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A History of Distrust: How Knowing the Law Impacts African American Males' Perceptions of Police Encounters

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A HISTORY OF DISTRUST: HOW KNOWING THE LAW IMPACTS AFRICAN
AMERICAN MALES' PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE ENCOUNTERS

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ABSTRACT

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From its inception American Law Enforcement was built from a racially motivated system in which African Americans were subject to discriminatory treatment. Unfortunately, that treatment still persists in modern day policing, which is highlighted by the deaths of Eric Garner and George Floyd to name a few. There is no surprise that law enforcement needs to be improve trust with the African American community; however there is a dire need for a new approach. This study is unique because unlike previous research this study focuses solely on African American males that reside in disenfranchised communities that are most at risk for experiencing negative encounters with law enforcement. The overall purpose of this mixed-methods action research study was to enhance participants' knowledge of Texas law. The primary research questions are: (1) How does knowing law impact perceptions of police-civilian encounters on the part of African American males? and (2) how do participant responses change by taking part in an educational session about the law? The research study included 43 Black males between the ages of 18 to 35 years of age from predominantly Black communities within the metro Houston, Texas area. The study consisted of pre- and post-perception surveys and educational tests, videos of police and civilian encounters, educational interventions and focus group discussions. Research findings suggest that an educational intervention did significantly shift participants' perceptions regarding police-civilian encounters in a positive direction. However, participant

responses suggest that knowing the law brings police conduct into question; and indeed, knowing

the law seemed to result in research participants trusting police even less. Law enforcement

agencies can use this action research study to improve relationships with the African American

community. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA: Antioch University

Repository and Archive, (https://aura.antioch.edu) and OhioLINK ETD Center,

(https://etd.ohiolink.edu).

Keywords: African Americans, Action research, Mixed methods, Community policing, Law

enforcement, Police, Perceptions of police, Disenfranchised communities, Police conduct, Police

encounters

Dedication

First and foremost, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my higher power. As I know, I do not have the courage nor the discipline to complete this on my own.

To my heartbeat, my mother, Elfredia Horn. Anything written is an understatement. There are truly no words that can adequately describe the amount of love I have for you. Thanks for pushing me, demanding better, and stressing the importance of education. There is not a single accomplishment in which you were not my biggest supporter and motivator. Mama, I love you so much, and I am beyond grateful for every single sacrifice you made for my benefit.

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Lastly, to all individuals growing up in marginalized communities suffering from oppressive police services, you have a voice, one that deserves to be heard. As in this study, let us continue to unite and grind as a body of one and work towards the liberation of oppressive systems.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Incidents of police brutality, discrimination, and fatal police shootings have become the focal point of most news media outlets since the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May of 2020 (Chughtai, 2020). However, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement began in 2013 following Trayvon Martin's death, a Black American shot by George Zimmerman, a White American in Sanford, Florida. George Zimmerman was acquitted of all charges (Turan, 2020). These incidents only highlight a countless number of incidents wherein police-civilian encounters with Black Americans have contributed to the eroding of trust in members of the police force (Chughtai, 2020). Although initiatives have been set in place to address discrimination of people of color by members of the judicial system, as evidenced by the violence against Black Americans, they have not worked (Chughtai, 2020; Ritchie & Mogul, 2007; Zinn Education Project, 2020).

Systemic racism, outdated policing practices that perpetuate racial inequalities, and mounting distrust further exacerbate the situation (O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Obama, 2014). Addressing discriminatory practices in policing requires a two-pronged approach wherein policy and practice changes are made. Efforts by both the Black and police communities have been made to rebuild trust between these two communities to foster reconciliation and collaboration (O'Brien & Tyler, 2019). The procedural justice literature suggests that "the key to creating trust is to act in ways that citizens will experience as fair" (Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Murphy et al., 2014, p. 407; Tyler & Huo, 2002). Ensuring Black citizens are educated on the laws and acceptable policy and practices of the police force may be one step on the path to ensuring they can adequately determine the fairness of their encounter and act accordingly.

The following chapter will provide a background of the problem which my research addresses, provide a problem statement, and present the purpose of this study. The chapter will also describe the research objectives, questions, and provide a detailed description of the study's significance. The chapter will conclude with a summary and description of what is expected to be found in the following chapters.

