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African American Female Law Enforcement Officers' Lived Experiences and Mentoring: A Thematic Narrative

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AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' LIVED
EXPERIENCES AND MENTORING: A THEMATIC NARRATIVE

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Dissertation Abstract
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A Thematic Narrative

Black female officers are an underrepresented sub-group of the law-enforcement profession. The bulk of research on women's policing has focused on the growth of women in law enforcement, barriers, sexual harassment, gender differences, why women are deterred from law enforcement, physical limitations, and instruments used during the recruitment process, and the stress endured after entry into the profession. When looking at Black female officers' lived experience and perceptions around mentoring; research is lacking. Eight Black female officers from the San Francisco Bay Area participated in this study. Findings revealed that all of the women have faced a recurring sense of discrimination, based on their gender. Many participants also suggested a culture in which women are viewed as less capable and, are, at times, less valued. This study contributes to the literature by presenting Black female officers' concerns, values, and experiences in the profession of law enforcement. These findings may also help shape policy, procedures, and recruitment tactics aimed at the retention and success of Black female law-enforcement officers.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

African American female law-enforcement officers face the same issues as their male peers; however, they also face challenges working in a field composed of foundationally masculine-driven principals, qualities, and policies. As the national population of female officers across the nation exist in relatively low numbers, even more so for women of color, it is often difficult to find support for these challenges. Sexual harassment and sexual innuendo, family-life struggles, restriction from certain assignments, and questions of physical ability in conjunction with race discrimination, can promote work stress and dissatisfaction and reduce job retention.

Over the last 30 years, minimal change has occurred to the overall demographics of policing in the United States. The majority of U.S. law enforcement officers, despite their rank, are mainly White men; the numbers are more disproportionate in supervisory positions. Thus far, female and minority-recruitment campaigns remain unsuccessful and, after more than 100 years of policing, a lack of adequate research persists on policewomen's experiences (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005). The failure to understand the perspective and experience of the female officer creates a barrier to an increase in recruitment and retention of female officers. Currently, police administrators report retention and recruiting problems for minorities (Jordan, Fridell, Faggiani, & Kabu, 2009) and resistance towards many promotions for women (Hassell, Archbold, & Stichman, 2010). Police administrators often experience pressure to implement more effective and comprehensive recruitment campaigns throughout the United States in an effort to attract more women to the police profession (Somvadee & Morash, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

In abundant information regarding gender differences in various career placements, a common theme is that women undergo a large amount of gender oppression, demanding the need for support systems such as mentoring. The social conceptions and misconceptions about femininity and masculinity play a marked role in determining the nature of work suitable for men and women (Fernandes, 2011). Despite popular belief that the United States is a highly progressive and liberal society, gender discrimination and stereotyping are not uncommon. The view of the progressive nature of the United States influences how organizations invest in recruitment and retention of employees. Women are more impacted by these scripts than men. Over recent decades, law enforcement became notoriously marred with gender stereotyping and remains slow to change. Operating in a hyper masculine work environment often leaves female officers feeling misplaced, affecting their morale and overall performance in attending to assigned duties (Fernandes, 2011).

Historically, the number of women in law enforcement has been relatively low but stable. Today women only account for 12.7% of the law-enforcement population nationally (Lonsway, 2007). Many female officers have struggled to find work-life balance, and equal promotional opportunities, instead facing discrimination, harassment, and institutional gender biases in policy, procedures, and representation. In supervisory positions, female representation is even lower. One barrier women face when pursuing a leadership position is the glass ceiling, which disrupts morale and limits merit-based promotions. The glass ceiling is often more restrictive for women of color. The lack of

women of color represented in leadership positions partially acts as a catalyst for diversity and inclusion programs.

In response, many law-enforcement departments have increased their allocation of funds to their recruitment and retention efforts of minority officers. A majority of these funds came in the form of federal grants to assist in the future development of these departments. In 2009, under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services appropriated more than $1 billion to help stabilize law-enforcement positions. "The program received more than 7,000 applications requesting more than $8 billion to support nearly 40,000 sworn officer positions." (Grammisch, 2010, p. 1).

"Despite their efforts, law enforcement agencies of all sizes have not always been successful in recruiting and attracting individuals that reflects the communities they serve. This is likely attributable to a number of factors that are present in the recruiting, hiring, and retention phases." (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016, p. ii). A missing component in this effort is an understanding of the factors that demotivate women from entering the profession.

An analysis of female officers' understanding, experience, and expectations upon entering the law-enforcement profession is vital to understanding the barriers and impediments to their retention and success. To attract and retain female officers in the police department, it is quite important to consider their experiences and needs during the formulation of new policies (Wilson, 2016). This understanding can provide insight into struggles of integration, promotion, tenure, retention, commitment to the profession, and overall job satisfaction. The retention of female officers is a recurring theme in the

literature, making it essential to explore the role that mentoring plays. Hassell, Archbold, and Schulz (2011) compared the workplace experiences of male and female officers, revealing that mentoring improved integration, career development, and female-officer camaraderie.

Considering the previously mentioned efforts, it is clear that women are underrepresented in all aspects of policing. This underrepresentation becomes more glaring when race is considered. Therefore, it is important to explore the perceptions, experiences, and understanding of Black female law-enforcement officers' in the context of their career experience. Specifically, it is important to explore ways mentoring can be used to attract and retain women. An understanding of mentoring affects could resolve some challenges specific to African American female law-enforcement officers.

Background and Need

"Diversity is particularly important in the law enforcement context because policing is most successful when it has the support of the community it serves…. A lack of diversity leads to a deficit of institutional knowledge of certain aspects of the community." (Muslim Public Affairs Counsil, 2014)

The importance of this community support has shown its importance and value to people of color in recent times. Police incidents such as those involving Michael Brown (2014), Sandra Bland (2015), and Alton Sterling (2016) brought to the forefront social-justice issues in the law-enforcement community. One strategy to address the call for social justice and action was to increase diversity among the law-enforcement ranks across the nation. The call to diversity rests on the idea that minorities tend to have a less favorable view of law enforcement when they do not see themselves as being

represented. This lack of representation builds on deep distrust that, for many, has roots deeper than the emancipation proclamation. Increased diversity has shown, in decades of research, that

> "….when members of the public believe their law enforcement organizations represents them, understands them, and responds to them-and when communities perceive authorities as fair, legitimate, and accountable-it deepens trust in law enforcement, instills public confidence in government, and supports the integrity of democracy." (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016, p.ii).

The role of African Americans and of women in the U.S. workforce has continued to evolve, particularly since the beginning of World War II. These shifts have concurrently prompted legal battles over the rights of minorities in the work force. One legal success advocate's for minority rights have had is the Equal Opportunity Employment (EOE) Act (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.). The EOE led to the prohibition of race and discrimination for African Americans. This has led to an 5.9% increase in African American official's and managers from 1966 to 2008. Women also greatly benefitted from the EOE. Women enjoy access to certain occupations through anti-discrimination laws as well as gain more leverage for equal pay. The advocacy of women's rights activists helped today's women, who "are the sole or co-breadwinners in half of American families with children. They receive more college degrees and graduate degrees than men" (Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2019, p.1).

Wilson's (2016) research on female police officers' perceptions and experiences with marginalization found that women continue to face barriers when seeking

promotional opportunities, and women reported less trust in their colleagues than their

male peers. Such interventions like the EOE accompanied an increasing number of

women in careers that were previously considered reserved for men, including law

enforcement. In spite of legal changes, societal norms still often treat policing as a male

profession. Images of police in the media are overwhelmingly male, reflecting that

approximately 85% of police officers in the United States are male (Statista.com, 2019).

For race, Delores Jones-Brown, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice,

found,

> the policing profession is mired by a legacy of racism, and many of the best-
>
> qualified minority candidates instead take their skills to the private sector. Further
>
> compounding matters, young Black men are already disproportionately burdened
>
> with prior arrests, disqualifying them from police work (as cited in Maciag, 2015,
>
> para 5).

Law-enforcement officers who are Black and female are in a further bind. When

considering data on African American female officers, the numbers get even lower. Black

female officers were lumped with women of other races and the research did not provide

an actual percentage. Because of this disproportionality, women, particularly Black

women, experience added challenges in the field of law enforcement, such as struggles to

gain acceptance from their male counterparts, as well as difficulties in career

advancement.

The bulk of research on women's policing has focused on the growth of women in

law enforcement, barriers, sexual harassment, gender differences, why women are

deterred from law enforcement, physical limitations, instruments used during the recruitment process, and the stress endured after entry into the profession (Hassell et al., 2011; Rabe-Hemp, 2008; Somvadee & Morash, 2008). Somvadee and Morash (2008) found that participants were especially worried about male colleagues' view that women could not do the job, in addition to sexual-harassment policies and the integration of women into work groups. Because of the nature of police work and the reliance police officers have on colleagues in life and death circumstances, relationships are critical. And part of the relationships and relationship building involve mentoring, formal and informal. However, the impact of mentoring on women, and specifically on African American female law-enforcement officers, receives little emphasis in the body of research. This lack of emphasis interferes with the progressive steps that law-enforcement organizations take in addressing the recruitment and retention of African American female law-enforcement officers. The legacy of discrimination against women and African Americans in law enforcement has helped keep the number of African American female police officers at a disproportionally low level, making it difficult to completely grasp African American female law-enforcement officers' experiences in addressing the issues they face. These issues highlight the importance of strong social career-oriented network groups and same-gender mentorship. Female officers with longer tenure likely have more knowledge, understanding, and coping skills that are useful for navigating police work.

The need for this study lies in the exposure of the complicated nature in which African American female police officers interact with their profession as well as with their race and gender. The understanding of this layering of identities in the field of law

enforcement can provide insight into the strengths and struggles in this population and their success as law-enforcement professionals. This understanding can serve the research population as well as departments in the potential for reduced grievances, increased job satisfaction, and increased diversity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experience of African American female law-enforcement officers and how they experience a myriad of issues in policing. Through the use of interviews, participants discussed topics such as job satisfaction, discrimination, impacts on career advancement, and the effects of mentoring. This qualitative study aimed to find common themes among the experiences of the African American female officers interviewed. Currently, minimal research exists studying the effects mentoring has on those working in the policing profession. Additionally, women, African Americans, and law-enforcement officers rarely collaborate to discuss professional challenges with an academic scope.

Conceptual Framework

Black feminist theory is a movement that found its voice in the early 1990s in the published works of Collins (2015). Its formation grew from the post-feminist movement that saw representation of a specific generalized group, but was not specific enough to address the needs arising from Black women's experiences. Black feminist theory differentiates itself by considering the thoughts and ideas of knowledge, consciousness, and empowerment through production by Black women. Although the recording of the Black-feminist-theory perspective can be undertaken by those who do not identify as a Black woman; its content can only be produced by Black women. This brings an

understanding that Black women have a unique experience that can be shared by other Black women, but not with others. The expressions of these common experiences may produce a multitude of responses however; the foundational themes can have commonalities. As stated by Collins, "As long as Black women's subordination within the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation persists, Black feminism as an activist response to that oppression will remain needed." (2015)

Collins (2015) described two themes behind Black feminist thought that include the "outsider within" and the "matrix of domination." Prior to World War II, many Black women worked in the households of White families as domestic laborers. This access provided an insight and perspective into the White culture that many Black men could not access. This form of work also presented a conflict in which Black women were hired for childrearing and domestic work for White families but were disconnected for most of the day from their own familial needs. This vantage allowed Black women to have an insider view of the White consciousness, while not having the ability to become a member. This outsider-within identity was also reaffirmed through television and film, solidifying the outsider-within status of Black women to the masses.

The matrix of domination Is a sociological ideology that attempts to discuss the connection of oppression through the lens of race, class, and gender. Black feminist theory attempts to shift the way in which society considers and conceptualizes oppression and domination through the lens of the oppressed. This shift in thinking creates a reassessing of the truth for the oppressed group. This truth provides a new context for their experiences and ways of knowing, with the goal of empowerment. This empowerment comes from acknowledgement that their experience is valid and that they

have the power to define their reality. This view runs counter to the domination that tends to view societal norms through Eurocentric and masculine perspectives. Normalized views are used as the foundation to define, theorize, and explain oppression, and in the process, strips the oppressed of their lived experience. Crenshaw's (2015) work on intersectionality speaks to Black feminist theory as well. Intersectionality attempts to find the relationship between identity and power. Crenshaw first used the term to explain how "racial and gender discrimination overlapped not only in the workplace but in other arenas of life; equally significant, these burdens were almost completely absent from feminist and anti-racist advocacy" (Crenshaw, 2015, para 4). Intersectionality identifies the alignment of race and gender and how this alignment affects a person. In the experience of Black female police officers, intersectionality lends a guide to the complexities of race and gender in a work environment where White men are privileged. This framework provides clear and distinct understanding in which the experience of Black women is specific to those who identify as such. It does not lend itself to the experience of women who identify as a race other than Black, nor does it provide context for those who are transitioning to the identity of a Black woman.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

- What are the lived experiences of African American female officers?

- What impact has mentoring played in the careers of African American officers?

- What are the challenges African American female officers faced during their careers?

- What recommendations would African American female officers offer to other African American female officers aspiring to advance in law enforcement?

Delimitations and Limitations

The limitations of this study required each participant to be female, identify as Black or African American, and currently work as a sworn law-enforcement officer in the State of California. The study aimed to gather the experiences of African American female officers from various law-enforcement departments in the San Francisco Bay Area; however, their availability determined their inclusion into this study.

Accessibility to the population was one of the main limitations of the study. Researcher accessibility only provided access to African American female officers in the San Francisco Bay Area. Thus, the results of this study lacked the ability to be generalized. A lack of African American female officers of higher rank in law-enforcement departments in this geographic area presented another limitation. Officers with less tenure may not have received opportunities to align themselves with a mentor or find access to a mentorship program. The use of Black feminist thought as a theoretical framework provides another barrier to generalizability to other female officers of different races. The use of this same framework also does not speak to the experiences of officers who were born male and now identify as female. Additionally, all participants shared the same experience of a sworn officer, which differs from the experience of female officers in other law-enforcement agencies.

Significance of the Study

This researcher sought to hear directly from Black female police officers as a way to hear directly from traditionally marginalized people. These voices provide a contextual insight into the experiences, shared beliefs, and perspectives of a group often left out of the research experience. A direct connection with these experiences offers a glimpse into what may affect their recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction. Additionally, these experiences can lead to ways to address social advocates' call for increased diversity. According to the University of San Diego, women can impact law enforcement through their less likely use of force, addressing violence against women and sex crimes, improve police-community relations, and encourage other women to pursue a career in law enforcement. (University of San Diego, 2019)

African American female officers are a unique subgroup in the profession of law enforcement. Large federal agencies, probation/parole departments, and sheriff deputies have very individualized organizational structures. Included are city-funded police departments that operate on the front lines through day-to-day interactions with city constituents. These countless face-to-face interactions present difficult situations that require quick thinking, emotional intelligence, analytical skills, physical abilities that include fighting and shooting, facility with de-escalation techniques, and the ability to shift to current contexts at a rapid pace; that is, the ability to go from a high-stress situation to an innocuous one at a moment's notice.

The purpose of this study was to capture the voices of a small sub-group in the law-enforcement profession: the African American female officer. Gathering their insights and sharing their stories can help bring to light the issues and potential

resolutions to the barriers Black women face as they enter the profession. This researcher aims to share insights with law-enforcement administrators to encourage organizational change. Study findings are important in increasing the recruitment and retention numbers for African American female police officers, which will help address the calls of social-justice advocates for diversity in policing. Currently the literature on mentoring and its effectiveness on the recruitment and retention of African American female officers are limited at best. To properly incorporate effective training, programs such as mentoring, and policy amendments, the first step is to identify the issues through the lived experience of African American female police officers. It is also important to understand their thoughts regarding necessary changes or suggestions regarding mentoring programs. The current literature has failed to address the notion that ethnicity and racial discrimination are major contributors to discomfort among female law-enforcement officers. By focusing on African American female officers, this study provided essential information about strengths and areas in need of improvement in mentoring.

Last, this study aimed to challenge the law-enforcement culture' which views women from a perspective that they are less able to do the job than their male counterparts. The literature has shown that women face challenges not faced by their male counterparts, and these challenges are more pronounced when the intersection of race and gender are considered. Through experience, some Black female officers have been able to masterfully navigate through the dominant culture, finding success in reaching higher ranked positions. However, many have continued to struggle with work-life balance and with earning respect through merit. These ranges of experience are

important in the development of organizational change and the understanding of how mentoring can be useful in the transfer of information.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

The following terms were operationalized for this study:

Discrimination: This term explains several types of oppressive behaviors including sex discrimination, race discrimination, and age discrimination (Kurtz, Linnemann, & Williams, 2012).

Law-enforcement officer: A government employee appointed to enforce the law, such as a police officer or sheriff. (lexico.com, 2019)

Formal mentoring: This term refers to a structured, purposeful, and intentional program that is usually formulated by organizations to have employees working together (Mujtaba, 2007).

Glass ceiling: This term refers to a metaphor used to describe an invisible barrier that prevents professional women and ethnic minorities from advancing into top leadership positions in an organization (Mujtaba, 2007)**.**

Informal mentoring: This term refers to a program that is spontaneous, casual, and intimate because the mentor and the mentee have, by choice, agreed on the relationship and have common interests and goals (Mujtaba, 2007).

Mentoring*:* This term refers to a powerful tool that can be used to accelerate the development of talent, improve staff retention, and create a high-performance culture that offers a real competitive advantage (Kram & Ragins, 2007).

Organizational culture: This term refers to the manner in which things are performed in an organization and passed to new employees through the process of

socialization that influences their behavior at work. Organizational culture includes assumed values, underlying assumptions, expectations, and definitions that characterize organizations and their members (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

Police officer: Police personnel are uniformed officers who regularly patrol and respond to calls for service. Others are investigators, perform court-related duties, or work in administrative or other assignments (U.S. Legal, 2014).

Summary

Significant changes occurred in the demographic composition of law-enforcement departments across the United States. Agencies became more racially diverse and reflective of the communities they serve. Although law-enforcement departments became more racially inclusive since the 1980s and prior, the number of women officers remains disproportionately low. As of 2019, the number of female officers still represents about 12% of the law-enforcement officers in the United States. This percentage is significantly lower when considering the number of officers in supervisory positions. A marked discrepancy exists in the number of women in the general population and in the workforce. This study analyzed Black female officers' experiences with mentoring and its effect on their career trajectory and job satisfaction. The collected information, such as researcher notes, research questions, knowledge, and access to mentorship, and individual perceptions are the variables in this study. Along with the dearth of information on policing in general, little research exists on the overall effects of mentorship on Black female officers and their career experiences.

In studying the lived experiences of these Black female officers, this study engages with areas of little research. In accessing this population, the findings may

provide insight into recruitment and retention issues voiced in previous research. The attempt to bring voice to these experiences could assist department administrators to develop tangible possibilities in the recruitment and retention efforts of Black female officers. The possibilities include pathways to supervisory and leadership positions, opportunities to become mentors or mentees, and ways to create support and network systems. The results may also help identify additional inhibiting factors that increase job dissatisfaction, remuneration issues, work-family-life balance, and stress. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth look at available literature regarding gender bias, stereotypes, gender representation, recruitment and retention, and discrimination in the organizational context of policing.

Additionally, Law enforcement typically operates under the parameters of a paramilitary work environment. This means that it is organized similarly to that of a military force. From this aspect of uniform attire and conduct is tightly controlled by the organization. This structure serves purposes such as being easily identifiable as well as safety to name a few reasons. Social cues such as attire give the general public a quick mental pathway to identify a person as a law enforcement officer. The law enforcement uniform also displays a certain level of power and authority. In addition to uniform standards, law enforcement agencies typically control hairstyles, acceptable jewelry and uniform accessories. These uniform guidelines can lead some to the perception that female's officers are trying to emulate a more masculine look for a variety of reason to include expression of sexual orientation. This is in fact a false perception. Uniform guidelines are more based around a practical and functional capacity of the job duties.

Long hair can easily get caught on equipment, can be grabbed by a combatant or suspect or become a hazard during other tactical situations to name a few.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Restatement of the Problem

Delving into the available literature, researchers offered a variety of discussions on the experiences of Black female officers. These discussions reached across a broad spectrum that included gender bias, policing, how women have been viewed, as well as the mentoring of Black female officers. This literature review focuses on the multitude of ways women are discriminated against in workplace settings. Avenues of study follow gender bias, conscious and unconscious discrimination, and pathways to reduction. When researching the relationship between law-enforcement culture and Black female officers; minimal research emerged. Explorations of formal and informal approaches to mentoring are covered here, as well as issues that affect career advancement.

