

6-2021

## A Psychological Perspective on Police Brutality: Current Statistics, Characteristics, and Trends Regarding Excessive Use of Force

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A Psychological Perspective on Police Brutality: Current Statistics, Characteristics, and Trends  
Regarding Excessive Use of Force

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A Clinical Research Project submitted to the Faculty of the Florida School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology.

Tampa, Florida  
April, 2021

The Doctorate Program in Clinical Psychology  
Florida School of Professional Psychology  
at National Louis University

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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Clinical Research Project

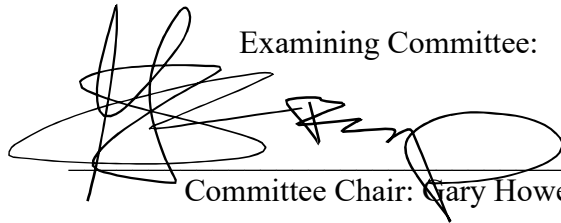
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This is to certify that the Clinical Research Project of

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as satisfactory for the CRP requirement  
for the Doctorate of Psychology degree  
with a major in Clinical Psychology

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Member: Patricia Dixon, Psy.D.

## Abstract

The purpose of this literature review was to utilize a psychological perspective on police brutality to identify current statistics, characteristics, and trends concerning excessive use of force. There were four fundamental goals of this literature review: (a) examine current statistics, characteristics, and trends regarding excessive use of force by law enforcement officers; (b) examine which populations are most likely to suffer from excessive use of force; (c) examine current methods in training law enforcement officers; and (d) propose a new model for training law enforcement officers. Also included is a discussion of a proposed idea for the training of police officers. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this literature review, areas for future research, and a brief summary. Major findings of this literature review found that police brutality has been a part of the United States since the inception of law enforcement. Furthermore, research has shown that ethnic/racial minorities, individuals with mental health issues, and members of the LGBTQ+ communities are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing excessive use of force and being killed by law enforcement officers. Finally, a brief proposed model for law enforcement training and reform is presented.

**A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON POLICE BRUTALITY: CURRENT  
STATISTICS, CHARACTERISTICS, AND TRENDS  
REGARDING EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE**

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Ashley N. Salter, MA

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## **DEDICATION**

First and foremost, I want to dedicate my dissertation to my parents, Holly Yvonne Salter and Christopher Eric Salter. Without both of you, I would not be where I am today. You provided me with the love, opportunity, and support to obtain this life-long goal of mine, so thank you for that! I know my choice to be a career student has sometimes been a pain in your ass, but we did it! I love you both dearly and cannot thank you enough. Last but not least, I would like to also dedicate my dissertation to Joshua Meeks for all of the coffee and patience you have given me throughout this entire process. It is not lost on me the sacrifices you have made to be here. Thank you for all of your support and love.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wanted to take this time and space to acknowledge my dissertation committee members: Dr. Gary Howell and Dr. Patricia Dixon. With the utmost sincerity, I want to thank you both for agreeing to take on my dissertation topic and me. Without either of you and your patience with me, this would not have been possible. Additionally, I also want to acknowledge the Florida School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University. Without FSPP, I would not have been able to complete my doctoral degree or dissertation. When my school in Georgia closed down, FSPP was there to take me in. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge my Aunt Patty and Uncle Glenn. Thank you for all of your support and help throughout my educational journey. Further, I would also like to acknowledge a dear friend of mine, who may not have actually thrown crunch bars at me but helped me through this painful and tedious process. Thank you!

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## CHAPTER I:

### INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

Excessive use of force by police has historically been an issue for the United States. In recent years, following the deaths of many individuals due to excessive use of force by police, police brutality has become a major concern in the United States (Brown, 2019; Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Dulaney, 1996; Taylor, 2013). According to Brown (2019), it can be argued that racial bias has deep roots in American policing, and though policing and American society have gone through many reforms, it has not eliminated the detrimental experiences of minorities who encounter the police. The occurrences of police violence and brutality that we see today are not far off from those seen in the origins and evolution of U.S. law enforcement organizations. Thus, it is important to understand the development of policing, as policing in the United States became a blend of history and tradition from the early stages of development (Brown, 2019).

The history of policing in the United States is often examined through the informal and communal forms of policing used by northern regions in the 18th and 19th centuries developed based on the policing standards utilized in London, England. During this time, England utilized the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 and the views of Sir Robert Peel as the basis for their guidelines on policing (Brown, 2019; Walker, 1983). The two forms were referred to as the *watch* or private-for-profit policing, known as the *big stick* (Potter, 2013). This was due to the similarities of the northern U.S. regions to London (Brown, 2019). However, it is important to note how policing in the southern United States developed quite differently from policing in the northern regions. The conditions and traditions of Southern and frontier regional law enforcement are important parts of U.S. policing (Turner et al.,

2006) and the police violence we see today as the two primary characteristics (e.g., “notoriously corrupt and flagrantly brutal”) seen in early policing are still primary characteristics of law enforcement seen today (Potter, 2013, part 2, para 4).

Discrimination was institutionalized from the beginning of policing as maintaining an elite status for Whites and the threat to the use of slavery (e.g., revolts and escapes) were significant concerns at this time (Bass, 2001) in the South. Further, the South required a form of policing that empowered the White population (elites and poor Whites) (Brown, 2019). In response to this need for “protection of Whites and the formal policing of Blacks,” slave patrols were established and considered the first U.S. police system (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Dulaney, 1996; Palmer, 2012; Potter, 2013; Reichel, 1999). In the South, following the Civil War, these slave patrols evolved into modern police departments to maintain the enslavement of minorities and the racial order (Dulaney, 1996; Palmer, 2012; Potter, 2013; Reichel, 1999). These “patrollers” were given the authority to utilize horrific forms of injustice, such as whipping, lynching, castration, burning, and hanging (Anderson & Anderson, 2006; Chaney & Robertson, 2014; Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Dulaney, 1996; Ward, 2012). This form of policing reigned until well after the American Revolution, as a centralized municipal police department did not emerge until the 1830s (Potter, 2013). However, these slave patrols would still set the tone and a pattern of policing that minorities, especially those of African descent, would experience throughout history (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Dulaney, 1996).

## **Historical Timeline of Policing and Police Brutality**

### ***The 1600s and 1700s***

During this time, there were four primary policing entities: constables, watches, slave patrols, and sheriffs (Brandl, 2018, 2021; Potter, 2013). The first night watches were created in 1636 in Boston, 1658 in New York, and 1700 in Philadelphia (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013). As settlements grew into larger cities, constables became the first known law enforcement officers in charge of the watch. Watchmen often slept on the job and even drank. Watchmen “volunteered” for this job as a way to escape military service, or were forced by their town, or even as a form of punishment (Potter, 2013). Following the arrival of slaves, slave patrols were established by the early 1700s (Brandl, 2018; Platt, 1982; Potter, 2013; Reichel, 1992). Slave patrols birthed law enforcement as we know it today, and they provided important information on the formation of police brutality. According to Brandl (2021), “these patrols represented the first example of racial conflict between the police and Blacks in America.” Further forms of law enforcement, such as the Texas Rangers, were established as a militia to defend against Native Americans and to suppress Mexican communities (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013).

### ***The 1800s***

In the early- to mid-1800s, the first formal police departments were established in the United States. Specifically, the first police department was established in 1838 in Boston (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013). While the South had slave patrols, the North was not immune to brutal and punitive policing. The northern region focused on policing labor unions, which targeted immigrants from Eastern European countries. As African Americans moved to the North to escape Jim Crow laws, they, too, became the victims of brutal policing (Brandl,

2021; Potter, 2013). In 1835, Black codes were established, which allowed African Americans to be heavily policed even though slavery had been abolished (Brandl, 2021). Black codes were not deemed illegal until 1866 as a result of the Civil Rights Act. During this time, officers were exclusively White, and minorities were not appointed until the late 1800s (Brandl, 2021). Police brutality was a staple during this time of abolishing slavery, poor living standards, the growth of American cities, ethnic conflict, and poor working conditions (Brandl, 2021). For example, in May of 1886, strikers protested police brutality in the Haymarket Riot (Potter, 2013; “Haymaker riot,” 2020). One of the most brutal and bloodiest conflicts in American history occurred on September 10, 1887, known as the Lattimer Massacre. Law enforcement strike-breaking was usually accomplished through extreme violence (Potter, 2013;). Additionally, police departments began to formally arm their officers with firearms during the late 1800s (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013).

### *The 1900s*

In 1943, Los Angeles Police Department officers were complicit in attacks against the Latino community during the Zoot Suit Riots. A clash between service men and the Latino community resulted in the death of a U.S. sailor. In response, mobs entered Latino communities in Los Angeles and strip people of their clothes and beat them. The Los Angeles Police Department often stood back watching this happen and then arrested the victims after it was all done (“Zoot suit riots,” 2020). According to Brandl (2021), the use of batons was synonymous with police brutality, and law enforcement officers were often depicted as using them on rioters in the 1960s.

During the early 1900s, officers often used two common strategies: the “dragnet” and the “third degree” (Brandl, 2021). The dragnet is what we call today “rounding up the usual

suspects,” or those who police deem as dangerous, and the third degree was just a euphemism for brutal interrogation tactics. More specifically, the third degree often consisted of beatings with rubber hoses, placing individuals in a sweat box for hours or even days while under constant questioning, drilling of teeth, burning flesh with lit cigars and cigarettes, and beating individuals with blackjacks or batons (Brandl, 2021). Often, those deemed the most dangerous were those considered to be the underclass, which consisted of the poor, foreign immigrants, and free Blacks (Brown, 2019; Potter, 2013). Further, the 1960s also saw the rise of police militarization (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013). According to Potter (2013), the militarization of police became synonymous with police repression. Between 1960 and 1970, there was a rise in riots across the United States sparked by police brutality and oppression (Brandl, 2021; Potter, 2013). Brandl (2021) noted that it was often White officers facing off against African American citizens during this time, and the police force was often viewed as an “occupying army” in low-income minority areas. Additionally, in 1969, after a police raid on the Stonewall Inn, there was an uprising in New York City. The Stonewall Inn was one of only a few openly LGBTQ-friendly bars in New York at this time. The June 27, 1969, police raid on the Stonewall Inn galvanized the gay rights movement (“Stonewall riots,” 2020). As the 1980s approached, it has been argued that the “War on Drugs” movement by law enforcement served as an excuse for the most overtly racist behavior seen by police officers (Taylor, 2013).

### ***The 2000s***

The 21st century has not brought reform or change in the amount of police violence and brutality seen in the United States. On the contrary, the United States has the greatest amount of police violence and civilian deaths caused by excessive use of force when

compared to other countries such as England, Australia, and Germany (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). After the 9/11 terrorist attack in September 2001, the militarization of the police was further increased, and the lines between military and police became even more blurred (Brandl, 2021). In 2015 alone, over 900 civilians were shot and killed by police (Brandl, 2018), and in 2020, police killed more than 1,127 civilians; unfortunately, during the entire year, there were only 18 days that police did not kill anyone (“Mapping police violence,” 2021). Furthermore:

between 2015 and 2019, it is estimated that law enforcement officers killed more than 5,500 people in the United States, and those killed were disproportionately minority citizens that lived in Native American, African American, and Latino communities; many of whom were experiencing a mental health emergency. (Institute for Criminal Justice Training Reform, 2021, para 1)

Police violence has only increased throughout the 21st century, and the United States has seen many peaceful protests, social movements, and riots in recent times as a result. These protests are often met with unnecessary force.

### **Deinstitutionalization and Encounters with Police**

The deinstitutionalization movement of the 1960s and 1970s resulted in mental health transitioning from a centralized system to one that was now decentralized, which in turn, led to the increased contact between individuals with a mental illness and the criminal justice system (Agee et al., 2019; Ellis, 2014; Wolff, 1998). The number of individuals committed to state mental hospitals reduced from 559,000 in 1955 to fewer than 100,000 by 1980 and fewer than 55,000 by the end of 2000 (Agee et al., 2019; Lamb et al., 2004; Martinez, 2010). According to Agee et al. (2019), a more recent estimate shows fewer than 35,000 individuals



committed to state hospitals within the United States. With the deinstitutionalization movement came the failed ability to provide adequate community mental health resources. Thus, former institutionalized individuals and those with mental illness were left without the much-needed access to medication and social supports (Agee et al., 2019; Easley, 2009; Martinez, 2010). Unfortunately, the lack of funding and appropriate resources in community programs placed individuals with mental health issues at higher risk of contact with law enforcement. The increased contact between those with mental illness and law enforcement created a sense of re-institutionalization within correctional facilities, which forced these facilities to become the new providers of psychiatric care (Martinez, 2010).

While the care of many individuals with mental illness has fallen to correctional facilities, prison and jail officials were never intended to care for a disproportionate number of inmates with mental health issues. Additionally, these facilities are not equipped to provide the level of mental health services needed, as they are inadequately staffed to meet the needs of individuals with mental health issues (Martinez, 2010). According to Geiman (2007), the number of inmates with mental illnesses in correctional facilities continues to grow, and the estimates of these numbers suggest that law enforcement officers are arresting a significant number of individuals with mental illness (Ditton, 1999; Martinez, 2010). According to Martinez (2010), The American Psychiatric Association (2000) reported, “as many as one in five offenders were seriously mentally ill, with up to 5% being actively psychotic at any given moment” (p. xix).

Law enforcement officers routinely interact with individuals with mental illness, which has led to the evolution of an officer’s role in mental health crisis calls. Due to this evolution, law enforcement officers are most often the first responders to emergency calls

involving individuals with mental illness (Agee et al., 2019). Thus, law enforcement officers have become known as the “gatekeepers” for the criminal justice system when dealing with mental health concerns (Agee et al., 2019; Franz & Borum, 2011). This leaves law enforcement officers with the ultimate decision of either transporting individuals to a mental health facility or arresting them. According to Agee et al. (2019), with the increase in required response to community members suffering from mental illnesses, the criminalization of these individuals began increasing as well. Research has shown individuals suffering from mental illness are arrested at higher rates than individuals without mental health concerns (Agee et al., 2019; Borum et al., 1998; Franz & Borum, 2011; Livingston, 2016; Wolff, 1998).

At this point, it is well understood that law enforcement officers are the primary individuals responsible for responding to emergency calls and the transportation of individuals with mental illness to mental health facilities (Agee et al., 2019; Reuland et al., 2009; Wood et al., 2017). However, on average, law enforcement officers “only spend 10 hours training for mental health crisis intervention” (The Institute for Criminal Justice Training Reform, 2018, the wrong training, para 2. The majority of mental-health-related emergency calls involve situations where a person with mental illness has made others feel uncomfortable and are not necessarily due to criminal behaviors (Agee et al., 2019; Reuland et al., 2009; Wood et al., 2017). Individuals with mental illness are more vulnerable to being subjected the excessive use of force due to law enforcement misinterpreting their behavior and demeanor (Agee et al., 2019; Kerr et al., 2010). Mental health issues often keep individuals from being able to respond to commands promptly, which in turn, leads law enforcement officers to interpret this as resistance or noncompliance (Agee et al., 2019;

Cordner, 2006). Research is starting to show that individuals with mental health issues are found to resist arrest more often than individuals without mental health issues, which has led to those with mental health issues being disproportionately becoming victims of crime (Agee et al., 2019; Johnson, 2011; Khalifeh et al., 2015; Mulvey & White, 2013). This is often due to law enforcement officers perceiving a challenge to his or her authority, which further raises the question of the efficacy of law enforcement strategies when dealing with mental health concerns.

### **Purpose of Literature Review**

This critical review of the literature has four fundamental goals. The first goal is to examine current statistics, characteristics and trends regarding excessive use of force by law enforcement officers and those officers' characteristics. The second goal is to examine which populations are most likely to suffer from excessive use of force by law enforcement. The third goal is to examine the current methods in training law enforcement officers. The final goal is to discuss a proposed model for psychologists to train law enforcement officers.

### **Research Questions**

The following three questions were foundational to this study: (1) What are the current statistics, characteristics, and trends regarding excessive use of force by law enforcement, and what populations are most likely to suffer from excessive use of force? (2) What characteristics do officers who use excessive force possess? (3) What are the current methods in training officers? These questions support and propose ideas for a reduction in the use of excessive force.

## Research Procedure

The research in this project included a thorough review of books and articles accessed through EBSCO, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and other original sources from other articles. Key terms used in the search process included, *excessive force, police use of force, police use of excessive force, law enforcement use of force, law enforcement excessive use of force, police killings, police culture, law enforcement culture, police violence, racism among law enforcement, social justice, history of policing, use of force statistics, accountability for use of force, dehumanization and stress, fatigue among officers, officers and mental health, effects of chronic stress, stress and anxiety, police shootings, problem officers, police misconduct, police training, police training standards, shooting bias, and racial bias*. To capture both past and contemporary research for this project, search parameters included research from 2010-2021. Other qualitative research, often found when exploring various diverse populations, was included to provide a richer understanding of the impact of police brutality on marginalized communities.

## CHAPTER II:

### EXAMINING REALITIES AND TRENDS FOR EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE

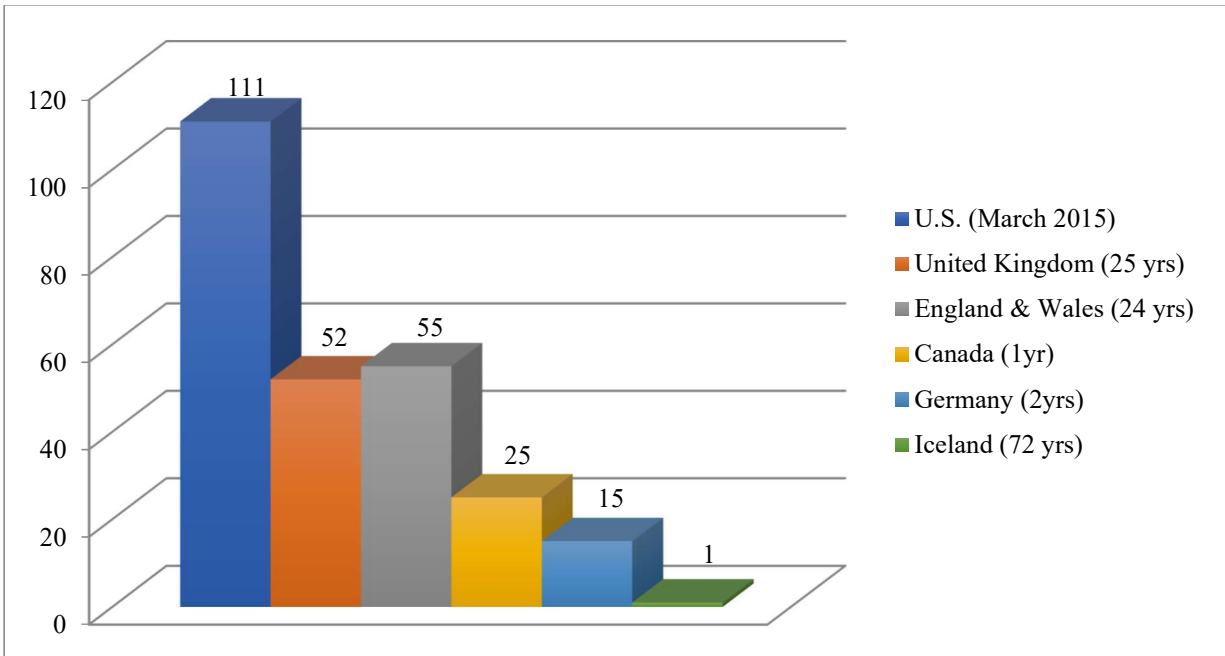
Unfortunately, there is no official, reliable system in the United States to keep track of data on the number of individuals killed by law enforcement officers. According to Krieger et al. (2015), this is due to the extensive history of known and documented resistance of law enforcement agencies publicizing the data. However, this does not mean that these deaths cannot be counted and documented. For example, a webpage (The Counted) was launched in 2015 by *The Guardian*, a newspaper from the United Kingdom, and hosted on their website. The Counted was the first webpage attempting to report, in real-time, an accurate number of individuals in the United States killed by law enforcement officers. This webpage collected data by “monitoring news outlets, research groups, and open-sourced reporting projects” (Krieger et al., 2015). Additionally, the webpage accepts verified submissions from users. Data collected by The Counted showed that within the first week of data collection, the U.S. total civilian deaths (due to law enforcement) surpassed the expected estimates put out by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) by a factor of two (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Krieger et al., 2015). The webpage stopped updating after 2016.

