 to 16 years
Law enforcement background/ time in service	All had prior service with a police agency ranging from 1.5 years to 12 years
Private security background/ time in service	Three had prior private security service ranging from 2.5 to 7.5 years
Length of job at current institute	3 months to 40 years in range

Developing Themes

The interview notes consisted of seventy-two pages from twelve different campus police participants interviews. After concluding the interviews, a systematic approach was used to identify the most efficient means of understanding the results of the study and note developing themes. Reoccurring themes were found that created multiple overarching central themes. These reoccurring themes encompassed the general perceptions of campus police and were noted for later use. In grouping the reoccurring themes from the interviews, sub themes were developed

that contrasted with each other. Thus, developing general sub groupings of relevant data into four individual superordinate themes that encompasses all points of perspective given to the relevant topic of campus carry. In Table 9 superordinate themes are listed across on top and following directly below each is their corresponding subthemes.

Table 9: *Superordinate and Subthemes*

Superordinate themes			
The existence of legal firearms on college campuses may increase safety.	The existence of legal firearms on college campuses may decrease safety.	The existence or absence of legal firearms on college campuses does not influence the level of safety.	Campus police support retired or current police officers carrying on college campuses.
Subthemes			
Vetting of concealed carrier	Fear levels of faculty	Crime level would stay the same	Training
Trained level of carrier	Fear levels of students	Proactive policing is deterring crime	Experience dealing with threats
Firearms are already illegally on campus	Altercations turning deadly		Background already vetted
Self-defense of carrier	Misidentification of the shooter		POST certified on or off duty officers can carry already

Theme One: Increase Campus Safety

Superordinate theme one describes the compiled raw data regarding the presence of legal concealed carry firearms on college campuses and the perspectives offered that it may increase campus safety. In discussion of an outline (superordinate theme) regarding positive perspectives of firearms held by campus police officers' repetitive perspectives are compiled into multiple subthemes. Furthermore, incorporated within each subtheme are interview quotes from participants when appropriate.

Training of Concealed Carry

The presence of concealed firearms in conjunction with enough proper training may increase safety on East Tennessee State University. Various participants specified that if firearm carriers obtained appropriate training there could be a positive impact on campus safety. For example, regarding students, participant "B" stated that "it depends on prior experience" and another participant "H" said "some are responsible; it is on an individual level of responsibility". Participant "E" went on to say that "if you are twenty-one years of age it is your right as an American citizen." This was discussed and followed up with the reasoning that "if you can die fighting for your country (in the military) and vote, why lose a right (on college campuses)".

Although only some supported student concealed carry, more were supportive of faculty concealed carry. Many officers stated that there should be more training for the faculty carrying on campus. When asked if faculty are responsible enough to carry, Participant B responded: "yes, with proper training and within the guidelines of the university." Participant "A", on the other hand, still believed that "they need more training on active shooter situations".

Properly Vetted

The existence of legally carried firearms at the university may raise campus safety if those carrying are properly vetted and have background checks. Several participants, specifically “D, I, L” noted that there needs to be proper screening to allow someone to carry a concealed handgun onto campus and that not all should be allowed. To possess a concealed carry license in the state of Tennessee, however the possessor must have already met all the requirements established by the state.

Illegally Concealed

Some participants noted that illegally concealed firearms are already present on campus in violation of campus policy and state law. Firearms illegally carried on campus emerged from the data regarding allowing legal concealed carry on campuses. Participants “D” and “I” indicated that carrying a firearm for students is already illegal on campus and in violation of campus policy. Other participants like “C” and “E” commented that they are not stupid, they know people whom are not supposed to carry have them on campus. Another participant “I” reflected: “watch someone who is not supposed to have a gun stop a shooter”.

Self-defense and Deterrence

Firearms on campus maybe used as a means of self-defense and deterrence. Most participants, “A, B, C, D, E, G, K, and L” believed that the main reason for owning a firearm was for self-defense or protection of self and others. Furthermore, participants “C, D, E, F, I, and L” acknowledged it as a primary reason they carry them and own themselves. Though participants “A, B, C, D, E, G, K, and L” believed that many people own firearms for self-

defense many participants “A, B, C, H, K, and L” believed that individuals that carry concealed could always use more training.