There is little to information as to why research has not focused on the black female law enforcement officer experience. Generally, law enforcement is a closed community. With the sensitive nature of investigations, tactics and confidential information; researchers have limited access. Many agencies use an assigned public information officer (PIO) to disseminate information to the public. This effort is to reduce the potential of releasing sensitive information unintentionally.

Police-Force Diversity

The United States moved closer to the long-standing belief that the country is a multicultural society. The history of the United States and its institutions are multicultural (Barlow & Barlow, 2018). To deny this fact, according to Barlow and Barlow (2018) in

the 2nd edition of their book, *Police in a Multicultural Society: An American Story,* is to

deny ourselves. Barlow and Barlow (2018) concluded that historical analysis of police

forces must directly confront the impact that class, profit, and race had on their specific

formation in the United States. These factors impact every person in the United States,

including the institutions and policies of policing (Barlow & Barlow, 2018).

Police departments are more heterogeneous than ever before. The modal officer of

the past, who used to be White, male, working class, military experienced, and high

school educated, continues to change (Paoline, 2003). More minorities, women, and

educated and trained officers represent police departments across the nation than ever

before. The diversity of a police department affects culture in two ways. First,

representation of racial minorities, women, and college-educated personnel bring to the

policing profession various outlooks and attributes based on their past experiences. These

differences may affect the way officers collectively interpret the world around them

(Paoline, 2003). Personnel diversity may also affect socialization patterns, infusing police

departments with previously excluded members of the occupation (Paoline, 2003).

In the profession of policing, female officers stand in the ranks at rates higher

than ever before. Their role and workplace experiences changed greatly from the time

they first began working as police matrons in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Archbold &

Schulz, 2012). Although the number of women in the policing profession is at its peak,

departments face challenges in retaining female officers. Their integration has been met

with a considerable number of difficulties, unwitnessed among their counterparts

(Archbold & Schulz, 2012). Hassell, et al. pointed out "the occupational culture of

policing is so entrenched that policing remains a very masculine profession, although

some argue that increased diversification and contemporary policing philosophies have begun to erode many of the values that typify traditional police culture" (2010, p. 38). The male patriarchy still affects women negatively in the police department. Discrimination and sexual harassment are pervasive in police departments and supervisors and commanders often tolerate such practices by others and also frequently perpetrate them personally. Once on the job, women frequently experience intimidation, harassment, and malicious impediments, especially as they move up the ranks (Hassell et al., 2010).

Yu (2015) conducted a study of occupational barriers, measuring qualitative and quantitative data generated from surveys of 168 women working in 34 federal law-enforcement agencies and varying in race, ethnicity, age, rank, and tenure. Yu concluded that all women reported at least one occupational barrier in the workplace. Negative attitudes from male coworkers, lack of high-ranking female role models, and work-life balance issues presented the biggest barriers women face in federal law enforcement. Despite the obstacles, women persist against the challenges and highlight the unique attributes of federal law enforcement to the policing research community (Yu, 2015).

Women in Policing

The history of women in policing is wrought with various issues related to promotions, belief in their ability to handle the job, work-life balance, and surviving in a masculine culture. Administrators and leaders in police departments adhere to the masculine culture of policing as a means of forming the dominant system for officers to follow, including subordination of women, authority, competitiveness, aggression, discrimination, and violence (Archbold & Schulz, 2012).

The history of women in policing, including initially working as social workers, matrons, and school crossing guards in police agencies, was not limited to White women, but included Black women as well. In more recent times, women achieved higher positions, such as middle managers and chief executives. Several factors, including Black political empowerment and the quest for representative bureaucracy, contributed to increases in the number of Black female sworn officers in urban police agencies. Yet, they remain underrepresented, due in part to cultural and organizational barriers (Greene, 2000). One cannot overemphasize the importance of recruitment, selection, and training for the overall health and stability of a police department (Alpert, Dunham, & Stroshine, 2014). In the past, deliberate policies of discrimination and predetermined selection criteria excluded many women and members of racial and ethnic minority groups from police work (Alpert et al., 2014).

Between 1990 and 1999, the Los Angeles Police Department found it more difficult to retain female officers than male officers (Kringen, 2014). Female officers left their jobs at a higher rate than male officers, with 4.3% and 3.0% of female and male police officers resigning from their positions every year, respectively (Stevens, 2017). Also, female officers are twice as likely to be involuntarily terminated compared to male officers, with 1.2% of the female officers dismissed each year compared to 0.6% of male officers (Stevens, 2017). To increase the underrepresentation of Black women in the field of policing and fortify their recruitment, retention, and promotion, certain cultural perceptions and all-masculine environments need to be challenged in dynamic ways. Tokenism saw African American police officers' ambitions toned down as they were unable to reach their goals to obtain higher-level positions in police departments

(Archbold & Schulz, 2012). This trend is likely to continue until police departments employ significantly more African American women (Archbold & Schulz, 2012).

Although police departments increased the number of women hired as patrol officers, women's advancement to command positions failed to keep up (Archbold & Schulz, 2012). Women experienced two types of hindrances when trying to advance command positions in police departments. The first hindrance concerns organizational practices that make it challenging for women to be promoted. The likelihood of promotion largely relates to service in highly valued assignments such as Special Weapons and Tactics (Archbold & Schulz, 2012). Many found mentoring valuable to African American police officers who attained a police-chief position (Sprafka & Kranda, 2000). Mentoring programs in policing provide an opportunity for departments to promote professional growth, inspire personal motivation, and enhance effectiveness of police service. Sprafka and Kranda established these mentor programs upon realizing mentoring significantly related to African American police officers' achievement of a command position. Formal mentoring programs provide all employees the opportunity to benefit. Formal mentoring programs help define roles for the mentor and mentee and establish goals and procedures for the mentoring process (Sprafka & Kranda, 2000).

Improving the cultural competence of police and their agencies can improve law-enforcement effectiveness, enhance officer safety, and reduce civil and criminal liability (Barlow & Barlow, 1993). For managers in law enforcement, the desire to recruit and retain women of racial and ethnic minorities in their workforce and reduce potential lawsuits based on discrimination and harassment provides further impetus for developing an agency sensitive to multicultural perspectives (Barlow & Barlow, 2018).

Unconscious Bias against Women

Unconscious gender bias remains one of the key barriers to women advancing in their careers (International Labour Organization, 2017). Women are underrepresented in corporations globally and the number of women diminishes with each step higher up the corporate ladder. Two of the main barriers are gender bias and gender-based discrimination. Contextualizing historical practices in U.S. organizations, gender bias became entrenched in many corporate structures and practices. For instance, performance-evaluation programs and processes mainly reflecting masculine criteria placed women in worse positions than men and negatively impacted women's opportunities to advance in their careers. For example, one company stated one of the performance indicators is "unfailing available and total geographical mobility" as one of the criteria used to evaluate leaders (International Labour Organization, 2017, p. 4).

Moreover, the teams assigned to undertake special-project assignments that increase their visibility and competitiveness for promotion positions are mainly composed of men, hindering the chance for women to advance in their careers (International Labour Organization, 2017). Also, companies assign value and prioritize employees based on performance. Because many performance evaluators are suited to men, meritocracy acts as one factors hindering women in their chance for promotion. Moreover, men receive opportunities to participate in leadership-training programs; this participation is critical for consideration for promotion to higher positions in a corporation. The International Labour Organization (2017) found 62% of men and 51% of women in an organization admitted weekly interactions with an organizational leader. More men are considered for supervisory and leadership positions when they rise in these

organizations, perpetuating masculine-dominated norms in the workplace that stunt female career growth.

Those in charge of recruiting and hiring employees seem influenced by their own political stances and political orientation when considering hiring women. Henley (2014) investigated how gender bias is affected through the use of fictional samples of job-applicant information and mock-interview transcripts when simulating an interview process. Henley manipulated the prospective occupations and the sex of the applicant to highlight differences in attitude. Specifically, Henley required each participant to go through one of four randomly accepted applicant transcripts. Henley asked study participants to imagine being an employer. Next, Henley encouraged participants to imagine a vacancy for a middle-level manager position in their organization that they must fill by looking at the details of the applicant presented in the applicant transcript. The researcher assessed the eligibility of the applicant and political ideology of participants and theorized that because conservatives supported traditions, they also are likely to ardently support assigning women to positions they traditionally associate with women. The researcher assumed liberals tend to reject inequality and support social change, whereas conservatives support inequality and tradition in society. Henley guided the research by hypothesizing that conservatives, when compared to liberals, are less likely to hire women for gender-atypical roles in organizations, compared to positions associated with gender stereotypes. However, the results proved different: Conservatives hired women for gender-atypical positions more often (Henley, 2014).

Marginalization

Landmark civil rights and equal-opportunity accomplishments over the last 50 years superficially achieved equity in the workplace for women. Many women became full-time, important members of the workforce through the Supreme Court's endorsement of affirmative action (Abrams, 1989). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was the main litigation tool women used to ensure they received equal treatment to men in employment opportunities. Using Title VII of the Civil Right Act, advocates of gender equality and opponents of gender bias and discrimination made claims for equality in two ways. First, advocates challenged hiring practices that considered women to be different from men. Second, advocates attacked seemingly neutral policies that effectively reduced efforts to hire and promote women. Women experienced greater exposure to opportunities after courts removed categorical exclusions created specifically to bar women from gaining employment, such as weight and height requirements and physical entrance examinations.

Over time, feminists' court victories did not secure women the benefits they initially intended (Abrams, 1989). Upon entering the workplace, women now held access to more employment opportunities but also encountered new problems that traditionally only pertained to men. Social relationships received a blow as former friends and acquaintances avoided the women who fought for employment. Moreover, women experienced difficulties forming normal mentoring relationships crucial to career advancement. At the same time, newly employed women faced gender discrimination from men who sexually demeaned and harassed them in the workplace. Some employers created rules requiring female employees to wear sexually provocative uniforms when

performing their jobs. Women in the workplace became the subject of lewd sexual comments and jokes from colleagues and supervisors (Abrams, 1989).

Newly working women encountered another challenge: scrutiny from employers regarding family obligations (Abrams, 1989). For instance, many employers were unwilling to accommodate women's pregnancies, indicating the drawback of employers to consider women to be similar to men. Some women were denied maternity leave and worked late into their pregnancies until they could no longer work. Other women returned from maternity leave only to find their jobs filled by other individuals (Abrams, 1989).

Because of these and other similar experiences, women and feminists noted winning employment opportunities only seemed a momentary victory; a more important hurdle needed to be won (Abrams, 1989). Women and feminists quickly suspected that the presence of women in the workplace remained unable to renounce gender bias and discrimination; rather, minor adjustments resulted to existent norms centered in masculinity and the domination of women. In retaliation, feminist scholarship incorporated pregnancy and questioned whether women could be considered equal to men when women were different because they could experience pregnancy (Abrams, 1989).

Other scholars modified the claim of equality, arguing artificial differences existed between men and women because society constructed those (Abrams, 1989). Gilligan (1982) described that the differences between men and women were based on social meanings in addition to inherent differences. Gilligan researched how boys and girls resolved moral conflicts, finding they used different approaches; thus, differences

emerged between the genders that employers must consider. Gilligan also showed that the incomplete moral development assigned to women was largely a result of models created for the evaluation of men. Gilligan proposed a need for psychological models that evaluated the moral development of female participants based on personal peculiar characteristics (Gilligan, 1982).

Chen (2015) used Gilligan's psychological models to explain the behavioral differences between male and female leaders in the police force. Gilligan argued male ethics are rooted in a sense of justice and a conception of rules and what is right, whereas female's ethics are rooted in caring and connection to understanding relationships (Gilligan, 1982). Chen used these ethics to compare the difference in behaviors of senior male and female police officers. Female senior police officers adopted the attitude that people hold responsibilities toward others; valued connectedness, intimacy, and relationships; and sought avoidance of detachment and abandonment (Chen, 2015). These female police-department leaders and lower ranking female police officers reluctantly judged other people according to a strict set of rules-moral relativism-and considered intricacies of individuals' life experiences before making moral decisions. In contrast, male police officers feared intimacy, because masculinity often correlates to independence and toughness. Senior and other male police officers enforced rules ruthlessly and believed rules must apply equally to all people, without consideration for the circumstances leading to a particular scenario (Chen, 2015).

According to Chen, male police officers often thought of citizens' rights as formulas-like mathematical problems—and assumed every problem had only one solution (Chen, 2015). For instance, if a thief steals money because of a need to buy food,

male police officers punish the offender in the same way they would if the thief stole the money for other reasons. This is because inflexible and abstract moral concepts govern male moral agents. In contrast, female police officers treat a thief who stole money to buy food with leniency more often than men because of the special circumstances. The decisions female officers make are based on mutual consensus because female police officers still want to offer care and to ensure peace to people in need. Thus, a thief who steals for food receives different treatment from a thief who steals in other circumstances (Chen, 2015).

The differences between male and female police officers also affect the workplace culture, creating an oppressive environment toward female police officers (Chen, 2015). A study by Babin and Boles (1998) indicated "a tendency for women to behave more consistently with voiced organizational policies and rules" (p.80). Men act more aggressively than women and are thus more likely to express personal opinions regarding an organization (Chen, 2015). In contrast, women act more submissively, by nature, and are more inclined to obey commands because of an instinctual nature. Therefore, female police officers agree to policies that do not completely align with their personal beliefs, whereas male police officers boldly express personal views and opinions in the organization (Chen, 2015).

Increasing numbers of indicators have shown increased acceptance of women as part of the workplace, which speaks to the place of women in modern society. Legislation allows women to own and control property. Also, many politicians, including presidential candidates, actively seek vast demographics of female voters in efforts to gain their support. However, advocates of gender equality are not deceived into believing gender

bias and discrimination ended, but persists in a subtler form. Many crucial problems women face continue, but are subtler. Many people in society are unaccustomed to women, owning and controlling property. Additionally, formal equality prevents many women from achieving victories in custody and divorce settlements. Many outdated sexual stereotypes negatively impact rates of prosecution for rape. Also, most feminists view issues women face as qualitatively different, requiring new solutions. This growing awareness of women's rights in modern democracies is rooted in the interaction between feminist theory and the practical experiences of women. The initial fight for women's rights aimed at access to jobs, property, and positions in politics. However, after gaining access, women realized increased access does not necessarily translate to the creation of equality. Many women opted into careers affording little social respect and offering few opportunities for promotion and advancement. When politicians receive concerns regarding women's issues, many are treated as concerns from a narrowly focused interest group. Although activists made considerable strides in progress to end discrimination against women in the workplace, many more steps are needed to truly emancipate women.

Two problems persist in addressing inequality and gender bias in the workplace. At the forefront, work–life balance and sexual harassment remain two major obstacles women face in the workplace. A need exists for a better approach to challenge the male-centered norms pervading the culture of the workplace in the corporate United States.

A. A. Wilson (2016) conducted a phenomenological study determining the perceptions and experiences of female police officers. A. A. Wilson argued female police officers are poorly represented in police departments throughout the country. As a result,

the seclusion of women in law-enforcement departments became a topic of discussion in many police literature reviews. A. A. Wilson aimed to understand, describe, and assess the lived experiences and perceptions of female police officers and the impact on the officers' lives, finding female police officers hold the same career goals and ambitions as male police officers. Institutional barriers against Black female police officers had no effect on officers' job satisfaction (A. A. Wilson, 2016).

Morash, Kwak, and Haarr (2006) investigated barriers to integration by observing the patterns of interaction in a police bureau. The researchers also sought to uncover the cultural underpinnings and organizational structural devices that combined to obstruct Blacks and women from integrating into the police bureau (Haarr, 1997). The researchers revealed that attempts to create integration and provide equal opportunity for gender and racial minorities in police departments failed, despite the application of various organizational structural devices (Haarr, 1997). No decisive cause emerged for the lack of integration of gender and racial minorities in the police force based on any individual, political, or structural condition or characteristic. Instead, gender and racial differences at the workplace arose from features of organizational life, such as the presence of Black female officers in patrols, (b) police leagues in a department, (c) the decision-making processes during police job assignments, (d) multiple promotional lists, (e) conflicts, and (f) disagreements on affirmative actions. Internal organizational features were more important than external social and political factors in determining racial- and gender-based discrimination for police officers (Haarr, 1997).

Boogaard and Roggenband (2009) aimed to determine how structure and agency intersect to produce inequality in the Dutch police force. These scholars collected data

from groups and direct observation and analyzed the data using information gathered from the sample of intersecting organizational, ethnic, and gender identities. The scholars established that female police officers act as agents, reflecting and engaging with intersecting identities and the unequal distribution of power they derive from these relationships. Female police officers perpetrated gender biases against fellow female police officers when assigned positions of leadership. Therefore, although these female officers openly challenged inequity derived from social identity and position in the police force, these officers reproduced power inequalities and gender biases to maintain the power they consolidated as individuals (Boogaard & Roggenband, 2009).

Some of the most heinous forms of gender inequality occur in human-resources departments because of hiring practices organizations often use during policy formulation, decision-making, recruitment and training, remuneration, and promotion of women in organizations (Starmaski & Son Hing, 2015). Some human-resource practices associated with creating and perpetrating gender inequalities in the workplace include policies, organizational climate, culture, strategies, structures, and leadership. For example, the level of sexism portrayed by the individual responsible for decision-making affected the level of gender bias individuals displayed while making human-resource policy decisions. Although gender inequality, as a system, is capable of reinforcing itself indefinitely, companies can take several actions to make the recruitment, training, and promotion of women favorable for forward career advancement (Starmaski & Son Hing, 2015).

Reducing Gender Discrimination against Women

It is possible to reduce gender discrimination in the workplace by creating economic independence for women, balancing family and work balance throughout the life cycle, and ensuring women are free from violence, harassment, and discrimination (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008). Researchers on the Listening Tour gleaned several findings pertaining to gender discrimination. First, many women experience gender inequality daily because of encounters with various factors. For instance, some women interviewed during this tour admitted to fears of being poor later in life because of constant movement in and out of work. Also, women complained of extreme difficulty in juggling work and family responsibilities. Tour researchers also established that factors contributing to gender inequality interconnected, and any attempts to emancipate women from discrimination in the workplace should begin by recognizing the differences between women. Although many common experiences of women in the workplace exist, many differences exist between individual women. Some of these differences include socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, age, disability, and race (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008).

Achieving economic independence for women is a central goal for achieving gender equality all over the world (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008). Economic independence attaches value to the paid and unpaid work women contribute socially and economically. In Australia, women earn 16% less than their male counterparts. Consequently, men have access to more retirement money than women in a similar position. More than half of all women between 45 and 59 years old saved $8,000 or less toward superannuation funds. In contrast, more than half the men in the same age

bracket saved an average of $31,000 during a similar period. As a result, the possibility of financial constraints for women increased. A Canberra community-consultation participant expressed feelings of extreme anxiety surrounding 3 months of medical bills for a hospitalization, in addition to an upcoming retirement (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008).

The second cause of inequality and aspect of gender discrimination is that many organizations do not consider the family-work balance throughout the life cycle (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008). Many Australian women find it difficult to balance paid work with family-related responsibilities, such as caring for their children, grandchildren, sick and disabled relatives, and their parents. Many organizations allow women to partake in these responsibilities without pay. During the Listening Tour, researchers noted that Australian women do not receive payment during maternity leave. Male colleagues-who are not held back from career obligations because of pregnancies-continue earning income while female colleagues are on unpaid maternity leave (Cerise & Black and White Media Australia, 2008).

Human-resource policy and associated organizational structures, process, and practices can also reduce gender discrimination (Starmaski & Son Hing, 2015). For instance, managers recruiting employees from a wider background and who include many women during the recruiting process can receive rewards through bonuses, incentivizing human-resource managers to recruit more women into the taskforce. Second, human-resource managers should adopt family-friendly policies because family-related issues take a great toll on women and occupy considerable portions of energy and attention. Human-resource decision-making and enactment systems can also reduce gender

discrimination by standardizing and objectifying performance data of all employees. Hence, rewards, punishments, and promotions rest on actual performance and not on superficial matters. Finally, lowering the level of sexism tolerated from an organization's human-resource decision-makers can reduce gender discrimination throughout organizations (Starmaski & Son Hing, 2015).