Compared to other countries such as England, Australia, and Germany, the United States has a significantly higher rate of civilians killed by police and police violence directed toward civilians (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). According to Chaney and Robertson (2015), police in the United States killed more civilians in one month (March of 2015) than the entire United Kingdom had killed since 1900. More specifically, there were 52 people killed by law enforcement officers in the United Kingdom from 1900 to 2015, while law enforcement officers in the United States killed a total of 111 civilians in March of 2015 alone (Figure 1).

According to Jones (2017) and Hirschfield (2015), in 2014, law enforcement in the United States was 18 times more lethal than Danish police and 100 times more lethal than Finnish law enforcement officers. Additionally, U.S. law enforcement officers have been found to significantly kill more civilians than police in France, Sweden, and other European countries.

**Figure 1**

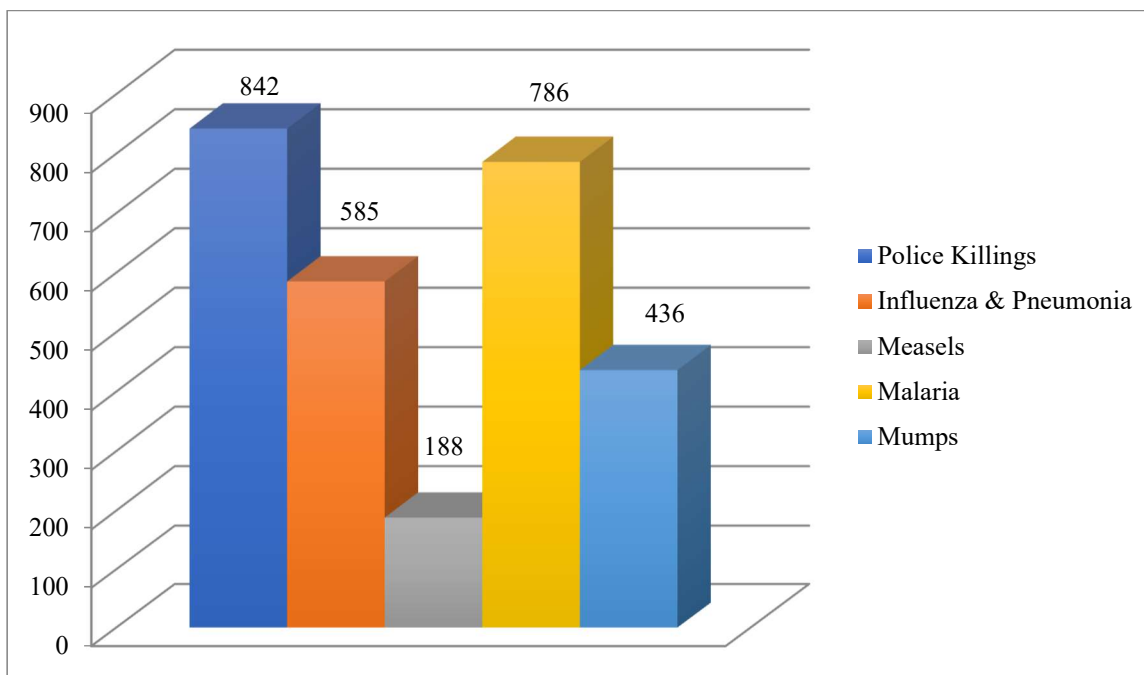
*Fatal Police Shootings in the U.S. Compared to Other Countries*



According to Krieger et al. (2015), even more shocking are the statistics that by September 19, 2015, a total of 842 people were killed by law enforcement officers, which markedly exceeded the total death rate of deaths due to pneumonia and influenza as well as other major diseases in the U.S. such as measles (188 cases), malaria (786 cases), and mumps (436 cases). Epidemic outbreaks threaten the public’s health and well-being, but police violence also affects the social and economic well-being of a community (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Fatal Police Shootings Compared to U.S. Death Totals for Diseases of Concern*



In 2020, law enforcement officers killed 1,127 civilians. The police shot 96% of those killed, and tasers, physical force, and police vehicles accounted for the other 4% (Mapping Police Violence, 2021). Unfortunately, police officers were only charged with a crime in 16 of the 1,127 cases (1% of all police killings). In general, most law enforcement killings begin with officers responding to non-violent emergency calls or calls where no crime had been reported. For example, police killed 121 people after stopping them for traffic violations.

Additionally, 94 civilians were killed after law enforcement responded to calls of erratic behavior or for a mental health crisis. Overall, 58% of law enforcement killings in 2020 were committed during traffic stops, mental health crises, or situations that did not involve a gun (“Mapping police violence,” 2021). Jones (2017) pointed out that violence in the justice system extends far beyond just law enforcement officers. More specifically, African American men were six times more likely than White men to be incarcerated, and

Hispanic men were incarcerated two and one-half times more than White men (Carson & Slobal, 2011).

### **Accountability**

An overarching theme noticed throughout the literature is the lack of accountability for law enforcement officers who utilize excessive use of force. In 98.3% of the cases where civilians are killed by law enforcement officers, charges are not brought against those officers (“Mapping police violence,” 2021). According to Kindy and Kelly (2015), it was discovered that officers have only been charged 54 times for killing civilians since 2005. Of those 54 occasions, 35 cases were resolved. More specifically, 21 of those cases were acquitted or dropped, and if an officer was convicted, the length of time served was an average of four years and as low as only a few weeks (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Kindy & Kelly, 2015). More recently, Chaney and Robertson (2015) found that officers were neither indicted nor charged in 63% of fatality cases, while in only 15% of fatality cases, the officer was indicted or charged. Additionally, it was found that more than three-fourths of the officers involved in these fatal killings were White, while two-thirds of the civilians were a racial minority (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Kindy & Kelly, 2015).

Furthermore, compelling experimental evidence supports the idea that the media are complicit in creating a context where lethal actions against certain populations (i.e., minorities) are justifiable and can go unpunished (Dukes & Gaither, 2017; Jones, 2017). For example, Dukes and Gaither (2017) found that victims tend to be perceived as at fault when they are described in a negative stereotypical way. Additionally, there is no universal database to keep up with police excessive use of force reports and lethal force killings committed by law enforcement. While the FBI claims to keep track of this information, it is



not mandatory for police departments to track or report this information. One of the largest police forces in the United States, the New York City Police Department, has not surrendered fatal shooting statistics to the FBI since 2007 (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Gabrielson et al., 2014). Roiphe (2017) suggested, “failing to charge for a crime, which implicates fundamental democratic values, such as police shootings of unarmed African American men, is an abuse of prosecutorial discretion” (p. 505). Roiphe also posited this is an abuse of discretion due to the vastly under-enforcement, especially in light of the historic mistreatment of African Americans, and it undermines the value of equality that is fundamental to our democratic system.

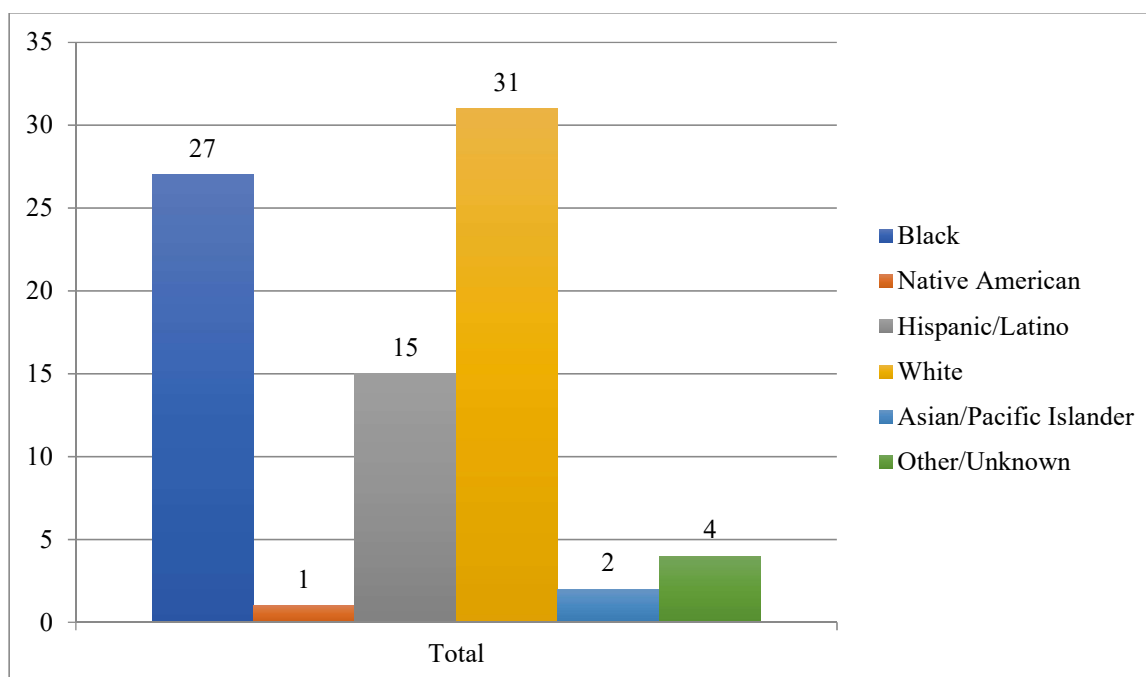
### **Armed vs. Unarmed**

In past research, it was determined that approximately half of the individuals shot at by law enforcement officers were unarmed at the time. A significant number of these civilians were shot while fleeing; i.e., their backs were turned to the officer (Jacobs & O’Brien, 1998). According to Jones (2017), the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) database shows that police kill at least 1,000 individuals every year, and approximately 10% of those individuals were unarmed. Additionally, a study conducted from 2016 to 2017 on California’s largest municipal police departments also found that approximately half (49%) of the individuals killed by law enforcement were unarmed (Campaign Zero, 2021a). While in 2016, *The Guardian* also collected data via The Counted database and found that law enforcement officers killed 1,093 individuals, of which 31.09% were unarmed people of color (POC). Compared to 2015, the number of unarmed individuals killed by law enforcement appears to have decreased while the number of armed individuals increased. This may be due to minorities fearing for their lives and feeling they need to

protect themselves from law enforcement. In recent research from the 2021 Mapping Police Violence data, approximately 80 civilians killed by law enforcement officers were unarmed at the time of the police encounter. The majority of these individuals were identified as POC (i.e., Black, 27; Hispanic, 15; Native American, 1; and Asian/Pacific Islander, 2) (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Race and Ethnicity of Unarmed Civilians Killed by Law Enforcement*



*African Americans*

Further analysis of armed vs. unarmed individuals shows that unarmed African Americans are 3.49 times more likely to be shot than their unarmed White counterparts. According to Chaney and Robertson (2015), there is an increase in the number of unarmed African Americans murdered by law enforcement officers. Specifically, they note law enforcement officers, between 1999 and 2015, killed approximately 78 unarmed African American men and women. Further, this discrepancy is even more pronounced in areas with higher rates of economic inequality and larger African American populations (Scott et al.,

2017; Binder & Scharf, 1982; Department of Justice, 2001; Jones, 2017; National Center for Injury Prevention & Control, 2013; Mekawai et al., 2016). Through analyzing public records, local news reports, and *The Guardian*, it was discovered that 32% of Black people killed by law enforcement in 2015 were unarmed. In 2016, *The Guardian* collected data suggesting 15.79% of Black individuals killed by law enforcement were unarmed at the time.

Furthermore, when considering that minorities only make up roughly 38% of the U.S. population (The Guardian, 2021), Black people are more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers, more likely to be unarmed, and less likely to be threatening someone when they are killed compared to other ethnicities/races. Additionally, in 2021, Campaign Zero found that 52% of Black individuals were unarmed at the time of their death at the hands of law enforcement.

### ***Hispanics and Latinos***

Research from 2015 has shown that 25% of Hispanic and Latino individuals killed by law enforcement were also found to be unarmed. Additionally, during 2016, 15.30% of Hispanic and Latino individuals killed by law enforcement were also found to be unarmed. Utilizing *The Guardian's* (2021) database, 21% of Hispanic and Latino individuals were more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers, more likely to be unarmed, and less likely to be threatening someone when killed. Furthermore, in 2021, Campaign Zero found that 51% of Latinx individuals were unarmed when killed or seriously injured by police officers.

### ***Whites***

Additionally, research conducted in 2015 also found that only 15% of White people killed were unarmed compared to POC. *The Guardian* (2021) also found that 38% of White

individuals were more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers when they were unarmed and not threatening anyone when compared to minorities. Moreover, in 2021 Campaign Zero suggested that 46% of the White individuals killed by police were unarmed, while minorities are still more likely to be unarmed when killed or seriously injured by law enforcement.

### **Populations Most Affected**

According to and O'Brien (1998), in early research on police use of excessive force, it was thought that racial inequality was the best approach to explaining the use of deadly force by the police. Jacobs also found that this was consistent with the emerging view that the greater differences in the economic resources of Blacks and Whites reduce the Black population's political influence, which in turn, would limit their ability to deter police violence. Research during this time also showed that broken families lead to violent crime, so areas with higher divorce rates were associated with an increased number of police killings (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998; Sampson, 1987). Along with this "broken home" theory, it was also understood that population matters in this consideration as well. A conclusion was drawn that police were more likely to use excessive force in areas of cities with the largest populations (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998). More recent research is finding that a number of factors play a role in police shootings and excessive use of force behavior. More specifically:

the context in which the officer encounters the suspect (Kahn & Davies, 2018; Sorensen et al., 1993), the race of the sitting mayor (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998), number of hours a police officer has of field training (Smith, 2004), and according to Terrill and McCluskey (2002), officer characteristics. (Scott et al., 2017, p. 702)

According to Jones (2017), the POST database shows that police kill at least 1,000 individuals every year. Even more alarming is, 40-50% of those killed by law enforcement are POC. Jones (2017) also pointed out that at least 76 POC have died while in police custody in New York City from 1999 to 2014. Overall, research shows that use of force, whether lethal or nonlethal, by law enforcement officers, is based on the victim's race/ethnicity. More specifically, POC receive harsher treatment and punishments than White suspects (Scott et al., 2017). Their research also analyzed approximately 3,300 police encounters and found that as the minority population increases, so does the amount of use of force by law enforcement officers (Scott et al., 2017).

Additionally, in a recent study completed by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, White individuals in the United States were found to envision a situation where they would endorse the use of excessive force toward an adult male citizen (Holland, 2015). In contrast, 42% of African Americans and 38% of Latinos could not envision a circumstance where they would approve of the use of excessive force (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Holland, 2015). With the majority of research showing African Americans as the primary victims of police brutality, the Hispanic population is considered the second most likely group to be targeted by police brutality. Further research also shows that in other countries such as the United Kingdom, while African Americans and Asians account for only one-third of the population, they comprise over 50% of the documented police brutality victims. Furthermore, in more rural areas where these minorities account for only 14% of the population, they account for approximately 50% of the police brutality complaints received (Dulaney, 1996).

Utilizing *The Guardian's* database, The Counted, stark statistics are provided regarding the number of people killed by law enforcement officers during 2015 and 2016. These statistics include data on deaths after using a taser, deaths caused by police officer vehicles, deaths following an altercation in police custody, and the individuals killed when an officer opens fire. Overall, the collected data shows that 24.34 % to 29% of individuals killed were Black, 14% to 16.74% of individuals killed were Hispanic/Latino, and 50% to 52.2% were White. However, it is important to note while 50% of the individuals were White, Black individuals in the U.S. are significantly and disproportionately killed by law enforcement officers, and they only make up 13% of the country's total population. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority (95%) of those killed by officers were male (The Guardian, 2021). Furthermore, research also indicated that an overwhelming majority (94.51%) of those killed by officers were male.

Utilizing the Mapping Police Violence database, statistics are provided regarding the number of people killed by law enforcement officers during 2017-2020. In 2020, law enforcement officers killed a total of 1,127 people. Much like The Counted, Mapping Police Violence researchers further break down this number. More specifically, data are provided on the number of officers charged with a crime, the number of individuals killed by police shootings, unarmed vs. armed, race and ethnicity, and other categories. According to Mapping Police Violence (2021), 96% of individuals killed by law enforcement officers were shot even though the majority of these killings began with law enforcement responding to suspected non-violent offenses or cases where there had been no crime reported. Of the individuals killed by law enforcement in 2020, 58% were traffic stops, police responses to mental health crises, or situations where the person was unarmed and nonthreatening

(“Mapping police violence,” 2021). For example, 121 individuals were killed after a law enforcement officer stopped the individual for a traffic violation, and 94 people were killed after law enforcement responded to reports of erratic behavior or an individual having a mental health crisis. Developing alternative response styles to these types of situations can substantially reduce the amount of law enforcement violence seen nationwide.

Furthermore, of the total individuals killed (1,127) by law enforcement officers in 2020, only 16 of the officers were charged with a crime, which is less than 1% of all killings by law enforcement officers (“Mapping police violence,” 2021). Eight of the 16 cases were able to provide video evidence of the police killings. Mapping Police Violence (2021) was able to identify 444 of the officers involved in these killings of civilians. Of the 444 identified law enforcement officers, 14 had shot or killed someone before. Further, nine had only one prior shooting, and five were identified to have multiple prior shootings. When considering that minorities only make up roughly 38% of the U.S. population (*The Guardian*, 2021), Black people are more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers, more likely to be unarmed, and less likely to be threatening someone when they are killed compared to any other race/ethnicity. For example, Black individuals are 3 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers than White people and are 1.3 times more likely to be unarmed when compared to White individuals.

One study examined data from state and local law enforcement agencies in 100 of California’s largest municipal police departments (Campaign Zero, 2021a). After analyzing the data, this study found that law enforcement officers in California discharged their firearms or used force, resulting in death or serious bodily harm in 1,276 cases in one year (2016-2017). More specifically, 824 people were seriously injured, while police killed 328

individuals. Of all the incidents analyzed, 647 incidents were classified as police shootings. All other deaths were due to the use of excessive force by law enforcement. Consistent with other research completed in this area, “when people come forward to report police misconduct in California, it rarely leads to accountability” (Campaign Zero, 2021a). More specifically, only 1 in 14 civilian complaints of police misconduct had a ruling in favor of the civilian. In 81% of California’s jurisdictions, when a civilian filed a complaint of police misconduct, there was a 1 in 5 chance of the ruling being in their favor (Campaign Zero, 2021a).

Furthermore, complaints of police violence and racial/identity discrimination rarely result in accountability. More specifically, Campaign Zero (2021a) found that civilians who reported police racial discrimination had only a 1 in 64 chance of their complaint being upheld, and civilians who reported use of force complaints only had a 1 in 78 chance of their complaints being upheld. Moreover, also consistent with previous research, Campaign Zero (2021a) discovered that in California, only 1 of the 647 incidents resulted in an officer being prosecuted for breaking the law.