Theme Two: Decrease Campuses Safety

Superordinate theme two discuss the possibility of legally allowed firearms on college campuses decreasing campus safety. Following this overarching theme are four subthemes that support and represent the sample by outlining reasoning behind the participants perspectives. Roughly half of the participants “C, D, F, G, and I” felt that a concealed carry prohibition for students was the most efficient way to ensure university safety.

Misidentification of the Shooter

A popular theme among participants “A, D, and G” was the concern of first responders or others being able to correctly identify the active shooter differently from a legal concealed carrier and how that could be achieved. Some participants “A and D” stated concerns that law enforcement may inadvertently shoot the first person with a firearm they see, even if the person was a student or faculty trying to stop the perpetrator.

Disputes Turn Deadly

Some of the participants “C, D, and F” noted concerns of escalating violence in conjunction with concealed campus carry. These participants explained that if a dispute occurred it could quickly escalate into a deadly altercation. Furthermore, this issue would be exacerbated if students could carry since younger individuals are often more reckless. Alcohol was also noted to be a contributing factor. Many participants, “C, D, F, G, and I,” believed students do not

have the maturity level required and may not have the correct upbringing to be safe with a firearm.

Fear of the Students

Participants “C, D, G, and I” expressed concern over the impact that concealed student carry in the classroom could have on the learning experience. A few participants, “C, F, and G,” noted that students may feel an inability to express themselves and their opinions. Furthermore, one participant “L” noted some faculty would be afraid to give a concealed carrying student a bad grade. Many participants felt that students lacked maturity and responsibility on a large scale and one participant “F” felt that “age does not mean maturity,” referring to faculty.

Fear of the Faculty

Participant “L” mentioned that some student could be fearful of expressing dissenting opinions or scared to attend classes if they knew their teacher was concealed carrying. As a result, this could stifle the ability of communication and free expression that is encouraged and fostered in college classrooms.

Theme Three: No Effect on Campus Safety

The third superordinate theme details that the presence or absence of legal firearms on college campuses does not influence the level of safety on college campuses. This superordinate theme is supported by two subthemes focusing on the idea that campus carry would not have an impact on crime levels on campus. Although this issue is not as significant as other superordinate themes, it does bear mentioning. This superordinate theme does not focus on the absence of

firearms, but rather the fact that if present on college campuses concealed carry firearms would not impact crime rates in any way.

No Effect on Crime

A few participants “C, E, and K” discussed the fact that firearms exist in society and crime rates stay approximately the same. The idea that firearms on campus would not impact crime is reflective of the idea that illegal firearms are already carried onto campus as per one participant. The reasoning supplied by participant “F” was that “firearms are concealed usually so it is hard to determine who is armed and not”. Another participant, “J” mentioned that especially “without the use of metal detectors and such a large campus knowing who is armed is almost impossible”.

Proactive Policing

This subtheme focuses on the emergent theme that campus police officers proactive policing in conjunction with strong relationships with surrounding police agencies deters criminal activity. Participant “K” felt that strong relationships to the campus community increased collective cohesion and deterred crime. Participant “E” felt that when proactive policing stances are taken, there is no discernable effect firearms will have on campus crime. Participants felt that the presence or absence of firearms on campus was irrelevant.

Theme Four: Police Support Self

The campus police participants “A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, and K” supported retired or current police officers carrying on college campuses more than anyone else carrying. This

support can be traced back to the thin blue line mentality or a deeper understanding of the responsibility necessary to carry a firearm.

Training

Participants “E, F, J and L” noted that current, retired or ex-police officers have conducted training with firearms, the continuum of force, and de-escalation of threats. Individuals that have prior police training are more capable to handle a violent altercation. Participant “J” mentioned that they would know the different possibilities that carrying entails, such as the risk, responsibility, and situational awareness. Participant “B”, however, mentioned that officers know from training that they can be targeted, and an if injured or incapacitated, there is the worry about the firearm being taken by another.