Six women offered opinions based on life experiences of different ways women could overcome gender bias in the workplace and advance their careers to top-level positions. Arnold holds the distinguished Crum Brown Chair of Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh and is the founder of SciSisters, a network for senior women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (as cited in Powell, 2018). Arnold noted that when she started her career, the rate of promotion in her organization favored men. Women, distinguished in their fields with international awards, experienced discrimination through these lower promotion rates. The university sent women in Arnold's department to a leadership course where the women performed well in internal metrics. The women realized all they needed was support for being women in leadership positions and opportunities to meet other career women in leadership organizations and discuss their career plans (Powell, 2018).

Arnold noted that diversity for the women seemed the best way to obtain quality results (as cited in Powell, 2018). Prior to that time, many women at the university did not interact with other women in similar positions. In response to this lack, Arnold founded SciSisters. SciSisters helps women in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields through the use of an application using Google Maps technology. Women use this application to search and connect with mentors locally and

internationally. Arnold saw this application as useful in meeting other more experienced

women and gathering useful advice on performance and career advancement. Programs

such as this can help reduce gender bias. Another way Arnold attempted to counter

gender bias was through sharing data in conversations. For instance, Arnold asked a

colleague, "Have you read the research that shows that women are perceived, by both

men and women, to have spoken more in a conversation, even when they have spoken

less?" (as cited in Powell, 2018, p.2).

Dunsworth offered opinions on overcoming gender bias in the workplace.

Dunsworth is an associate professor of biological anthropology at the University of

Rhode Island in Kingston (as cited in Powell, 2018). Dunsworth argued that women can

counter discrimination in the workplace by modeling expectations. For instance, in the

university medical field, bias urges that one call male professors "doctor" but female

professors are not addressed in the same way. Dunsworth stated she changed her e-mail

signature to Dr. H. Dunsworth to counter students who might e-mail her with the

derogatory "Hey, Holly!" In the classroom, Dunsworth also conducts herself in a manner

that portrays a woman of dignity. For instance, Dunsworth wears academic robes during

lectures so she is viewed as an academic instead of a sex symbol. Dunsworth insists

students handle matters with her in person rather than through mail. Dunsworth stated

this helped set boundaries in the workplace and stopped one avenue of harassment of her

female colleagues (as cited in Powell, 2018).

Meir is a comparative physiologist and astronaut at NASA Johnson Space Center

in Houston, Texas. The main way Meir fights gender discrimination in the workplace is

by building confidence (as cited in Powell, 2018). At NASA, women often dress in a

more technical fashion, especially those working in technical and operational fields, because women who look too feminine are viewed as less competent than their colleagues. Meir noted similarity of dress in the workplace would not change anything. Meir felt a woman dressing in a feminine way exudes confidence that is very important in combating gender discrimination in the workplace. Meir also stated women should be confident in their skills and achievement because it makes others see them as equally competent to male colleagues. During Meir's PhD defense at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla California, Meir noted that stating personal accomplishments aloud to friends and instructors helped boost her confidence. At one time during Meir's PhD defense, she told one of her supervisors, "This is a ridiculous amount of work I've done. I do deserve this. I know more about oxygen depletion in diving penguins and seals than anyone" (as cited in Powell, 2018, p. 3).

Calisi-Rodriguez is an assistant professor of reproductive biology at the University of California, Davis (as cited in Powell, 2018). Calisi-Rodriguez spoke up to combat gender discrimination at work. Calisi-Rodriguez recalled a time she attended a faculty meeting with her husband. After her husband introduced himself, she began introducing herself, only to be abruptly cut off by the next person so he could introduce himself. Calisi-Rodriguez immediately navigated the situation by being vocal, "Hey, I was skipped over. I'm faculty in the neurobiology department." Calisi-Rodriguez stated she is firm on taking credit for personal ideas and objects when male colleagues attempt to present them as their own. She also advocates for minor interruptions from women during meetings. Calisi-Rodriguez stated one example of an interruption during a meeting is a mother breastfeeding a baby she brought into the meeting (as cited in Powell, 2018).

Eberle is a vertebrate paleontologist and Director of the Museum and Field

Studies graduate program at the University of Colorado, Boulder (as cited in Powell,

2018). Eberle is well educated in fighting gender discrimination in the workplace. Eberle

stated every woman should have a mentor of any gender in an organization. First, a

woman should thoroughly assess individuals in the workplace to determine potential

reactions to different situations. After this assessment, the woman should look for a

person they respect and get along with, then choose this person as their mentor. Eberle

continued, stating women should avoid people with negative perceptions of the

organization and surround themselves with positive forward-thinking peers. When

difficulty arises in identifying someone who meets these criteria, a woman should seek a

relevant person to request an assigned mentor. Another way for women to fight for

equality in the workplace is to fearlessly negotiate salary at the very beginning of

employment. An investigation into the salaries of other employees in the organization

with similar credentials and experience provides a foundation for salary negotiation.

Similarly, women should conduct the same investigation prior to the acceptance of tenure

or a promotion to achieve more equitable pay. Last, Eberle urged women to strive to be

treated as people and avoid hiding behind gender identity.

Many in Australia and the United States show interest in the emancipation of

gender discrimination in the workplace. Towns, Good, and Olsen (2017) noted that

gender inequity exists as one of Australia's most contentious workplace issues. Towns et

al. observed that despite decades of research in ways gender equality can be promoted in

the workplace, organizations showed little examination toward workplace approaches

they enacted to create gender equality. These scholars proposed a framework used in the

creation of a practitioner framework for creating gender equality at the organizational

level. When the framework is applied to organizations, the scholars hoped their

recommended practitioner framework would help reduce the level of gender

discrimination and open more opportunities for women to rise to leadership positions in

the organization. However, the framework is not perfect due to the complexities inherent

in every organization that affect the application of a standardized framework (Towns et

al., 2017).

Several organizations advocate for the equality of women and the elimination of

all forms of gender bias and discrimination at the workplace (Towns et al., 2017). The

United Nations Women's Empowerment Principals and Calvert Women's Principals are

two organizations carrying out this mandate in nations under the banner of the United

Nations (Towns et al., 2017). Overt displays of gender and racial bias in the United States

diminished considerably after the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the creation of the

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission approximately 50 years ago (Tolbert &

Castilla, 2017). However, despite landmark steps toward gender inclusivity in the

workplace, more overt and covert forms of gender bias persist in organizations. The high

rate of class-based and individual lawsuits alleging gender and racial discrimination

suggests many employees in the Unites States perceive workplace discrimination as an

important and continuing employment problem. Hence, employers implemented a wide

array of organizational policies and practices to increase gender inclusion and reduce

gender discrimination. These organizational policies and practices also ensure workplace

equity, prevent legal claims of bias and discrimination, and rectify past and potential

problems of bias and discrimination. Employers' efforts to improve gender inclusivity in

the workplace are voluntary or driven by court verdicts and settlements that involve charges of gender discrimination. Over the past decade, a growing body of researchers focused on assessing how different practices aiming at "diversity management" actually affect outcomes that benefit women and minority groups in the workplace (Tolbert & Castilla, 2017, para.3).

More than 40 years ago, researchers began appreciating the important role of organizational practices and decision-making in changing and maintaining broad patterns of social stratification (Tolbert & Castilla, 2017). From that time on, researchers focused on studying different organizational processes, such as remuneration, promotion, performance evaluation, training, job assignment, and hiring. For example, women in federal agencies chose jobs with shorter career ladders more often than men, reducing the chances of being promoted to higher positions in the federal agency (Tolbert & Castilla, 2017). Organizational practices impact diversity management and change the gender and racial composition of a managerial group in an organization (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006).

In a longitudinal study with a sample of 800 randomly selected U.S. work establishments with 100 employees or more, scholars investigated the link between the presence of seven practices of diversity management and changes in the gender and racial composition of the managerial group (Kalev et al., 2006). Researchers observed one key finding: giving responsibility for diversity management to specific staff positions or committees (increasing the accountability for such practices) is one of a few practices consistent in organizations with high numbers of women and African Americans in managerial positions. Other common practices, such as including diversity as a

component of manager-performance evaluations and diversity training, generally showed limited and sometimes negative effects on the presence of women and minority groups in managerial positions (Kalev et al., 2006). Subsequent research provided ways to ensure that accountability helped reduce overt and covert forms of gender bias and discrimination in the workplace.

Castilla (2015) showed accountability could help reduce the pay gap and thus guarantee women and minority group's higher salaries. In this research, Castilla examined merit-based pay decisions made by more than 2,600 managers for approximately 9,000 employees working in large service organizations in the United States. The analysis compared individual compensation before and after receiving an increase in pay implemented by organizational management through organizational procedures that increase pay transparency and pay accountability in the performance-reward system of the firm. The researchers also included companies that created a performance-reward task responsible for monitoring and analyzing pay decisions and ensuring that only factors related to performance drove the reward system (Castilla, 2015).

Another useful action to counter gender discrimination is promoting managers solely on merit. Heilman (2012) conducted three studies that chose women for leadership positions partly or wholly based on their gender. As a result, other individuals in the firm perceived their leadership approaches negatively, and the self-examination of the female leaders suffered as well (Heilman, 2012; Heilman, Block, & Lucas, 1992; Heilman, McCullough, & Gilbert, 1996). Some of Heilman's research indicated that women assigned to leadership positions in their organizations were chosen wholly because of

their gender (Heilman, 2012; Heilman et al., 1992, 1996). In one experimental study, participants evaluated female leaders more negatively after learning they were women (Heilman et al., 1992). This evaluation resulted in the idea that many expect organizations to choose female leaders solely to fill open leadership positions and many view these female leaders negatively if they believe the women received promotion because of credentials and performance (Heilman et al., 1992). Thus, female leaders have negative reputations whether they were chosen because of their gender or because of merit (Heilman, 2012). This negative view stems from a culture of masculinity in company cultures accustomed to male leaders (Heilman, 2012).

Hence, one way to eliminate gender bias in the workplace is by creating a culture inclusive of women (Heilman, 2012). Acceptance of female leadership in organizations cannot be based on gender or merit considerations because other people in the organization are still bound to view female leaders in a negative light. The solution, in this case, is to change the culture in organizations to be inclusive of women and accept female leadership as legitimate, if backed by results (Heilman, 2012). Although Heilman (2012) and colleagues (1992, 1996) suggested that diversity management efforts have potential backlash effects, Tolbert and Castilla (2017) argued that little scholarly information addresses what actually occurs when organizations implement diversity-management efforts. The effect of a given organizational practice on gender inclusivity in the workplace varies in industries, labor markets, organizational groups, and social groups. Some contingencies include lower and higher hierarchal levels, internal and external labor-market status, gender, and race (Tolbert & Castilla, 2017).

The success of diversity actions focusing on gender and race differences in an organization differ by demographic group (Tolbert & Castilla, 2017). Dobbin (2009) supported this assertion, conducting research in U.S. firms coerced by legal action to adopt policies and practices that improved the race and gender diversity of their leadership (Dobbin, 2009; Dobbin, Kalev, & Kelly, 2007; Dobbin & Kelly, 2007; Dobbin, Schrage, & Kalev, 2015; Dobbin, Sutton, Meyer, & Scott, 1993). Dobbin and colleagues focused on the following parameters: creation of diversity management positions, hiring and promotion strategies to improve diversity, and diversity training. Creating officers and offices for diversity management had a positive effect on the representation of Blacks and women in managerial positions. Hence, under pressure from the legal system, companies are more likely to ensure organizational practices and policies have measures guaranteeing diversity management and maintaining a positive effect on the representation of African Americans and women in leadership positions (Dobbin, 2009; Dobbin et al., 2007; Dobbin & Kelly, 2007; Dobbin et al., 2015, 1993).

In Australia, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Toolkit received extensive use in fighting gender discrimination and advocating for gender equality in the workplace (Towns et al., 2017). The Workplace Gender Equality Agency created the Toolkit with input from various parties, such as commercial organizations and academic institutions. The Toolkit is a framework for assessing gender equality in an organization using an entire-organization approach. The Toolkit conceptualizes the journey of the organization toward gender equality as a progression from mere compliance and avoidance with legislation toward a strategic and sustainable approach to gender equality. The Toolkit defines 12 key areas that comprise essential components of a gender-equality strategy:

(a) gender inclusive culture, (b) leader and manager capability, (c) talent pipeline,

(d) flexibility, (e) gender pay equity, (f) gender composition, (g) supply chain,

(h) policies and processes, (i) measurements and reporting, (j) strategy and business case,

(k) leadership accountability, and (l) stakeholder engagement (Towns et al., 2017). The

process of the Toolkit considers all aspects separately, detailing various goals and the

progress required to achieve each aspect, but also shows how the different steps and

aspects interconnect. For instance, a gender-inclusive culture represents the embodiment

of all the other aspects. Leaders in the organization represent custodians of gender

equality in the workplace and stakeholders receive engagement and consultation before

the organization takes each step to ensure accountability (Towns et al., 2017).

Summary

The literature review revealed that the main cause of gender bias in organizations

is a pervasive culture of masculinity that permeates the outlook of many organizational

leaders who are mostly male. Some ways bias and discrimination manifest in the

workplace are unequal pay, less chance for recruitment and promotion, and a generally

negative outlook toward women. The literature review also offered mechanisms that can

be adopted to rectify this defect, including policies embracing diversity during

recruitment and promotion.

Police Culture

In the book, *Understanding Police Culture*, Crank described police culture as,

our capacity for moral and ethical development, the way we describe and act out

fundamental institutions of marriage, church, government, and economy, the

labeling of others as friends or foe, our ability to act in ways that display justice

and fair play, our identity as citizens, all of these expressions of culture. (Crank,

2014, p. 13).

Crank continued,

The ideas of culture is the recognition that culture is neither bad or good, but

rather is a central organizing principal of social life. Human culture brings out a

central feature of our humanity-our capacity to find meaning in our lives. So, it is

for the police as well. It is culture that makes police like the rest of us, not

different from us. (2014, p.14).

Therefore, police culture rests on the unique conduct of police officers and the

performance of police organizations, a set of values and rules that sprang from and

evolved through the experiences of officers, affected by their places of work (Campeau,

2015). It is important to understand that police-department culture heavily influences how

the department conducts its matters internally. Occupational cultures contain accepted

practices, rules, and principals of conduct that are applied, depending on the situation,

generalized rationales, and beliefs (Paoline, 2003).

This section described various aspects of police culture. Masculinity in the culture

is pervasive and finds protection in the community traditionally assigned to men. This

section also showed that society holds gender expectations for each gender and members

of each gender are expected to adhere to these guidelines. Thus, for gender and race

equality to achieve realistic status in the policing field, women and minority police

officers should receive mentorship that aids in their career paths. Finally, this section

discussed some of the advantages of improving cultural competence in the police force.

These competencies improve law-enforcement effectiveness, promote officer safety, and reduce civil and criminal liability.

<div align="center">Mentoring of Female Police Officers</div>

Sabat and Mishra (2010) conducted a qualitative assessment of previous studies on the role of female police officers in determining various barriers to advancement. The study included the participation of female managers who related personal experiences about being victims of sexual harassment and gender abuse. The women's efforts helped undermine the notion of a masculine organization. One hurdle female officers' face in acquiring management positions is a lack of mentors or dysfunctional mentoring relationships that adversely affect the female officers (Sabat & Mishra, 2010).

Networks in the work place regulate access to jobs, provide mentorship and sponsorship, channel the flow of referrals and information, and augment positions of power. A mentor is a more experienced person who forms a relationship with a less experienced person to encourage, advice, and support them (Sabat & Mishra, 2010). Mentorship has two functions: career advancement through sponsorship and improving confidence and enhancing identity through role modeling. A female police officer benefits from mentoring because it may assist in the advancement of her career. Not all mentorship relationships are advantageous to the mentee; however, as problems in interpersonal dynamics in the mentor-mentee relationship may have a negative impact (Sabat & Mishra, 2010).

Lonnie and Crawford (2005) conducted a review of formal mentoring documents of various organizations to show that formal mentoring is more advantageous than informal mentoring. Formal mentoring occurs when an organization demonstrates

support of the mentoring relationship and provides training to the mentor and mentee. Informal mentoring consists of a natural component of everyday relationships in society and in the workplace. In informal mentoring, one acquires insight, knowledge, friendship, and support from the other. In formal mentoring, the mentor is viewed differently according to the field or organization (Lonnie & Crawford, 2005). In the police force or military, a mentor is usually a supervisor or a senior officer who is challenged to differentiate between their supervisory and mentoring relationships (Lonnie & Crawford, 2005).

Formal mentorship is advantageous for the organization, mentor, and mentee (Lonnie & Crawford, 2005). The mentee can receive personal gain through career advancement, whereas the organization receives a positive learning environment. Mentors share in the growth of their mentees while leaving a legacy for the organization. The organization as a whole benefits from the mentoring relationship through tangible factors such as pathways to leadership, continuity, and increased employee motivation and commitment. To address problems arising from a formal mentoring program, members of the organization participate in its design (Lonnie & Crawford, 2005). As a whole, female officers' benefit from the advantages mentorship provides for a mentor and a mentee.

The National Center for Women and Policing created a manual aiming at increasing the number of women hired and retained at all branches of law enforcement (Harrington, 2001). Previous research supported the notion that women police differently: through the use of less physical force. Additionally, women often communicate better than men, diffusing tense and violent situations that result in the reduction of citizens

being charged with crimes of resisting arrest. As a result, one advantage women have is their ability to more effectively address cases of violence against women. One report detailed the historical assignment of the first two female patrol officers on an equal basis in Indianapolis in 1969. Since then, women joined the police force and played critical roles, but their total numbers remain small and have increased at a slow rate. The lack of female role models played a role in the low numbers. Female officers only comprise about 14% of the sworn law-enforcement officers in the United States, making them less visible as role models for women in the community and female police officers in training (Harrington, 2001).

The small number of female police-offices role models resulted in more men recruited by male police-officer friends, perpetuating male domination in police departments (Harrington, 2001). One potential alternative to this process is implementing a formal mentorship program. In the development or maintenance of a formal mentoring program, the coordinator should have ample knowledge of issues women face in the law-enforcement field. The existence of a formal mentoring program also provides an additional avenue for women to make complaints that may include sexual harassment. A formal mentorship program provides an important tool in the hiring and retaining of female police officers (Harrington, 2001).

United Nations Women in Somalia arranged for a study to be conducted studying female police officers. The researchers aimed to provide information about the capacity in which the police force responded to cases of sexual- and gender-based violence. This study improved judicial remedies for women and encouraged the full participation of women in the police force (Koshin & Botan, 2017). The researchers conducted the study

between September and November 2016, collecting data from nine locations in Somalia through use of a public survey, informant interviews, and a focus group. The researchers found the need for an increase in the number of female police officers present, due to the small number at that time. Increasing the number of women police officers would benefit law-enforcement agencies in areas such as intelligence gathering, sexual- and gender-based violence, and performing searches of women in public places. The study authors recommended the federal government encourage female police officers be involved in role modeling for young women and junior female police officers (Koshin & Botan, 2017).

Koshin and Botan (2017) asserted that forming a group to advance the rights of women in the Somali police force and promote, support, and mentor incoming and junior police officers would be a suitable modification. The African Union Mission in Somalia supported gender units in the Somalia police force (Koshin & Botan, 2017). As part of its mandate, a police unit formed to address training and mentoring programs. According to the results of the survey, about 58% of respondents demonstrated awareness of a formal mentorship program in the police force and about 38% demonstrated a lack of awareness of a female staff association in the police force (Koshin & Botan, 2017). The formation of a staff organization promoting female police officers and mentorship programs provides ways for female officers to begin to thrive.

Jones (2017) conducted to determine what female police officers in formal mentorship relationships perceive to gain from the relationship and how those perceptions affect them in the work place. Little academic research exists studying the role of mentoring in the male-dominated British police force. Mentoring provides a

supportive and collaborative relationship, enabling one to reach one's career and personal

potential (Jones, 2017). Mentoring provides a space for women to thrive in the male-

dominated work place of the British police force. The number of women in the work

force progressively increased as women had the same level of commitment to work and

pursued career ambition as did men. In the same study, the British police force filled

senior positions with men, most of the time, leaving women in lower paying,

stereotypically female jobs. Women are therefore still marginalized in the police force

(Jones, 2017).