Regarding evidence for racial bias, Campaign Zero (2021) consistently found a pattern of minorities being at higher risk of being shot or confronted with excessive use of force. More specifically, Campaign Zero’s (2021a) study found that in California, Black individuals were 2.2 times higher (per population) than White individuals to be arrested for misdemeanor offenses. Black individuals in California are also arrested for drug possession at higher rates than White individuals despite research showing similar rates between the two groups. Additionally, there was evidence showing racial bias regarding police use of force. When racial and ethnic groups were compared, Campaign Zero (2021a) found that Black



individuals were 32% more likely to be shot when arrested and 20% of Latinx individuals than White individuals.

Moreover, Campaign Zero (2021a) suggested that police officers are more likely to shoot Black and Latinx individuals as a first response rather than first attempting nonlethal tactics to resolve the situation. In 87% of police shootings of Black people and in 84% of police shootings of Latinx people, officers were found to shoot first over attempting to de-escalate or utilizing a lower level of force when compared to the 81% of police shootings of White people. Campaign Zero's research is consistent with other research studies that have been conducted (Kahn et al., 2017; Klinger et al., 2015).

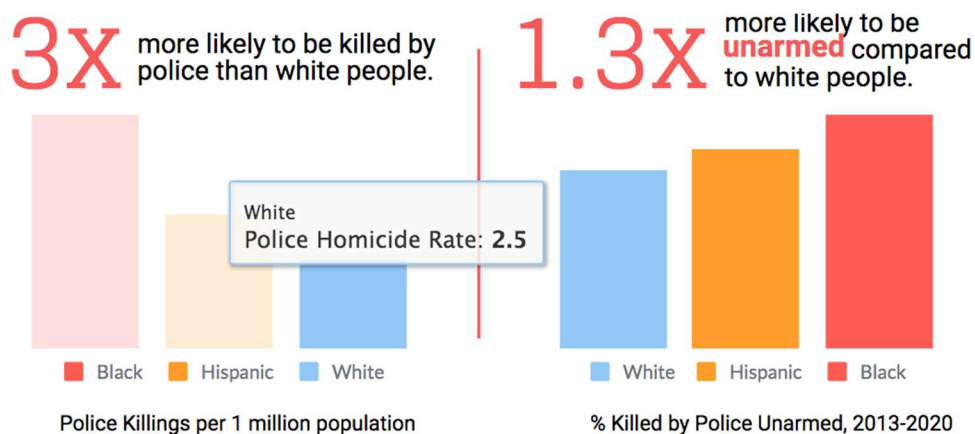
### *African Americans*

Despite only accounting for 13% to 15% of the total U.S. population, African Americans accounted for roughly 40% of individuals killed by law enforcement (Scott et al., 2017; U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], 2001). It has been found that African Americans are 3 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement, 1.3 times more likely to be unarmed (Figure 4), less likely to be threatening someone when killed, and 5 times more likely to be fatally shot (Mapping Police Violence, 2021; Scott et al., 2017). In a 2012 study conducted between January 1-June 30 by a grassroots organization, it was discovered that law enforcement officers or another individual acting in an official capacity (i.e., security guard or self-appointed law enforcers) killed an African American citizen every 36 hours (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). Of those individuals, 5% were African American women, and 46% were unarmed African American men. Additionally, 36% of those individuals allegedly had a weapon identified by police, which included a cane, toy gun, or a BB gun (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). Also of note, African American off-duty law enforcement officers are 52

times more likely to be fatally shot than White off-duty officers (Charbonneau et al., 2017; Scott et al., 2017).

**Figure 4**

*Black Individuals are Most Likely to be Killed by Police*



*Note:* Black people are most likely to be killed by police. Reprinted from Mapping Police Violence, 2021, <https://policeviolencereport.org/>.

African Americans appear to face a disproportionate number of harmful incidents with law enforcement due to the disparaging perceptions that officers have of these individuals. These perceptions contribute to the unjustified use of physical and deadly force toward African Americans, police officer misconduct, slow response times, and fewer police services (Anderson, 2000; Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998; Kane, 2002). A magnitude of research suggests that African Americans, especially African American men, are frequently dehumanized by police officers, which leads to police brutality and the use of deadly force (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1997). Further research has shown that the use of violence by police officers is closely related to the racial and ethnic makeup of the community (Holmes, 2000; Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998; Liska & Yu, 1992; Smith & Holmes, 2014). For example, minorities that live in cities that are spatially segregated by racial/ethnic populations tend to be seen as threats by law enforcement officers, which results in them

being more likely to experience police violence (Holmes & Smith, 2008; Smith & Holmes, 2014).

Research has also shown that the marginalization of African Americans starts very early on. African American children (specifically males) are seen as more dangerous, less innocent, and older than their actual age than White children (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). More specifically, a study found that African American children as young as 10 years old are seen as “less innocent than their White peers, are much more likely to be mistaken for being older and to be perceived as guilty, and face police violence if they are accused of committing a crime” (Chaney & Robertson, 2015, p. 46). Furthermore, research has shown that perceiving African American children as “apes” is a predictor of racial disparities in police violence toward children (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2007). African American children are 18 times more likely to be punished as adults than their White peers (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2007). According to the FBI’s supplementary homicide report, statistics from 1980 to 2012, which account for more than 12,000 police homicides, show the following regarding young African American males:

- Ages 15 to 19 are 21 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers when compared to White peers.
- African American police officers only account for 10% of police killings. However, 78% of their victims are African American individuals.
- White police officers account for 68% of the deaths of POC. (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Gabrielson et al., 2014)

According to Chaney and Robertson (2015), the average age of African Americans killed by law enforcement officers is 27-years old. Further, of the African Americans murdered by

police from 1999 to 2015, 19% were only 19 years old, 44% were 20 to 29 years old, 20% were 30 to 39 years old, 13% were 40-49 years old, and 3% were individuals in their 50s.

Moreover, in a study conducted by the DOJ, the Ferguson Police Department frequently engaged in racial bias and routinely violated the rights of its African American citizens (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). A study conducted from 2011 to 2014 also showed that unarmed African Americans were roughly 3.49 times more likely to be shot than unarmed Whites. This further increased when examining areas with a higher rate of economic inequality and a larger population of African American residents (Scott et al., 2017). Additionally, another study conducted in 2017, which analyzed data from 2015, found that African Americans were significantly more likely to be unarmed while being shot by law enforcement (Scott et al., 2017). Furthermore, Black males are often found to have disproportionate contact with police, including disproportionate pedestrian stops and traffic stops (Kahn et al., 2017).

### ***LGBTQ+ Community***

Discrimination and harassment by law enforcement officers have historically been an inescapable issue for the LGBTQ+ community. Unfortunately, it still remains to be a persistent problem for the LGBTQ+ community to this day. This pervasive discrimination and harassment by law enforcement officers make it difficult for officers to efficiently police communities and establish the trust of their community. Particularly vulnerable to profiling, entrapment, and violence by law enforcement are LGBTQ+ POC, youth, and transgendered people (Mallory et al., 2015). Law enforcement officers often ignore victimization reported by the LGBTQ+ community. Furthermore, there is no nationwide federal statute that fully prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Discrimination, harassment, and violence toward the LGBTQ+ community at the hands of law enforcement officers is an area that has been well documented in recent years. In 2014, a report utilizing data from a national survey of LGBT people and individuals living with HIV reported that 73% of participants had face-to-face contact with law enforcement within the past five years (Mallory et al., 2015). Data further showed that of the participants, 21% endured hostile attitudes from law enforcement officers, 14% were verbally assaulted by law enforcement, 3% reported sexual harassment, and 2% were physically assaulted by law enforcement personnel (Mallory et al., 2015). Furthermore, a report from 2013 noted that LGBT violence survivors who had an encounter with law enforcement experienced police misconduct (48%), such as unjustified arrests, use of excessive force, and entrapment (Mallory et al., 2015). Additionally, POC, transgender, and gender-nonconforming participants were found to suffer from higher incidences of law enforcement misconduct, abuse, and neglect (Mallory et al., 2015). More specifically, in a report of law enforcement encounters with transgender Latinas, approximately two-thirds of the women disclosed verbal harassment, 21% were physically assaulted, and 24% were sexually assaulted by a law enforcement officer (Mallory et al., 2015).

The discrimination, harassment, and abuse endured by the LGBTQ+ community at the hands of law enforcement officers undermines effective policing and creates an environment where community members feel unsafe, isolated, and without support from the individuals supposed to protect them. One study of gay and bisexual identified males discovered that roughly 40% of participants believed contacting the police would be unhelpful. Further, 59% of participants believed that law enforcement officers would be less helpful if the individual was a gay or bisexual man when compared to heterosexual women

(Mallory et al., 2015). Moreover, a study conducted in 2014 showed that only one-third of LGBT victims' complaints of a hate crime were addressed (Mallory et al., 2015).

### ***Mental Health***

Mapping Police Violence (2021) pointed out that in Eugene, OR, mental health providers respond to calls that involve individuals in a mental health crisis instead of law enforcement officers. Additionally, in Los Angeles County, there are co-responder teams comprised of mental health providers and law enforcement officers that work together when responding to the most extreme mental health-related calls (Mapping Police Violence, 2021). An analysis of LA's program found that approximately 751 use of force incidents and 9 killings by law enforcement for 2018 were prevented. Since the deinstitutionalization of mental health facilities, law enforcement officers have become the frontline responders to a healthcare issue. Unfortunately, use of force toward this population has been linked to these calls (Baker & Pillinger, 2020). Utilizing data from *The Guardian's* database, The Counted; approximately three citizens die per day after contact with law enforcement in the United States (Baker & Pillinger, 2020). With the increased number of unaccountable law enforcement actions, there is a lack of societal trust and confidence in the police (Dunham & Peterson, 2017; Katz, 2015; Marenin, 2016). Furthermore, numerous academic research studies conducted in the United States have found a disproportionate use of force on individuals with mental illness and minorities (Engel & Silver, 2001; Holmes & Smith, 2012; Kahn et al., 2017; Kleining, 2014; Klinger et al., 2015).

Mulvey and White (2013) found that individuals with mental illness are four times more likely to be shot, and these individuals are disproportionately more likely to die after an encounter with law enforcement officers (Baker & Pillinger, 2020). Thus, individuals with

mental health issues are often trapped in this revolving door between living in the community and the criminal justice system, which is ill-prepared to meet these individuals' needs (Baker & Pillinger, 2020). In a study completed by Baker and Pillinger (2020), 16 of 43 deaths (37%) were identified as individuals with mental health issues. Of the 16, 14 individuals were shot (87.5%), one died from being restrained by officers (6.25%), and one committed suicide while in police custody (6.25%). Furthermore, the youngest individual was 16 years old, and the oldest was 59 years old. The mean age of those individuals with mental illness who died was 28 years old. Consistent with other research, the majority of deceased individuals with mental illness were male. Rossler and Terrill (2016) further suggested that mental illness is a significant predictor of the level of force used. According to Rossler and Terrill (2016), this finding mirrors previous work conducted by Mulvey and White (2013). To justify these killings and the use of force, law enforcement officers and the media portray these victims in a stereotypical way (Baker & Pillinger, 2020).

In research conducted by Livingston (2016), it was found that 1 in 10 individuals with a mental health diagnosis has a history of police arrest. Perry and Carter-Long (2016) suggested that 42% of all killings between 2000 and 2011 involved individuals with a mental health diagnosis. Further, 81% of all officer-involved shootings from 1993 to 2012 in San Diego County involved an individual with a mental illness, were impaired by drugs, or both. Additionally, Kesic et al. (2013) suggested that psychoses and schizophrenia are dramatically overrepresented in cases where police resort to using force. Kesic et al. (2013) also found that half of the individuals in their study were injured by an encounter with law enforcement.

Moreover, NAMI (2021) reported that 21% of the homeless population suffers from a serious mental illness. Thirty-seven percent of individuals incarcerated in prisons (state and

federal) and 44% of individuals in local jails have been diagnosed with a mental health condition, and 70% of youths in the juvenile justice system have been diagnosed with at least one mental health condition. Those youths who are incarcerated are 10 times more likely to experience psychosis than those in the community. Further, approximately two million times each year, individuals with a serious mental illness are booked into jails (NAMI, 2021). Moreover, 66% of women in prison report having a history of mental illness, roughly twice the percentage of men in prison. NAMI (2021) also found that 25% of the individuals shot and killed by law enforcement officers between 2015 and 2020 had a mental health condition.

Additionally, among incarcerated individuals with a mental health condition, minorities are more likely to be held in solitary confinement, be injured, and have lengthier stays in jail (NAMI, 2021). Approximately three in five (63%) incarcerated individuals with a history of mental health issues do not receive appropriate mental health treatment while imprisoned in state and federal prisons. Of those individuals who do receive mental health treatment while incarcerated, White adults received treatment 50% of the time while minorities received treatment less than 50% of the time. Currently, there are more individuals with mental illness in jail or prison than all the state-run psychiatric institutions in the United States combined (Council of State Governments, 2007; Mulvey & White, 2013).

Further research has shown that disabled people, which are considered to be the world's largest minority group, make up one-third to one-half of all people killed by law enforcement as well as experience twice the rate of violence than other groups do (Mueller et al., 2019; Perry & Carter-Long, 2016; Shah, 2019). Per the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Shah (2019), in the United States, over 9.8 million individuals experience a



serious mental health condition that substantially interferes with daily life functioning. According to Mueller et al. (2019), disabled individuals experience serious violence nearly twice that of the general population. Moreover, disabled individuals are also overrepresented among the arrested and incarcerated. Additionally, these individuals are nearly three times as likely to report having a disability when compared to the non-incarcerated (Mueller et al., 2019; Vallas, 2016). Regarding age, individuals with disabilities aged 12 to 15 have the highest proportion of violent victimization (Mueller et al., 2019). Morabito et al. (2017) suggested individuals with co-occurring disorders are more likely to be seen as violently resisting law enforcement officers, which results in having force used against them. Morabito et al. (2017) found that control holds are more frequently used on individuals with comorbid disorders (10.14%) when compared to individuals with no perceived disorder (2.08%). Furthermore, takedowns were found to be used less frequently on individuals with no perceived disorder (20.19%) when compared to individuals with a mental health diagnosis (41.08%), with only substance use (44.98%), and those with comorbid disorders (42.31%) (Morabito et al., 2017). A taser was used least frequently on those with no perceived disorders (12.01%) and most frequently on individuals with comorbid disorders (39.51%) (Morabito et al., 2017).

Baker and Pillinger (2020) pointed out it is widely recognized that in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada dealing with calls involving individuals with mental health issues occupy a significant portion of police time. However, it is also well known that law enforcement officers are not the most qualified to be handling these types of calls. Law enforcement officers receive insufficient training and lack the confidence needed to handle these types of calls. Insufficient training can lead to an officer making a rushed

evaluation, which in turn, leads to the use of inappropriate techniques (Ruiz & Miller, 2004). Furthermore, law enforcement officers may also respond to mental health calls based on their stereotypical view of mental illness. Some of these stereotypical views consist of viewing individuals with mental illness as unpredictable, dangerous, and violent (Baker & Pillinger, 2020; Chappel & O'Brien, 2014; Ruiz & Miller, 2004). Law enforcement officers historically have a poor record regarding the use of force when responding to mental health calls. In a study completed by Ruiz and Miller (2004), a cross-section survey of the Pennsylvania police department found that only 47% of officers felt confident when responding to mental health calls, and 49% of officers felt uneasy, worried, and threatened by individuals with mental illness.

Additionally, Watson et al. (2014) found that officers were 20 times more likely to use force when subjects physically resisted police officers. If the resistance was only verbal, then police officers were four times more likely to use force than if the individual did not struggle or resist arrest. Further, Johnson (2011) also discovered that individuals seen as having a mental illness tended to be more likely (42.9% v. 4.9%) viewed as having a weapon than individuals without an obvious mental illness. However, it is important to note that it is possible law enforcement likely views common objects such as a chair as a weapon when an individual has an obvious mental health condition (Johnson et al., 2013; Watson et al., 2014).

Some research suggests that individuals with mental illness are more vulnerable to being the subject of use of force due to police officers misinterpreting their demeanor or behavior (Agee et al., 2019; Cordner, 2006; Kerr et al., 2010). For example, an individual with mental illness may be perceived as ignoring an officer's command. However, this individual may not understand the command or be able to pay attention to the command due

to their psychiatric symptoms, such as an internal stimulus like a hallucination (Agee et al., 2019; Cordner, 2006; Kerr et al., 2010). Law enforcement officers are known to be highly sensitive to behaviors that are considered to undermine their authority and legitimacy; therefore, this can often lead to misinterpretation and use of force against those who are considered mentally ill (Auner, 2016). Further, Auner (2016) found that 42 to 50% of individuals classified as mentally ill will be arrested in their lives, much higher than the 7 to 8% of the general population. Thus, there is an increased mistrust between the community and law enforcement. Further research has shown that approximately 25 to 50% of fatal encounters with law enforcement involve individuals with mental health disorders (Thompson & Kahn, 2018; Tribolet-Hardy et al., 2015). Due to this heightened risk, individuals with mental illness tend to feel vulnerable and fearful of police officers (Reuland, 2010; Thompson & Kahn, 2018; Watson et al., 2008).

## CHAPTER III:

### CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS USING EXCESSIVE FORCE

#### Police Culture

Traditional police culture (TPC) is defined as a set of attitudes and values developed as a coping mechanism to assist officers in managing strains intrinsic to police work as well as providing a lens through which law enforcement officers use to interpret the world in which they work (Crank, 2014; Kappeler et al., 1988; Paoline, 2003; Paoline et al., 2000; Silver et al., 2015). Police culture also provides law enforcement officers with “common-sense” guidelines for how one should present themselves (i.e., social and moral identities (Crank, 2014; Silver et al., 2015). TPC inherently fosters distrust and isolation from citizens through a desire to “maintain the edge” in civilian encounters, loyalty to fellow officers, avoidance of supervisor scrutiny, and permissiveness toward misconduct (Crank, 2014; Kappeler et al., 1988; Paoline, 2003; Silver et al., 2015). A desire to uphold this culture often affects the officer’s attitude and behavior toward citizens (Paoline & Terrill, 2005; Silver et al., 2015; Terrill et al., 2003; Terrill & Paoline, 2015; Van Maanen, 1974) and has become associated with greater use of force (Silver et al., 2015; Terrill et al., 2003). Understanding police culture is important when attempting to understand and address police behavior and citizen encounters. Research has shown that masculinity contest cultures, like those found in TPC, often result in negative outcomes such as harassment, discrimination, and increased stress for individual officers. The toxic cultures also contribute to lawsuits and high turnover among policing organizations, and at the community level, more officers use excessive force (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018).

Regarding police culture, early research first studied in the 1960s proposed that police culture reflects the working-class backgrounds of recruits. Police recruits who were found to view violence as a legitimate resource were preoccupied with maintaining self-respect, proving masculinity, and demonstrating that they were physically and mentally tough enough to adapt to hostile working conditions (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018; Wilson, 1968). Occupational characteristics and the socialization process both reinforce these cultural values throughout each stage of an officer's career (Crank, 1998; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018; Skolnick, 1994). According to Rawski and Workman-Stark (2018), as a result of this subculture, men who spend their career in policing tend to develop highly masculinized self-identities, which continue to perpetuate these cultural norms. It is thought that police work can lead to or often encourage a masculinity contest culture (MCC) where a law enforcement officer's enforcement of hyper-masculine norms encourages the use of excessive force and harassment behaviors often seen by law enforcement (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). Unfortunately, due to law enforcement being male-dominated, masculine norms tends to be common and reflect an MCC culture. MCC has four defining features: show no weakness, strength and stamina, put work first, and dog-eat-dog competition (Berdahl & Aquino, 2009; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018).