Background

The Historical Relationship Between the Police and African Americans

It would be unjust to speak about policing without discussing the foundation in which policing was built. Throughout United States (U.S) history, there has been a negative relationship between police officers and African Americans. At the inception of policing in the South, one must not forget that one of the police's primary functions was to preserve slavery. This was a system built upon racism in which African Americans did not have rights, and at best, were viewed and treated as second-class individuals (Graham et al., 2020). Naturally, the encounters between African Americans and police officers were not pleasant. It is said that the first impression is lasting. It was those actions that framed the perception of police officers amongst African Americans.

Furthermore, those experiences with police officers created a negative sentiment that continues to be engraved within African American communities. After slave patrols were dissolved, Jim Crow laws were established and enforced between 1877 and 1950. These were the laws that did not allow African Americans to occupy the same public spaces as White people. For those African Americans that violated these laws, the police were called, and African Americans were forcibly made to comply. This was also a time in which African Americans were commonly lynched, mainly for being African American. Although this was a clear

violation of the law, those that committed these horrendous crimes were not punished. There was no accountability for police officers, nor was there an expectation for African Americans to be treated fairly by police officers (Kramer & Remster, 2018).

According to Taylor (2013), the racialized police violence against African Americans is a recurring issue that the government, American communities, and other stakeholders have failed to address effectively (Taylor, 2013). Bowen et al. (2017) argued that since the advent of slave patrols and the state-sponsored police forces in the country, racialized policing has mostly been detrimental to African Americans (Bowen et al., 2017). There is a consensus among researchers that the Slave Codes, which were later identified as the Black Codes and Jim Crow Segregation Laws, set the basis for African Americans' racial profiling and police brutality. Numerous social movements have emerged over the years, focusing on police violence and African Americans' discrimination in the criminal justice system (Graham et al., 2020).

In the last half of the 20th century in the U.S., the war on drugs presented numerous challenges for African Americans as they became a target for law enforcement (Corva, 2008). Additionally, the September 11th, 2001 terror attack on the U.S. led to a drastic increase in law enforcement powers and how they engage with people fighting the "war on terror" (Harris, 2006). This presented a new challenge for people of color due to increased racial profiling that eroded the efforts to mitigate systematic abuse by law enforcement (Patman, 2006). Suggestively, the systematic abuse worsened in practice and severity according to accounts offered by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Declaration of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Xenophobia. The U.S. government has failed minority groups in its duty to appropriately investigate and document incidents of excessive force by law enforcement officers. Correll et al. (2007) argued

that the handling of racialized police violence proves this is evident, which has systematically led to the violation of racial minorities rights and unequal subjection to the criminal justice system.

In 1998, Amnesty International, in a report titled "*Rights for All*," concluded that racial minorities, including African Americans, Latino, and Native Americans, experience police brutality, excessive force, racial discrimination, and bias by the police (Amnesty International, 1998). Similarly, a research study conducted in 2016 reported similar findings (Buckler & Higgins, 2016). The abuse highlighted in the report included the use of racist language, harassment, ill-treatment, unjustified stops and searches, unjustified shootings, and false arrests (Buckler & Higgins, 2016). According to Sadler et al. (2012), these abuses often result in society's conflicts, health problems, and loss of lives. Having looked at the historical background of racial discrimination in the U.S., the next section considers a range of interventions that have been adopted to address this issue.

Evidence of Interventions

An attempt to address racial discrimination of African Americans internationally was made, as exemplified by the "We Charge Genocide" petition submitted by the U.S. Civil Rights Congress to the United Nations in 1951 (Zinn Education Project, 2020). The petition presented thousands of police violence cases experienced by African Americans (Ritchie & Mogul, 2007). Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the U.S., such as the NAACP, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International, have also provided concrete evidence of the widespread use of force and abuse of human rights by law enforcement against African Americans and other minorities. Furthermore, the violation of human rights characterized by the subjection of force and violence against people of color has been a matter of public discourse for decades (Spinney et al., 2018). Additionally, Ritchie and Mogul (2007) noted that a U.N. Special Rapporteur

highlighted the use of excessive force by law enforcement against minorities as a form of contemporary racism, which is also a prominent human rights issue in the U.S..

The U.S. government also recognizes that underlying persistent factors thwart the relationship between minorities and law enforcement. Established in 1957 as an independent and bipartisan agency by Congress, the U.S. Civil rights Commission highlighted these findings. According to a 2000 review by the Commission of a 1981 report titled "*Who Is Guarding the Guardians: A Report on Police Practices*," the issues of police brutality, harassment, and misconduct were still widespread across the country at the start of the 21st century (Ritchie & Mogul, 2007). The report highlighted that the most vulnerable groups to the unethical police practices were people of color, women, and the poor.