Experience

Participant “H” mentioned in this study that many current, retired, or ex-police officers have had personal experience in violent altercations in one form or another. Therefore, participants “H” and “K” felt that the past experiences of current, retired or ex-police would prepare them for whatever may occur when carrying on college campuses. All participants had shot their first firearm before the age of fifteen and owned their own personal firearm from the age of eight to fifteen. All participants mentioned learning proper firearm safety prior to police officer experience.

Pre-Vetted

Participants “H” and “J” mentioned that current, retired or ex-police officers have gone through a more rigorous background check in conjunction with mental and physical

examinations to be a police officer. Many participants, therefore, felt that after being scrutinized in order to be an officer, they should be able to carry on campus. Participant “E” stated that “many officers carry on the job and off-duty to protect others”.

Legal Already

Participant “K” noted that according to statute in the state of Tennessee, POST-certified police officers, either on or off duty, can carry on school grounds. Participants also mentioned that ex-police officers carrying on campus should not be blanketly accepted, but suggested looking at why they are no longer officers. Many participants, “A, B, E, F, G, H, J, and L” had no problem with retired or current officers carrying on campus as long as they were up to date on their training.

Quantitative Analysis

Univariate

The first step in this series of analyses is to conduct univariate tests to gain or portray a better understanding of the data. A breakdown of the descriptive statistics shows a sample size of twelve officers in the study. Of the twelve officers, there were ten white males and two white females.

Frequencies, Measures of Central Tendency, & Measures of Dispersion

In this study individual participants were asked about carrying a firearm on their person when off-duty resulting in nine participants stating that they carry daily and three stating that they do not carry. Therefore, the mode is one and the standard deviation is 0.45 ($n=12$; $Mo=1$; $s=0.45$). Next, the individual participants were asked their age at the time of the

interview. The sample had a range of 39 with the youngest participant being 30 and the oldest being 69. The mean age was 47 with a standard deviation of 11.23 ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=47$; $s=11.23$).

Levels of education were also examined in the current study. Participants reported their individual levels of education, which ranged from one with a high school diploma, one with some college credit, three with trade school, one with an Associate degree, five with Bachelor's degree, and one with a Master's degree. The mode was six, which indicates that the majority of participants had a Bachelor's degree, and the standard deviation was 1.5 ($n=12$; $Mo=6$; $s=1.50$).

Participants also reported whether they had prior police officer experience. There was a range of approximately 15.75 years with three months being the lowest and 16 years being the highest. The mean was 6.47 years with a standard deviation of 4.48 ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=6.47$; $s=4.48$). In addition, participants were asked if they held a supervisory position within the department. Results indicated that exactly half stated they held supervisory positions while the other half did not. Thus, there are two modes of zero and one with a standard deviation of 0.52 ($n=12$; $Mo=0,1$; $s=0.52$).

A variable was constructed to represent the overall level of support of police officers regarding students concealed carry on campus, regardless of their employment history or lack thereof. For this measure, it was treated as an index composed of three separate attributes including support for current or ex-military students carrying, current or ex-police students carrying, and other students without military or law enforcement experience carrying. The index presented a wide range of responses, however, results indicated that seventy-five percent of officers fell between one standard deviation above or below the mean, signifying a moderate

level of support for allowing students to carry on campus in general ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=2.75$; $Mo=3$; $s=1.54$).

A variable was constructed to represent the overall level of support of police officers regarding faculty concealed carry on campus, regardless of their employment history or lack thereof. For this measure, it was treated as an index composed of three separate attributes, including: support for current or ex-military faculty carrying, current or ex-police faculty carrying, and other faculty without military or law enforcement experience carrying. The index presented a wide range of responses; however, results indicated that seventy-five percent of officers fell between one standard deviation above or below the mean, signifying a moderate level of support for allowing faculty to carry on campus in general ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=3.67$; $Mo=3$; $s=1.15$). Although the dispersion is similar to the previous measure, it is important to note that the mean for this measure was approximately one unit higher than the previous measure for students. This suggests that there is more support for faculty carry than student carry generally speaking.