Female police officers in formal mentorship relationships perceived a benefit

from the mentoring arrangement, accruing to mentors and mentees. Female officers

asserted they gained intrinsic and extrinsic benefits in cognitive and skill-based learning

and creating social networks (Jones, 2017). In male-dominated masculine work cultures,

formal mentoring can work to mitigate certain barriers. The study may influence more

organizations to invest in the formal mentoring of female police officers (Jones, 2017).

Formal mentoring serves as a tool of empowerment for women in places such as the

police force.

In their article on mentoring newly hired police officers, Grace and Petras (2014)

highlighted discouraging statistics about the number of women recruited in fields of law

enforcement. Less than 15% of police officers are women in various public organizations.

These female police officers faced many barriers surrounding job inclusion and

promotion, which resulted from gender stereotyping and discrimination. Mentoring is

considered a positive tool in assisting newly hired officers into police culture. Mentoring

helps police administrators and managers strengthen the organization while maintaining

an accurate assessment of the retention of female police officers. Administrators designed

formal mentoring programs, which were then reaffirmed through administrative action.

(Grace & Petras, 2014).

Due to the sensitive nature of mentoring, organizations should maintain clear

guidelines for the behavior of the mentor and mentee. Failing to establish proper

mentorship relationships may lead to major legal and financial implications (Grace &

Petras, 2014). One step toward the development of a mentorship program is determining

what type of mentoring program should be implemented: formal or informal. Formal

mentoring programs tend to be highly structured and cost more to implement due to

training costs, maintenance, and incentives. Organizations measure mentoring costs

against the overall benefits the organization receives. Informal mentoring is less costly,

but presents a unique challenge due to the intimate nature of the mentor-mentee

relationship. Problems such as inappropriate behaviors and discrimination can arise. The

cost of informal mentoring may pale in comparison to the cost of formal mentoring, due

to legal costs arising from emergent issues (Grace & Petras, 2014).

The organization's culture sets the tone for how men perceive women's roles in

the organization and the attitudes of senior female police officers (Grace & Petras, 2014).

When the notion of female subservience prevails in an organizational culture, newly

hired women may feel threatened by male mentors, which could stunt their development.

Additionally, job stress caused by gender stereotypes can lead to health issues, an

increase in medical costs, and a decrease in work availability. A young female police

officer mentee can fail to develop important skills when her female mentor takes on the

attitude of getting along, and her male counterparts subscribe to stereotypical beliefs

about women. Several outcomes benefit from mentorship: (a) becoming acclimatized to an organization's norms, (b) ideologies and standards, (c) increased female police officer retention, and (d) positive public perceptions of the police force as a suitable working place, irrespective of one's gender (Grace & Petras, 2014).

Carson (2009) sought to determine the role of mentoring in the retention of female police officers in the UK. Carson conducted a phenomenological study examining the experiences of female officers in mentoring programs and the effects of those experiences. Women faced some struggles when entering the predominately male police force. The department's interest in mentoring began with the establishment of the mentoring program by the City of London Police. Carson collected data using a phenomenological study through the use of semi-structured interviews. Women participating in the mentoring program in the City of London Police participated in the interviews. After analyzing the results of the survey, Carson revealed several positive effects associated with the mentoring relationships.

Female police officers accrued benefits from mentorship programs, such as career development through job promotions, which is an important use for mentoring but should not place undue pressure on mentors and mentees (Carson, 2009). Mentoring assists the mentee in discerning the direction they want their careers to take. The department had few women at the rank of Chief Inspector or above. Mentoring gives officers an opportunity to discuss day-to-day issues and traumatic events. Mentorship provides advice to female officers regarding issues of balancing work and domestic life (Carson, 2009). With the number of benefits deriving from mentorship programs, female officers and officers of color could benefit the most from participation.

In the 2009 article *Women in Policing*, Flanagan sought to find the various hurdles female police officers addressed during recruitment. A survey conducted in 2007, in which female officers from 23 counties in Texas participated, provided information for this article, and two senior female officers related personal experiences in the police force through interviews. The author introduced the paper with a brief history of women in policing. The first female law-enforcement officer, employed by the New York City Police Department received the reference of "matron." Due to pressure from the American Female Moral Reforms Society in 1845, the department hired this woman. The matron had limited duties that included escorting women in the detention center, cleaning jail quarters, and caring for female prisoners. Since then, the number of women in law enforcement substantially increased. The author recognized the challenges facing a woman working in the predominately male police force (Flanagan, 2009).

Flanagan (2009) identified a variety of hurdles many female officers faced when qualifying as a police officer. One hurdle was the perception many men hold that female officers are emotionally and physically weak. The second hurdle was the difficulty surrounding the physical ability and agility test. The author related that personal experiences in the police academy were quite unpleasant. Senior female police officers identified getting educated, working hard, and identifying strong mentors as a way to be successful in the male-dominated field of law enforcement (Flanagan, 2009). A senior female officer acts an ongoing source of knowledge, advice, and support for newly hired women.

In a 1995 study by Morash, Kwak, and Haarr (as cited in Morash et al., 2006), the researchers sought to identify various causes of stress for police officers. The researchers

collected data for the study from a sample of police officers from 11 police departments and used mixed qualitative and quantitative methods: conducting interviews and performing regression analysis and variance on collected data. Officers' work stress can lead to poor health, burnout, absenteeism, and mental health issues. Causes of stress for female police officers are different from those of men. The few women in the policing field are likely to have a different experience in the organization and with citizens. Previous researchers studying the topic suggested the causes of stress for female police officers include lack of acceptance brought about by the male subculture and the related denial of information, advice, and sponsorship from coworkers and supervisors. Another cause of stress for female police officers is a lack of role models or a lack of informal tutoring or mentoring (Morash et al., 2006).

Workplace stresses adds to the complicated nature of police work and can be compounded by a lack of social support. Support networks, such as family, supervisors, and coworkers, become important aids in reducing workplace stress. For female police officers, social-support networks become especially useful in countering issues women face in policing. In 1995, Morash and Haarr (as cited in Morash et al., 2006) collected data from a survey conducted in 1990 that followed female police officers and showed that social-support networks reduced levels of stress for female officers in addressing issues of gender bias and harassment. According to the study, because the female officers received mentoring and social support, levels of stress in male police officers appeared higher than those recorded in female police officers (Morash et al., 2006).

Existential Review

Black female police officers in the Nigerian Police Force experienced the same phenomenological obstacles as U.S. Black female police officers when working to advance to senior management positions. Osibanjo, (2013) referred to this phenomenon that women hampered from advancing to higher positions in their career paths as the *glass-ceiling effect*. The researchers conducted a statistical analysis of data collected from a sample of 198 respondents. Results showed the various causes of the glass-ceiling effect among women in the Nigerian Police Forces (Osibanjo, 2013).

A cultural expectation of the female gender hindered the career advancement of women and was the greatest cause of this phenomenon (Osibanjo, 2013). Female officers attended higher education and made career plans, influencing the glass-ceiling effect, whereas counterproductive male behavior had a small, mild effect on the glass-ceiling effect. These scholars recommended public and private organizations start enlightenment campaigns, educating women about ways they can advance to senior-management positions. Also, they recommended public and private organizations apply equal-opportunity employment policies into organizational or company policies (Osibanjo, 2013).

Dick and Metcalfe (2007) conducted an empirical study determining whether any evidential basis existed for the lack of career progress among UK female police officers due to female officers having lower levels of commitment and less tenure than male officers. Despite a rise in the number of women in the UK Police Force, a small number of women attained the senior ranks of the organization. Dick and Metcalfe used whole-population surveys of police forces from two counties in the UK and compared the

population of male and female officers that achieved tenure. Further the authors

compared the organizational commitment of female and male police officers. Dick and

Metcalfe used this comparison to analyze whether female police officers experienced

organizational and managerial influences that undermined their commitment to the police

force, compared to male officers. The researchers found that female officers held the

same level of commitment as male officers. The scholars refuted the claim that only a

few female officers in the UK advanced to senior positions in the police force because

women officers showed less commitment than men. Dick and Metcalfe concluded their

article by asking the Police Leadership Development Board to incorporate an agenda that

improves management skills in the police force, asking this board to train senior police

officers to use transformational leadership styles (Dick & Metcalfe, 2007).

Alderden, Farrell, and McCarty (2017) supported the importance of more diverse

leadership styles in the police force. These scholars conducted a study establishing the

impact of senior police leadership diversification on police-officer job satisfaction and

the perception of fairness in the police force. Job satisfaction and perceptions of fairness

are some factors influencing performance and retention in organizations. The researchers

chose a sample of 15,236 police officers from a pool of 88 agencies and applied the

multilevel model to determine the effect of individual- and agency-level variables, such

as measures of diversification, affected perceptions of fairness, and job satisfaction

among police officers. Diversification in senior-management positions improved

perceptions of fairness among all officers. Diversification was important in ameliorating

feelings of injustice and unfairness among African American police officers (Alderden et

al., 2017).

Thus, diversifying the leadership of the police force so more officers can be retained and promoted in the police force was important (Alderden et al., 2017). However, only studying the effects of senior-leadership diversification on officer perceptions limited the study. The scholars recommended future researchers study the effects of officer diversification on the perceptions of citizens and how members of the public view the diversification of the personnel entrusted with their security (Alderden et al., 2017). These researchers did not assess the perceptions of different genders and races in the police force.

Presently, a culture of masculinity grips the police culture. The *machismo* and highly sexualized nature of the banter and jokes affirmed male domination in the police force (Brown, 2007). Linton (2017) conducted empirical research to obtain data on the perspectives of various police officers on gender inclusivity in the recruitment and leadership of the police force. Linton gathered data from a stratified sample of 85 police officers from different genders, lengths of tenure, ages, ranks, and races. The researcher used input from male and female police officers to avoid receiving data from only female police officers, thereby avoiding gathering data from the feminine point of view alone. Some perspectives offered by participants illustrated the culture of male domination in the police force (Linton, 2017).

One female police officer noted that a team she led consisted of only one male subordinate, who had problems taking orders from the female police officer because she was a woman (Linton, 2017). This account illustrated the cultural expectations of women: women are not viewed as leaders but are expected to be subordinate to the leadership of men. One young female recruit named the *machismo* culture and hierarchical nature of

the police force as the main obstacle hindering her integration into the police force as a new recruit. Also, one respondent pointed out that other British women get 9 months of maternity leave, but female police officers in the British police force get just 3 months of maternity leave (Linton, 2017). This description illustrated that organizational practices in the British police force are disadvantageous for women. Some police officers expressed the opinion that police work involved a large amount of physicality and thus was appropriate for male officers, but that women's roles should be confined to tasks that do not involve much muscle work. Most respondents expressing this opinion were male officers, which might account for the masculinity pervading British police culture (Linton, 2017).

Dunn (2014) offered statistics of senior police officers in a large urban Midwest police department. The positions Dunn considered in the study included, in descending order of seniority, chief, deputy chief, commander, captain, and lieutenant. Dunn collected data about the police from the ClearPath System, a computerized police database created and maintained by the department. In total, 297 high-ranking police officers participated in the study. The ranks of the 297 participants were 202 lieutenants, 40 captains, 42 commanders, 11 deputy chiefs, and nine chiefs. The department also employed a superintendent and a deputy superintendent (Dunn, 2014). Of the 297 high-ranking sworn personnel were 44 White female police officers, 13 Black female police officers, four Hispanic female police officers, and one Asian female police officer. No female police officer ever held the position of superintendent and first-deputy superintendent, the two highest-ranking positions in the department (Dunn, 2014).

Summary of the Literature Review

Gender discrimination remained one of the issues that continuously affected women in modern organizations. Gender discrimination persists despite the progress made by the feminist movement in winning women's rights, initially thought impossible. The feminist movement helped women win access to formal employment, challenge and organizational policies and practices, and accommodate the features of all women in the workplace. These features included work-life balance and physiological considerations, and provided tangible results. Despite these victories, women still found themselves in a culture of masculinity and chauvinism with barriers to recruitment and promotional opportunities. This male-dominated culture met a slow demise as women gained more employment and career-advancement opportunities. As a result, women found alternative ways to improve their chances of promotion. Mentoring is one method African American police officers found useful in improving the chances of promotion for Black female police officers. The retention and progression of Black female officers found mentoring relationships useful. Thus, mentoring is one practice African American police officers associated with increased performance, higher retention, and better chances for career advancement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze and explore the lived experience of African American female law-enforcement officers and their access, connection, understanding and experience with mentoring in law enforcement. Currently, very few formal mentoring programs exist across the United States and informal mentoring is generally limited to officers in field training. Some new hires find the transition from trainee to the status of solo officer difficult beyond the field-training-program timeframe. This has left many officers, specifically, female officers of color, with little support to overcome the challenges of law enforcement. This failure to provide systematic support laterally and longitudinally has played a role in difficulties in the recruitment and retention of female officers who identify as African American.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

- What are the lived experiences of African American female officers?

- What impact has mentoring played in the careers of African American officers?

- What are the challenges African American female officers have faced during their careers?

- What recommendations would African American female officers offer to other female officers aspiring to advance in law enforcement?

Research Design

To best capture the lived experience of the participants, face-to-face interviews were conducted. A qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate manner to maximize the use of participant narratives while providing space for fluidity in the research questions. Qualitative information also provided a context in which detailed psychological, emotional, physiological, and mental experiences would be accurately captured, as expressed by the participants. This specificity translated directly into policing, as the responses were not limited to numerical categories.

Narrative inquiry is a ubiquitous practice in that; human beings have lived and told stories about that living for as long as they could talk. These lived and told stories and the talk about stories are one of the ways people fill the world with meaning and enlist one another's assistance in building lives and communities. (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 35). The flexible nature of narrative inquiry provides the researcher and the participant access to a wide scope of experiences. This scope can include contradictory and inconsistent feelings. Narrative inquiry does not view this as a limitation, but more an extension of the human experience. Hence, narrative inquiry goes beyond the static nature of quantitative collection methods while focusing attention on the conditions research participants experience in their relation to the profession of policing. This focus is the central issue on which this research is based.

Research Setting

The San Francisco Bay Area encompasses nine counties and over 100 cities. Population's numbers vary, but, according to the Bay Area census, approximately 7 million people reside in the area (MTC-ABAG Library, 2019). On November 4, 2014

California voters passed Proposition 47, which reclassified certain felonies into misdemeanors. One of the reclassifications included the classification for possession of a controlled substance. This reclassification speaks to the liberal political leanings of the region; a 2015 *SFGate* article described San Francisco as the nations' most liberal city (Dowd, 2015). Some would argue that the aforementioned information makes policing in the San Francisco Bay Area an anomaly to the rest of the nation. The demands, expectations, pay, and job satisfaction all relate to this amalgamation of liberalism and the law.

Currently, the standards for law-enforcement officers in the State of California are set forth by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training Department (POST). Their function is to set forth the minimum selection and training standards each new officer must receive prior to becoming a sworn officer in the state. Each police department creates and defines their own mission/value statement, internal policy, and procedures, as well as ways to manage disciplinary conduct. These internal documents can be more restrictive than the law but cannot be less restrictive. To offset the many conundrums of litigation, many police departments use a policy template from legal experts and modify it to specifically suit their individual departmental need. Companies such as LexisNexis provide computer-assisted legal resources, case-law management, and risk management to formulate these policy templates.

<div align="center">Data-Collection Procedures</div>

The collection of information and data is essential to have a working relationship in the context of the law-enforcement profession. An initial e-mail soliciting voluntary inclusion in this research was sent to associates in the field. This e-mail request used a

snowball technique to increase the sample size. Once a large enough participant sample was reached, with 20 participants as the desired threshold, they were e-mailed or physically received a recruitment letter (see Appendix A). The purpose of the letter was to inform participants of the interview protocols. The protocols included a reminder of their voluntary status, the use of audio recording/transcription, confidentiality. In a post-recruitment letter, participants received an informed-consent form for their signature. Participants who decided to continue in the research set up a time and location for their one-on-one interview.

Participants were asked to take part in a one-on-one interview that lasted approximately 60–120 minutes. The length of the interview was determined by participants' length, depth, and connection to their responses. The interviews were conducted in a time and location most convenient for the participant. The first part of the interview involved background and demographic information (see Appendix B). This background information was essential in understanding the context of participants' lived experiences. All information was coded for confidentiality. The second part of the interview covered questions regarding lived experiences as a law-enforcement officer and participants' relationship to mentoring in the profession.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a method in which people interact, interpret, and experience their surrounding world. Continuous experience in life, interwoven with dialogue with others and oneself shapes the way people consciously and unconsciously organize meaning. These meaningful experiences create an individualized story. Many find talking or storytelling to be a natural way to express themselves. These stories constantly develop

and shift as people engage with narratives from the social world. Researchers increasingly use narrative research in studies of educational practice and experience, chiefly because teachers, like all other human beings, are storytellers who individually and socially lead storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In using this approach, the research participant is regarded as a collaborator rather than an informant guided by the agenda of the researcher (Altork, 1998).

Narrative inquiry can find itself shifting in many different directions, as the story being told is the guiding force for the qualitative nature of the research. These shifting directions find focus in the collaborative efforts between the researcher and the researched, using the narratives to find qualitative meaning. Thus, a case study, a biological study, a phenomenological study, or an ethnographic study may have a narrative form of representation (Creswell, 2012).

<center>Population</center>

The participants in this study worked in various law-enforcement departments across various cities in the San Francisco Bay Area. The criteria for this study included participants who actively work as full-time sworn law enforcement officers in the State of California and identified as African American and female. Their sworn status places them in the function of an officer, detective, or supervisor in a law-enforcement agency that falls under the scope of the California POST). Parole/probation, privately funded police, and federal agents, were not included in this study. Each participant was asked to voluntarily be an agent in this study. Last, the female African American officers had to be willing to share their time of service, number of agencies worked, current assignment,

number of mentors in the policing profession, and number of mentees in the policing profession.

African American law-enforcement officers, who were known through professional relationships, were sent an e-mail requesting their participation in this research study. This e-mail solicited additional candidates through snowball sampling. It was made clear that their additional efforts to recruit others would be appreciated but not a requirement of this study. This method of sampling was used due to the large number of agencies and limited access to the research population. After a reasonable sample size was reached, one-on-one interviews were conducted. During the interviews, an audio recording device was used along with notes taken by the researcher. The audio recordings were later transcribed through a professional transcription service. These transcripts and researcher notes were coded to ensure confidentiality for each participant and were used as the basis for the thematic analysis.

Each participant's information was kept confidential. Since some of the participants worked in the same agency, efforts were made to make sure they did not run into each other during the interview process or at any other point during this research. Efforts were also made to ensure that a broad representation of the San Francisco bay area was employed by using a variety of agencies. The use of multiple agencies also was a way to increase the level of anonymity for each participant.

Instrumentation

Initial interviews were arranged with each voluntary participant. The interviews included a series of demographic and background questions as well as open-ended

questions designed to understand participants' lived experience. The interview questions are listed below and in Appendix C.

Protection of Human Subjects

An informed-consent letter was drafted and disseminated to the participants. A copy of the informed consent is attached as Appendix D.

Background/Role of the Researcher

The researcher's position in this study was to create a platform in which African American female law-enforcement officers could share their lived experience in the context of mentoring and their profession. This platform provided an opportunity for participants to voice their thoughts through their narrative perspective. This perspective was put through a thematic analysis for future research. In this study, I acted as an active participant by leading the face-to-face interviews and facilitating in-depth analysis in the form of research questions. The opportunity allowed a rare look into the perceptions of law-enforcement officers' though a multifaceted lens of race and gender.

Epoche is defined as a suspension of judgment, according to *Merriam Webster Dictionary* online. This could be viewed as setting aside one's beliefs, judgments, and cultural contexts. My connection to the topic was through my own experiences as a person of color working in the field of law enforcement. From my time in the profession, I have seen a multitude of unfair, biased, beliefs and practices that are pervasive on every level of the policing hierarchy. What I have seen over the course of the last few years was the reduction of African American males entering the profession whereas the number of African American females has increased. This reduction could be, in part, due to the hiring practices that may be discriminatory. With this new wave of African American

officers leading the charge in community-policing tactics, more pressure and responsibility seems to lie on the shoulders of these female officers, while still withholding social support in their careers.

Prior to undertaking the interview portion of this research. I spent time in self-reflection and dealing with my own views regarding the culture of law enforcement. Through this process prior to the interviews, I was able to re-center my own biases and enmesh myself in the interview process. This deep involvement in the research participants' experiences allowed me to quiet my own beliefs to the best of my ability.