Furthermore, research on in-groups and out-groups supports the idea that police culture affects police behaviors and interactions with citizens. Research has shown that out-groups (those who do not endorse police culture) are disconnected from and marginalized in the community by the in-group/officers (Jones, 2017; Vaes et al., 2003). These individuals (out-group members) are denied the benefits of the in-group (e.g., sympathy, hope, empathy) (Jones, 2017). Officers are expected to continually demonstrate masculine attributes to fit in

(Ely & Myerson, 2010), and those officers who conform to the police culture are fully embraced as a member of the “brotherhood,” which awards them the benefits and solidarity of this culture (Reus-Ianni, 1983). Those benefits consist of ensuring one’s colleagues will defend and back up members of the in-group even in dangerous situations. However, if an individual does not conform to the in-group/police culture, they are viewed as weak and become a target for ridicule and isolation (Nolan, 2009; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). Broderick (2016) suggested this is a major concern for officers who cannot or do not want to adhere to police culture norms. For example, in 2011, officer Donna Watts suffered the consequences of arresting one of her fellow officers for reckless driving, and she became the victim of retaliation for the so-called “brotherhood” she was a member of. More specifically, her fellow officers would make prank phone calls, park unidentified vehicles outside of her home, make threats via social media, and access her personal DMV records (25 different law enforcement agencies). Officer Watts could no longer work as a patrol officer due to her superiors being afraid her fellow “brothers” would no longer respond to her for backup when needed (Brandl, 2018; Alpert et al., 2015).

Regarding the four dimensions of MCCs, endorsing the “show no weakness” dimension further results in consequences such as preventing officers from receiving the necessary support to deal with the pressures of the job (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). This can lead to several mental health concerns (i.e., alcohol or substance abuse). The “put work first” dimension also leads to negative consequences such as the need to be available 24-hours a day, one’s presence must be known (“being seen to be keen”), and one must have a long uninterrupted law enforcement career (Davies & Thomas, 2003). Officers are also expected to participate in social events with their fellow officers. Those who do not

participate are often left out of the group. These dimensions also often isolate law enforcement officers from civilians and can be challenging for female officers, as they are seen to have greater family obligations (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). As a result of social isolation within this subculture, officers are more likely to withdraw further into the subculture for support and approval (Chappel & Piquero, 2004; Kappeler et al., 2001). This often results in toxic peer influence and control that tends to assume the acceptance of deviance (Chappel & Piquero, 2004; Kappeler et al., 2001). Chappel and Piquero (2004) suggested the opportunity to learn deviant behaviors is due to the exposure of the attitudes, values, and beliefs transmitted from generation to generation via the learning process of law enforcement officers.

### ***Gender Differences***

Also of importance, as officers adhere to the “show no weakness” dimension of MCC cultures, officers tend to overemphasize their masculinity and avoid showing any emotions that would make them appear vulnerable or feminine (Addis & Cohane, 2005; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). Due to this, women are often further isolated and excluded in police culture. Rawski and Workman-Stark (2018) pointed out the challenges female police personnel experience working in a MCC culture. This culture often requires female officers to change their behaviors to gain acceptance into the in-group. Research has shown that female officers in leadership positions are often afraid of taking advantage of flexible hours due to stigmatization (Silvestri, 2005). Female officers who do take time off from work often fail to advance in their careers due to perceptions of them not being committed to the organization or “brotherhood” (Workman-Stark, 2017). This often results in barriers to inclusion and lost opportunities for career advancement (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018).

### ***Police Misconduct and the Code of Silence***

According to Brandl (2018), by the time officers leave their academy training, they are already more prone to using force as a means of resolution over talking through a situation. Research shows that these officers are less likely to engage in active listening but are more likely to engage in machismo behaviors before hitting the road (Brandl, 2018). Additionally, even when fellow officers and supervisors are aware of misconduct, it often does not make a difference in stopping the behavior. This is due to the unspoken rule known as the code of silence endorsed by police culture (Brandl, 2018). The code of silence is an important aspect of police culture when attempting to deal with police conduct. Specifically, due to the nature of police work and the fact the decisions made by officers are often only visible to the officer and the citizen involved in the event, this often creates or breeds an opportunity for misconduct (Brandl, 2018). Solidarity between officers is a strongly encouraged value among the occupational subculture of law enforcement (Brandl, 2018). Brandl (2018) pointed out this value of solidarity, reinforcing the unspoken rule of not reporting fellow officers' misconduct. As a consequence of this type of culture, officers often become suspicious of others outside of their occupation, which in turn, becomes a survival skill. More specifically, violation of the code of silence can carry significant consequences from members of this subculture. For example, officers must conform to this value if they wish their fellow officers to have their backs and respond as backup. Officers' well-being and life often depend on their ability to conform to this culture (Brandl, 2018).

### **Organizational Culture and Characteristics**

Organizational culture denotes the recognized and established practices, guidelines, and principles of conduct applied to any given situation, which consist of shared norms,



values, attitudes, and expectations (Brandl, 2018). Brandl also pointed out that these factors determine everything from the value of police tasks to what constitutes a “good” joke. The violation of these unwritten rules has both informal and unofficial sanctions. These sanctions can come in the form of ridicule or whether an officer receives backup when needed (Brandl, 2018). Organizational/police culture is only learned through experience and cannot be learned through a classroom. Elizabeth Reuss-Ianni (1983) developed a list of cultural rules that govern police officers, which include the following:

- Watch out for your partner first and then the rest of the guys working that tour;
- Don’t give up on another cop;
- Show balls;
- Be aggressive when you have to, but don’t be too eager;
- Don’t get involved in anything in another guy’s sector;
- Hold up your end of the work;
- If you get caught off base, don’t implicate anyone else;
- Make sure the other guys know if another cop is dangerous or crazy;
- Don’t trust a new guy until you have checked him out;
- Don’t tell anybody more than they have to know; it could be bad for you, and it could be bad for them;
- Don’t talk too much or too little;
- Don’t leave work for the next tour;
- Protect your ass;
- Don’t make waves;
- Don’t give them too much activity;

- Keep out of the way of any boss from outside your precinct;
- Don't look for favors just for yourself;
- Know your bosses;
- Don't do the bosses' work for them; and
- Don't trust bosses to look out for your interests. (pp. 15-18)

Research about police culture suggests that TPC conforms to organizational boundaries such that two subcultures are described. More specifically, the strains faced by line officers and managers have created a “street cop culture,” which includes the values and attitudes of TPC, and “management cop culture,” which is focused on the concerns of the department and city (Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Silver et al., 2017). Thus, in a paramilitary organizational environment of traditional police departments, officers face substantial scrutiny from supervisors and are more likely to be reprimanded for mistakes instead of recognized for good work (Brown, 1988; Paoline, 2003; Silver et al., 2015). Organizational strains can lead to avoidance behaviors to evade reprimands or other repercussions (Paoline, 2003; Silver et al., 2015; Van Maanen, 1974). According to Jones, organizational policies “explicitly warrant the dangerousness of certain groups through stop-n-frisk, mandatory minimum sentencing, and three-strike laws” (2017, p. 874). Laws such as stand your ground support lethal force and legitimate fear as a defense. Additionally, Rawski and Workman-Stark (2018) have found that police organizations tend to endorse MCCs, which lead to significant issues for police officers and their communities.

Further research has shown that officer discretion is also influenced by official departmental policies (Brandl, 2018). According to Silver et al. (2017):

organizational characteristics such as organizational justice (Bradford & Quinton, 2014; Myhill & Bradford, 2013; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011) and organizational philosophy (Paoline et al., 2000) have both been found to shape TPC endorsement, as have contextual factors such as rural vs. urban policing environments (Christensen & Crank, 2001) (p. 1295).

Brandl (2018) noted that organizational goals of law enforcement are difficult to specify and achieve; therefore, it can be difficult to regulate what is considered good policing. To reduce stress from ambiguous roles and situations, officers tend to adopt a “crime-fighter orientation,” which leads to the regular use of force against citizens. This further isolates officers from citizens and creates an environment of suspicion and distrust of civilians (Paoline, 2003; Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Silver et al., 2015), which results in a view of citizens as potential assailants and inconvenient bystanders (Silver et al., 2015; Sparrow et al., 1990). Further, this environment also creates a desire to “maintain the edge” when there are encounters with citizens who refuse to back down (i.e., verbal resistance); Thus, officers feel the need to maintain and demonstrate their authority over the civilian whenever possible (Paoline, 2003; Reiner, 2010; Silver et al., 2015; Sparrow et al., 1990; Van Maanen, 1974; Westley, 1970). Therefore, an “us vs. them” mentality is created and reinforced by TPC. Silver et al. (2017) suggested that TPC is strongly related to organizational factors among police officers. Silver et al.’s (2017) findings are also consistent with the idea that larger police departments and officers in county police departments are more likely to report adherence to TPC than municipal departments. Further, research conducted by McDevitt et al. (2011) suggested officers employed by smaller departments exhibit less solidarity among fellow officers and have more positive views of the disciplinary process. Research has also

shown that officers employed by larger departments are more likely to engage in misconduct and use force against civilians (Eitle et al., 2014; Nowacki, 2015; Silver et al., 2015; Willits & Nowacki, 2014).

### **Officer Characteristics**

According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) (1996), psychological screening is a less accurate indicator of values, attitudes and overall character of an officer than utilizing information on past interests and activities of the officer (Brandl, 2018). Thus, officers with different traits and characteristics will bring different styles of police discretion to the job. These individual officers will decide what laws to enforce, when to enforce them, and against whom they should be enforced (Brandl, 2018). Police officers may begin their careers with good intentions and may be well suited for the job, but the demands and strain of law enforcement can change the way an officer thinks, which will ultimately result in bad decisions while on the job (Brandl, 2018). According to Brandl, officer discretion often impacts citizens negatively and appears to look more like discrimination than objective discretion.

Silver et al. (2017) suggested that managers' attitudes are associated with individual factors, such as race, age, years of service, and education, whereas officer attitudes are more associated with organizational and contextual factors, such as agency size, agency type, and Southern residence. Managers having more insulation from organizational and occupational environments that police officers are faced with allows for more individual preferences and the ability to no longer need to conform to TPC. Thus, officers' personal characteristics may be less prominent in determining whether they conform to TPC (Silver et al., 2015). For example, newly promoted officers may still be more likely to support the use of force tactics

than managers who have been in the position for a longer period. Many reviews that examine police culture have found that norms consistent with MCCs are more likely to promote the acceptance and normalization of discriminatory and harassing behavior. More specifically, these norms often support and promote excessive risk-taking, use of force, fractures relationships, and downplay of health issues (Ely & Myerson, 2010; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018). Furthermore, research has found that threats to an officer's masculinity lead to an officer striking back via excessive use of force. For example, Workman-Stark (2017) discussed an instance where an officer was rejected and isolated from his fellow brothers due to an interaction with a member of the LGBTQ+ community. To regain his place among the brotherhood, this officer attempted to reassert his masculinity by becoming aggressive during encounters with civilians, which resulted in a number of citizen complaints (Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018).

Terrill and McCluskey (2002) pointed out that citizen complaints toward police officers are considered representative of the identification of problem officers. Further research of officer misconduct suggests that citizen complaints are produced only by a handful of police officers (Terrill & McCluskey, 2002). According to Terrill and McCluskey (2002), officers with high complaint histories regarding excessive use of force and discourtesy engage in these types of behaviors more frequently than officers with few to no complaints. More specifically, an investigation completed in 1991 by the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department found that a small group of officers (44) were actually responsible for a disproportionate number of complaints. These officers who had approximately six or more complaints became labeled as "problem officers." According to Mapping Police Violence (2020), of the 444 officers identified in fatal shootings, roughly

14 of them had shot or killed someone previously, 9 had a record of 1 prior shooting, and 5 officers had a record of 2 or more prior shootings. However, it is also important to note that complaints are subject to interpretation (Terrill & McCluskey, 2002).

### ***Stress***

Law enforcement officers are exposed to traumatic events daily. The nature of the law enforcement occupation is often unpredictable and dangerous, which ultimately, throughout an officer's career, exposes them to chronic periods of stress as well as acute stressors that trigger a fight or flight response (Jetelina et al., 2020). Thus, law enforcement officers become susceptible to adverse events such as unwarranted use of force after being dispatched to recurring and chronic high-stress calls (Jetelina et al., 2020). Officers are typically dispatched to 8 to 10 calls per shift—these calls are randomly assigned, often resulting in multiple exposures to high-stress calls in a single shift. Furthermore, this repeated exposure to high stress adversely impacts officers in multiple ways. More specifically, stressors impact officers physiologically via increased heart rate, elevated cortisol levels, and heart disease, as well as psychologically via burnout, depression, anxiety, and/or PTSD (Anderson et al., 2002; Bakker & Heuven, 2006; Bishop & Boots, 2014; Bishop et al., 2016; Hickman et al., 2011; Jetelina et al., 2020; Maguen et al., 2009; Violanti et al., 2017). These stressors often consistently cause officers to be more vigilant and on guard.

Jetelina et al. (2020) suggested that both inherent or internal (officer characteristics) and external (i.e., situational, environmental, civilian, and supervisor) elements create stress in officers that increases the likelihood of adverse events occurring. Regarding extrinsic factors, the most frequent stressors found are family disputes (83%) and crisis situations. The most stressful extrinsic factor found was exposure to battered or dead children (Jetelina et al.,

2020; Violanti et al., 2016). Jetelina et al. (2020) also discovered that only civilian behaviors (i.e., displaying symptoms of mental illness & substance impairment) were predictors of adverse events (i.e., excessive use of force). Further research has shown that leadership-generated stressors and organizational/administrative factors impact an officer's ability to do their job as well as their mental health (Brandl, 2018; Jetelina et al., 2020). Another significant study (Violanti & Aron, 1995) asked 100 officers in a police department to identify and rank order various stressors. The officers endorsed the following top 10 stressors (Brandl, 2018): killing someone in the line of duty; having a fellow officer killed; being physically attacked; investigating a battered child; participating in a high-speed pursuit; shift work; using force; having inadequate departmental support; having an incompetent partner; and being involved in a squad accident (p. 429).

An important extrinsic factor to examine is shift work and the lack of sleep it can create. A regular work shift for an officer is eight hours. However, some shifts may be as long as 10-12 hours. Officers often find frequently rotating shifts problematic and extremely stressful (Brandl, 2018). Of all the shifts officers are required to work, the night shift is the most problematic. Due to human physiology, individuals do not do well when forced to only sleep during the day. More specifically, this disrupts the circadian rhythm and leads to chronic sleep deprivation and fatigue (Brandl, 2018). Sleep deprivation and fatigue can then result in negative health issues and performance problems.

Furthermore, fatigue and lack of sleep hinder an individual's ability to manage stress. Brian Vila (as cited in Brandl, 2018) revealed that about 53% of officers get less than 6.5 hours of sleep daily (compared to 30% of the general population). Brandl (2018) also indicated about 91% of officers report feeling fatigued "routinely," 14% are tired when they

start their work shift, 85% drive while “drowsy,” and 39% have fallen asleep at the wheel. One week of sleep reduction (five to seven hours per night) is enough to produce fatigue. Even mild sleep loss can negatively affect cognitive functioning (Ma et al., 2013).

Furthermore, sleep deprivation can result in cognitive depletion, a temporary state of diminished capacity to exert control/volition over affect, behavior, and cognition (Ma et al., 2013). Research has shown that because stereotypes are cognitive shortcuts, they allow individuals to make quick judgments. Thus, cognitive depletion can exacerbate racial bias in distinguishing a weapon from a tool (Gocorun & Payne, 2006; Ma et al., 2013). Research conducted by the U.S. DOJ found that 41% of police officers were at clinical levels of sleep deprivation, 19% of officers showed impairment, and alarmingly 6.2% showed deficits equivalent to the performance of a person with a .10% blood alcohol concentration (Figure 5). Ma et al. (2013) noted these data suggest that fatigue can harm an officer’s decision-making and increase the number of racially biased decisions. Furthermore, research has also shown that sleep deprivation and fatigue contribute to officer irritability and an ability to remain calm in situations as well as impairing physical and cognitive abilities (Ma et al., 2013).

Extreme stress can cause both cognitive and physical performance issues, such as an inability to use equipment that requires the use of gross motor skills (Peterson et al., 2017). Particularly, psychological stress that increases an individual’s pulse rate above 115 beats per minute reduces fine motor control and extreme psychological stress that increases the pulse rate above 145 beats per minute will reduce one’s ability to perform complex motor control (Peterson et al., 2017). Furthermore, psychological stress also affects the sensory system and cognitive processes (e.g., perception of the environment, tunnel vision, attentional locking).



Chronic stress can result in a number of psychopathologies, such as depression, learned helplessness, and changes in cognitive states (Grandjean et al., 2016). Peterson et al. (2017) further noted that psychological stress can have negative repercussions on the sensory systems and the processing stages of the central nervous system. Thus, stress can subconsciously overrun conscious analysis of incoming information, making rational analysis difficult, delayed, and even inhibited. For example, extreme stress conditions can result in the activation of cultural stereotypes because one's ability to cognitively break down stereotypes may be overridden (Scott et al., 2017).

### ***Stereotypes and Dehumanization***

Research has found that race becomes an increasingly salient factor in an officer's desire to engage with members of the community throughout their career (Lasley et al., 2011; Silver et al., 2015). For example, Black managers are less likely to endorse TPC than White managers. This may be due to racial minorities being more aware of and concerned with the consequences that TPC has on minority communities and citizens. Thus, Black managers are often more aware of the threat TPC holds on attitudes and behaviors toward citizens and the consequences TPC results in concerning officer-citizen relations (Paoline et al., 2000; Pew Research Center, 2017; Silver et al., 2015). Further research suggests female and minority officers both may be less likely to conform to TPC due to historically being excluded from the policing profession (Hassel et al., 2011; Paoline et al., 2000; Silver et al., 2015; White et al., 2010). More specifically, minority officers may be more attuned to the needs of minority communities and the negative consequences associated with excessive use of force and aggressive police tactics (Lasley et al., 2011; Paoline et al., 2000; Pew Research Center, 2017). Additionally, female officers tend to be less rule-oriented and confrontational toward

citizens; therefore, they may also experience additional tensions due to negative workplace experiences (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005; Paoline et al., 2000; Pew Research Center, 2017; Rabe-Hemp, 2008, 2009; Silver et al., 2015).

According to Jones (2017), unconscious racial bias has been shown to produce adverse race-based behavior. Mekawi et al. (2016) suggested that fear of out-groups also interacts with stereotypes of the dangerousness of groups. More specifically, an individual's unconscious bias coupled with stereotypes of out-groups can lead to adverse behaviors toward the out-group (i.e., excessive use of force). In studies of officers' attitudes, it was found that officers' perceptions of African American males are used to justify and legitimize the use of brutality. More specifically, the perception that African American men are aggressive people and criminals was used to justify deadly force (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Dottolo & Stewart, 2008). This perception/stereotype of African American men has led to an irrational fear of African Americans, which has contributed to the desensitization and dehumanization of African Americans and their suffering. Thus, African Americans are seen as expendable (Chaney & Robertson, 2015). Research conducted by Mekawai et al. (2016) suggested that individuals high in fear and high in dehumanization have considerably more abundant shooting thresholds for Blacks versus White marks. Mekawai et al.'s (2016) research has shown that fearing racial/ethnic minorities has devastating outcomes for Black individuals. This is consistent with research that shows dehumanization is associated with a willingness to harm members of an out-group. Jones (2017) noted that dehumanization suggests that a particular individual is not even a member of an out-group because they are not humans.

Furthermore, research on perspective-taking in out-groups/in-groups has shown that increasing perspective-taking through intergroup contact can decrease prejudicial attitudes and behavior (Decety & Cowell, 2014; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Pettigrew & Troop, 2008). For example, one study suggests that the presence of high perspective-taking acts as a buffer to White fear of shooting biases. Further analysis suggests that both out-group derogation and in-group favoritism contribute to these biases (Mekawi et al., 2016). Additionally, empathic ability is negatively related to prejudice more than any other factor related to prejudice. Furthermore, studies have found a racial empathy gap where in-group members (i.e., police officers) reserve empathy reactions only for their racial group, which results in an inability to take the perspective of out-group members (Eres & Molenberghs, 2013; Gustell & Inzlicht, 2012; Mekawi et al., 2016).