Bivariate

The second step in this series of analyses includes bivariate correlations, nonparametric Mann-Whitney, and nonparametric one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In utilizing bivariate correlation, the analysis can describe the direction, strength, and significance of the relationship between the two variables. Thus, bivariate correlations can determine whether two separate frameworks are predictive of a similar association. Nonparametric Mann-Whitney test allow for a more thorough understanding of the significance of possible differences in the means between two measures.

Correlations

In the current study bivariate correlations were conducted to determine whether there were underlying relationships between the seven measures being used. The most significant finding was that carrying off-duty and being in a supervisory position were strongly and negatively correlated ($r = -0.57$; $p < 0.05$). This means that those in supervisory positions are significantly less likely to carry while off-duty than those in non-supervisory positions, which could possibly have an impact on their perceptions regarding campus carry.

Table 10: *Statistics*

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Carry firearm off duty	--						
Age	-0.46	--					
Other police time	0.14	-0.43	--				
Education	-0.03	0.21	-0.30	--			
Supervisor	-0.57*	0.24	-0.43	0.05	--		
All student carry	-0.09	-0.51	0.24	0.22	-0.16	--	
All faculty carry	0.34	-0.35	-0.12	0.19	-0.45	0.15	--

Note: * = $p < 0.05$

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

The nonparametric one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted for the purposes of determining whether there were any meaningful differences between the combined measures that were treated as indexes for officer perceptions on student and faculty campus carry. This allowed for a better understanding of how prior police officer experience (on behalf of students and faculty) impacted the perceptions of participants in the current study. As such, there were two one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test conducted—one for students and one for faculty. Results indicated that there was not a significant difference in how police officers felt about students carrying on campus if they had prior law enforcement experience ($D(11)=0.309$, $p<0.05$). These results appear to support the qualitative assessment. For the same analysis regarding faculty, the same held true. Results indicated that there was a significant difference in how police officers felt about faculty carrying on campus if they had prior law enforcement experience ($D(11)=0.374$, $p<0.05$). Again, the qualitative assessment is supported by this rationale.

Nonparametric Mann-Whitney

When conducting Mann-Whitney test, the dependent variable must be measured on a continuous level or ordinal level scale, and the independent variable must consist of two categorical, independent groups. The first series of tests analyzed the officer's perceptions on student and faculty carry separately, focusing on whether or not the officer was in a supervisory position. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in perception of campus carry by students regardless of whether or not a given officer was in a supervisory position ($U=14.5$, $N1=12$, $N2= 12$, $p= 0.565$, two-tailed). Similar results were found for campus carry by

faculty members; supervisory positions did not have a significant impact ($U=8.500$, $N_1=12$, $N_2=12$, $p=0.103$, two-tailed).

The second series of tests analyzed officer's perceptions on student and faculty carry separately, focusing on whether or not the officer carried a firearm while off-duty. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in perception of campus carry by students regardless of whether or not a given officer carried a firearm while off-duty ($U=11.000$, $N_1=12$, $N_2=12$, $p=0.727$, two-tailed). Similar results were found for campus carry by faculty members; carrying a firearm while off-duty did not have a significant impact ($U=7.500$, $N_1=12$, $N_2=12$, $p=0.282$, two-tailed).

Summary

This study utilized a mixed method design incorporating both phenomenological study and various quantitative analyses to reinforce the findings regarding campus police perspectives. This study sought to explore an understudied classification of individuals that are charged with protection of college campuses conducted with the goal of increasing understanding. Campus police perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, understanding, and principles were collected in semi-structured open-ended interview style. The data collected from East Tennessee State University campus police was specific regarding concealed carry.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and determine a general understanding of factors that influence campus police officer's perceptions regarding campus carry. Furthermore, the study pursued to understand campus police perspectives toward firearms separately from campus safety. This study sought to determine past experiences prior to working as a campus police officer and their impact on perception. A series of research questions were constructed in reference to prior research by Bartula and Bowen (2015) and Jeff Hosking (2014). This study's research questions focused more on past experiences to determine if there was a significant impact for approval or disapproval of different classifications of individuals carrying firearms on college campuses.