Senior African American female officers may have had the time to develop the necessary coping strategies to survive in the field of policing, yet lack systematic ways to transfer this knowledge. The experience of African American law-enforcement officers can vary greatly. However, what seems to be consistent is an underlying feeling of professional inferiority, exclusion based on cronyism, and acceptance through assimilation.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

Through a qualitative lens, this research explored the professional lived experiences of Black female law-enforcement officers in their work places in organizations, their perceptions of, and access to professional mentoring, and how gender affected their overall job satisfaction. Specifically, this study considered (a) the impact mentoring has had on their careers, (b) challenges faced such as gender bias and discrimination, and, (c) participants' recommendations for aspiring officers who are Black women. Eight interviews were conducted with women who identify as African American and work as full-time sworn officers. The theoretical framework used in this research was based on Collins' Black feminist theory, which "uses the concept of intersectionality to analyze how "oppressions [such as 'race and gender' or 'sexuality and nation'] work together in producing injustice." (2015, p. 22). Black women have traditionally been marginalized in the United States due to a complex and systematic system of oppression. This marginalization is unique to Black women because of the ways their racial identity interacts with rather than layers on their gender identity. This framework guided the research process from participant selection, development of interview questions, and analysis of the data gathered.

This chapter begins with a generalized description of each research participant. Each participant chose the pseudonym used throughout this process, to maintain confidentiality. Any mention of specific agencies was removed as well to provide an increased level of anonymity. The interviews were professionally transcribed and divided

into categories of commonality. Last, findings were organized by theme. The researcher based the themes on the overarching research questions:

- What are the lived experiences of African American female officers?

- What impact has mentoring played in the careers of African American officers?

- What are the challenges African American female officers faced during their careers?

- What recommendations would African American female officers offer to other African American female officers aspiring to advance in law enforcement?

Interview questions (see Appendix A) were used to facilitate a process in which open dialogue could be used to express views, concerns, and challenges in being an African America female law-enforcement officer. Across the various interviews, the following themes emerged: (a) mentorship, (b) sexual harassment and, (c) gender discrimination.

Eight women who self-identified as African American were included in this study. Participants all were active full-time sworn law-enforcement officers employed in the San Francisco Bay Area. At the time of the interviews, all participants were academy graduates and were non probationary status. All but one of the participants was sworn officers who worked in city-funded police departments. City-funded police departments are defined as law-enforcement agencies funded under a city budget. An exception was a sworn officer in the California Department of Corrections, which is funded through the State of California.

The eight participants in this study were all San Francisco Bay Area natives who worked in law enforcement departments in the Bay area. Seven of the eight attended either a 2-year community colleges or a 4-year institution. One of the eight participants graduated from a 4-year historically Black college in the southeastern United States. The professional law enforcement experience of these participants ranged from 2 years to more than 20. Three of the eight participants had 2 to 3 years of experience. Two had approximately 5 years of experience on the force. Another two had approximately 15 years of service, whereas one participant had more than 20 years of experience on the force. The two most experienced participants had surpassed the role of front-line officer and now work among the administrative levels, which placed them in administrative supervisory roles. The varying levels of work experience may have played a role in participants' sense of identity as law-enforcement officers as well as their willingness to form and share their perceptions of their work. In addition, three of the eight participants openly identified themselves as members of the lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer (LGBTQ) community. Three self-identified as mothers.

<div align="center">Participant 1: Lucy</div>

Um, so I am a two year I guess seasoned officer in the metropolitan area. Um, I'm African American female. I am 29 years old and this is my first career type job.

<div align="right">—Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019</div>

Lucy (a self-selected pseudonym) grew up in the San Jose area and was a Division 1 collegiate athlete. Her goal of being a graphic illustrator reflected her passion for drawing. Toward the end of her senior year in college, she believed her time as an athlete was coming to an end and realized she no longer wanted to invest time in

developing as a professional athlete, a profession that, as she described, "didn't look much fun" because of the nomadic lifestyle and low pay; Lucy shifted her career trajectory. During the time Lucy was considering her life transition, Lucy witnessed two women being harassed on public transportation. This sparked the idea that she could enter law enforcement, which would satisfy her desire to help others with a profession that led to a reliable pension. Though she did not have any law-enforcement officers in her family, Lucy believed she could be successful as a police officer while contributing to her community.

<div align="center">Participant 2 (Dorothy)</div>

I'm courageous, because, like, if you look at how I was raised in my family, I am the first of many different things. First to finish college, first to be a homeowner, first to take on a job that was considered taboo and/or dangerous.

<div align="right">—Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019</div>

Dorothy (a self-selected pseudonym) grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and after college, worked as a United Parcel Service employee before becoming a high school biology teacher. After 2 years of teaching, she found her niche in developing students. However, the limited salary left some room for dissatisfaction. When a friend of hers applied for position in the law-enforcement field, the friend encouraged Dorothy to go through the application process for policing as well, bringing her along. Seeing policing as a way to continue her work supporting youth, but with a higher income, Dorothy decided to apply. During the hiring process, Dorothy continued in the hiring process while her friend did not. With the push and support from trusted family and friends, she

found herself in the profession 21 years ago and has since moved up in the ranks of the police force.

Participant 3 (Lennon)

Because I am East Oakland all day. I'm just basic, what you see is what you get. I love blackness, I love black people. I wear my heart on my sleeve. I'm honest and I believe the universe gives you what you give it, so I'm extremely, um, just open and, um, and I believe in opportunities. I believe in supporting and, just being a good person. I'm god child first, then I am a mother, then I'm a friend, um, and I just like to hang out and talk about how to encourage and empower black people.

—Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019

As a proud Bay-area native, Lennon (a self-selected pseudonym) is currently working at her second law-enforcement agency. Her father played a major role in her decision to enter the profession. Her father is a military veteran who developed life-long relationships with people across broad spectrums, linking her with law-enforcement professionals as a young child. Lennon was introduced to the lifestyle of law-enforcement professionals through these personal relationships and saw the critical role law-enforcement officers had in her home community. She saw policing as viable and valuable work, playing a vital role in her decision to enter the profession.

Participant 4 (Uhuru)

I would describe myself as caring, um, thoughtful, family oriented, um, just people oriented in general … that's pretty much what people, over the years, that have known me, or gotten to know me says.

—Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019

Uhuru (a self-selected pseudonym) is a 2-year officer at her first agency. Uhuru grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and studied in college in the local area. Prior to entering the law-enforcement profession, she worked as a park ranger as well as a music instructor. She said a male colleague at her park-ranger position played a key role in her lead into the law-enforcement profession. This White male colleague wanted to become a police officer and encouraged Uhuru to go through the process with him. After 2 years as a police officer, Uhuru still feels she is learning the profession and determining her place in the field. She continues teaching and creating music outside of her work as a police officer.

Participant 5 (SUBJECT 5)

I am a 41-year-old African America female. I'm a mother and a wife, an aunt, a sister, a daughter. Someone who is loved outside of my job. I do take my job extremely serious, 'cause I've got a lot of people to get home to, and I take that to heart, every time I walk through the door.

—Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019

Subject 5 (a self-selected pseudonym) stated she attending college with the hopes of becoming a parole officer. Subject 5 had a desire to help others and saw this as a way to contribute to her community. She graduated from a historically Black college with a degree in criminal justice and returned to the Bay area where she grew up and prepared herself for work in some aspect of the law-enforcement field. During a law-enforcement recruiting fair, Subject 5 discovered that opportunities in parole work were much more limited than in the Department of Corrections. She opened herself to becoming a

corrections officer, which led her to her current agency with the California Department of Corrections. After 16 years there, Subject 5 has found her place in the field.

Participant 6 (TWO-THOUSAND AND TWO*)*

I would say right now um, my interest just basically just focused on my purpose, my family. Um, and being a mentor to kids in the community. And, that's just not kids in general bit that's just people that I come across in my life. Um, I'm and advocate for women in my gym, specifically women of color, which focuses on health and clean eating right now.

—Two-Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019

Two-Thousand And two (a self-selected pseudonym) is a 2-year law-enforcement officer at her first agency. Two-Thousand and Two grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and after receiving a bachelor's degree, returned to her native city to begin her career. Prior to her current career, she worked at a Police Activity League, mainly focused on marginalized children, providing after-school programming and mentoring to youth. Her main goal was providing mentorship for the population at the Police Activity League facility. At this organization, local police officers often participate and some of these officers encouraged Two-Thousand and Two to apply for law-enforcement work. With this encouragement, Two-Thousand and Two began the process and is now an entry-level police officer.

Participant 7 (C)

Well, I am a, uh, 29-year-old female. I have two sisters, so I am the oldest of three. Um. I was the first out of my family to go to college. I have a step-father and I have never met

my real father. Currently I have my own family, one-year-old daughter. And, um, kinda

just working as a police officer.

—C, Interview, August 21, 2019

C was a police explorer as a high school student, prior to entering the profession full time. The Police Explorer Program is targeted at youth to introduce them to work in law enforcement. Many of C's high school friends were in the Police Explorer Program, which inspired C's participation. The program familiarized her with the policing profession and gave her an insider understanding of the organizational culture and structure. This introduction led C to pursue police work and she currently works at the same agency in which she was an Explorer in high school.

Participant 8 (Angel)

Um, I'm the oldest of my mom's kids, middle of my dad's. Um. I would say I take on more

of the oldest role. Uh, I've been told I'm a natural born leader. Um, 33 years young. I

feel like I am a workaholic.

—Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019

Angel, a Bay Area native, is currently working at her second agency with 5 years' experience. Before entering police work, Angel enlisted in the military reserves as a way to establish herself professionally. She is also currently a high-level noncommissioned officer in the military reserves. She sees herself as an advocate for the LGBTQ community, including her work toward nondiscriminatory practices in law enforcement.

Findings: Research Question 1

The first research question aimed to understand more about the lived experiences of Black female law-enforcement officers. The researcher asked participants general

questions about their paths to law enforcement and their senses of themselves through the process of becoming an officer and on the force. Upon review of the interview transcriptions, four themes emerged as factors contributing to the lived experience of African American female law-enforcement officers: (a) shared reasons for entering the field, (b) sense of self, (c) lack of representation, and (d) out-group membership

Shared Reasons for Entering the Profession

Seven of the eight participants spoke of a person in their lives, typically a family friend or coworker, who guided them in to the profession of law enforcement. These individuals helped shaped the idea that these women could thrive in the profession, even when many participants did not even considered the profession prior to these relationships. All seven stated that, on some level, these informal mentors impacted their decision to continue into the field. All eight participants stated that prior to entering the field; they had a desire to help others. They described this "help" in ways such as mentoring, leadership, and support. These initial desires to help others were further shaped by the assistance of these informal mentors. This is important in the sense that most reported they had a preconceived idea of police officers, based on the historical treatment of people of color. This preconceived idea was rooted in a negative perception and validated by family and friends, prior to entering the profession.

Dorothy stated that her interests and intentions were not to officially become an officer; however; with the input of others she decided to move into the field. Dorothy stated,

Um, I mean, I also had some interest in it, but I didn't really think I could do it. It was on a fluke. I just started testing, you know, one of my girlfriends that I

worked with at [United Parcel Service] was like, hey, we should try out for the

[XX] police department and I was, like, yeah, why not? But not with the intention

of actually making it or becoming a police officer. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10,

2019)

Lucy said that at the end of her collegiate athletic career, she was unsure what she

wanted to do. Considering her age at the time, access to a decent wage and a pension led

her to policing. Lucy stated,

But policing is one of those things that doesn't require like a ton of time and it

doesn't have the super like you have to have known you wanted to be a cop

forever to, you know, get into it. And you can make a good amount of money.

You have, you know, benefits. Its, it's not bad for people who kind of figured out

what they want to do late. You know? (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

She continued,

Okay. So, um, let me, I can share this story. I was on Muni and I seen these guys

get up and they picked this lady up and they shook her. And they took her phone

and they ran off the bus. And I was like, "I want to do something for this lady so

bad." Because I know she has to be so scared right now. You know? Like…and

she was crying. She was like, "I just want to go home. I just want to go home."

Like can I, like of course I'm not just going to blindly take off after these people.

One, it's a phone. She can get another one. You know? And two, like I don't

know. These people can stab me, shoot me, whatever. You know? Like I'm not

equipped to just be running after somebody. So just seeing stuff like that. And I

was just like, "Hey, I want to be able to help somebody in that situation." And

then also the whole turmoil between, you know, distressed people were. A lot of people were upset about what was going on and, and I wanted to know what was going on. And you? (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

Lennon was brought into the profession at the urging of her father. His attempts to set his daughter in financial security led her to connections in the realm of public safety. These interactions with firefighters and law-enforcement officers, in conjunction with her father's advice, allowed her to consider law enforcement as a viable profession. Lennon stated,

my father served this country for 33 years in the Navy, and everybody that would get out of the military, when they would come to our house for the weekend barbeques or just to socialize with my dad, they were either fire fighters or cops. And back then, in the 80s and the 90s, they were hiring people that were a reflection of the community, um, people that had a vested interest in the community. So, they were hiring black cops, they were hiring black fire fighters, and everybody seemed happy. And so, my dad was like, "Well," I said, you know, he said, "Find something that you like to do and get paid to do it." (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019)

Uhuru said that although she considered law enforcement to be a noble profession, she did not originally see herself completely committing to the idea. She stated it was when she was urged by a coworker during her time as a park ranger that she solidified her idea of becoming a law-enforcement officer. Uhuru stated,

Um, it was actually a little mustard seed planted in the back of my head, at a young age … .I remember someone asking, "Oh what do you want to be when

you grow up?" I remember saying, "Police Officer." Um, but, uh, yeah, so just, there was a lot of encounters with the police, um, growing up. And I didn't quite understand who they were … as I got older, I'm going, Oh, okay. … I think I would like to be that because what they do is something that is needed. And, um, and so, it was just always in the back of my mind." (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Two Thousand and Two saw the need for more female officers of color through her employment engagements with law-enforcement officers. From her perspective in working with underprivileged children, she quickly saw the need for herself and the children with whom she worked to see women of color working in the capacity of law-enforcement officers. Two Thousand and Two stated,

Um, I would say [I was] influenced by other officers because there weren't enough people like me in the profession. It's not so many, it's not so many times like they'll have and interaction with a female black officer, versus of course with a white officer or a black male officer. So there's, there weren't a lot of women um, of color in my profession. I know that kind of sounds like really, is that the reason to do it? Well, yeah it is. Because there's kids who might want to go in this, do into this profession. (Two Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

Subject 5 reported that spending time with her grandfather influenced her decision to enter the profession. She stated that although she originally thought she would work in parole or probation, she does not regret working in the California State Department of Corrections. Subject 5 stated,

Oh my gosh, let's just say, I think I've always wanted to be in law enforcement,

like in some form or capacity in my life. … Like ever since I was little I used to

watch Matlock with my grandfather … you know, I used to, and I used to think

that I wanted to be a criminal justice lawyer. … And then things just didn't work

out, I don't wanna be in school that, that much and then along the way I kinda, I

kinda thought I wanted to do, um, probation or parole or just something in the

criminal justice field. (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019)

C said that during her time in the Explorer program, she not only gained a different and

more positive perspective of the law-enforcement profession but she also found a greater

sense of confidence in herself. C stated,

I was the only one that stayed in the program (police explorer program). Um, I

think that there was a lot of people, you know, just seeing how the other side of

law enforcement … seeing the context, the training that we received … you

know, in regards to, like, pedestrian stops, traffic stops, domestic violence

training, me learning those laws behind it, the safety of everything and then, you

know, now being a part of it, I saw the difference, positive side of law

enforcement. (C, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Angel stated that although she was not seeking to work as a law-enforcement

officer, the opportunity presented itself and she took a chance. She stated that she feels

her previous military experience, although not directly correlated, prepared her for the

paramilitary structure of the law-enforcement profession. Angel stated,

I was walking through a cross fit event. Um, I think I was in Santa Rosa in 2013,

and I'm in sweats-a tank top, you know, Lululemon shorts, flip flops, hat

backwards. I don't have any military tattoos or anything. Tan, I'm in good shape.

This guy walks up to me, he's like, "Hey, you in the military? You look like you

want to be a police officer." I was like, What? (Angel, Interview, August 21,

2019)

<div align="center">Sense of Self</div>

Lucy's questioning of herself and her ability to feel disconnected at time is a

byproduct of the profession. As an officer, typically in larger or busier areas, officers can

become inundated/overwhelmed with the criminal aspects of society. For some, this is a

defense mechanism because to be surrounded by so much negativity is to take on some of

its energy. Without some form of disconnection of self from the calls for service, one

may experience increased stress, lowered job performance, and mental health issues such

as depression or posttraumatic stress disorder.

It has. And it has made me more aware of myself. Like if I see somebody who is

deceased and I don't feel anything, right? Why don't I feel anything? Typically,

you see people crying. Typically, you see people who are emotional. Do I not feel

anything because I don't know this person? Because I don't have any attachment

to this person? I mean, some people it doesn't matter. You know, just seeing that

is like enough to suddenly knock the edge. Like so it makes me analyze

sometimes when I'm feeling like that. Like is it normal? Am I okay? I think I'm

okay. Okay. I keep going. (laughs). (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

Dorothy's perception was interesting in that part of her self-confidence was based

on the metrics of male peers. Her assessment was based on her ability to keep up with her

male counterparts, speaking to the notion that the male ideology is the measuring stick. Dorothy stated,

> I mean, I think it allowed me to do things I never thought I could do, which definitely boosted my self-esteem, my self-confidence. I've always be okay with my self-worth, but you realize, like wow, I can do these things that I didn't think I could do. I'd never shot a gun before, and I'm a pretty sharp shooter now.
>
> (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

She continued,

> So just little stuff like that. Um, being able to keep up with my male counterparts. I've never asked for any extra points of any leeway because of me being a, you know, being a woman. I've always done things based on, you know, except for the physical strength part, which I respect that, but when it comes to using my mind, because this job is not just about using physical strength, it's really about being physically fit in your mind. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

> Lennon spoke to a spiritual reawakening that was based on her experiences as a law-enforcement officer. Lennon stated,

> Sometimes I feel closer to god, because I feel like I have experienced…and so that insight, the experiences that I've gotten to see what this world can give and what it can take, I feel, I feel blessed with that, because I know that I can take that information and I can give it to the world in a cup they can swallow. Because a lot of people cannot deal with what we have, what we have seen, what we have experience in this life. (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019)

Uhuru spoke about a sense of hyper vigilance when she first entered the profession. As she gained a few years in the profession, it has become more second nature and less of a pronounced reaction. Uhuru stated,

> Just be like all night, High Alert, you know? But now it's like, yeah I'm-um, Ill observe, you know, I'll look at hands, you know, I'll look at doors and … but it's so second nature now, it just … it doesn't bother me, um. But I'm not going to be … sit there, you know, be on a date with my girlfriend, be like, " Watch the door because we're going to be in the ambush. (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Two Thousand and Two talked about a maturational aspect of her that now finds firm footing in her beliefs and the courage to speak up. Two-Thousand and Two stated,

> Um it's definitely challenged me to start standing up for myself more. That's just in life, period. If you want to see something or want something, you can learn, if you know like God damn well it's the right thing, then do it. I, before this profession I was into politics. I worked in city council's office for three years. My skin wasn't tough enough then. (Two thousand and two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

Subject 5 spoke about becoming more aware of not only her surroundings for safety reasons but, also her awareness of social diversity and societal demands. Subject 5 stated,

> I think, yeah it's helped me in, in knowing anything can happen in any environment and I'm like aware at all times. And so, sometimes, um, like my family will say I be like real standoffish or I'm real hostile in like a different environment. (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019)

She continued,

> For me, as an individual, um, it has helped me learn a lot more about gender rules, about the races, about, um … I've learned that, regardless of what you do, you're not gonna satisfy anybody, so all you can continue to do is to take care of yourself, work for … work how you want to be seen as, right? (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019)

Angel stated, "I try not to let it play too heavy of a role. When I walk out of the doors of the PD, when I drive away from the police department I leave the police department" (Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019). Angel seemed aware of the possible negative effects of the profession causing disruption in her personal life. Her wanting to disconnect after work runs parallel to Lucy's sentiments.