**CHAPTER IV:**  
**CURRENT METHODS IN POLICE OFFICER TRAINING AND USE OF FORCE**  
**PROCEDURES**

The United States is currently facing a crisis within its law enforcement agencies. However, this is not a new crisis, as it has been occurring for centuries. According to the Institute for Criminal Justice Training Reform (2021), over 5,500 people were killed by law enforcement between 2015-2019. Those killed were disproportionately representative of the Black, indigenous POC (BIPOC) in the United States. Moreover, many of those individuals were experiencing a mental health emergency at the time of their deaths (Institute for Criminal Justice Training Reform, ICJTR, 2018). Even more shocking, over half of those citizens were unarmed at the time of their death, and the ICJTR suggested that these deaths can be connected to a cascade of training failures that encourage a culture riddled with a lack of accountability in response to excessive use of force. More specifically, these obvious failures in training range from deficient training hours to “warrior-cop” training approaches that many of the academies still use (ICJTR, 2018). Law enforcement personnel are an integral part of our communities and have a role in keeping people safe and helping those in need; however, law enforcement officers kill about three people daily across the United States (ICJTR, 2018). According to Campaign Zero (2021b), current training regimens for law enforcement officers fail to effectively teach officers how to interact with the community in a way that defends and preserves life. For example, police novices devote 58 hours studying how to shoot firearms while recruits only spend eight hours learning how to de-escalate a situation. Campaign Zero believes that an intensive training regimen is needed to

help police officers learn the appropriate behaviors and skills needed to interact with community members.

One of the most alarming aspects of law enforcement training regulation is that some states allow an officer to be trained after he or she begins working (ICJTR, 2018). As of 2018, there are approximately 37 states that allow untrained rookie officers to have the full authority of a fully trained police officer (i.e., detain, arrest, and incarcerate civilians) without attending academy training. More specifically, departments can defer officer training from weeks to indefinitely. For example, Hawaii does not require its officers to complete training and Kansas, Missouri, and North Dakota have an indeterminate time frame for training completion. Additionally, 20 states allow law enforcement officers to work untrained for 12 months, while New Jersey and Oregon allow up to 18 months without training, and Mississippi allows untrained officers on the job for 24 months. Even more disturbing, there are special categories of law enforcement (e.g., park rangers, school officers, transportation venues) that receive far fewer training hours than the mandated training for regular police officers.

### **Use of Force Policies and Procedures**

Current police policies and procedures lack basic protections against police violence, and they often fail to require common-sense limits on police use of force (Police Use of Force Project, 2021). Policies and procedures often leave out requirements that mandate an officer utilize de-escalation tactics for situations. De-escalation tactics consist of communicating with subjects and maintaining distance, eliminating the need to use force. Policies and procedures also allow officers to choke or strangle civilians when less lethal force could have been used. However, this often results in individuals' unnecessary death and

serious injury (Police Use of Force Project, 2021). Current use of force procedures tend to leave out important policies that can help reduce the use of excessive force and civilian deaths. More specifically, law enforcement standards of procedure (SOPs) often fail to require a fellow officer to intervene when a peer utilizes excessive use of force. Additionally, these SOPs often leave out regulations on reporting use of force incidents to supervisors.

A study conducted by the Use of Force Project reviewed use of force policies from 100 of the largest city police departments in the United States. This analysis found 56% of the studied police departments started requiring their police officers to de-escalate situations first and foremost. Previously, only 49% of the departments had the same policy in place. The Use of Force Project also found that 83% of police departments utilized a force continuum or matrix in their SOPs. The matrix/continuum is utilized to help define the different types of force and weapons used in response to suspect resistance. Of the police departments, 71 prohibited chokeholds and strangleholds or limited the use of these tactics in situations where deadly force was authorized, which is a major improvement from June 2020 when only 28 departments utilized this procedure. There were approximately 81 departments that required verbal warning before the use of deadly force. This was an increase from June 2020 where only 70 departments required this of its officers. Further, only 25 of the departments prohibited officers from shooting at individuals in a moving vehicle. Only 49 departments required officers to deplete all other practical options before using deadly force. Moreover, 72 departments required an officer to intervene to stop a fellow officer from using excessive force, while only 39 departments required an officer to report all uses of force, including threatening a civilian with a firearm (Police Use of Force Project, 2021).

Furthermore, the Use of Force Project also attempted to study the relationship between the murder of U.S. civilians committed by law enforcement officers and the use of excessive force. Findings suggest significantly fewer murders committed by law enforcement departments that have strong use of force policies in place. The Use of Force Project further compared department use of force policies to data on police killings from the above 100 departments. Law enforcement departments with clear and stringent restrictions on when and how to use force were found to have a significant number of fewer civilian murders committed by law enforcement when compared to departments that did not have clear restrictions in place. Eight policies were examined, and research suggests departments that implemented these policies were less likely to kill individuals when compared to departments without implementing these policies. More specifically, police departments that implemented four or more restrictive use of force policies were found to have the fewest killings per population and per arrest (Police Use of Force Project, 2021). According to the Use of Force Project (2021), on average, departments utilizing these restrictions had 54% fewer killings than police departments with zero policies in place. Moreover, when a department utilized all 8 restrictive policies, it was found to have 72% fewer killings than departments without any of the policies in place.

### **Police Recruitment Process**

How a police department functions depends on selecting the right individuals for police careers and providing those recruits with the proper training. Unlike training standards, there are few differences in the minimal requirements for employment as police officers. For example, applicants must be at least 21 years old, have a valid driver's license, have U.S. citizenship or legal authorization to work in the United States, have no felony

convictions, and have proportional height and weight (Brandl, 2018). However, on all other factors, departments vary on their qualification requirements for applicants. Regarding education, “at the very least, police departments require officers to have a high school diploma or its equivalent” (Brandl, 2018, p. 209). However, some states actually require that the individual have 60 college credits or an associate’s degree to be hired as an officer. Additionally, very few departments require a four-year college degree to be hired (Brandl, 2018). Early research shows that law enforcement in the U.S. was originally disinclined to accept the idea that a college education would add value to the training of officers (Regoli, 1976). Sherman (1978) suggested that this view resulted from the perceived gap between academic knowledge and the practical application of rules. Further, on the academic side, there was mistrust related to concerns that topics such as criminal justice and policing were superficial and constricted in regard to intellect and theory (Sherman, 1978). Current concerns with embracing the idea of requiring higher education are that it may result in fewer applicants (Brandl, 2018).

There are two primary bodies of literature when discussing the evidence for the benefits of higher education for police officers. The first body of literature covers research on the impact of higher education on police attitudes. This body of literature was established in the 1970s and demonstrated that police officers with a university degree were less authoritarian and cynical than their peers (Parker et al., 1976; Regoli, 1976; Roberg, 1978). Further, the higher the level of education obtained by an officer, the more flexible the officer’s value system became (Guller, 1972; Hays et al., 2007). This body of research also found that higher education resulted in improved attitudes toward minority groups and more ethical and professional behaviors (Parker et al., 1976; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). However, it is



important to note that this research also suggests that it is not the type of courses (i.e., criminology or criminal justice) that cultivated these ethical and culturally aware attitudes. Instead, it was due to the overall university experience (Paterson, 2011; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Worden (1990) suggested that higher education also can improve officer knowledge, skills, problem-solving techniques, and the ability to utilize non-coercive strategies to resolve a situation. This further improves the relationship between law enforcement and the community and improves police legitimacy (Paoline & Terrill, 2007).

Further research has argued that higher education is necessary for the development of certain values (i.e., social justice, social cohesion, fairness, equality, and human rights) and the effective use of discretion, which maintains performance and professionalism within police departments (Bayley & Bittner, 1984; Marenin, 2004; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Moreover, higher education encourages flexibility in orientation to competing demands while also generating transferable skills needed to develop competence in a number of areas (Jaschke & Neidhart, 2007). The second area of research suggests higher education can also improve accountability in law enforcement attitudes and performance. Roberg (1978) suggested that higher education positively impacts police performance, especially when combined with job experience (Paoline & Terrill, 2007). For example, higher education impacts officer attitudes and behaviors, which has resulted in reduced citizen complaints. Moreover, it also positively impacts an officer's use of discretion, which positively impacts the public perception of police fairness and performance (Roberg & Bonn, 2004).

According to Brandl (2018), four selection procedures are most commonly used by law enforcement to identify applicants during the hiring process: written tests, background investigations, oral interviews, and medical/physical tests. However, the nature of these

selection procedures and the order in which they are administered vary dramatically among police departments (Brandl, 2018). Brandl (2018) provided an example from both the Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Police Department and the Waco (Texas) Police Department. The Milwaukee Police Department utilizes the following selection process: (1) written test, (2) physical ability/agility test (PAT), (3) oral interview, (4) writing sample exercise, (5) background investigation, and (6) medical exam. However, The Waco Police Department utilizes the following selection process: (1) written test, (2) physical fitness test, (3) background investigation and a polygraph, (4) psychological examination, (5) oral interview, (6) oral interview with the chief of police, and (7) physical exam. The selection process can also vary based on whether examinations are considered compensatory. For example, with a compensatory process, a high score on one examination can compensate for a low score on another, while with the non-compensatory process, a low score on one examination disqualifies the applicant from further consideration (Brandl, 2018). Law enforcement agencies tend to use a mixture of compensatory and non-compensatory tests. More specifically, written tests, psychological examination, medical examinations, and physical agility tests are pass or fail (non-compensatory), while the oral interviews and background investigations can be graded on a scale (Brandl, 2018).

### ***Written Tests***

The majority of law enforcement agencies use a written examination as a part of the selection process for their applicants (IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021c). However, each department has its own version of the written exam. Currently, there are no national standards for a law enforcement written examination (Brandl, 2018). Law enforcement agencies utilize written examinations to measure an applicant's aptitude, verbal and

mathematical skills, reasoning abilities, reading comprehension, memory, and problem-solving skills (Brandl, 2018; USCP, 2021c). Most of the written examinations are structured as multiple-choice examinations; however, some require a writing sample. Further, these written examinations are timed and usually consist of 50 to 100 questions organized by subject matter (Brandl, 2018). Furthermore, applicants who do not obtain a minimum score (e.g., 70%) are not allowed to continue to the next stage of the selection process (USCP, 2021c). For example, the U.S. Capitol Police (2021) require a written examination that examines knowledge of reading, mathematics, and grammar skills. Moreover, each recruit needs to pass the written examination with a minimum of 70% or becomes disqualified (USCP, 2021). Additionally, written examinations are often a part of the promotion process for officers once they have been hired (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a).

### ***Oral Interview***

Much like the written examinations, interviews can have significant variation between departments. Oral interviews are typically conducted by a select group of police personnel, educators, and/or other government agency employees (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021c). Interview questions are designed to measure an applicant's reasoning and judgment abilities, problem-solving skills (i.e., response to questions and scenarios), logical/critical thinking, and general job-related knowledge (i.e., understanding and interest in law enforcement) (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a). However, some oral boards (oral interview) may also assess other factors such as communication skills, qualifications, maturity, and self-control, and fit for the agency (IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021c). Some agencies even utilize a polygraph to verify information obtained throughout the recruitment

process and oral interview (IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021c). Brandl (2018, p. 219) provided a list of common interview questions asked of law enforcement applicants:

- Why do you want to become a police officer?
- Why do you want to work for this agency?
- Explain how your background and experiences have prepared you to become a police officer.
- Describe a challenging situation you have faced in your current or previous job and how you handled it.
- Describe yourself in one word. Explain.
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What do you like the least about your current job?
- What is your most significant weakness? What is your greatest strength?
- What is cultural diversity? Provide an example of its benefits in the workplace.
- What is the difference between a burglary and a robbery?
- What are the Fourth and Fifth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution?
- What is the use of force continuum?
- Some interviews include scenario-type questions: “What would you do if?”

### ***Background Investigation***

Comprehensive background investigations are always a part of the selection process for hiring police officers. However, it is important to note that some of these background investigations are more thorough than others (Brandl, 2018). At the very least, background investigations involve a criminal history and driving record check. Most background checks include verification of education, employment history, criminal and credit history,

fingerprinting, and personal reference checks (e.g., neighbors, family, friends) (USCP; 2021c; IACP, 2018a). Regarding background investigations, a felony conviction would automatically disqualify the applicant (Brandl, 2018). However, in a majority of agencies, a misdemeanor conviction (as long as it does not involve domestic violence) does not automatically result in the disqualification of an applicant. Regarding drug use, approximately half of all agencies will not disqualify an applicant for prior marijuana use. Moreover, roughly half of agencies will not disqualify an applicant based on their driving record (i.e., a suspended license or citation for driving under the influence) (Brandl, 2018). During the background investigation, some departments may even utilize a polygraph examination to determine the truthfulness of the information provided by the applicant (Brandl, 2018). However, it is important to note that passing the background process does not automatically qualify a recruit for the hiring process (USCP, 2021c).

### ***Medical and Physical Fitness Examination***

A medical examination and a physical fitness examination are usually required as a part of the hiring/selection process (IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021b). The medical examination is designed to ensure an applicant does not have a health condition that would negatively impact their ability to perform the duties required of a police officer (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021c). Eye and hearing examinations are required parts of the medical examination, and the applicants must have a minimum eyesight ability or correction to 20/20 (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a). Additionally, the medical examination also includes chest x-ray, blood pressure, height, weight, blood test, urine test, electrocardiogram, and a drug test (IACP, 2018a). Further, some agencies also have specific medical requirements for specific diseases/conditions (IACP, 2018a).

To assess an applicant's physical ability to perform the duties required of an officer, departments utilize a physical fitness or physical agility test (GPSTC, 2021; IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021b). Much like the other factors in the selection process, the physical fitness examination also has a great degree of variation between agencies. However, some of the typical requirements are the ability to run a mile, climbing stairs, climbing a wall or fence, and dragging/moving a weight (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018a; USCP, 2021b). A common obstacle course utilized is that of the San Diego Police Department, which consists of: participants dodging low-hanging objects, climbing ladders and stairs, running through a series of pylons, jumping/stepping/climbing over fences of varying heights, and lifting and dragging a 155-pound dummy (Brandl, 2018). Further, this obstacle course is 475 yards in length and must be completed within 3 minutes and 15 seconds to pass. In Georgia, the physical agility test is an 870-foot (290 yards) obstacle course that needs to be completed within 2 minutes and 6 seconds (GPSTC, 2021). The course consists of nine tasks: running, jumping a low hurdle, stairs, low crawl, jumping, climbing a four-foot chain-link fence, climbing through a window, dragging 150lbs, and changing direction during the course of running (GPSTC, 2021). In comparison, the U.S. Capitol Police's physical readiness test consists of only 4 tasks that must be completed within 3 minutes and 52 seconds. The tasks are as follows: a 1.5-mile run, climb (ascend and descend) 3 flights of stairs, drag a 165lbs. rescue dummy 40 feet, and complete 15 single-handed trigger pulls with each hand (arm must be held out at eye level for each pull of the trigger; USCP, 2021b).

### ***Psychological Examination***

While most departments do not require a psychological evaluation as a part of the selection process, some departments do. A psychological examination assesses the

applicant's personality characteristics and psychological/emotional well-being (IACP, 2018a, USCP, 2021c). Thus, agencies want to make sure a candidate has the appropriate emotional and character makeup that ensures they are psychologically qualified for the job (IACP, 2018a). Several standardized measures can be used for this purpose. Some departments may also include an interview with a psychologist or psychiatrist as a part of this selection process (Brandl, 2018). For example, the U.S. Capitol Police require candidates to complete a full battery of psychological assessments and a clinical interview with a mental health professional (USCP, 2021c). The USCP psychological evaluation takes roughly four to six hours to complete.

### **Diversity Among Police Departments**

Throughout history, the United States has attempted to increase the minority presence within law enforcement. For example, in 1968, the Kerner Commission recommended that the hiring of minority officers would reduce racial bias and the excessive use of force among officers (Todak et al., 2018). Again, in 2015 another call for promoting minorities within law enforcement agencies was recommended by the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (Todak et al., 2018). Unfortunately, by reviewing data on the recruitment, hiring, and promotion process within law enforcement, it is clear this is not the case. Regardless of these efforts, the representation of minorities within police departments is still significantly underrepresented and further promotes poor law enforcement relationships with the minority community (Reaves, 2015; Todak et al., 2018). Approximately 27% of U.S. police officers are racial or ethnic minorities. Of that 27%, only 12% are African Americans and Hispanics (Reaves, 2015).

Moreover, only 3% are Asian Americans. Additionally, while large law enforcement agencies have more diversity among their officers, this is often because these agencies have higher minority populations (Todak et al., 2018). Bolton (2003) suggested that racism is so institutionalized that minority officers often feel like outsiders regardless of the code of blue or the brotherhood. More specifically, in a study conducted by Bolton, it was found that there is a social distance between minority officers and their White peers (Todak et al., 2018). Reaves (2015) reported that minority officers feel that White officers often receive better assignments and promotions. Reaves noted that over half of African American officers felt this way, while roughly 19% of Hispanic officers agreed (Todak et al., 2018).

### ***Recruitment***

When examining research only utilizing state/local police departments, Ray et al. (2018) found no statistically significant relationships between a candidate's race/ethnicity and recruitment. Additionally, research examining only the state/local levels of recruitment tends to have mixed results. However, if examining the national level, there was a statistically significant association between the candidate's recruitment process and race/ethnicity. Unfortunately, diversity efforts among law enforcement agencies tend to further promote and cater to the overall Whiteness of this career field (Ray et al., 2018; Seamster & Ray, 2017). Ray et al. (2018) found that recruitment efforts often discounted primarily Black institutions such as local NAACP chapters, churches, and fraternal organizations. Ray et al. (2018) also suggested that larger agencies target recruitment efforts toward women and minorities, which could account for the minority and female officer population among smaller departments compared to larger agencies. Overall, research on recruitment efforts shows that recruitment is typically underfunded and misdirected (Wilson



et al., 2013) and heavily skewed toward the recruitment of White individuals (Ray et al., 2018). These recruitment efforts further validate the idea of racialized organizations creating a racial divide while creating barriers to substantial resources (Ray et al., 2018).

### ***Hiring***

When examining law enforcement officers' hiring process, research suggests a significant relationship between race and ethnicity and hiring outcomes (Ray et al., 2018). More specifically, Gustafson (2013) found that factors such as the percentage of the Black and Latino population, presence of a minority mayor (Black/Latino), the length of the minority mayor's tenure, and the percentage of minority (Black and Latino) councilmembers also impacted the hiring of minorities (Ray et al., 2018). Furthermore, Gustafson (2013) suggested the institutional dynamics of law enforcement agencies also impact the hiring of minorities. For example, factors such as the existence of a minority police chief (i.e., Black or Latino), the presence of formal and informal affirmative action policies, and a union or other minority groups also play a significant role in the hiring process of minority individuals. Research conducted by Zhao et al. (2005) further supported the finding that a minority mayor (Specifically a Latino mayor) and a minority police chief (either African American or Latino) significantly impact the hiring of minority police officers (Ray et al., 2018). Overall, the strongest predictor of law enforcement diversity among line officers is minorities in political office (Ray et al., 2018). Furthermore, the greater the representation of minorities in these areas, the more diverse an agency is. For example, Zhao et al. (2005) found that the largest predictor of minority police officers, specifically African American and Latino officers, was based on representing the minority population in an agency's

jurisdiction. Moreover, Ray et al. (2018) suggested that a significant barrier to hiring minority officers is because the primary credential for employment remains to be Whiteness.