Research Question Review

The research questions outlined in Table 2 covered possible factors that could influence campus police officer's perspectives regarding concealed carry. Research question one suggested that carrying a firearm off-duty could have a differential impact on campus police perceptions of campus carry. In this study nine participants stated that they carry daily and three stated that they do not. Thus, the mode was one and the standard deviation was 0.45 ($n=12$; $Mo=1$; $s=0.45$). Utilizing an Mann-Whitney test analyzing student and faculty carry separately, with intent on testing against if an officer carried a firearm while off-duty. The results showed that there were not significant differences in perception of campus carry by students irrespective of carrying a firearm while off-duty ($U=14.5$, $N1=12$, $N2= 12$, $p= 0.565$, two-tailed). Parallel results were

confirmed for campus carry by faculty members and officers carrying a firearm off-duty, without a significant impact ($U=8.500$, $N1=12$, $N2= 12$, $p= 0.103$, two-tailed). Therefore, campus police are not impacted by personally carrying a firearm regarding their perception of who should or should not carry on college campuses.

Research question two suggested that the age of campus police officers could have a differential impact on campus police perceptions on campus carry. The sample had a range of 39 with the youngest participant being 30 and the oldest being 69. The mean age was 47 with a standard deviation of 11.23 ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=47$; $s=11.23$). According to bivariate correlations in this study there are not any differential impacts between age and perceptions of campus carry for either student carry ($r = -0.519$; $p = 0.084$) or for faculty carry ($r = -0.350$; $p = 0.264$). Thus, meaning that the age of the participant did not significantly impact their perceptions regarding who should or should not carry firearms on college campuses.

Research question three suggested that the level of education a participant has could have a differential impact on the campus police officer's perceptions on campus carry. Participants reported their individual levels of education, which ranged from one with a high school diploma, one with some college credit, three with trade school, one with an associate degree, five with bachelor's degrees, and one with a master's degree. The mode was six, which indicates that the majority of participants had a bachelor's degree, and the standard deviation was 1.5 ($n=12$; $Mo=6$; $s=1.50$). According to bivariate correlations in this study, there were not any differential impacts between the level of education and perceptions regarding campus carry for either student carry ($r = 0.225$; $p = 0.482$) or for faculty carry ($r = 0.192$; $p = 0.550$), meaning that the level of education a participant had did not significantly impact their perceptions regarding who should or should not carry firearms on college campuses.

Research question four suggested that prior police officer experience could have a differential impact on perceptions campus police have on campus carry. Regarding prior police officer experience, there was a range of approximately 15.75 years, with three months being the lowest and 16 years being the highest. The mean was 6.47 years with a standard deviation of 4.48 ($n=12$; $\bar{x}=6.47$; $s=4.48$). Campus police officers indicated that if an individual who concealed carried had obtained the proper training, they believed it could have a positive impact on campus safety. Two one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were conducted between the combined measures that were treated as indexes for officer perceptions on student and faculty campus carry—one for students and one for faculty. These results indicated that there was a difference in how police officers felt about students carrying on campus if they had prior law enforcement experience ($D(11)=0.309$, $p<0.05$). Furthermore, the analysis regarding faculty showed that there was a difference in how police officers felt about faculty carrying on campus if they had prior law enforcement experience ($D(11)=0.374$, $p<0.05$).

These results appear to confirm the qualitative assessment. The qualitative assessment stated that campus police participants “A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, and K” in this study supported retired or current police officers carrying on college campuses more than anyone else carrying. Participants “E, F, J and L” noted that current, retired, or ex-police officers have conducted training extensive with firearms, the continuum of force, and de-escalation of threats. This follows the rationale that individuals with prior police training are more capable to handle a violent altercation. Participants “H” and “J” mentioned that current, retired, or ex-police officers have gone through typically more rigorous background checks, in conjunction with mental and physical examinations to be a police officer. Participant “E” stated that “many officers carry on the job and off-duty to protect others”.