Lack of Female Representation

One consistent theme that emerged from research participants was the lack of representation of women, especially women of color and Black women, throughout their respective departments. Some said this lack of representation deterred their success. Many participants described lack of representation among the ranks as a reminder that women of color have come a long way, yet they have much more to accomplish. Two participants mentioned the importance of seeing and having access to someone who looks like them in the higher ranks of law enforcement as a signal of the possibilities of professional growth for themselves. The significance of this is the accessibility to speak on topics relatable to female peers but not necessarily to male peers. Additionally, seeing representation higher in the ranks represents the possibility of achievement in their

department. This possibility of achievement through representation can provide a shattering of the glass ceiling that women described in this study.

> So, based in people like me, especially women of coloring doing it, then they would probably be influenced. I mean that's usually how things start right? You see something and you're influenced to do it. Well I saw something and I was influenced to do it. Which was there's not a lot of black women in this field. So that's really why I wanted to do it. (Two-Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

After entering police work, Two Thousand and Two discussed the value of diversity representation. She saw Black male officers in the field, as well as female officers, which encouraged her. However, Two Thousand and Two was looking more specifically to model herself after Black female officers. Because of the limited numbers, she saw this as a challenge. She had a limited ability to closely identify and align herself with other officers because of the unique experiences she had as a Black female officer.

Dorothy spoke clearly about her transition to her current rank. She talked about feeling isolated even among women in higher ranking positions, as they tended to look out for themselves something Dorothy referred to as the "Queen Bee" complex. This pervasive loneliness can lead to the acceptance of organizational norms and a questioning of oneself and one's fit in the ranks. Dorothy expressed a delicate balance between trust and mistrust as she moved up in the ranks. She defined this tightrope as the political realm of upper level policing. She stated she tries to reframe or offset insecurities by focusing her efforts on supporting these in the communities in which she serves. Dorothy stated,

But I am one percent within my organization. I am the only female African

American commander in my department of 800 … there's about 43,44

commander positions, um, let's see, and there's only four female commanders …

it's not a lot of women. I mean, a lot of the women find themselves in, you know,

similar situations, even if they have rank. They're looking out for themselves, so

they don't have time to look out for you. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

C talked about her experience in the academy in which the female recruit was

unfairly treated. According to C, women were treated in a more hostile manner than their

male counterparts. Part of the justification was preparing the women for situations they

may face as they move into the law-enforcement profession. She said she has always

been a chubbier girl and she would be chastised about her weight, her looks, and her

ability to succeed in the profession. C stated,

At times because it's a male dominated place, so at the Academy you mostly see

males at the Academy. So, you see the male … drill instructors, the male trainers,

the male everything. You rarely see and females. So, for the females up there, it's

gonna mean a lot more. (C, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Out-group Membership

Most research participants expressed a feeling of being members of an out-group

in their respective organizations. For some, this created a sense of isolation and lack of

trust in the organizational structure. All respondents expressed that gender identity has an

immediate impact on their ability to be accepted in their organizations. With a reported

form of a "good ol' boys" system still in place, access to this group is important to the

acquisition of specialty assignments such as homicide, robbery, and drug task forces, in

addition to promotional opportunities. This culture can also prey on a newer officer's self-esteem and confidence. In a profession where trust, partnership and respect are paramount, having a foundation built on an out group status can affect an officer in numerous ways.

Lucy explained that because she is so new to the profession, that she finds it easier to maintain her distance from everyone. She originally described herself as a people person; however, the potential cost of labels and being affiliated with any particular group is too complicated. Still trying to work her way through the organizational culture, it is difficult to understand the alliances that may exist. Lucy stated,

> I feel like since I've been … I feel like as an outsider you're, it's easier for you to be a neutral party. Because once you start getting clicky and people start to associate you with people. You try to become and insider because you want to talk to everyone, it has the potential to stab you in the back. Or you're just unfavorable in some people's eyes for certain reasons … but if you kinda stay more as an outsider, you can kind of flow amongst everyone and not really have, come in contact with too many rough edges. (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

Dorothy referenced the increased level of difficulty and isolation, as women rise in the ranks. The higher up she went, the more women in a similar position tended to operate in a self-preservation modality. This self-preservation serves two potential purposes: alignment with cultural norms in hopes of continued career progression, and minimizing potential professional liabilities. Dorothy stated,

Outsider more so internally, because the higher up I go, um, the more contentious

or competitive things become … well, I think women are naturally, you know,

some women are just more, you know, competitive towards each other. And I

don't see a lot of trust (from men) around the women. (Dorothy, Interview, July

10, 2019)

C stated, "I think that, you know, again, because … I think that goes around

where, you, know, if you don't fit in a certain clique, you'd rather just mind your own

shit … you know?" (C, Interview, August 21, 2019). C painted a black and white picture

of her organization in group/out group. This black or white perception leaves little room

for exchange. It partially seems like a caste system in which one can only minimally

control their ability to join the in group.

Lennon was speaking to her fundamental belief that law enforcement still uses a

mentality of might rather than her belief in support. The warrior mentality is a belief in

protecting people from threats or situations but not necessarily creating long-term

solutions. This style of triage can perpetuate cycles of crimes, due to the lack of real

solutions. Lennon stated that her style is more in tune with providing services for long-

term resolution. Lennon stated,

I see myself as an outsider, because the way that I was raised and the way that I

do police work, I am a guardian. I am not a warrior. I want to come in, I want to

help. I want to provide resources and support, and a lot of people think that

policing is a warrior mentality, where you come in and you affect change by force

or fear, and that's not how I policed. (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019)

Uhuru talked about learning to remain balanced in her special and professional interactions, which has served her well in her career thus far. Uhuru stated,

> I'm not trying to be friends with everybody. Uh, I've learned that at a little too young age, uh, that, not everybody's going to like you. I can be very introverted. I can be very outgoing. It depends literally, what mood I'm in, how tired I am, if my period is on. (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Two-Thousand and Two stated, "I feel like I am an outsider for all the wrong reasons" (Two Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019). Two Thousand and Two expressed that at this point in her career, she feels more comfortable keeping to herself or remaining more aligned with her other mission of mentoring, outside of law enforcement.

Subject 5 attributed her insider status to being more of a result of her personality and work ethic. Subject 5 stated,

> Oh, I'm an insider … I don't alienate myself against people and so, I'm always trying to give the helping hand and always trying to make sure I understand you, and I want you to be able to understand me, and where I'm coming from. And I don't leave anybody out there that's, that's not knowing the position and the danger of their job and what they need to be doing. (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019)

Angel spoke to her belief in being herself as a driver of her outsider status. Angel stated,

> Just cause I don't go with the status quo (outsider). I'm not somebody that's with the social norms. I'm not going to fake a friendship and I'm not gonna be like, "Oh, it's the things to do because.." (Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Findings: Research Question 2

Mentorship

The researcher asked participants questions that specifically addressed

participants' access to professional mentorship. Questions centered on participants

defining mentoring and sharing their personal experiences with mentoring in law

enforcement, as mentor and mentee. Upon review of the interview transcriptions, three

themes emerged as factors contributing to the lived experience of African American

female law-enforcement officers: (a) mentoring prior to the academy, (b) mentoring

during the academy/field training officer (FTO), and (c) mentoring post academy/FTO.

Preacademy Mentorship

Seven of eight research participants expressed that someone in their life prior to

their employment played a major role in setting their path into the law-enforcement

profession. Research participants expressed that with encouragement from someone else,

their confidence in being successful was enhanced. This enhanced state of confidence and

self-image propelled them to success, in spite of the challenges expressed by many

women throughout the research. Although the population came from mixed familial

backgrounds, men played key positions as role models and influencers. These influencers

helped navigate beyond academy preparation and provided support to non-academy

related topics.

Dorothy spoke of a family friend who reached out after she initially applied for a

position in law enforcement. Dorothy admitted that although she had applied, she had no

commitment to continuing in the hiring process. In fact, she reported she was going to

withdraw and continue in the field of education. It was around this time of contemplation

that a family friend reached out. She stated that this unanticipated connection was the

turning point in her commitment to the field. This person was a deeply trusted family

friend who held respect in her familial circle. Dorothy stated,

> It was a family friend who called me out of the blue and was like … Hey Dorothy,
>
> you need to take that job. I think you'll do well at it. I think you could make a
>
> very good career for yourself and you could, you know, go far up in that
>
> department. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

Uhuru said that she worked as a park ranger to supplement her life as a music

teacher. To her, it was just a job and thought nothing more of the profession. At the time,

she was extremely obese and was content with the way her working life had panned out.

She said that an older White male co-worker was applying as a law-enforcement officer,

a dream of his. He gradually convinced Uhuru to join him, and she perceived it as a form

of informal mentoring. To her, the shift from park ranger to law enforcement meant more

than an application process. It required her to build self-esteem and change her lifestyle,

due to her weight. This encouragement from her coworker essentially changed the

trajectory of her life as she has experienced increased confidence and self-esteem, and

maintained a healthier weight. Uhuru stated,

> Um I, right before I applied I was a park ranger … one of my co-workers, he was
>
> trying his best to get into policing. And he was a little bit older than me. And, um,
>
> he kept saying, you know, you would be a great officer. You'd be a great Officer.
>
> (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Lennon stated that her father was essentially the reason she entered the

profession. She thought her father designed the introduction to the profession so her

future would be financially secure. Lennon stated that from a very young age, her father

would have gatherings at her childhood home that always included minorities from the

public-service professions. These relationships had root in her father's time in the armed

forces and participants were considered trusted family friends. The guidance from her

father, as well as the informal mentorship she received from members of her local police

force (coordinated through her father), became the foundation for Lennon to succeed in

law enforcement. Lennon stated,

> So, [father] encouraged be to go to the police department and become a civilian
>
> employee, just to see what it's like … all his friends seemed to love it. So, they're
>
> like. … You'll love it too because that's all you know, right? (Lennon, Interview,
>
> July 25, 2019)
>
> C stated, "Um, being able to….you know, people mentoring me through that

program (police explorer) and people actually telling me that, um, they actually saw me

becoming a police officer" (C, Interview, August 21, 2019). C stated she joined the

Police Explorer Program simply because her friends were doing it. Some of her friends

joined to counter the purpose of the Explorer program. From her upbringing, C had an

embedded distrust of law enforcement and never considered working in the profession.

The law enforcement officers running the program showed her a different, more positive

and inspiring side of policing. This change in perception, as well and the confidence she

received from these same officers, led her to apply, upon completing college. She said

that her connection to the program not only helped her provide alternatives to her limited

viewpoints of law enforcement, but helped her drive to change the perceptions of other in

the community in which she was raised.

Two-Thousand and Two stated, "There was no mentorship. It was more so this is

what you need to do to get here" (Two thousand and two, Interview, August 16, 2019).

Two Thousand and Two clearly stated that a formalized system of mentoring did not

exist in her organization. Her experience was more of a rote-memory experience, which

did not bode well for a fluid profession.

<center>Academy/FTO mentoring</center>

The FTO program is a period that immediately follows the basic 6-month

training, controlled by state oversight through POST. Field training can vary from

department to department. A typical program consists of four phases that are gradual in

nature. After the second phase, an evaluation period (a week or 2) is conducted. The

purpose of this mid-phase evaluations is to assess whether the trainee needs to remediate

or is capable of moving on in the program. At each phase of this program, the trainee is

assigned to a full-time, sworn, non-probationary officer; typically, the trainer has years of

experience and has completed a POST certified training course. This teaming up, trainer

and trainee, is in a form of a mentoring relationship in the sense that the trainer teaches

the trainee ways in which the organizational structure believes an officer should function.

Once the training phase is completed, the officer is then evaluated again for preparation

to solo status.

Dorothy spoke of an appreciation for the officers who helped and guided her

through her field training. Their knowledge and experience helped Dorothy establish a

strong foundation. The passing of information, albeit informal, went beyond the basic

information and also addressed challenges to promotion, as well as ways to navigate

through the male-dominated organization. Dorothy stated,

Nothing formal, but I did have a mentor earlier in my career … they were older

men. … I felt like just their words of encouragement and guidance and direction

helped me early on start to promote, so I promoted within, like the first four and a

half years of my career. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

Two-Thousand and Two stated, "they're is just no time. … You have to

remember that this is a profession where people are trying to get ahead" (Two-Thousand

and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019).Two Thousand and Two described the work

environment where she works as being competitive. This competitive spirit leaves many

concerned for their own well-being, with little time or interest in serving others as

mentors.

Lack of Formal Mentoring

Two of the eight participants reported a formalized mentorship program in their

department. When I asked clarifying questions on how the formalized program was

designed, organized, and measured, they realized it was not formal in nature. After the

field-training program, many departments across the nation do not have formal mentoring

available for their officers. A search of rationale behind this phenomenon did not produce

viable information. All eight expressed that a formalized mentoring program does not

exist. When asked for reasons, none could provide an answer. What did come about were

systems, reported by three participants, in which Black women would reach out to each

other for support, for need as well as for a confidante. It was though these informal

channels that they found the answer that directly correlated to their experience as women,

and as women of color.

The learning curve for new hires who complete the academy, to the FTO program, to being a solo officer, can be steep. In the academy, the militaristic environment gives constant feedback, positive and negative, as well as stresses knowledge acquisition through state-sanctioned learning domains. Additionally, officers, from a recruit's respective agency, check in and provide information regarding their performance and the practicality of the information received. In the FTO program, the officers are aligned with another, typically seasoned officer, to best learn the agencies' specific nuances. These nuances include how the police and procedures of that specific agency play out in the walls of the department, as well as in working with citizens. During this typically 4-month period, rookie officers have an assigned officer with them during each shift to correct mistakes, provide answers and insights, and serve as a resource for any need the rookie officer may have. Once the field-training portion is completed, rookie officers are evaluated on their ability to work as solo officers. Should they pass, they are now rookie/probationary officer for an additional year.

This is where the steepest drop off to mentoring occurs in a law-enforcement officer's career. Once an officer is cleared to work as a solo officer, they are left to the information and resources they have acquired through their training. Formalized mentoring no longer exists. This can be one of the most stressful times of an officer's career. During this probation period, they have no employment protection and can be fired for any reason. Also during this time, an officer is trying to put to practical use the penal code, education code, health and safety code, business and professions code, tactical situations, de-escalation techniques, legal authority, resources, and tactical safety.

Lucy was speaking to the lack of formal mentoring following field training. She

spoke to the idea that after an officer completes the field-training program, they still may

not know some information or may not feel completely comfortable with the information

they have. Its compacted nature of instruction does not serve all learning styles. Much

knowledge comes in the form of rote memory. Rote memory serves a purpose at times;

however, it can create an issue when an officer struggles to adapt to the shifting nature of

the work. Lucy stated,

> It'd be nice to just, you know, ride with or be with people who have been in the
>
> department longer and that have some sort of like official mentorship or
>
> something like that where they can pass things on so we cannot make the same
>
> mistakes or we can learn. (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

> Lennon stated, "Why do you think formal mentoring doesn't exist in your

agency? Lack of trust" (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019).Lennon expressed a sentiment

that directly spoke to the nature of formal mentoring. Her words about trust correlated

with her belief that many in her agency were focused on their own self-interest. This

looking out for oneself creates a situation in which it becomes difficult to gain a sense of

trust.

Angel believed that the mentoring she received at her first agency was invaluable

to feeling secure and stable in the organization. She believed the department had a vested

interest in her career and success as a woman. Angel stated,

> So, he laid out … like he had me fill out what, where and what goals did I want to
>
> attain within five years of being at the police department (previous agency). Um,
>
> and he was actually doing things, sending me to classes, um, recommending

classes for me to take, um, following up with me if I did an evening tor training.

He like, you know, "How can we improve on that? What could we do

differently?" Um, seeking feedback but also giving me feedback … he was also

trying to push for recognition. Um, just things that were going to be stepping

keystones to promoting if I chose to go down that path. (Angel, Interview, August

21, 2019)

Uhuru was explicit in her belief that officers could receive help if they requested

it. Part of the challenge is having officers believe they have the power to affect their own

careers through professional and respectable inquiry. She also expressed that her current

agency was not one in which mentoring was a forethought and was more so an

afterthought. Uhuru stated,

And so, um, and I got the help that I needed based upon doing that (asking for

help). Versus saying "Okay, well, I'm struggling. I'm just going to stay to myself.

And if someone sees it, hopefully they will say something. But I've learned from

this department, that you need to speak up or you'll get enough rope to hang

yourself. (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Subject 5 stated, "Yeah, they do (have formalized mentoring). They have a group

that's and it's an outside agency. I haven't attended it because um, I do not work on

Saturdays" (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019). Subject 5 alluded to a desire to

participate in the mentoring offer; however, her family and schedule were the main

factors in her inability to participate.

Two Thousand and Two stated, "Um, yes I did, but not prior to going to into the

organization" (Two Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019). Two Thousand and

Two received informal mentoring from a person in the organization who happened not to be a sworn officer. She found herself under the tutelage of a civilian Black woman who helped her navigate entering the profession to the best of her ability.

Dorothy stated, "Nothing formal, but I did have a mentor earlier in my career … at the department. It was informal" (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019). Dorothy found the informal mentoring to be key in her development earlier in her career. The informal nature of the mentoring she received, she felt, helped her gain promotion in the first 5 years of her career.

Findings: Research Question 3

Harassment and Discrimination

Another topic explored in this research was the experience of Black female law-enforcement officers and discrimination. The researcher asked participants about their experiences with discrimination from gender or race, including the impact of harassment and discrimination on their professional trajectories and job satisfaction. Upon review of the interview transcriptions, three themes emerged as factors contributing to discrimination and harassment of African American female law-enforcement officers: (a) gender discrimination, (b) work place respect, and (c) quid pro quo.

Gender Discrimination

In an effort to tease out the impact of race and gender, one interview question directly asked participants to assess the individual impact race had on their professional careers rather than gender. It is acknowledged that this is, in many ways, a false dichotomy, because of the concept of intersectionality, which *Merriam Webster* (2019) described as "the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of

discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups" (para 1).

Yet, the effort here was to explore participants' perspectives. Based on the interview data, nearly all participants in this research described a constant and pervasive feeling of discrimination based on gender. Seven of the eight participants in his study felt more negatively affected by gender than race. A variety of discriminatory practices were relayed that included the level of banter allowed in the organization through jokes, comments, and sexual innuendo. A common experience for all research participants was the idea that gender discrimination occurred almost immediately upon entering the profession. Not only was the timing of immediate impact, but the level from which the incidents occurred did not limit itself to the patrol ranks. All research participants perceived discrimination as part of the profession; some participants were even prepared prior to entering the profession. The range and scope of discrimination expressed was broad in nature. Most said that a lack of representation presented a conundrum in which many felt they had no safe path to report or express their feelings, based on what they deemed discriminatory actions and practices. Some of the subthemes that presented themselves were promotional opportunities based on quid pro quo, limited access to certain specialty assignments, and workplace respect.

Angel spoke about how women are perceived as more emotional and difficult to work with. Angel used terms she heard to describe women as "bitchy" and difficult to work with. She explained that women tend to get unfair assessments. She described a duality in the assessment of leadership in the profession. When a man is assertive, he is

looked upon as a strong leader; when a woman is assertive, she is looked upon as demanding, unfair, and "bitchy." Angel stated,

> Like if I felt like there was a driving force that was gonna prohibit me from moving forward in my career at [XX] it would be definitely have to be gender. And I feel like that's overwhelming in the law enforcement; that's the voice in law enforcement. (Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Two-Thousand and Two conjoined two aspects of this research in the context of discrimination. She first alluded to the lack of female representation in the profession. Her personal experience with discrimination brought her to the idea of male domination. Because the number of female representations was so low, it was difficult to counter the male-dominated culture in a multitude of ways. Low representation affects women is in their ability to report instances of harassment and to gain support for that reporting. With a small number of women available, they have the difficult situation that relatability, emotional support, and understanding are limited. Additionally, when reporting through a chain of command, the path largely comprises male supervisors, creating an unsure path when the "good ol' boys" network is considered. Two-Thousand and Two stated,

> Fact is, when the law enforcements involved and the police department you didn't see women, you know, behind you know, the crowd line. … Which, to a certain extent, when you know people have their own perceptions, about oh you're sexist. …There are some things that we cannot do that men were not wired that way. Um, but that's no reason to be discriminated against. (Two Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

One of the eight participants identified race as more impactful on her professional life than gender. Lennon reported, "Well, what's the first thing that they see? It's your skin color. Then they see your sex" (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019). Still, during the interview, she clearly affirmed that gender had a dramatic impact on her work, as well. This finding reflects the intersectionality that Black women feel discrimination on two fronts rather than one-gender and race-thereby increasing the effects of identity in policing.