There is compelling evidence emerging from research and domestic and international civil and human rights organizations that show people and communities of color in the U.S. have consistently been subjected to police brutality and discrimination in the Criminal Justice System (Taylor, 2013). Despite this knowledge, there has been little effort to develop sustainable solutions for the disproportionate services of minorities in the hands of law enforcement (Graham et al., 2020). Obasogie and Newman (2017) stated that various interventions had been enacted to improve the relationship between minorities, police forces, and the criminal justice systems. Despite this, the police force reforms are implemented differently across the states, and such efforts have also not made a significant impact in addressing the challenges faced by African Americans (Obasogie & Newman, 2017). Additionally, reforms have often been met with criticism, which has made it difficult to disrupt the policing practices that have been embedded in most departments (Robinson 551). Consequently, there are frequent cases of pervasive verbal abuse and harassment by the police, racial profiling that includes routine stops

and frisks, unjustified use of excessive force, unjustified shootings, and torture (Buckler &

Higgins, 2016). Young African American males mostly experience these atrocities (Buckler &

Higgins, 2016).

Police Violence Against African Americans in the 21st century

Over the years, generational experiences highlight African Americans' unjust treatment at

the hands of police officers. Those stories being shared about Watts, Los Angeles, commonly

referred to as the Watts Riots, highlight the division between African Americans and the police.

Other events include the Rodney King video, where Los Angeles police officers were captured

on video beating him during a police encounter, yet police officers were not prosecuted. Even

decades later, African Americans are facing the same malicious events. Examples include the

tragic events surrounding Walter Scott, Eric Harris, Eric Garner, George Floyd, and Daunte

Wright. Events like these only continue to support a belief that the police system is not equitable

for African Americans. The relationship between police officers and the African American

community continues to be strained. When African Americans state that policing was not created

to protect Blacks and has always disproportionally affected African Americans, historically, that

is a fact that is hard to dispute. Despite many strategies to address police violence against

African Americans being proposed and enacted, there is a lack of useful insights into their

success. They lack effectiveness in addressing the issue of accountability. Further, racism is a

significant component of police violence that has been inadequately addressed in the past. The

following section will address the topic of racism as it relates to this research study.

Racism

According to Kay et al. (2007), racism is considered an ideology or a belief system

designed to justify and rationalize inequality based on racial and ethnic aspects. Racism is linked

to discrimination, which is deemed a behavior aimed at denying members of a particular group, race, or ethnicity equal societal reward. Drawing from these definitions, the practices of law enforcement in the U.S. have been racist and discriminatory. Despite the lack of accurate data, governments, researchers, and credible media show about 1000 civilians are killed annually through law enforcement officers' actions in the country. In these statistics, Black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by the police than White men (Hemenway et al., 2019). In the same context, African Americans are twice as likely to be fatally shot by the police as White people. In this light, race continues to be a powerful and polarizing factor in how the police interact with the civilian populations. James et al. (2016) noted that the focus on implicit versus explicit bias shows that police officers favor Whites over Black people.

Implicit bias could be implicated in these statistics. Implicit bias is experienced when the discriminator lacks conscious awareness of their bias. In contrast, explicit bias alludes to situations where the discriminator clearly understands their biased attitude, behaviors, or actions. From this perspective, the implicit nature of American society's stereotypes contributes significantly to recognizing and addressing racial discrimination situations by police forces.

A research study conducted on racial bias in the decision to shoot in a multiethnic context was explored (Sadler et al., 2012). Researchers used a computer-based video game simulation to measure participants' reaction times to shoot a potential suspect in situations where they did or did not have a weapon. Suspects were either Black, Hispanic, Asian, or White (Sadler et al., 2012). The experiment was conducted two times, first with college students and then again with active-duty police officers. The police officer cohort was surveyed based on the community characteristics and explicit individual beliefs and attitudes using a discrimination scale and stereotype rating scale measuring perceptions of attributed groups aggressiveness (aggressive,

violent, or dangerous; Sadler et al., 2012). Research findings suggested that "police officers showed anti-Black racial bias in their response times: they were quicker to shoot armed Black targets and to indicate "don't shoot" for unarmed Latino, Asian, and White targets" (Sadler et al., 2012, p. 286). Research results also indicated implicit bias responses toward Latinos versus White and Asian groups.