Research question five suggested that supervisory positions as a campus police officer could have a differential impact on perceptions on campus carry. Participants were asked if they held a supervisory position within the department. Results indicated that exactly half stated they held supervisory positions, while the other half did not. Thus, there are two modes of zero and one, with a standard deviation of 0.52 ($n=12$; $Mo=0,1$; $s=0.52$). In the current study, bivariate correlations were conducted finding that carrying off-duty and being in a supervisory position were strongly and negatively correlated ($r= -0.57$; $p<0.05$).

This means that those in supervisory positions are significantly less likely to carry while off-duty than those in non-supervisory positions, which could possibly have an impact on their perceptions regarding campus carry. Mann-Whitney results, however, indicated that there were no significant differences in perception of supporting campus carry by students regardless of whether or not a given officer was in a supervisory position ($U=14.5$, $N1=12$, $N2= 12$, $p= 0.565$, two-tailed). Similar results were found for supporting campus carry by faculty members; supervisory positions did not have a significant impact ($U=8.500$, $N1=12$, $N2= 12$, $p= 0.103$, two-tailed). Therefore, data regarding if a campus police officers held a supervisory role indicated that there was no differential impact upon campus carry perceptions because of their position.

Limitations

There are various limitations within the current study that must be noted. The most apparent limitation is the restricted sample size, which is largely because this study focuses on a topic that has rarely been examined. Another possible limitation is that participants may choose to not be entirely truthful in their responses for fear of being reprimanded by their chain-of-command. Because the sample was composed of campus police officers from a single university

in the southeast region of the country, findings are not generalizable to the larger population. In addition, it is possible that responses could be partially biased in relation to social conditioning within the region itself and norms associated with the use and ownership of firearms. Another limitation is that this study focused solely upon the carrying of handguns and disregarded questions regarding long firearms throughout the interview process. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted over a large amount of time that could impact variance in officer opinions.

Policy Implications

The research gathered in this study shares campus police officers' specific perspectives regarding campus carry. Thus, this indicates that many officers support greater training requirements and that they wish they knew whom carried on campus. This is because when responding to a call, they would like to know who may be armed. Regarding training, participants indicate that effective use of a firearm requires significant training to efficiently use it as a means of increasing campus safety. As a result, increased training, higher than what is necessary for a handgun permit, should be required by all individuals that are authorized to concealed carry on campus. Also, participants and the literature illustrate that only appropriate individuals without a history of criminal offense or serious mental health issues should be able to conceal carry a firearm (Lott & Mustard, 1997). The reason being stated by participants and literature is that only an appropriate person with adequate training would be able to act rationally in an active shooter scenario. Thus, there is a need for appropriate vetting for individuals that wish to carry concealed and need for greater freedom of information for the officers to know who is armed on campus. One method that could be used for identifying individuals that are armed on campus could be a specialized pin or lanyard with a badge. A form of identifier selected by the school and kept unknown to the public could help officer when responding to an

active shooter. Therefore, by having a means to identify the individual carrying could reduce the risk of misidentification of the shooter.

Future Research

This study is used to explore an understudied field of research regarding campus police officers' perceptions towards concealed carry on college campus. Up until recently, concealed carry on college campuses was illegal and the topic was not relevant. There is a great need for further research on campus police officers' perceptions regarding concealed carry. This study only helps to highlight a greater need for research and shows some shared themes that can be used to create greater directed questions in future research regarding campus carry.

This study focused upon one regional university, thus, future research should compare university officers' perceptions dependent upon the size of the school. Which could impact the viewpoints held by the participants because of increased or decreased community outreach. Furthermore, the geographical location could impact perceptions held by officer's dependent upon the state and significance of firearms historical in that area. This research did not focus upon urban characteristics or how they may impact participants perceptions. Also, this research did not focus upon how firearms may affect college campuses, instead the research focused upon participants views of firearms and participants views of firearms may impact college campuses. Future research should focus upon differences between public and private campuses safety personals opinions regarding firearm policies, the geographical location of the school affecting campus safety personal opinions, and the varying levels of support for individuals to carry on college campuses based upon prior law enforcement specialty experience.