<div align="center">Work-Place Respect</div>

Law enforcement is a paramilitary profession in which one's life depends on their personal skill and intelligence. Moments can arrive in a law-enforcement officer's career when the trust and respect of peers can literally save one's life. Thus, in the law-enforcement profession, earning the trust and respect of peers is a necessity for career survival. The women in this project revealed that women believe that, for them, respect is much harder to earn professionally.

Lucy addressed times in which she was primary officer on the scene and the lack of work respect led her male peers to disrupt her investigation. This lack of respect for her position as a peer and functional officer has led her to many situations in which a full and complete investigation is impossible. In turn she can potentially cause and experience demerits, unsolved cases, and citizen complaints. Her ability to navigate these experiences was difficult, as she is a newer officer. She explained that she tends to reframe an incident in her mind to soothe over the gendered nature in which the original offense occurred. Lucy stated,

There's a lot of times where I get to a scene and I start talking to folks. And then

the male comes up and he just wants to start talking over people. When I'm

primary … I like to slow things down. We get paid by the hour. I like to take my

time. Like I's going to solve this person's problem. So, I like to take my time. I'll

talk to this person in length. Like look, it's not my fault we don't have enough

people here. I need to handle the situation so I, I'm trying to handle it. He's like

doing everything. And then he's like, "Okay. I'm done." Like, "I was primary!"

And then they just come over and they just step on me and a lot of males just want

to start doing stuff. You know what? I sit there, and I'm like, That's fine. We get

paid the same. (Lucy, Interview, July 7, 2019)

Dorothy reiterated that gender has played a major role in feeling respected. She

explained that people in the professional have a generalized understanding that when a

man speaks, he is immediately granted respect and reverence; when he is wrong, he is

more likely to be granted reprieve. When a woman makes a mistake, others take that as

more of an opportunity to scrutinized and generalize that women are incapable of

handling the responsibilities and requirements of the profession. Dorothy stated,

So as an example, as a female captain or a commander, if I say something to, you

and I, because you're a man, I'm a female, and we can both give the same

directive in the same exact way, but your way would be taken differently than my

way. My way would be considered more contentious or bitchy, and your way

would just be accepted, because a lot of men have a hard time taking orders from

a woman. And some, and they can become contemptuous, because she said it.

That bitch told me to go over there and stand in line, whereas if the male

commander said it, they just go stand on the line. There's no back talk, there's no

back, you know, gossip about it. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

Uhuru stated, "Um, but then it's just like, sometimes, respect-wise, I think it's just

with the, the, the, uh, it's like you get more sexual harassment from the public" (Uhuru,

Interview, July 27, 2019). Uhuru addressed the duality of respect in the profession and

citizens provide a similar perspective. She explained that, at times, citizen's challenges

her more based on gender. This push back can come in the form of physical

resistance/challenge, comments, and sexual innuendos. Uhuru also explained that such

challenges have a benefit. At times, she has a greater ability to deescalate citizens due to

more nurturing assumptions people impose from their own experiences in life.

Angel echoed an early sentiment related by Dorothy. When a woman supervises a

team, they are more likely to be challenged or labeled as difficult to work with. This

creates a situation in which they have to be more developed in their skills and abilities in

hopes of withstanding the sporadic nature of challenges from male peers and supervisors.

Although women may be more knowledgeable, should they take the time to learn, these

challenges are a subtler form of discrimination. This unbalanced questioning of a

women's position could easily be justified as natural inquiry. Angel stated,

But certain-certain females have been promoted, um, and I feel like the

overwhelming message that a lot of the officers, "Oh, she's not prepared," or "Oh,

she's, you know-she don't really know what she doing," or "She's not tactical," or

" She doesn't come from this background," or "She's not into guns." It's like

what the fuck does that have to do with her being a leader? Like base it off her

leadership ability. "Oh, she's moody. She's hard to work with." Is she hard to

work with … or do you just already have a preconceived notion that you don't

like her so you're going to make it hard to work with her? But I feel like women

get the shorter end of the stick … like I said, automatically they're having to fight

for how well they know, you know, the policy, how well they know how to set up

a block when they have a perimeter. (Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Quid Pro Quo

Participants who had more years in the profession expressed greater connection to

the experience of quid pro quo. In this study, 100% of participants reported experiencing

sexual harassment on the job. Examples of sexual harassment they experienced included

sexual innuendos, jokes of a sexual nature at work, or direct comments about sexual

relationships.

Dorothy stated that late-night calls interrupted her quality of life. Not only did

they disrupt her sleep, which at times affected her ability to work effectively, it created a

level of discomfort with significant others. Dorothy and Subject 5, the only two officers

with male spouses, reported having to negotiate the need to manage work colleague's

sexual harassment with their spouses' perceptions of disrespect. In response, Dorothy and

Subject 5 reported having to keep quiet about some of these instances, as well as having

to have conversations with their spouses. Dorothy explained that the pressure to give into

what was being asked was persistent, even if the office was interested, but she also

understood that the consequence run much deeper than a momentary tryst. To give in to

the requests for sexual interactions risks other colleagues finding out, in a profession that

is uniquely built on personal respect. Dorothy stated,

And then, you know, high ranking commanders call my home at night, you know, asking what I'm doing, what I'm wearing, and, um, but then if you don't, um, give into what they're asking you, you know, dates or, you know, inappropriate conversations, when it's time for you to get transferred to a position or get promoted, I was denied. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

Three of the eight participants in this study reported personal concerns regarding the impact of sexual harassment on their ability to progress professionally. Dorothy explained, "You know, I was told when I wanted to go to homicide, um, you know, you need to stay home and take care of the kids. It's not a good position for you" (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019).

Dorothy believed that the rejection of sexual advances has affected her career trajectory. She saw herself as the most qualified person applying for certain positions, based on her experience and years of service, but she was denied on more than one occasion.

Sergeants, as an officer, sergeants, you know, paying attention closely to your behavior and they have a reputation for, you know, having sex with multiple female officers, and because you're not going along with their program, now you're getting written up by them. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

In some ways, the responses of these Black female officers to sexual harassment on the force was in situations in which they could not be successful. If an officer acquiesced to persistent requests for sexual relationships, they risked losing trust from fellow officers. However, if they resisted sexual interactions, they risked being under added scrutiny and formal demerits. Unwarranted or questionable assessments can sit in a

personnel file and influence promotion or the attainment of a specialty assignment such as homicide.

Two-Thousand and Two stated,

My last trainer. There were so many things that like, I just wanted to go into my office with my sergeant and say, enough with this shit. Like, there were so many days I just wanted to go in there and be like, I did not sign up for this shit. Like, this was not a part of the deal. I thought that, and that's why I say, I put-I think I put more into this department than I did into myself, if that makes any sense? Like, I had such high expectations for this place, and when I got there and it didn't add up to what I thought they would be, and I was kinda broken hearted. (Two-Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

The consequence to the pressures of navigating sexual harassment caused three of eight participants to openly consider leaving the law-enforcement profession. Two Thousand and Two explained that at multiple points in her career, she questioned her ability to continue in the profession. She explained that the constant pressure and persistent nature of the harassment was overwhelming. She explained that even now, she is questioning her ability to remain in the field.

Like that's uncomfortable. And I shouldn't have to feel that way. Granted, this person is very knowledgeable, helps me when I need help. Why can't we just leave it there? Why do you have to make sexual advances, and things like that? The thing is, it—it's inevitable that women feel like they have to, you know, get with the program in order to be successful or to be liked, or to be treated equal? That's a problem. (Two thousand and two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

Two Thousand and Two spoke to the idea that in her experience, when dealing with men, there was a sexual cost to most things in the profession. In the above comment she was speaking to a male mentor who was working with her in an unofficial capacity. The need to have this person to work with was great, as they were willing to share information in a situation where formal mentoring did not exist. However, the unintended consequence was the constant notion of information and mentorship at the cost of a sexual relationship. This research does not cover the negative consequence to those black female officers who identify as LGBTQ and not give into the request for sexual favors.

Findings: Research Question 4

Recommendations

All eight participants shared some way they would change the agency where they work. The recommendations varied from mentorship and morale to a disconnection with law-enforcement administrators. For example, Two Thousand and Two spoke about a need for mentoring that does not exist at her agency. Her ideas around cliques existing left her feeling an outsider and disconnected from many of her peers. Two Thousand and Two stated,

> I would put more emphasis on mentoring. Like, people actually there to, you know, like with any job, right? You usually have somebody's that, prepares me to be you. If that makes any sense. Like, fill me in on corporate vibes and settings, I'm, I want to take on somebody who I know when I leave this place, it's going to be able to run this place like a well-oiled machine. Just keep going. Everything's flowing. (Two Thousand and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

She continued,

It's just a cutthroat business to me. Every man for himself. And cliques. You

know, like if you're not with this clique, or you're, then you're this. So … um, I

mean, mentoring would definitely be ideal because more people would get the,

the help that they need, and um, you know, like I said, it helps. (Two Thousand

and Two, Interview, August 16, 2019)

Angel also spoke of a clique system, affirming the position of Two Thousand and Two.

Angel spoke of a more egregious form of cronyism where certain positions are created to

protect certain "in group" members. Angel stated,

I'm sure there's no way to really do this, but the good old boy, oh, you're-you're-

I'm creating a position for you because you're my boy and I'm gonna get rid of a

sergeant position just so that we can keep your-you know, we can promote you or

… that shit has to stop. (Angel, Interview, August 21, 2019)

C said her department meets diversity needs at various levels of leadership. This

desire to meet diversity needs has left her agency in a potion where merit base

promotions are more based on diversity needs instead of merit C stated,

I think it would just be based on the morale. I think the morale that—that we

have, you know, again, I mean, the selfishness. … there's certain things that you

can't change on individuals, but I think if you start putting the right leadership

roles, like, the right leaders, um, in those positions, I think they'll be able to

slowly make that change within the entire department. (C, Interview, August 21,

2019)

She continued,

I would definitely … you know, instead of checking certain boxes and not worrying about what race you are or what gender you are, um, if you're great, if you're a great fit for the job, for the-the specialty assignment, for the ranking structure, and you've been putting in the work, you should get it, you know, instead of being focused on filling those boxes. (C, Interview, August 21, 2019)

Lennon felt that the agency in which she works was more driven by internal factors that did not always equate to respect and cohesion with the community they are tasked to serve. Lennon stated,

If I could change anything in the department, I would change, un, the transparency. I would change people being held to answer for their, uh, for their views, for their, um, for what they've done to the community. Like, I don't, I really don't think that the command staff, and I really don't feel like the people that are employed in my department have a vested interest in the community. And the community should always be the priority. Community policing and transparency and, um, building bridges and communication should always be the number one priority, and I never had a problem with the community. (Lennon, Interview, July 25, 2019)

Uhuru referenced the desire to have more contact with administrators in her agency. The tactic of e-mail use as a record of communication diminishes interpersonal relationships that are an essential part of the law-enforcement profession. This disconnection, to Uhuru, felt more like self-preservation than connectivity and team building. Uhuru stated,

I would change the, um … Sometimes it's the unknown. Um, sometimes like

what, uh … I think there is a disconnect between admin and like, I guess, the

regular workers. And um, there's a lot of emails flowing back and forth. The

emails are like life there. I'm the type of person, I'd love to rather talk face to

face. (Uhuru, Interview, July 27, 2019)

Lucy addressed the mental health portion of officer safety: that is, the need to

make sure that officers' needs are being addressed among the chaos of the profession.

Mental health providers are typically offered in a limited sense. For some officers, seeing

the negative aspects of the law-enforcement profession can leave many in mental

anguish. Lucy stated,

I think that's definitely important (mental health). I feel that's something with that

should be required. Um, now I don't know to what degree. And what kind of

suggestions to make as far as that. But it would be nice. I mean we, I know we

have stuff for officers to talk to somebody if they're feeling some kind of way.

But that's like if they choose to. I feel like it should be more of a, we know

officers go through this. You guys need to start checking in and start doing this

kind of stuff because it's going to end up that way. Because we know, you know,

this job takes a certain kind of toll on you mentally. Were aware of the fact that

people change while they're, were on this job. We're trying to prevent that from

happening. So, were going to make you do this kind of stuff. You know? That'd

be nice. Because if you leave it up to some people, they think they're fine. And

you know? Next thing you know, they're jumping out of buildings. (Lucy,

Interview, July 7, 2019)

Dorothy talked about administrators valuing education for leaders across her agency. This emphasis on education keeps the staff current on new methods of policing, as well as challenging old beliefs. This sharing of educational knowledge also paves the way for regular communication among peers and is, in a sense, a form of mentoring. Dorothy stated,

Just have better leadership, you know, that's more aware, that's more sincere about equity and the application of it … more education of your command staff, because, you know, obviously is starts at the top and it trickles down, and people, including, like, middle management, like, I think middle management is often overlooked in terms of education and training and how it affects the rest, the masses, and I don't think we do a good job with that. (Dorothy, Interview, July 10, 2019)

Subject 5 stated, "I wouldn't say change so much as to, as to practice what we already know what were supposed to be doing … we need to be able to, to be more professional in our environment" (Subject 5, Interview, August 3, 2019). Subject 5 stated that everyone in her agency knows what they are supposed to do. A level of entitlements as well as complacency has led to her peers becoming less than professional in their work engagements.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The need for law enforcement agencies to increase their representation in the communities they serve has been reflected in the literature, through social advocacy and federal programs and grants. The ability to recruit and retain black female officers has been linked to building trust and legitimacy with the public in addition to addressing the diversification of the law enforcement population. There has been limited research that directly addresses the experience of the black female officer and the challenges that they face. Chapter 2 delved in to the available research on the topics of police culture, mentoring as well as women in policing. Chapter 2 focused on the experience of women in general as research on the experience of black female officers is severely lacking. Chapter 3 looked to black feminist thought in an effort to address the blind spots within the literature. The use of Patricia Collins black feminist theory shaped the context in which the participants experience was evaluated. The finding of this study placed emphasis the desire to help others as reasons for entering the profession with mentoring being a key component of completing the hiring process. Once entering into the profession, the lack of access to mentoring in conjunction with sexual harassment and gender discrimination led to an overall feeling being unsupported and isolated.

Reflecting on the technological and economic developments of today's times, the profession of law enforcement is changing and is seemingly at a crossroads. The field continues to develop with the rise of technology, just as external social pressures of being in law enforcement have increased. These pressures have led to a period of markedly

lowered success in the recruitment and retention of officers. Gone are the days of the stereotypical television police officer who knew the names of everyone on their beat. Today's officers are inundated with a multitude of technological devices such as body-worn cameras, mobile data devices, work cell phones, conducted energy devices (TASERs), and body armor, to name a few. Agencies expect officers to know and demonstrate increased levels of cultural awareness and sensitivities to a widened variety of needs, and to be able to deescalate a vast array of scenarios they might face in their work with the public.

Some of these changes in expectations reflect increased scrutiny of policing, including media coverage. Technological advances have led to an increase in the public's use of cell-phone videos in interactions with officers, along with the ability to immediately share video without context. The expansion of civilian oversight committees and internal affairs has raised the level of anxiety officers experience. Some of these changes have had positive effects, but all of them have increased the pressure law-enforcement officers feel. With economic changes that have pushed back the retirement age in many fields because of changes in pensions, many law-enforcement agencies have increased the age of retirement from 50 to 57. For certain cities, like many in the San Francisco Bay Area, the intensive need for police activities under the increased scrutiny of media and technological devices can take a physical, emotional, and mental toll, making it even more difficult to sustain the increase in years served by law-enforcement officers.

In the past, law-enforcement agencies relied heavily on recruiting individuals separating from military service under honorable circumstances. However, as society

learned more about the negative effects of repeated and sustained military tours, law-enforcement recruiters carefully vetted for posttraumatic stress disorder. Just as the demands and expectations of law-enforcement officers has increased, along with public security of officers, traditional pools for recruitment are beginning to decrease. The need to recruit and retain law-enforcement officers, especially "diverse" officers who better reflect the demographics of their constituents, is increasingly critical.

The small number of participants does not lend this research to generalizability. Yet, the value of "lived experiences" is key to Black feminist theory. As Collins (2000) explained,

> For most African-American women those individuals who have lived through the experiences about which they claim to be experts are more believable and credible than those who have merely read or thought about such experiences. Thus, lived experience as a criterion for credibility frequently is involved by U.S. Black women when making knowledge claims. (p. 257)

When aiming to better understand the unique experiences of Black women in the United States, the responsibility to speak directly to Black women and to amplify their voices is essential. The pattern of the lived experiences of participants in this study speaks to the experiences that some Black female law-enforcement officers have in the field and helps provide context for study findings.

<div style="text-align:center">Discussion</div>

<div style="text-align:center">*Research Question 1: Lived Experience*</div>

The finding of a pattern in these participants' emotional reactions in the field policing can be seen through what Collins (2000) termed "the ethics of caring" (p. 264)

These participants reflect on the three "components of the ethic of caring the value placed on individual expressiveness, the appropriateness of emotions, and the capacity for empathy" (Collins, 2000, p. 264). First, the finding that after entering law enforcement, most participants could see changes in their personalities and these changes varied across participants is a poignant one. Many participants took on a broader perspective of the world than they originally had, as a result of their work as law-enforcement officers. The variety in their emotional development reflects the first aspect to the ethic of caring, with emphasis placed on individual uniqueness. Lennon developed a broader, more spiritual perspective on life as she encountered the very serious, tragic events that law-enforcement officers face daily. Lennon's point of view reflects a sense of emotional maturity and "appropriateness of emotions." She showed maturity in being able to manage the serious stress brought on by seeing victims of violence, for example, in police work. She talked about having to hold these experiences and their consequences inside because "a lot of people cannot deal with what we … have seen" (Lennon Interview, July 25, 2019). She showed her ability to appropriately navigate the intense exposure to trauma in the field, aptly deciding to share or contain her experiences and emotions with her family and friends, based on her evaluation of their ability to handle the seriousness of potentially traumatic moments. Many of the situations Lennon and other Black female officers' experiences while on duty could provoke traumatic reactions, but Lennon speaks of purposefully managing her emotions that result from her sometimes-dire work experiences.

Other participants in this study felt a decreased sense of trust in others and an emotional hardening from the exposure to serious traumatic experiences they have had as

officers. Uhuru and Subject 5 both discussed a sense of hyper vigilance that they began to live within their lives outside of work. They withdrew from social interactions. Even though Lucy became a law-enforcement officer to help others, she began to notice herself becoming less empathetic to others' emotions; the longer she stayed on the job. Her concern about this decreased sense of empathy for others fits with the call for empathy in the ethic of caring. Lucy seemed to worry about her reflections that she was becoming less empathetic, a behavior that would be deemed inappropriate in Black feminist theory's ethic of caring. Although these personality developments may happen simply by virtue of maturation through experience, the intensity of policing seemed to advance this process more pointedly.

Second, the pattern to the sense of being an outsider that study participants pointed to reflects the concept of "outsider within" in Black feminist theory. Many participants in this study saw themselves as outsiders in the field of law enforcement. This notion parallels the outsider status Black women can feel because of their gender in conversations about African Americans and the outsider status they feel because of their race in discussions of women. The pattern with these participants was a sense of acceptance, even preference for being seen as an outsider. As Lucy and other participants suggested, being considered an outsider provides a sense of distance, and therefore decreased scrutiny from the key players in an organization. It could be that as Black women, these participants were familiar with an identity as an insider–outsider in the larger society and more readily accepted this status in their law-enforcement organizations.

Conclusion

It is essential for law enforcement to hear the voices of their officers, especially their Black female officers who have unique experiences to offer. Viewed through a Black feminist theoretical lens, Black female officers have a particular way to navigate the ethic of care and the emotional demands of policing. Based on Black feminist theory, one would expect the participants in this study to manage their emotions in ways that reflect "appropriateness" and an increased sense of empathy. It is possible that these two demands compete at times. Although Black women may have social pressures in their identity subgroup to reflect empathy, the simultaneous need to appropriately express emotions may lead to an increase in Black women holding in the traumatic emotions experienced in intense police work. It is useful for law-enforcement organizations to be aware of this unique need and to provide the necessary resources Black female law-enforcement officers might need: space and time to debrief from traumatic work experiences, particularly with other Black female officers.