Further insights from Green (1998) suggested that racial bias experienced by African Americans starts at an early age, which subjects even children to the detrimental stereotypes held by the police and the community at large. Statistically, Black youth are more vulnerable to the police force than youth from other races, even if they are innocent. The dehumanization of African Americans, especially young males, implies that adults' force is deemed appropriate for individuals as young as 14 years (Goff et al., 2008). This premise is reflected in the shooting of a 12-year-old boy (Dewan & Oppel, 2015).

Black Lives Matter Movement

The recent death of George Floyd in police custody and the video of arrest and death widely shared on social media rejuvenated the #BlackLivesMatter, a trending topic and a matter of public discourse online and offline since civil demonstrations that began in 2014 and 2015. Black Lives Matter (BLM) shows that Black Americans are often viewed as subhuman, which leads to the devaluing of their lives compared to their White counterparts (Kilgo et al., 2019). From another perspective, Black people are perceived to be superhuman, leading to the belief that they are less susceptible to harm (Chernega, 2016). Despite this, many people believe that they are unbiased against Black people, although they are likely to perceive crime-related issues negatively. Furthermore, Taylor (2013) alludes to the idea that Black individuals are viewed as deserving of harsh treatment in the criminal justice system. There are also insights from the

literature suggesting that Black males are also perceived as prototypical criminals, a phenomenon propagated by the media, the public, and the historic sentencing outcomes in the criminal justice system. These factors have contributed to the BLM movement growing larger to address the issues associated with the additional and well-publicized extrajudicial killings, brutality, and police violence. Despite a backlash on the BLM's actions, the movement has become the rallying cry for the Black community and many supporters due to the increasing evidence of abuse and discrimination in the criminal justice system (Kilgo et al., 2019). According to Garza (2014), the BLM movement's anger can be associated with the lack of a satisfactory response by the criminal justice system in convicting officers who engage in brutality and killings. However, the movement is also fueled by a history of unjust practices on behalf of the criminal justice system.

Issues with the Justice System Outside of Policing

The criminal justice system's key processes are underfunded, contributing to the discrimination against people of color who often are from low-income backgrounds. The lack of appropriate funding for defense programs in most states results in individuals settling their bills (Safiedine & Chung, 2018). This makes it difficult for pre-trial release, which requires one to raise money for bond and bail. Individuals living in low-income communities have a lack of money to hire a good defense team. As a result, individuals from low-income communities tend to accept less favorable plea bargains (Safiedine & Chung, 2018). Additionally, there is a lack of significant support from parole and probation systems and programs that can alleviate the socioeconomic factors that compromise individuals, leading them to engage in criminal behavior (Butler, 2013). For instance, there is little funding for public drug treatment programs and civic

education for defendants to understand better their rights and sentencing alternatives (Dorf &

Charles, 2000).

Negative Impact of Current Justice System

The current criminal justice system has a long-lasting negative impact on the people

involved. This includes the loss of life or being hurt by the police, which leads to trauma among

victims and community members, resulting in challenges with mental health and thwarted

relationships with the police force. From another perspective, the criminal justice system

exacerbates the socioeconomic inequalities in the African American community (Harris &

Keller, 2005). Socioeconomic inequalities result in collateral consequences experienced by

individuals, families, and societies due to the criminal justice system's policies. For instance,

individuals who have been convicted in the past are more likely to be shot or treated with force

when police officers respond to issues where they are involved (Graham et al., 2020). Criminal

convictions also create a barrier for people seeking decent employment and obtaining public

assistance or gaining eligibility for public housing programs in many areas. These insights

suggest that addressing the challenges experienced by African American people and other people

of color should account for different factors beyond the criminal justice system (Spinney et al.,

2018). Interventions should be conducted using a holistic approach that addresses socioeconomic

challenges while advancing sustainable policy reforms to be sustainable.

Interventions for Current Policing Practices

Racial disparities in the criminal justice system exacerbate racial inequality (Taylor,

2013). As has previously been noted, predisposing factors have made African Americans and

other people of color a law enforcement target. In the recent past, various jurisdictions have

attempted to address these predisposing factors and establish reforms to improve the police's

engagement and services to all American citizens. The effectiveness of the reforms that have been enacted is yet to emerge, considering that African Americans remain subject to police brutality. This issue persists, despite the community's increased attention through social media and mainstream media, increased diversity in the police force, and improved representation in the criminal justice system, disparities persist.