### ***Promotion***

Regarding promotion among law enforcement officers, research conducted by Bendick and Nunes (2012) suggested that the promotion of minority officers is often used as a way to protect a law enforcement agency from claims of discrimination, which in turn, makes further minority promotions less likely (Ray et al., 2018). Bendick and Nunes (2012) further suggested that the promotion of minorities is much slower due to a need to preserve the racial hierarchy among law enforcement agencies. Moreover, Polk (1995) found that while minorities are drastically underrepresented in law enforcement based on minority populations, minority representation among law enforcement drastically decreases as a minority officer is promoted/moves up in rank (Ray et al., 2018). Interestingly, female officers and minority officers tend to be promoted more quickly, even as their numbers diminish in higher ranks. For example, Gujardo (2016) found that the level of diversity among the New York Police Department significantly declined once a minority officer reached the rank of sergeant. Regarding the remaining ranks among law enforcement, Guajardo (2014) also found that the number of White officers far outweighed the number of minority officers (specifically Black, Hispanic, and Asian minorities). Gustafson (2008) pointed out there is no significant relationship between minority representation (population and political) and the promotion to a management position. Gustafson (2013) also suggested that promotion among minority officers is extremely limited when more than one minority group competes for the same opportunity.

### ***Females***

Regarding the representation of female police officers, in 2014, roughly 12% of sworn officers were women. In comparison, 51% of the adult population and 47% of the adult workforce were females (Brandl, 2018). Further, Reaves (2015) noted that from 2011 to 2013, only 15% of recruits were females, which was down slightly from the rate of 17% in 2005. Based on these statistics, there is a clear underrepresentation of women in the field of law enforcement. However, Polk (1995) suggested that female officers tend to be promoted more quickly. Ray et al. (2018) noted that the rapid promotion of female officers may be due to having higher education levels compared to regular line officers. Additionally, Gujardo (2015) found that employment of Latina officers is currently on the rise (Ray et al., 2018). Brandl (2018) pointed out that law enforcement agencies in cities with over one million people have the highest representation of female officers (17.6%), while smaller agencies do not employ a single female officer. This underrepresentation of female officers may be due to an inability to attract and recruit women (Jordan et al., 2009) or poor recruitment efforts.

### ***Ethnic/Racial Minorities***

Regarding the representation of racial minorities within law enforcement agencies, in 2013, only 27% of police officers were members of a racial/ethnic minority group when compared to 38% of the population (Brandl, 2018; Reaves, 2015; Todak et al., 2018). Reaves (2015) further broke this down to show that Black and Hispanic individuals accounted for 13% of recruits while only 4% were members of other races. While minorities are greatly underrepresented as police officers today, there has been a substantial change in their representation among departments. For example, in 1967, less than 10% of officers were racial minorities, and in 1987 only 15% of officers were classified as a minority (Brandl,

2018). Much like the representation of women, departments with larger jurisdictions have a higher rate of racial/ethnic minority officers and a quicker rate of promotion (Polk, 1995; Ray et al., 2018).

Moreover, it is important to note that research has shown that one of the primary predictors of minority employment is based on the minority population. For example, Zhao and Lovrich (1998) found that the best predictor for representing Black individuals employed as law enforcement officers is the magnitude of the African American population within the community (Ray et al., 2018). This is also similar to findings on the Latino community; however, the number of Latino officers is based on the already established number of Latinos in the community (Todak et al., 2018). More specifically, as the minority community grows, there is a lag in the increased diversity rate among local police departments. Further, there are several barriers when it comes to African Americans being hired as law enforcement officers. More specifically, Kringen and Kringen (2015) found that the most significant barriers for African Americans are the actual application process, written exam, physical exam, and background check (Ray et al., 2018). Furthermore, other major barriers to the employment of minorities within law enforcement are the mistrust among citizens for police, insufficient recruitment practices, and subjective screening processes, which utilize disproportionate selection criteria that impacts minority citizens being screened out of the hiring process (EEOC, 2016; Todak et al., 2018).

### ***LGBTQ+***

The research on the representation of LGBT police officers is very limited, and data have not focused on the representation of LGBT community members within the police department (Brandl, 2018).

## **Officer Training**

Currently, there are no federally mandated training minimums for U.S. law enforcement officers. Unfortunately, this creates a mixture of training requirements that vary state by state. Law enforcement officers are one of the few professions that do not have a set standard for training. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (2018) 2013 study found that law enforcement officers often receive less than six months of training at an academy (e.g., basic training). The mandated hours of training required for officers to complete ranges from a 16- to 20-week program, which does not even compare to the amount of time an actual college student spends taking courses. For example, just one college credit works out to be approximately 37.5 hours (ICJTR, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). In 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics examined the training requirements of police officers in over 100 countries. Findings suggest that the United States has some of the lowest standards for police training. Moreover, the United States has lower law enforcement training standards than Iraq, Afghanistan, and Papua New Guinea (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018).

According to ICJTR (2018), “law enforcement officers spend nearly one-third of their training on combat tactics” (The wrong training, para 1. The majority of law enforcement training focuses on preparing an officer for a potential threat that may never actually happen. Primarily focusing on these “possible” events is placing law enforcement officers in a continual state of fear and chronic stress, which can have dangerous effects on civilians and officers. Thus, the United States is training its officers to be scared and chronically stressed, which can lead to the dehumanization of others and reliance on stereotypes due to cognitive depletion. This type of training has been shown to significantly impact law enforcement encounters with the public. More specifically, research conducted by ICJTR in 2018 shows

that a law enforcement officer's perception, biases, opinions, and attitudes become affected. For example, at least 25% of all individuals killed by law enforcement officers showed signs of mental illness. However, on average, law enforcement officers only spend about 10 to 14 hours of training for mental health crisis intervention ( U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). A survey conducted by the Justice Center (2017) found that of states that were able to provide information on specific training hours, there was a wide range of the types and amounts of training for mental health and de-escalation practices (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). More specifically, some of those departments only utilized two hours for mental health and de-escalation tactics, while others (only 5 states) require the CIT program, which consists of 40 hours of training (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018).

Further, 47% of individuals killed by law enforcement officers in 2016 were BIPOC. Yet, law enforcement officers continue to have minimal training regarding diversity, culture, and bias (ICJTR, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Moreover, several states do not have any training directed toward diversity issues and bias. However, the states that do utilize diversity training only show a movie (ICJTR, 2018), which does not appear to be a serious effort in understanding diversity issues such as personal biases that can affect one's interactions with diverse groups. Additionally, while law enforcement training primarily focuses on tactical skills preparation, it often overlooks important training opportunities for officers (ICJTR, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). More specifically, while the suicide rates among officers are on the rise, training and resources for mental health and self-care are practically nonexistent for law enforcement. Furthermore, seeking any form of help, especially for mental health issues, is greatly discouraged in TPC. One of the most shocking statistics among the research on officer suicide rates is that each year police officers commit

suicide two to three times higher than the number of officers killed while on the job (ICJTR, 2018). Past calls for police reform do not appear to have significantly altered how new recruits spend their training, as police academies still utilize a military-style approach, which focuses on training in firearms and self-defense over skills in conflict resolution (ICJTR, 2018).

### ***Academy Training***

Reaves (2016) reported that from 2011-2013, a total of 664 state and local enforcement academies provided basic training to entry-level recruits in the U.S. Academy or basic training consists of primarily classroom lessons on skills needed for police work. The current standard for basic training hours of completion is 667 to 840 hours, completed during 40-hour work weeks (Brandl, 2018; ICJTR, 2018; Reaves, 2016). For example, the state of Georgia's basic training program takes only 11 weeks to complete and is approximately 408 hours of classroom work and practical skills (GPSTC, 2021); however, the state of Florida's basic training program is roughly 770 hours of training time, which is divided into two categories (e.g., Law Enforcement and High Liability) (FDLE, 2020). There is no national standard for training hours, so the amount of basic training received by recruits varies from department to department. Basic training for police officers is administered in several different ways. More specifically, 47% of police academies are operated by universities, colleges, community colleges, or two-year technical schools (Brandl, 2018). Some departments (20%) still utilize in-house training academies. Police departments are responsible for the cost of academy training and usually pay recruits a salary for the duration of training (Brandl, 2018; Reaves, 2016). However, officers who choose to enroll in a police academy operated by an educational institution are required to pay for their own training.

Additionally, civilians who wish to become police officers also pay for their own training if they are not currently employed by a specific law enforcement agency and are referred to as pre-service candidates (GPSTC, 2021). Once a graduate successfully completes training at the police academy, they graduate and are sworn in as a police officer. Here, they will begin the next phase of training, which is field training.

Regarding the degree of stress involved in the training experience, academies vary based on the department and type of training academy the recruit attends. For example, stressed-based academy training reflects military training and includes drills, intensive physical demands, public disciplinary measures, daily inspections, value inculcation, and the withholding of privileges (Brandl, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Non-stress academy training is often more relaxed and oriented toward academic achievement, physical training, administrative disciplinary procedures, and the cultivation of an instructor-trainee relationship (Brandl, 2018; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Academies administered through the police agency, especially state police agencies, are more likely to utilize a stressed-based setting instead of the academic focus of colleges and two-year technical schools (Brandl, 2018). Approximately half (48%) of recruits are trained by academies utilizing a training model that is a stressed-based approach (Reaves, 2016). Moreover, roughly a fifth (18%) of recruits are trained utilizing a non-stress-based environment (Reaves, 2016). Furthermore, one-third (34%) of recruits are trained utilizing a balanced approach.

The majority of training at the academy is focused on firearm skills, self-defense skills, and fitness training (Brandl, 2018; Reaves, 2016; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Other skills focus on investigative procedures, report writing, patrolling, and



emergency vehicle operations. Recruits are evaluated on these skills through written examinations, skills tests, and physical fitness examinations. Approximately 86% of recruits successfully complete academy training. Major topic areas included in state and local law enforcement academy training are as follows: operations (i.e., report writing and basic first aid/CPR), weapons/self-defense (i.e., firearms skills), legal (i.e., criminal and constitutional law), self-improvement (i.e., ethics, health and fitness, and stress prevention), community policing (i.e., diversity and human relations), and special topics such as domestic violence, juveniles, and hate crimes (Brandl, 2018; FDLE, 2020; GPSTC, 2021; Reaves, 2016; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). The number of hours of instruction for each topic varies greatly by department. For example, the median number of instruction hours for report writing is 20 to 25 hours, for self-defense 51 to 60 hours, firearms skills 60 to 71 hours, ethics and integrity 8 hours, stress prevention 5 hours, hate crimes/bias crimes 4 hours, and domestic violence 14 hours (IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). According to Reaves (2015), basic training programs also usually address social issues such as mental illness (10 hrs.).

Regarding the major topic areas, each category can be divided into different learning topics and courses. Under the operations category, topics such as interviewing, report writing, patrol procedures, investigations, traffic accidents, basic first aid/CPR, and computers/information systems are studied. On average, recruits spend 213 hours of training in this area (Criminal Justice Programs, 2021; IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). The area of operations is the primary area of focus and where recruits receive the most training hours. For example, on average, recruits receive the following training hours: 25 hours of report writing, 52 hours on patrol procedures, 42 hours on investigations, 23 hours

on traffic accident investigations, 38 on emergency vehicle operations, and 24 hours on basic first aid/CPR (IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Utilizing the state of Florida's basic training requirements, 454 hours of law enforcement training is completed while 316 hours are completed in high liability areas. For example, Florida police recruits spend 35 hours on patrol procedures, 82 hours on investigations (e.g., criminal investigations—50 and traffic crash investigations—32), and 40 hours for first aid (FDLE, 2020).

Under the weapons/defensive tactics/use of force category, topics such as defense tactics, firearm skills, use of force, and nonlethal weapons are discussed and practiced. On average, police candidates spend approximately 168 hours training in the weapons and defense tactics category (Criminal Justice Programs, 2021; IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). This area is where police candidates receive the second-largest number of training hours. For example, police candidates receive on average the following training hours: 60 hours of defensive tactics, 71 hours of firearm skills, 21 hours of use of force training, and 16 hours of nonlethal weapons training (IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). In high liability areas, some states such as Florida require the following training hours: 80 hours defensive tactics, 80 hours firearms skills, and 8 hours of nonlethal weapons training (e.g., electrical weapon/dart-firing gun) (FDLE, 2020).

Under the self-improvement category, topics such as stress prevention/management, ethics and integrity, communications, health and fitness, professionalism are discussed. Additionally, special topics such as mental health, racial relations, emergency planning, and community policing strategies may be included in this area. Law enforcement candidates complete roughly 89 hours in this area (Criminal Justice Programs, 2021; IACP, 2018b; U.S.

Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Regarding special topic areas, courses on domestic violence, sexual assault, and mental illness range from approximately 6 to 13 hours on average (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). The area of self-improvement has one of the lowest requirements for the number of training hours. However, over half of these self-improvement training hours are spent solely on health and fitness (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). For example, police recruits receive on average the following training hours: 8 hours of ethics and integrity, 49 hours of health and fitness, 15 hours of communications, 11 hours of professionalism, and 6 hours of stress prevention/management (IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). Furthermore, under the legal education category, topics such as criminal/constitutional law, juvenile justice law/procedures, and traffic law are covered. Recruits complete approximately 86 hours of training in this area (Criminal Justice Programs, 2021; IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). For example, candidates receive on average the following training hours: 53 hours of criminal/constitutional law, 23 hours of traffic law, and 10 hours of juvenile justice law/procedures (IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018).

### ***Field Training***

Once the recruit has successfully completed academy training, they are placed at the department for which they will be working. There, the officer will begin field training (their final training component) and work as a police officer (Brandl, 2018; IACP, 2018b; Reaves, 2015). The current average of field-training hours an officer received after basic training is 15 (ICJTR, 2018). According to Brandl (2018), during the first 6 to 18 months of employment, the new officer is considered to be on a probationary period. During this probationary period, the new officer is paired with a field-training officer who teaches the

new officer how to perform the necessary policing tasks. This is also where the new officer is introduced to the unspoken rules of police culture. The majority of law enforcement agencies have a very structured field-training process (Brandl, 2018). More specifically, field training often consists of 8 to 16 weeks of training (an average of 180 hours) divided into phases (IACP, 2018b; Brandl, 2018). Each phase of field training lasts three to four weeks.

According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (2018), police recruits are rotated throughout different shifts during field training (i.e., day, night, week, and weekend shifts) and different jurisdictions. This allows officers to become accustomed to shift work as well as providing maximum exposure.

### ***In-service Training***

A law enforcement officer's training does not end with the completion of field training. Every year throughout an officer's career, full-duty officers are required to complete continued education (Brandl, 2018; FDLE, 2020; IACP, 2018b; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). This continued education is known as in-service training. On average, the mandated continuing education hours for law enforcement officers are 23 hours (ICJTR, 2018). The majority of police departments provide their own in-service training for their officers (Brandl, 2018). This is referred to in-house training. However, some training hours are provided through seminars and workshops offered through an outside agency (Brandl, 2018). Thus, this is known as out-of-department training. While some in-service training is mandatory, some is voluntary. According to Brandl (2018), mandatory in-service training often consists of topics that are critical to police work such as, police use of force. Additionally, further training is required for promotions and specialization conducted

through in-service training (IACP, 2018b). One voluntary training program that is becoming common among departments is critical intervention team (CIT) training.

### **Critical Intervention Team**

Bonefine et al. (2014) noted that the crisis intervention team program is an approach for law enforcement officers to safely respond to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Since the inception of the CIT program in Memphis, TN, in 1988, it has spread rapidly and is often described as the “most visible pre-booking diversion program in the U.S.” (Bonefine et al.; Steadman et al., 2000). CIT is an established training program used to improve police response to encounters involving an individual with mental illness (Bratina et al., 2020). The primary goals of CIT are to reduce arrests of individuals who should be diverted to the community health system, as well as to increase safety for officers and civilians (Bonefine et al., 2014; Bratina et al., 2020; Compton et al., 2008; Dupont & Cochran, 2000). Additionally, CIT is considered the most popular training program to improve police response in this regard (Bratina et al., 2020; Gostomski, 2012; Hartford et al., 2006; Watson et al., 2011). The Memphis model is the most popular in terms of large-scale implementation (Broussard et al., 1998). It is currently estimated that there are approximately 3000 CIT programs in the United States (Taheri, 2016; University of Memphis, n.d.). Further, the implementation of CIT is underway globally (Kohrt et al., 2015; Taheri, 2016).

The primary objectives for the original Memphis model include (a) advanced training, (b) immediate crisis response, (c) safety of officer and consumer, and (d) proper care for persons in crisis (Bratina et al., 2020; Pennsylvania Mental Health & Justice Center for Excellence, 2013). Agencies that have implemented the CIT program report positive results (Bratina et al., 2020; DeMatteo et al., 2013; Pearson, 2014; Steadman et al., 2000). More

specifically, studies have shown a significant positive effect on officers' approaches by increasing contact with and understanding of mental illness (Bonefine, 2014; Bratina et al., 2020). Bonefine et al. (2014) reported findings that indicate CIT is rated very positively by officers and perceived to impact multiple factors such as officer, community, and individual safety, improved accessibility to mental health services, and enhanced officer skills, techniques and knowledge, which improved officer confidence and preparedness in responding to mental health crisis calls. Further, Bonefine et al. (2014) suggested that attitudes pertaining to certain aspects of CIT are associated with increases in officer confidence in their own abilities. These findings support research on CIT shaping an officers' use of skills and techniques during mental illness calls (Bonefine, 2014; Canada et al., 2010, 2011; Compton et al., 2006; Hanafi et al., 2008). Bratina et al. (2020) pointed out that CIT programs are successful in (a) improving understanding of signs and symptoms of mental illness, (b) reducing stigma and negative attitudes, and (c) increasing the number of positive police interactions overall. This is also consistent with previous research on CIT (Compton et al., 2006; Wells & Schafer, 2006). Further, directly following the 40-hour CIT training, the majority of encounters documented by CIT-trained officers resulted in diversion rather than arrest (Bratina et al., 2020; Franz & Borum, 2011).

## **CHAPTER V: CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS AND PROPOSED MODEL**

The purpose of this literature review was to utilize a psychological perspective on police brutality to identify current statistics, characteristics, and trends concerning excessive use of force. The four fundamental goals of this literature review were: (a) examine current statistics, characteristics, and trends regarding excessive use of force by law enforcement officers, (b) examine which populations are most likely to suffer from excessive use of force, (c) examine current methods in training law enforcement officers, and (d) propose a new model for training law enforcement officers and discuss a proposed idea for the training of police officers.

### **Clinical Implications**

This review discusses multiple clinical implications that are important to the field of clinical psychology. First, this project would allow a more integrated approach by both professions (law enforcement and mental health providers). By having an integrated approach between these two professions, there is potential to prevent the rapid rise of incarceration for individuals with mental health issues. More specifically, by implementing the proposed model, law enforcement would no longer be the sole “gatekeepers” of the mentally ill. Instead, law enforcement would have the help and guidance of mental health professionals.

Additionally, integration among the two fields would provide more resources for minority individuals and those with a mental health concern. By expanding the knowledge and understanding of officers, individuals could get the appropriate help and treatment needed instead of being incarcerated. Second, this proposed model could also improve

community relations with law enforcement and providers. With improved community relations comes less discrimination and mistrust among all parties. By eliminating the us versus them mentality often seen between law enforcement and the community, there is a possibility of being a unified community instead of in conflict.