Summary

This analysis of East Tennessee State University will not provide a definitive solution for policy makers wrestling with the proper role of concealed carry on campus. This study may, however, provide important information from which a foundation of sensible concealed carry policy could be created. This research will similarly supply information for future research and study in relevance to firearms at institutes of higher education with the goal of directing future endeavors. In the comparison of traditional policing versus campus policing, there are similarities of values, service, and safety. However, there are greater differences, such as an increased atmosphere of trust and open communication stemming from the many non-law enforcement quality of life help duties that are associated with campus policing. Many campus police perceive that carrying a firearm is a privilege on college campuses, not a right, as in society. Campus police generally support retired or current sworn police officers, as either students or faculty, to carry over any other group. From the literature, interviews and qualitative data analyzed, there are many examples of the dangers that can be associated with carrying a firearm and with not carrying one.

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APPENDIX

Data Collection Instrument

Personal Background:

1. Do you have a military background, if yes? Time in services/branch (army, navy, air force, marines)?
2. How many years have you worked at ETSU as a public safety officer?
3. Have you ever worked for another police agency? If yes, how long and what position.
4. Have you ever worked for another campus safety agency? If yes, how long and what position.
5. Have you ever worked for another private security agency? If yes, how long and what position.

Job:

1. How many interactions with students on campus do you have in an average week? Positive or negative?
2. What kind of interactions are they?
3. How many interactions with faculty and staff on campus do you have in an average week? Positive or negative?
4. What kind of interactions are they?
5. How many interactions with off campus individuals (individuals that are on campus and neither students or faculty) on campus do you have in an average week? Positive or negative?
6. What kind of interactions are they?
7. Do you wear a bulletproof vest on the job? – do you think you should or they are necessary?
8. Do you wear a bulletproof vest any other time if not on the job? Why?
9. Are you in a supervisory position for campus public safety? What kind?
10. Do you plan on staying at ETSU public safety till retirement? If not, what do you want to do?
11. How would you describe your job?
12. Do you find your job make you happy?

Carrying Firearm:

1. Are you required to carry firearms on the job?
2. Would you carry if you were not required, but personally allowed to decide?
3. Do you carry a firearm off duty? – why? Why not?
4. Do you like to carry a firearm? – why? Why not?
5. Do you dislike carrying a firearm? – why? Why not?
6. Do you feel safer carrying a firearm or less safe? – why? Why not?
7. At what age did you own your first firearm?
8. Do you have a personal carry permit? – why? Why not?
9. At approximately what age did you start carrying a firearm?
10. What age were you when you first fired a firearm?

Personal Perceptions:

1. Do you think policy for firearms on campus should be decided by

- a. Federal
 - b. State
 - c. Campus/university administration
 - d. General public
 - e. Other
 - why?
2. How many campus police officers do you think support faculty armed campuses?
 3. How many campus police officers do you think support student armed campuses?
 4. Do you think college students are responsible enough to carry?
 5. Do you think university faculty is responsible enough to carry?
 6. If students are ex-police officers or current should they be allowed to carry on campuses/universities? Why?
 7. If students are ex-military or current should they be allowed to carry on campuses/universities? Why?
 8. If the university faculty is ex-military should they be allowed to carry on campuses/universities? Why?
 9. If the university faculty is ex-police officers should they be allowed to carry on campuses/universities? Why?
 10. How likely do you think other campus police officers believe an active shooter incident is?
 11. If an active shooting incident did occur would armed teachers or armed students help in stopping the threat? – why? Why not?
 12. Is gun control good or bad?
 13. Why do you believe that people own firearms? – why? Why not?
 14. Do you think gun owners are more likely to commit crimes? –What percentage? – why?

Personal affiliations:

1. Are you a member of the NRA or other firearm support group?
2. Are you a member of any Anti-firearm group?

Demographics

1. Education: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

No schooling completed	Trade/technical/vocational training
Nursery school to 8th grade	Associate degree
Some high school, no diploma	Bachelor's degree
High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)	Master's degree
Some college credit, no degree	Professional degree
	Doctorate degree

2. Age
3. Gender
4. Race

VITA

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