For example, although Kramer and Remster (2018) suggested that racial disparities in traffic stops have reduced substantially across the country in recent years, insights emerging from social media users, BLM supporters, and other sources show that racial disparities persist in many jurisdictions. Subsequently, police officers are more likely to stop Black or Hispanic individuals for investigative reasons (Buckler & Higgins, 2016; Kramer & Remster, 2018). Once stopped by the police, people of color are more likely to be searched and arrested than their White counterparts (Buckler & Higgins, 2016; Kramer & Remster, 2018). These factors, coupled with prosecutors and judges charging and sentencing people of color more harshly, aggravates their experiences from the point of arrest to incarceration. This phenomenon has been constant in many places and has influenced increased scrutiny of the criminal justice system. For instance, the Vera Institute of Justice engages with prosecutors across the U.S. to monitor prosecuting and sentencing outcomes in search of bias cases for repeal and ensure that all parties in the criminal justice system are held accountable (Subramanian & Shames, 2013). Another example of efforts to increase accountability is the actions taken by Judges in Dorchester, Massachusetts. These judges act to ensure collaboration with police and prosecutors in establishing appropriate guidelines to reduce racial disparities in services offered. Finally, because the proposed study will take place in Texas, the following section includes a discussion of factors particular to the criminal justice system in Texas.

The Texas Context

Texas has made various efforts to address the criminal justice system's challenges and how its institutions in different stages interact with the African American people and other people of color. In the recent past, the Texas legislature enacted a law that enables counties to establish diversion courts to address cases associated with police officers and other first-responders who face charges (Balko, 2017). This offers an opportunity for increased scrutiny in the issues of police brutality and increases focus on the factors that contribute to the use of force and other detrimental procedures when dealing with particular people. Nevertheless, the courts also created a loophole where defendants can bypass criminal prosecution when they are found to be eligible for treatment-based programs such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Additionally, creating courts specifically for police and first-responders implies that police will be treated differently from other people, which leads to the notion that police are above the law. As a result, this practice may further bolster police officers' mentality of being "above the law" in their discriminatory behavior toward Black citizens and further perpetuate this behavior.

Ultimately, this can further impact their conduct in the communities they serve, contributing to increased racial disparity in how the police treat people of color due to knowing they will not be prosecuted in the regular court systems (Balko, 2017). There are growing concerns being brought to the forefront by movements such as BLM and community activists regarding police officers' attempts by the current criminal justice system. In response, it has become evident that each state nationwide, including Texas, needs to improve on policies governing the effective treatment of those in the criminal justice system, including alleviating socioeconomic disparities faced by minorities and those challenges that contribute to engaging in criminal activities.

Summary

In conclusion, the historically negative relationship between police officers and people of color within the U.S., in conjunction with racial disparities within the criminal justice system and overall society, has resulted in the need for and beginning of another civil rights movement. The increased prevalence of violence toward Black Americans by the police force has resulted in several attempts by the administration to thwart racial discrimination and practices. Still, these actions have fallen short in sustaining fundamental change. Racially discriminatory practices built within the criminal justice system have become systemic and require further research to identify interventions that could address this issue or even alleviate it.

Problem Statement

The issue of police discrimination against African Americans is a significant problem that needs immediate intervention. In addition to the implementation of reform in policing practices and policy, a significant way to address this problem is by improving trust between police and Black communities (Murphy et al., 2014; Obama, 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Constant discrimination and unfair treatment are the driving force behind African Americans' behaviors when encountering police officers. This behavior is because most of these individuals are agitated and display inevitable anger and frustration levels because of past discriminatory experiences with police officers. The perception is that the police react to such behavior with no compassion and excessive force, triggering a more negative reaction from both parties. Resolving police discrimination and the perception of unfair treatment directed towards African Americans is more complex and requires both groups' participation and cooperation. Therefore, rebuilding trust between Black citizens and the police

force is one way to move this issue forward and begin reconciliation between these two groups to foster the rebuilding of trust (Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019).