Third, by requiring more training on diversity and mental health, the benefits are twofold. Diversity and mental health training can also help improve community relations (Blumberg et al., 2019). Regarding community relations, diversity and mental health training could help bridge the gap between the mistrust on both sides. Furthermore, this training could help individuals challenge their biases and create a new understanding (Guller, 1972; Hays et al., 2007; Parker et al., 1976; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Moreover, it also could help improve the stigma and stereotypes in the law enforcement field. More specifically, reducing the stigma of mental health and stereotypes, officers might be more inclined to reach out for help with their own mental health issues, which often occur with their occupation placing them in chronically stressful situations. Currently, police culture prevents a lot of officers from seeking help for health and mental health concerns. It is frowned upon, and there is a significant stigma to seeing a therapist. However, if officers were encouraged to seek help and treatment, stress, PTSD, and suicidal ideation could be addressed appropriately (Blumberg et al., 2019). Law enforcement officers have one of the highest suicide rates in high-stress professions.

Finally, expanding the type of training required of police officers could help reduce intergenerational trauma. Currently, racism and stigmatization of mental health are passed down through families and passed down from generation to generation of police officers. These two issues are ingrained into the institution of law enforcement and must be changed



with current and new generations. Challenging one's biases in a productive way, like in a classroom, could help diminish these negative views and expand a person's knowledge and understanding of something they do not understand. Furthermore, a model like this is needed to begin the healing the country needs. This model can improve the lives of members of the community and the lives of the individuals who are supposed to protect and serve the community.

### **Proposed Model of Training**

The proposed model of law enforcement reform and training has five major areas of needed implementation: (a) national mandated standardized training; (b) requirement of a four-year bachelor's degree (criminal justice or criminology) with a minor in psychology; (c) the incorporation of CIT nationwide; (d) national standardized mandated policies and procedures for use of force; and (e) the incorporation of diversity and mental health-specific training hours during recruit training.

### ***National/Federal Standards***

Regarding nationally mandating standardized training, many professions already require a standardized training level to be employed in that particular area. For example, firefighters need to undergo set hours of recruit training and become state or nationally certified to be employed as a firefighter. Medical doctors, psychologists, nurses, and psychiatrists all have mandated requirements to be licensed and successfully employed in their field. Furthermore, a set number of continuing education hours are required each year to maintain certification and licensure for all of the above fields. Why is law enforcement one of the only areas that do not require mandated training or certification? The field of law enforcement currently has a wide range of training standards, none of which are federally

regulated. After examining training requirements from several countries, it was found that the United States has the lowest standards of police training (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018).

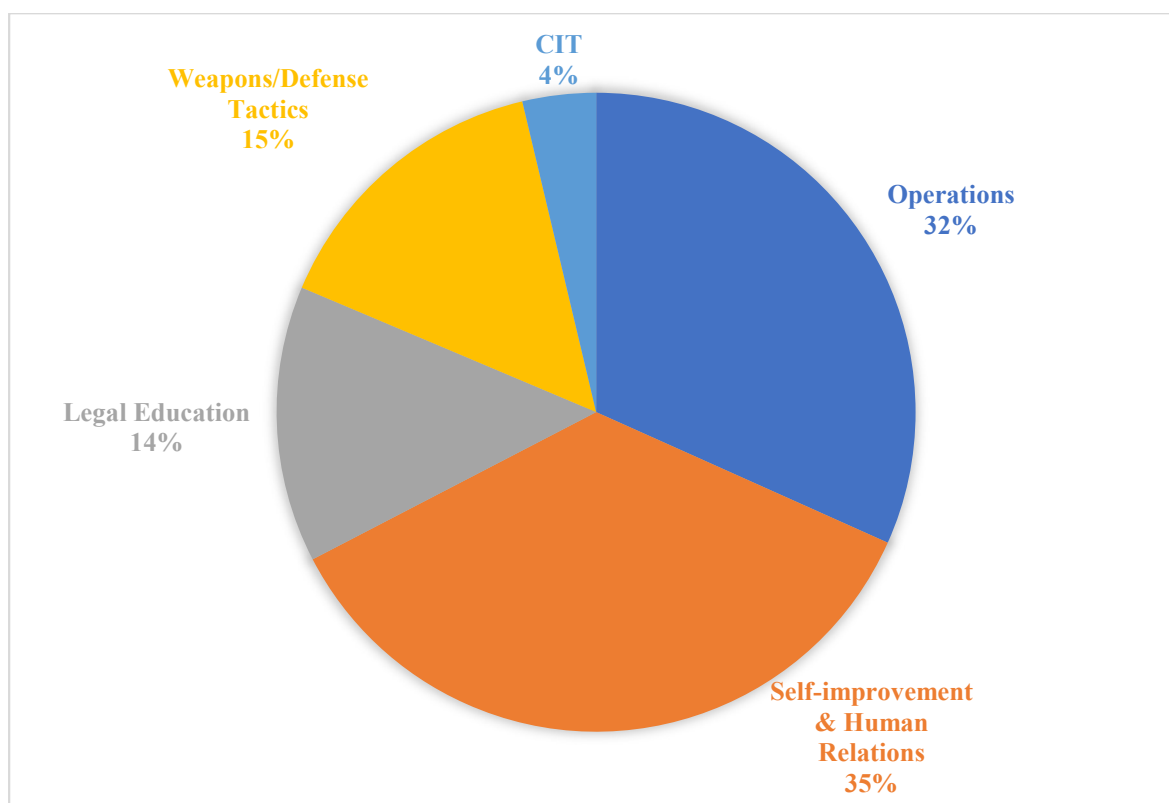
To help standardize law enforcement training, a federally/nationally mandated curriculum for academy training, mandated continuing education, and a national certification should be put in place. Given the importance of law enforcement in society, a training curriculum should have law enforcement officers, the community, and community relations in mind. The current mandated hours of training required for law enforcement range from 16 to 20 weeks (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). I propose that academy training be increased to a minimum of six months of full-time (40-hr weeks) training; once that training has been completed, there should be a national certification examination that must be completed. The national certification should require both a written examination and practicals, so recruits can verify their knowledge of the required curriculum, perform the required duties, and utilize appropriate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The proposed model of academy training does not abolish all previous training requirements or eliminate the old curriculum. Instead, the purpose of this model is to expand and improve upon already established training (see Appendix A for the proposed training manual). For example, this model would maintain the four primary topic areas already established in law enforcement training (e.g., operations, self-improvement, legal education, and weapons/defense tactics). However, there are some major changes to these areas. The proposed curriculum for academy training can be found in Figure 5. The proposed basic training curriculum consists of 1,039 hours total, which would be a little over six and one-half months of full-time training. However, this can be further expanded on, and hours can be

increased, as there is a need for specific training areas. Each topic area is also divided by hours and areas that will be covered. More specifically, the topic of operations would require a total of 342 hours of training (Figure 6). An in-depth description of important topic areas can be found in Appendix A. Regarding in-service/continuing education hours, the majority of professions have a required set number of hours to maintain certification and licensure. Law enforcement should be no different. Law enforcement agencies should be required to have a standard for continuing education that includes topic areas such as de-escalation techniques, mental health, ethics, diversity, and firearms skills.

### Figure 5

Proposed Curriculum by Topic Area for Law Enforcement Training at the Academy



Regarding national certification, it is important to make sure that law enforcement officers complete their training and have the knowledge and understanding needed to perform their duties. One way to ensure officers obtain the required skills and training needed is by requiring a national certification before being employed as an officer. Additionally, annual recertification standards should be established as well to help maintain an officer's skill. Currently, 36 states recognize the national certification program developed by the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IDALEST, 2021). This program was established to create training standards and best practices for law enforcement officers that improved professionalism practices and each officer's skill set needed for the job. IDALEST offers accreditation to both the POST and police academies to ensure training standards adhere to the highest international standards (IDALEST, 2021).

Furthermore, national certification can help prevent "wandering officers" by establishing and mandated utilization of a de-certification database, which has already been initiated by IDALEST. Wandering officers are defined as "law enforcement officers fired by one department, sometimes for serious misconduct, who then find work at another agency" (Grunwald & Rappaport, 2020, p. 1676\_). Wandering officers often face difficulty finding a new job, so they tend to seek employment with law enforcement agencies located in areas with fewer resources. Unfortunately, this often places these problem officers in areas with larger communities of POC (Grunwald & Rappaport, 2020). Regardless of whether an officer is fired or resigns from a position, their national certification should be revoked and immediately updated in the National De-certification Database. Additionally, prior to employment at any agency, a check of the National De-certification Database should be

conducted as a part of the background screening, thus, preventing the rehire of problem officers at another agency, which can help decrease the current issues our community is facing.

### ***Higher Education and Use of Force Policies/Procedures***

Additionally, research has shown that both higher education (Guller, 1972; Hays et al., 2007; Parker et al., 1976; Regoli, 1976; Roberg, 1978; Roberg & Bonn, 2004) and the implementation of strict use of force policies and procedures impact the behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers (Use of Force Project [UFP], 2021). The requirement of a four-year college degree could significantly alter the behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers and lead to a fully reformed criminal justice system. Research has suggested that officers with higher education tend to be less authoritarian and cynical (Parker et al., 1976; Regoli, 1976; Roberg, 1978), have a more flexible value system (Guller, 1972; Hays et al., 2007), and have an improved attitude toward minority groups as well as develop more ethical and professional behaviors (Parker et al., 1976; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Furthermore, by requiring a four-year degree with a minor in psychology, officers would be required to take a minimum of 18 credit hours in psychology courses consisting of the following available options:

- Introduction to Psychology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Abnormal Child Psychology
- Drugs and Behavior
- Cross-Cultural Psychology
- Diversity (Culture and Diversity)

- Ethics
- Prejudice and Stereotyping
- Social Psychology
- Judgment and Decision Making

These are just a few of the available courses at many colleges and universities across the nation. Yet, each one can have a significant impact on law enforcement personnel.

Moreover, this is another area where psychologists can play a major role in the training and reform of the criminal justice system. Regarding use of force policies, the UFP (2021) completed research that discovered the implementation of specific use of force policies and procedures resulted in significantly fewer murders of civilians by law enforcement officers. UFP (2021) found that implementing just four restrictive use of force policies decreased the number of killings per population and per arrest. Furthermore, the implementation of all eight use of force policies studied resulted in 72% fewer civilian murders among law enforcement agencies (UFP, 2021). The eight effective use of force policies presented by the UFP are as follows:

1. Requirement of De-Escalation practices
2. Utilization of a Use of Force Continuum or Matrix
3. The banishment of chokeholds and strangleholds
4. Requirement of giving a warning before shooting
5. Restrictions on shooting at moving vehicles
6. Requiring exhaustion of all other means before discharging a firearm
7. Requiring a duty to intervene by fellow officers when witnessing excessive use of force

8. Requirement of comprehensive and immediate reporting of the use of force (2021)

*CIT*

Research also shows that the implementation of CIT programs has been significantly successful in deterring excessive use of force and the killing of individuals with a mental illness. However, at this time, it is only voluntary among officers. By implementing CIT training as a requirement for training while at the police academy, the death rate of innocent civilians and the extensive use of excessive force can be dramatically decreased. CIT training is a 40-hour program that has been shown to teach law enforcement officers a better and safe way to respond to individuals with a mental health crisis (Bonefine et al., 2014; Bratina et al., 2020). Additionally, CIT has been shown to reduce arrests of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis by diverting them to appropriate community resources such as mental health providers and community mental health centers (Bonefine et al., 2014; Bratina et al., 2020; Compton et al., 2008; Dupont & Cochran, 2000).

Further, research shows law enforcement agencies endorse positive results when a CIT program has been implemented at their agency (Bratina et al., 2020; DeMatteo et al., 2013; Pearson, 2014; Steadman et al., 2000). For example, studies have shown a change in officer attitude due to increased exposure and familiarity with mental illness (Bonefine, 2014; Bratina et al., 2020). Moreover, this allows mental health providers (psychologists) to play a major role in reducing discrimination toward racial minorities and the mentally ill. Implementing a CIT program nationwide would allow psychologists and law enforcement to work side-by-side within the community.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, research has shown that ethnic/racial minorities, individuals with a mental health issues, and members of the LGBTQ+ community are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing excessive use of force. For example, Fagan and Campbell (2020) found that African Americans are more than twice as likely to be killed by police and Latinx civilians are also at higher risk of being killed by law enforcement. Moreover, these vulnerable populations are at increased risk of being killed by a member of law enforcement. TPC, stereotyping, dehumanization, fatigue, and failures in training often result in fatal results for U.S. citizens at the hands of the individuals meant to serve and protect the community. Further, research has shown a history of racial injustice that has been embedded within America's law enforcement agencies since the inception of law enforcement. More specifically, initially, police departments were established as a way to enforce slavery and as a means to defend against the Native American and Mexican communities. However, there is a body of research that suggests reform among law enforcement could happen. For example, research conducted by Fagan and Campbell (2020) suggested that adding specific training that addresses the role of race in perceptions of risk and decision-making while in dangerous situations could reduce incidents of police shootings and disproportion of racial/ethnic injustice. It will not be easy, as these unethical and racial traditions of law enforcement agencies are deeply rooted in tradition and culture, but change can happen.

Psychologists are not only mental healthcare providers; they also advocate for clients. A part of being an advocate means sometimes one needs to step outside of one's comfort zone and take a stand. More importantly, one needs to take a stand for social justice issues such as inequality and racism. The field of psychology was founded on the principles of



being advocates for clients, upholding ethical and moral standards, and immersing one's self and becoming competent in diversity issues. Not taking a stand against social injustice not only hurts the psychologist but the client as well. Providing care does not end when clients leave the psychologist's office. If psychologists are not accountable, then who is? Law enforcement officers are definitely not held accountable. Research suggests that both federal and state courts often rely on the reasonableness standard to justify police killings (Fagan & Campbell, 2020). More specifically, the reasonableness standard heavily relies on subjective observations regarding the level of danger/threat, which overwhelmingly results in officers not needing to face any form of consequences or liability for their conduct (Fagan & Campbell, 2020). Thus, it is up to psychologists and advocates to utilize their voices, knowledge, and skills to help reform current policies, procedures, and training among law enforcement.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Manual for Proposed Model of Training Reform**

The proposed model of law enforcement reform and training has five major areas of needed implementation: (a) national mandated standardized training; (b) requirement of a four-year bachelor's degree (criminal justice or criminology) with a minor in psychology; (c) the incorporation of CIT nationwide; (d) standardized mandated policies and procedures for use of force; and (e) the incorporation of diversity and mental health-specific training hours during recruit training.

#### **National/Federal Standards**

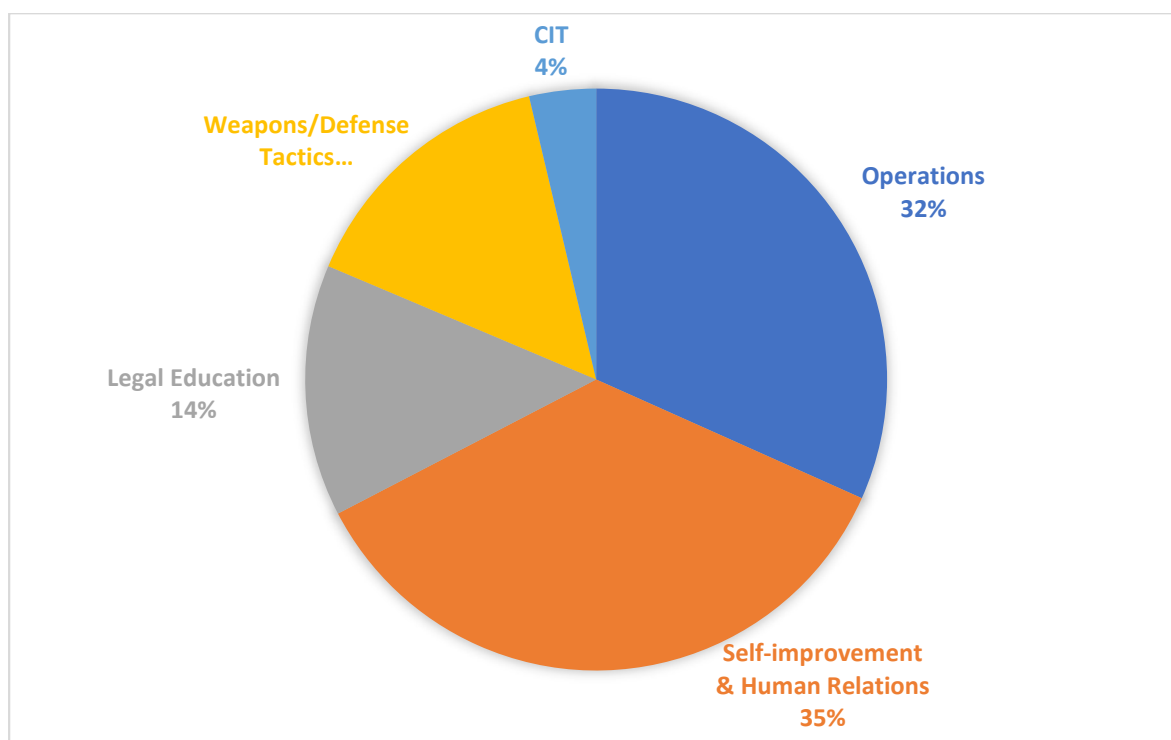
To help standardize law enforcement training, a federally/nationally mandated curriculum for academy training, mandated continuing education, and a national certification should be put in place. Given the importance of law enforcement in our society, a training curriculum should have law enforcement officers in mind and the community and community relations as well. The current mandated hours of training required for law enforcement ranges from 16 to 20 weeks (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). I propose that academy training be increased to a minimum of six months of full-time (40-hr weeks) training, and once that training has been completed, there should be a national certification examination that must be completed. The national certification should require both a written examination and practical's, so recruits can not only verify his or her knowledge of the required curriculum but that he or she can also actually perform the required duties and utilize appropriate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The proposed model of academy training does not abolish all previous training requirements or eliminate the old curriculum. Instead, the purpose of this model is to expand

and improve upon already established training. For example, this model will maintain the four main topic areas already established in law enforcement training (e.g., operations, self-improvement, legal education, and weapons/defense tactics). However, there are some major changes to these areas. The proposed curriculum makeup for academy training can be found in Figure A1. The proposed basic training curriculum consists of 1,039 hours total, which would be a little over six and a half months of full-time (40 hrs. per week) training. However, this can be further expanded upon, and hours can be increased as there is a need for specific training areas.

**Figure A1**

Proposed Curriculum by Topic Area for Law Enforcement Training at the Academy

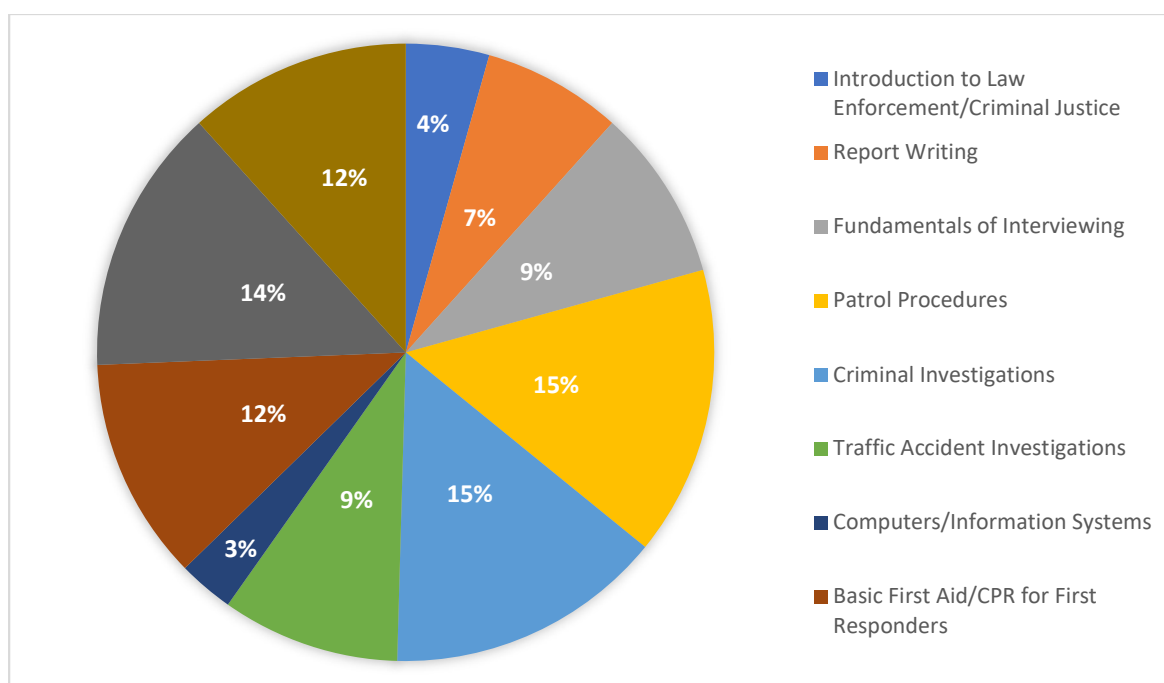


Each topic area is also broken down by hours and areas that will be covered. More specifically, the topic of operations will require a total of 342 hours of training. The area of operations can be further broken down into 10 classes. More specifically, the courses in this

area consist of the following: Introduction to law enforcement/criminal justice (15 hrs.), report writing (25 hrs.), the fundamentals of interviewing (31 hrs.), and patrol procedures (52 hrs.), criminal investigations (50 hrs.), traffic accident investigations (32 hrs.), computers/information systems (10 hrs.), basic first aid/CPR for first responders (40 hrs.), emergency vehicle operations (48 hrs.), and domestic violence and sex crimes (40 hrs.). A percentage breakdown for each class is provided in Figure A2.