Research Question 2: Mentoring

Given the paucity of Black women in law enforcement, it is not a surprise that all participants stated that someone who acted as a mentor, formal or informal, played a key role in their decision to enter the profession. Although some participants, like Subject 5 and Uhuru thought about being police officers, this study showed a clear pattern of someone else pushing participants to seriously pursue the path to law enforcement. Because law enforcement is generally perceived to be a "masculine" field, the woman, particularly the Black woman, who enters the field is the exception. One has to go beyond just considering the idea to actually following through on the steps to joining the

law-enforcement ranks. In this study, the important role emerged of trusted family and friends, encouraging Black women to pursue a career in law enforcement, including Dorothy's coworker and Lennon's father. This external encouragement speaks to a potentially significant recruiting possibility: significant people in the lives of Black women can encourage them to consider a field that they may have never seriously considered.

All eight participants expressed either a lack of access to formal mentoring or challenges with access to the mentoring services in their agencies. One way to increase diversity in leadership roles is to provide opportunities and access to mentoring for women and, specifically, women of color.

> However, compared to white women colleagues, diverse women are much more likely to have mentors that lack power. This is crucial, given that powerful mentors often act as sponsors by influencing decision-making on key positions and providing coaching for stretching into senior roles and assignments. (Giscombe, 2012)

Mentoring programs should be crafted such that individual needs are considered when mentors are matched with a mentee. These considerations should include gender and race.

> Catalyst research has demonstrated that women of color have experiences and perceptions that are unique from both women as a group and men of color as a group—such as facing a greater level of negative stereotyping that may impede career progress. (Giscombe, 2012)

This notion fits with the study finding that participants desired to see more Black women in the ranks above them in law enforcement who can become mentors. As Collins (2000) explained, "Black solidarity, the belief that Blacks have common interests and should support one another, has long permeated Black women's political philosophy" (p. 31). Thus, it should be that the participants here could look to all Black law-enforcement officers to support their growth in the field. However, because of the intersectional barrier of sexism that Black women face in law enforcement, the participants in this study discussed their need to navigate the challenges of sexism and discrimination with their male colleagues, including their Black male colleagues. A call to increase the numbers of Black male officers in law enforcement would not necessarily address the mentoring needs of Black female police officers. These participants expected solidarity with other Black female officers in particular, not just Black colleagues.

The National Center for Women and Policing found that female officers are significantly less likely to use excessive force. In a 2002 report, this organization found that the average male officer in a big city police agency costs taxpayer somewhere between two-and-a-half and five-and-a-half times more than the average female officer in excessive force liability lawsuit payouts. Men are over eight-and-a-half times more likely to have an allegation of excessive force sustained against them, and are two to three times more likely to have a citizen name him them in a complaint of excessive force. These data are too striking for police executives to ignore. Whether these data reflect something unique about the ways female police officers do their work or about the ways the public interacts differently with female police officers, the seriousness of the finding suggests the benefits of more policing organizations hiring more female officers. The intersection

of race and gender is a very unique context in law enforcement. This uniqueness allows

for a contextual understanding from administrators, peers, and the public in

understanding of these Black female officers. Many different situations can create

adverse situation for Black female officers' success. The existence of a "good ol' boys"

club, gender and racial stereotypes, harassment, discrimination, double standards, and

off-kilter assessments create barriers to the recruitment and retention of Black female

officers. Mentorship can offset some of these challenges.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Most significantly, given the topic of this study, Black female officers want to see

more Black women like themselves in policing, given their specialized, intersectional

experiences as law-enforcement officers. In addition to value in seeing other Black

officers, the participants in this study want to look up to and be mentored by other Black

female officers. Given the particular demands on Black women around the ethic of care

and around protecting Black men, having mentoring by other Black women can help

these participants and others like them more effectively navigate the law-enforcement

path. Mentoring makes a difference and mentors who have a deep understanding of what

Black female officers experience can make that mentorship more effective.

<div align="center">*Research Question 3: Workplace Challenges*</div>

A key pattern to the workplace challenges that the participants in this study faced

reflected sexual harassment and discrimination. The findings related to harassment and

discrimination were the most developed and emphasized in interviews with participants.

In fact, when asked, some participants said that their gender was more impactful than

their racial identity as Black female officers. The sexual harassment that Black women

experience in law enforcement aligned with some of the historical stereotypes of Black women and their sexuality. The idea of the overly sexualized Black female has roots in the slavery narrative created by slave owners of the time. The creation of the hypersexual seductress Jezebel served to absolve White men of responsibility in the sexual abuse and rape of African American women. Black women, in such cases, were said to be "askin' for it" (Goings, 1994, p. 67). Because of these two issues, Black female officers are under considerable pressure to effectively navigate sexual harassment in the workplace.

Workplace Respect

The participants relayed a general sense of devaluation and workplace disrespect. Two of the eight participants spoke of blatant acts that left them feeling disrespected with no viable recourse. Rabe-Hemp (2008) found that 100% of the female law-enforcement officers interviewed had experienced some form of harassment at some point in their careers. Policing can be heavily influenced by one's gender. For many organizations, aspects of law enforcement are still generally viewed as male positions. These positions include K9, special weapons and tactics, homicide, and, some leadership positions. Women who find themselves in these roles must make a choice: to fall in the organizational culture's belief about how a woman should act in those positions or counter the organizational norms and be labeled in a negative way. Both choices offer complexities that could have profound effects on job satisfaction, career trajectory, and job performance.

As described in Chapter 4, some women in supervisory roles found their positions challenged or disregarded by peers and subordinates. Acts such as defiance undermined a female supervisor's ability to properly supervise. This disrespect can jeopardize her

ability to gain upward mobility and can also lead to negative perceptions of her as incapable or difficult to work with, which could also affect her career trajectory.

<p align="center">Quid Pro Quo</p>

Participants who had more years in the profession expressed more connection to the experience of quid pro quo. Quid pro quo indicates a favor or advantage is given in return for something. These experiences were expressed typically in the form of sexual harassment. Quid pro quo and sexual harassment are similar and both can form the foundation of a hostile work environment. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act strictly specifies that sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. Researchers have pointed to the existence sexual harassment as pervasive in the field of law enforcement (Ryan & Reiter, 2008). Harassment through comments, jokes, and innuendos is so embedded in the profession that it is a part of the cultural norm (Ryan & Reiter, 2008). The disproportionate number of men in the profession, coupled with the historic hypermasculine structure, has created a series of discriminatory practices that are pervasive today.

In police work, officers' lives lie in each other's hands in the field. A colleague's character impacts one's level of trust in that person. Feminist theory and Black feminist theory both discuss the higher standards to which women are held in sexual relationships. Men are rewarded for sexual conquests, whereas women are negatively judged as people of loose morals. In a study conducted by Berdahl and Moore (2006), minority women were significantly more harassed than minority men, majority women, and majority men when ethnic and sexual harassment were combined into an overall measure of harassment. In a study of double jeopardy (discrimination based on race and gender),

Berdahl and Moore looked at 800 employees across five agencies that included male-dominated manufacturing and female dominated community-oriented professions. Of the 238 respondents, minority women experienced significantly more overall harassment than minority men, White men, and White women.

This outcome reflects what Black feminist theory. In a legacy of slavery, all men, including Black men, are exposed to the stereotypes of hypersexualized Black women. Black women experience the intersectional expectation to protect Black men. As Collins (2000) explained,

> the unfortunate current reality is that many Black men have internalized the controlling images applied to Black women… These beliefs allow them to ignore Black women's rape by other black men, their own culpability in fostering Black women's objectification as pornographic object, and, in some case, their own behavior as rapists. (p. 148)

Despite a shared racial identity, Black men may accept the sexist stereotypes of Black women. Again, we see the intersectionality of identities in play. Black women and other minority women experience more sexual harassment than White women, including by Black men. This harassment is set in the social expectations described in Black feminist theory that Black women keep quiet about oppression by Black men.

> to talk of White racist constructions of Black women's sexuality is acceptable. But developing analyses of sexuality that implicate Black men is not—it violates norms of racial solidarity that counsel Black women always to put our [their] needs second. Even with these racial boundaries, some topics are more acceptable

than others—White men's rape of Black women during slavery can be discussed whereas Black men's rape of Black women today cannot (Collins, 2000. P. 124). As men, including Black men, may be more likely to sexually harass a Black woman and other women of color, Black women are expected to protect any Black male victimizer because of their responsibility to protect Black men and Black people in general.

The governing body of law-enforcement officers on a state level, POST, is to set minimum selection and training standards for California law enforcement. Participating agencies are offered services that include research into improved officer-selection standards, as well as the development of new training courses. Currently the majority of law-enforcement agencies in the state send recruits through POST-approved academies. In academy experiences, POST provides 42 different learning domains that set the foundational skill set of law-enforcement officers, prior to field training. Agencies that align themselves under the guidance of POST must administer sexual-harassment training for sworn personnel on an annual basis. Other annual training includes firearms qualifications, defensive tactics, and cultural-diversity training. The inclusion of sexual-harassment training speaks to its importance in the profession. Agencies across the state follow POST recommendation on sexual-harassment training annually. As a result, law-enforcement personnel should have common knowledge of what sexual harassment is, and the repercussions for such actions. This body can benefit from understanding the unique needs of Black female officers, mitigating the historical stereotypes of their hypersexuality. Also, this body should understand the social expectation that minority women might feel pressured to fail to report sexual harassment at the hands of Black male officers.

When considering gender bias, harassment, discrimination, and a sense of isolation, female officers may endure more professional stress than their male counterparts. This imbalance of stress can be attributed to organizational failures that do not address the additional challenges female officers face. These failures, in conjunction with the pervasive culture of male orientation, continues to play a vital role in the struggles to recruit and retain female officers, and specifically Black female officers.

Conclusion

The historical stereotypes that press on Black women, including their sexuality, colors the way Black female officers experience discrimination and workplace sexual harassment. The expectation that Black women protect Black men may increase the burden Black female officers bear when it comes to sexual harassment at work. Certainly, they experience pressures to not report sexual harassment, but they have an added pressure when Black women experience harassment from Black male officers. To report against Black male officers may be viewed as a betrayal to the race. Understanding this cultural tenet should shape the way law-enforcement agencies create procedures for reporting workplace discrimination and harassment, providing whatever additional channels Black women require, given their intersectional responsibility to protect Black men.

Research Question 4: Participants' Recommendations

Although participants in this study had an abundance of information to impart about workplace challenges and sexual harassment, they had little to recommend to improve law-enforcement for Black female officers. Participants did call for more

transparency in the field. Of particular interest, they called for more transparent career-advancement decisions.

Conclusion

Attending to these findings can inform the alignment of resources, organizational understanding, and a motivation to implement retention efforts, which are vital to the recruitment, retention, and development of this population. With the number of women in the law-enforcement field remaining consistently low—and Black female officers are even lower—it is imperative to find ways that positively impact their career trajectory and job satisfaction of female officers.

This research aimed to discern the lived experiences of Black female law-enforcement officers who have experienced and survived the nuances of the profession. To make law-enforcement agencies more representative of the communities they serve, law-enforcement administrators must first hear the lived experiences of these officers, but also place value on those experiences. Additional changes must be made to address the embedded culture of maleness that permeates the profession and exacerbates some of the challenge's Black female officers face. Understanding the ways Black female officers feel most supported, what they feel they need for success, and their solutions to challenges that they face offers law-enforcement administrators the opportunity to improve their departments.

Recommendations for the Profession

Law enforcement as a whole should provide more resources for the training and development of women officers who identify as black or African American. Gathered from this study, both informal and formal mentoring provides many women with the

confidence and belief that they can survive in the profession. This ability to motivate and inspire these women can help shift the need of black female officers in favor of the profession. Women officers tend to use less force against the public in general and have traditionally shown an increase ability in the use of de-escalation techniques. These abilities can help reduce the liability for cities, law enforcement agencies as well as individual officers.

Additionally, having access to mentorship for black female officers can increase their numbers thus, increasing their visibility to the public. This is essential in the trust building process as communities who see officers who are more representative of themselves are more likely to legitimize the existence of law enforcement officials. Law Enforcement has struggled with building trust within marginalized comminutes for decades. Increased number of black female officers, more specifically black female officers that feel supported in their agencies, can engage with these same communities potentially with more compassion, empathy and understanding. Through these interactions not only can black female officers feel more invested in their abilities, their agencies but their communities in which they serve.

Access to mentorship can also provide pathways in which promotional opportunities for black females can be increased. As learned from this study, having representation within the ranks gives a sense of relatability, increased possibilities for staying within the profession as well as excelling in the profession. As learned from black feminist thought the ability to identify, define and explore personal experiences within the law enforcement profession contains nuances that are specific to the black female experience. Many of the research participants voiced that gender affects them more than

race however; when taking the interconnectedness of these two factors the experiences becomes for specific in nature. By having senior black female officers who have gone through the profession and had time to develop coping mechanism could help shape the experience of newer black female officers through understanding, relatability, mentorship, sponsorship and guidance.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Future Research</div>

This study was limited to a small number of Black female law-enforcement officers located in the San Francisco Bay Area. The research population were obtained using a convenient snowball-sample technique. The lived experience of these officers is specific to the area in which these officers worked and may not be representative of the lived experiences of Black female officers, regionally or nationally. A national longitudinal study of Black female officers' lived experience would provide a more accurate picture of the challenges these officers face in the profession. A longitudinal study would lend access to a more generalized experience that takes into consideration the ways in which law enforcement departments operate regionally and nationally. Furthermore, research which considers the experience women who identify as other than Black/ African American should be considered.

Additionally, a mixed-method study that focuses on solutions to challenges that Black female officers face would provide administrators and change agent's valuable insight. A mixed method approach would provide a platform in which the experiences could be shared in a qualitative manner while also addressing the more direct quantitative nature of law enforcement. This quantitative date could provide access to grants that would be aimed at addressing the voiced challenges.

Closing Thoughts

Black female law enforcement officers are a unique sub group within the law enforcement profession. With racial and gender challenges historically permeating the culture within the law enforcement profession; women have faced and continue to face numerous challenges. These challenges have shaped the way in which law enforcement agencies are shaped, trained and represented not only within the confines of the profession but also within the context of the communities in which they serve. The layer of these affects can cause additional pressures and stress on black female officers as they progress in their careers. The black women officers in this study all expressed a desire to help other while not feeling fully supported within their agencies. This intersection of a desire to help others while feeling unsupported has created a reckoning point within law enforcement. This reckoning has played a major role in the recruitment and retention issues that have been expressed in the literature, research and publications through the federal government.

None of the research participants expressed a desire to leave the profession however; there was an emphasis on feeling supported and having access to mentoring. As departments struggle to find qualified candidate it is imperative that law enforcement agencies use the resources they have in order to maximize the human capital within their organizations.

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APPENDIX A

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE E-MAIL

I am conducting qualitative dissertation research on black female police officers lived experience (as an officer) as well as their relationship to mentoring. This letter is an invitation requesting your participation in this research. This research is part of my Doctoral Dissertation through the University of San Francisco, Department of Organization and Leadership. My dissertation work is under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Patricia Mitchell.

Policing across the nation is in a transition period in regards to recruitment, hiring and retention of minority officers. This transition involves the desires of communities and politician alike in the attempt to have a police force that is more reflective of the communities in which they serve. As many minorities with exemplary qualifications are taking their abilities into other industries, policing is struggling to fill their ranks while maintaining the goals of increased diversity. One important group that has been overlooked in the literature is the experience of the black female officer. The purpose of this research is to bring voice to the black female police officer experience. Their personal accounts of the challenges that they have faced within the walls of powers in police departments will shed light on opportunities for change. This research will also focus on the ways in which the research participants would change or maintain their respective departments. These goals are all in an effort to overcome the existing barriers that black female officers face in the profession.

Participation in this research is in whole voluntary. Participants will be asked to sit for a one-on-one interview that will last approximately 60-120 minutes. The length of the interview process is dependent on the volume of information shared from the participant. The location and time of interview will be based upon the availability of the participant. Your decision to withdrawal from participation at any time, for any reason is without consequence. Furthermore, you as a participant are free to not answer any questions asked of you. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded. This is so that your responses and voice can be accurately captured for research purposes. All information shared will be coded a destroyed upon completion of the dissertation process for confidentiality purposes. Your information may be shared with my advisor however, your information will not be released nor published. The first part of the interview will involve background and demographic information. This background information is essential in understanding the context of your lived experience. The second part of the interview will cover questions regarding your lived experience as a police officer as well as your relationship to mentoring in the profession. There are no anticipated risks involved with this research.

If you are interested in participating in this study, or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me at any time. My contact information is Harold Wilson, at Harold.wilson1@gmail.com or (510) 619-4039. You may also contact my supervisor Dr. Patricia Mitchell by e-mail at (Mitchell@usfca.edu).

This study has been reviewed, received though the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS). If you have questions or concerns about your participation in this study, you may contact them via email at (Irbphs@usfca.edu).

This research hopes to bring voice and value to the black female police officers experience. The emphasis is to bring light to both positives and negatives as it relates to gender and race within the parameters of the policing profession. This research hopes to expand on the literature as it relates to the overlapping of race, gender and policing.

I look forward to speaking with you and thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Harold Wilson

Doctorate in Organization and Leadership Candidate

Organization and Leadership

University of San Francisco

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

Date:

Pseudonym:

Age:

Ethnicity:

Current Rank

Time in Rank

Years as a sworn Police Officer

Number of Agencies in which you have worked

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

1. Please tell me about yourself.
2. How did you get into the policing field? What specifically drew you to the profession?
3. Outside of the Police academy, how did you prepare to become an officer?
4. What led you to your current agency?

Discrimination

1. How would you describe discrimination? Marginalization? Sexual Harassment?
2. Have you had any experience with the previously mentioned while working in the field of policing?
3. What strengths and weakness have you learned about yourself since becoming an officer?
4. Do you feel more affected by gender or race? If so, please explain.
5. How has being an officer shaped your sense of self?

Career Satisfaction

1. Do you consider yourself an outsider or insider? How does that affect your job satisfaction?
2. Is there anyone or anything that verifies your outsider/insider status?
3. Are there any specific challenges that you have personally faced?
4. What has led you to remain in the profession?
5. Have you ever contemplated leaving the profession? If so, why?

Mentoring

1. How would you describe what mentoring is?
2. Have you had any formal mentoring through your department? Is it available? Why do you think this is?
3. If you have mentored anyone or been a mentee, please discuss your experience.
4. Do you feel there is support for African American female officers?
5. How would you change the agency in which you are employed?

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT

University of San Francisco

Leadership Studies Department

You are invited to participate in a research project titled "AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE POLICE OFFICERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES AND MENTORING: A THEMATIC NARRATIVE". This study is being conducted through the Department of Education, Organizations and Leadership Studies Program at the University of San Francisco. The study will be run by Harold Wilson who is a doctoral student in the aforementioned program.

Participants will be asked to sit for a one-on-one interview that will last approximately 60-120 minutes. The interviews will be conducted in a time and location most convenient to the participant. The first part of the interview will involve background and demographic information. This background information is essential in understanding the context of your lived experience. All information will be coded for confidentiality purposes. Your information may be shared with my advisor however, your information will not be released nor published. The second part of the interview will cover questions regarding your lived experience as a police officer as well as your relationship to mentoring in the profession.

The purpose of this study is to examine, understand and analyze the lived experience of black female police officers within policing as well as their connection to mentoring in the profession. To help facilitate the nature of this study, the over-arching questions will be presented with time to reflect on your thoughts just prior to the interview. These interviews will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy of information gleaned from the interview. The audio recordings will then be transcribed to a written format. At any point during the interview, you may ask that the audio recording to pause or stop.

Please feel free to ask questions prior to/ or during participation in the research. At the completion of this research, the result will be available to you. To ensure that all parties are protected, information will be coded and pseudonyms used. For my own records, I will keep separate notes on all the names of participants and their corresponding code number. Once the transcription process is completed, you will be given a copy of your transcribed interview session. The purpose of this is so that you can review, change and/or clarify any narration. Once the information is collected, transcribed and analyzed, my notes on participants names will be destroyed.

All research runs the risk of unforeseen consequences. For some, this experience may provide an avenue to shared personal thoughts, beliefs, opinions and assessment of the black female police officers lived experience. On the other hand, this process could bring up unsettling reflection or emotions. In the end, the purpose of this is to help

administrators view a rarely voiced perspective while also lending insight for black women considering entering the profession.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Harold Wilson at arold.wilson1@gmail.com or at (510) 619-4039.