**Figure A2**

Break Down of Training Hours for Operations



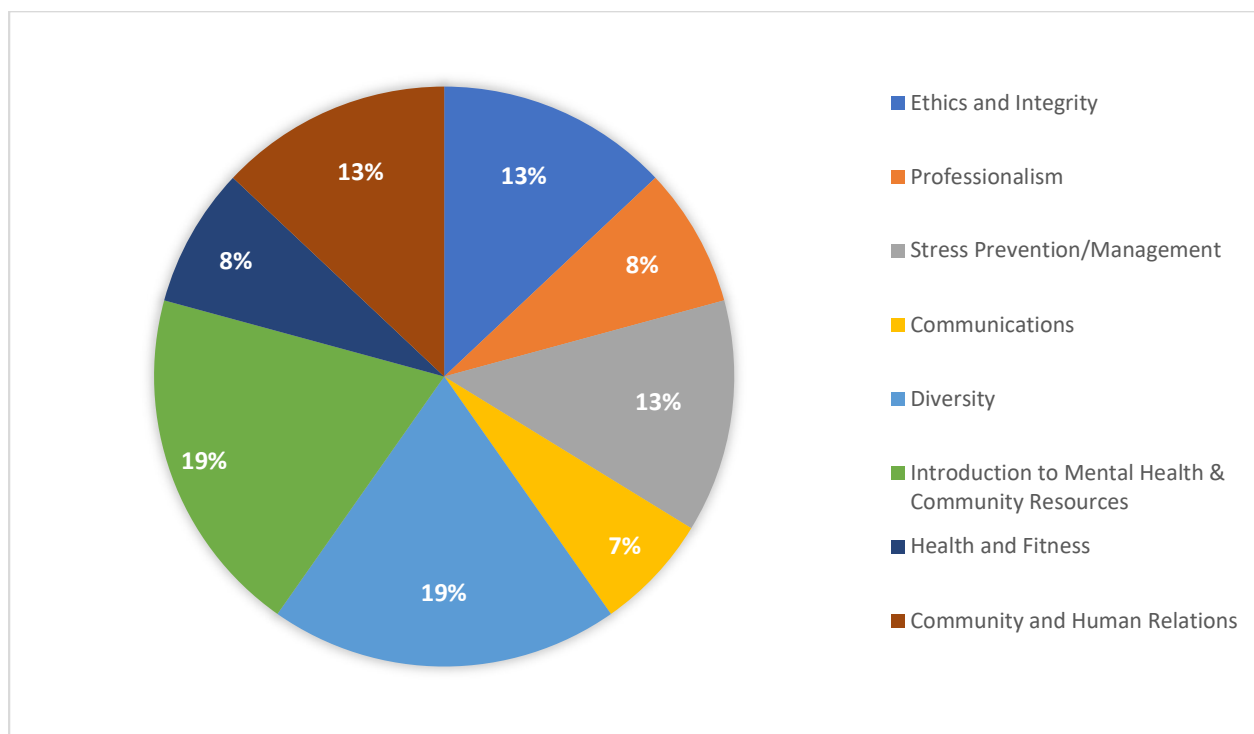
*Note.* Sources utilized to help form proposed curriculum: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018; FDLE, 2020; USCP, 2021a; IACP, 2018b

The topic of self-improvement and human relations will require a total of 385 hours of training. The area of self-improvement and human relations can be further broken down into eight classes. More specifically, the courses in this area consist of the following: Ethics and integrity (50 hrs.), professionalism (30 hrs.), stress prevention/management (50 hrs.),

communications (25 hrs.), diversity (75 hrs.), introduction to mental health and community resources (75 hrs.), health and fitness (30 hrs.), and community and human relations (50 hrs.). A percentage breakdown for each class is provided in Figure A3.

**Figure A3**

Break Down of Training Hours for Self-improvement and Human Relations



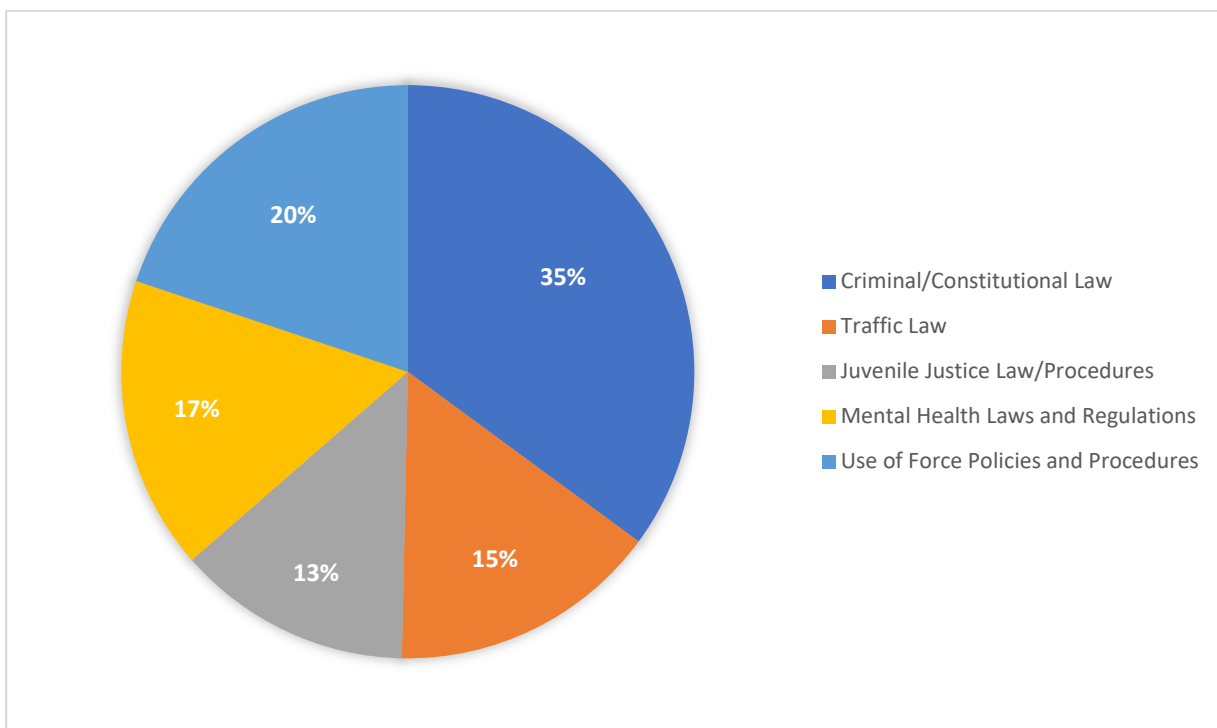
*Note.* Sources utilized to help form proposed curriculum: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018; FDLE, 2020; USCP, 2021a; IACP, 2018b

The topic of legal education consists of 151 hours of training, and it can also be further broken down into five classes. More specifically, the courses in this area consist of the following: criminal/constitutional law (53 hrs.), traffic law (23 hrs.), juvenile justice law/procedures (20 hrs.), mental health laws and regulations (25 hrs.), and use of force policies and procedures (30 hrs.) A percentage breakdown for each class is provided in Figure A4.



**Figure A4**

## Break Down of Training Hours for Legal Education

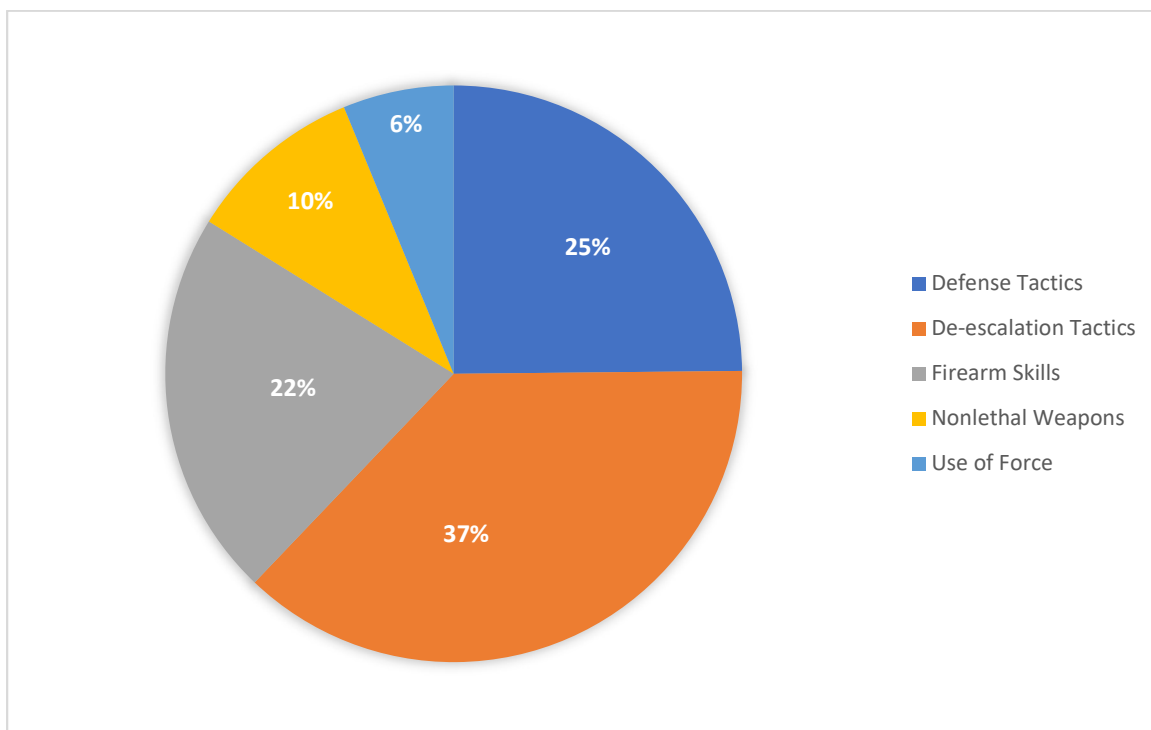


*Note.* Sources utilized to help form proposed curriculum: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018; FDLE, 2020; USCP, 2021a; IACP, 2018b

The area of weapons/defense tactics will require 161 hours of training, and it can be further broken down into five courses. More specifically, the courses in this area consist of the following: Defense tactics (40 hrs.), de-escalation tactics (60 hrs.), firearms skills (35 hrs.), nonlethal weapons (16 hrs.), and use of force (10 hrs.). A percentage breakdown for each class is provided in Figure A5.

**Figure A5**

## Break Down of Training Hours for Weapons/Defense Tactics



*Note.* Sources utilized to help form proposed curriculum: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018; FDLE, 2020; USCP, 2021a; IACP, 2018b

Each course in the four primary comprehension areas is important. However, there have been some courses that have been expanded upon and added to the previous curriculum. Courses that have been expanded on are the following: fundamentals of interviewing, ethics and integrity, professionalism, stress prevention/management, and use of force. Courses added to the training model are as follows: domestic violence and sex crimes, diversity, introduction to mental health and community resources, community and human relations, mental health laws and regulations, use of force policies and procedures, de-escalation tactics. A description of these updated and new courses can be found in Table A1.

**Table A1**

## Description of Important Topic Areas

Training Topic	Description
Fundamentals of interviewing	An introduction to common law enforcement interview techniques such as visual cues, behavioral analysis, reverse recall, and the kinesics method. Additionally, a focus on Socratic questioning to avoid leading questions will be utilized for this course.
Domestic violence and sex crimes	Studies a variety of criminalities in the family setting (i.e., domestic violence/intimate partner violence) and sexual assault crimes. Increases knowledge and encourages critical thinking and problem-solving abilities for the interaction with victims.
Ethics and integrity	An examination of theories underlying ethics and how they relate to law enforcement and principles of justice. Create a framework for identifying and dealing with ethical problems as they related to ethical dilemmas in the areas of law, police, courts, and corrections. A review of ethical company culture and regulatory/compliance training. Further, expand one's knowledge, skills on integrity and accountability.
Professionalism	Building skills, knowledge, and competence in areas of conduct, behavior and attitudes of law enforcement. A review of the ethics, morals, and standards of behavior.
Stress prevention/management	Examines ways to prevent and relieve stress, such as grounding techniques.
Diversity	Examines different cultural groups and their values while building multicultural competency. Addresses topics such as ethnic, race, gender, sexual identity, religious affiliation, and age differences. Additionally, provides a look at the racial impact of criminal laws and raises awareness in critical thinking about problems within the criminal justice system.
Introduction to mental health and community resources Community and human relations	A broad introduction to the topics of abnormal behavior and the identification of mental illness and available community resources. An examination of problems arising from organizational and interpersonal relations between law enforcement and the community. Devised to cultivate improved interpersonal and intergroup proficiencies.
Mental health laws and regulations	A review of the current mental health laws and regulations as they pertain to the criminal justice system.
Use of force policies and procedures	A review of current use of force policies and procedures.

De-escalation tactics	Examining current de-escalation tactics such as empathy, validation, nonthreatening nonverbal communication, and providing support, not suppression. Creating a space where officers can utilize appropriate communication techniques to defuse potentially dangerous situations.
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Regarding in-service/continuing education hours, the majority of professions have a required set number of hours to maintain certification and licensure. Law enforcement should be no different. Law enforcement agencies should be required to have a standard for continuing education that includes topic areas such as de-escalation techniques, mental health, ethics, diversity, and firearms skills.

Regarding national certification, it is important to make sure that our law enforcement officers complete their training and have the knowledge and understanding needed to perform their duties. One way to ensure officers obtain the required skills and training needed is by requiring a national certification before being employed as an officer. Additionally, annual recertification standards should be established as well to help maintain an officer's skill. Currently, 36 states recognize the national certification program developed by the IDALEST (2021). This program was established to create training standards and "best practices" for law enforcement officers that improved professionalism practices and each officers' skill set needed for the job. IDALEST offers accreditation to both the POST and police academies to ensure training standards adhere to the highest international standards (IDALEST, 2021).

Furthermore, a national certification can help prevent "wandering officers" by establishing and mandated utilization of a de-certification database, which has already been initiated by IDALEST. Wandering officers are defined as "law enforcement officers fired by one department, sometimes for serious misconduct, who then find work at another agency"

(Grunwald & Rappaport, 2020). Wandering officers often face difficulty finding a new job, so they tend to seek employment with law enforcement agencies located in areas with fewer resources. Unfortunately, this often places these problem officers in areas with larger communities of POC (Grunwald & Rappaport, 2020). Regardless of whether an officer is fired or resigns from a position, his or her national certification should be revoked and immediately updated in the National De-certification Database. Additionally, prior to employment at any agency, a check of the National De-certification Database should be run as a part of the background screening. Thus, preventing the rehire of problem officers at another agency, which can help decrease the current issues our community is facing.

### **Higher Education and Use of Force Policies/Procedures**

Additionally, research has shown that both higher education (Guller, 1972; Hays et al., 2007; Parker et al., 1976; Regoli, 1976; Roberg, 1978; Roberg & Bonn, 2004) and the implementation of strict use of force policies and procedures impact the behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers (UFP, 2021). The requirement of a four-year college degree can significantly alter the behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers and lead to a fully reformed criminal justice system. Research suggests that officers with higher education tend to be less authoritarian and cynical (Parker et al., 1976, Roberg, 1978; Regoli, 1976), have a more flexible value system (Guller, 1972, Hays et al., 2007), and have an improved attitude toward minority groups as well as develop more ethical and professional behaviors (Parker et al., 1976; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Furthermore, by requiring a 4-year degree with a minor in psychology, officers would be required to take a minimum of 18 credit hours in psychology courses. Those courses would consist of the following available options:

- Introduction to Psychology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Abnormal Child Psychology
- Drugs and Behavior
- Cross-Cultural Psychology
- Diversity (Culture and Diversity)
- Ethics
- Prejudice and Stereotyping
- Social Psychology
- Judgment and Decision Making

These are just a few of the available courses at many colleges and universities across the nation. Yet, each one can have a significant impact on law enforcement personnel.

Moreover, this is another area that psychologists can play a major role in the training and reform of the criminal justice system. Regarding use of force policies, the UFP (2021) completed research that discovered the implementation of specific use of force policies and procedures resulted in significantly fewer murders of civilians by law enforcement officers. UFP (2021) found that implementing just four restrictive use of force policies decreased the number of killings per population and per arrest. Furthermore, the implementation of all eight use of force policies studied resulted in 72% fewer civilian murders among law enforcement agencies (UFP, 2021). The eight effective uses of force policies presented by the UFP are as follows:

1. Requirement of de-escalation practices
2. Utilization of a use of force continuum or matrix

3. The banishment of chokeholds and strangleholds
4. Requirement of giving a warning before shooting
5. Restrictions on shooting at moving vehicles
6. Requiring exhaustion of all other means before discharging a firearm
7. Requiring a duty to intervene by fellow officers when witnessing excessive use of force
8. Requirement of comprehensive and immediate reporting of the use of force (2021)

## **CIT**

Research also shows that the implementation of CIT programs has been significantly successful in deterring excessive use of force and the killing of individuals with a mental illness. However, at this time, it is only voluntary among officers. By implementing CIT training as a requirement for training while at the police academy, the death rate of innocent civilians and the extensive use of excessive force can be drastically decreased. CIT training is just a 40-hr program that has been shown to teach law enforcement officers a better and safe way to respond to individuals with a mental health crisis (Bonafine et al., 2014; Bratina et al., 2020). Additionally, CIT has been shown to reduce arrests of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis by diverting them to appropriate community resources such as mental health providers and community mental health centers (Bonafine et al., 2014; Bratina et al., 2020; Compton et al., 2008; Dupont & Cochran, 2000). Further, research shows law enforcement agencies endorse positive results when a CIT program has been implemented at his or her agency (Bratina et al., 2020; DeMatteo et al., 2013; Pearson, 2014; Steadman et al., 2000). For example, studies have shown a change in officer attitude due to increased exposure and familiarity with mental illness (Bonafine, 2014; Bratina et al., 2020).

Moreover, this allows mental health providers (us as psychologists) to play a major role in reducing discrimination toward racial minorities and the mentally ill. Implementing a CIT program nationwide would allow psychologists and law enforcement to work side-by-side within the community.