This focus on trust is supported by my research review, highlighting specific trends and exposing what I believe to be a research gap in existing research. The most reoccurring trend is that African Americans distrust law enforcement and the criminal justice system (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Brunson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler, 2005; Webb & Marshall, 1995). The research has shown this stems from historical events, news, other social media forms, stories shared in the African American community, and local stories passed along by community members (Brunson, 2007). The research has also shown that specifically, African American males are the most affected and, thus, carry the worst perception of police officers as compared with other races (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Brunson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler, 2005; Webb & Marshall, 1995).

Previous research has also missed the mark on their selection of participants in the research studies. This is because African American males usually make up smaller sample sizes than White and Hispanic males. Additionally, the African American males who participated in existing research were predominantly upper and middle-class environments. Although they carry a negative perception of police, it is not the same as those in lower-income areas (Wu et al., 2009). It is consistently reported that individuals in higher and middle-class neighborhoods maintained a more favorable perception of law enforcement and the criminal justice system (Wheelock et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2009).

It is no surprise that law enforcement needs to improve trust with the African American community; that should not be contested. After all, this is nothing new. However, there is a dire need for a new approach. The previous approaches are not making the needed impact. Education

is undoubtedly a crucial component in how individuals approach their decision-making process. However, society fails to ensure that community members are educated on how the law should be enforced and the actual limitations of what officers can legally do. The literature on procedural justice argues that "the key to creating trust is to act in ways that citizens will experience as fair" (Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Murphy et al., 2014, p. 407; Tyler & Huo, 2002). Ensuring Black citizens are educated on the laws and acceptable policy and practices of the police force may increase the probability that Black citizens can adequately determine the fairness of their encounter and act accordingly.

This study addresses Black citizens' unfamiliarity with the law and how to apply those laws to arrest, search, and seizure. This unfamiliarity can be misconstrued by African American citizens when experiencing or observing police/citizen encounters, whether first-hand or via media outlets. Many citizens do an excellent job of disseminating information and videos to the public when capturing police encounters they feel are improper. However, the process of adequately analyzing those police encounters based on the law is equally crucial when disseminating information and videos that go viral to the public. Providing evidence of police encounters in the proper context is essential because this is a delicate topic, and misinformation can further fuel distrust with the police force.

Positionality

First and foremost, I am a Black man in America who grew up in the urban streets of Houston, Texas. The majority of the things I witnessed first-hand or heard bolstered unfavorable relationships with law enforcement. At that time, I did not differentiate between cops that policed my area and cops that policed other areas or worked for other agencies. I had a pessimistic view of all police officers. Ironically, I have been employed as a police officer for the past 15 years.

As I have progressed through formal education and the various ranks of police departments, I have a newfound appreciation of education, as it is a fundamental building block for growth. Once again, law enforcement and, specifically, the African American community are in dire times. Over the years, law enforcement officials have tried community policing techniques, citizen's police academies, increased police training, and even revised policies. These techniques were not beneficial in some areas; however, police killings and distrust of law enforcement have remained on the rise. Therefore, I believe that it is time for a new perspective: a knowledge-based one that focuses more on de-escalation and how it can be used with African American males. To do this, I primarily want to conduct this research study to enhance participants' knowledge of Texas law. Indeed, the ultimate aim is to improve relations between African American males and the police. However, I understand that the study can only test how the educational interventions increase participants' knowledge of the law.

In undertaking this study, I am obligated to be explicitly clear that I am not looking for *any* African American male. For this study's purpose, I feel that it is paramount that the African American participants meet strict eligibility criteria, as I want those from areas that tend to have a very strained relationship with law enforcement to be heard and actively involved. It became evident that this approach was needed and missing from current research. Thus far, I have read countless publications on perceptions of police by African Americans, police and African American relationships, and many other topics closely related throughout my academic journey. Although the readings were engaging, the most reoccurring trend is that African Americans have the most distrust for law enforcement compared to other races. African American males usually made up smaller sample sizes compared to white and Hispanic males. Additionally, after looking deeper into the research by examining the specific cities and other geographical information

embedded in the publications, I discovered that the African American males that participated in former studies resided in upper and middle-class neighborhoods. I felt that this approach was falling short as they failed to gain the perspectives of those African American male participants that are the most at risk for experiencing negative encounters with law enforcement.

Throughout both my personal and professional life, I have been directly impacted by the negative perceptions that Black citizens have towards police officers. I recognize that we live in times wherein social media often creates the narratives that are depicted nationally. I have witnessed events that gained national attention and negatively impacted local Houston communities via protests, small riots, and even property destruction. Unfortunately, social media is continuously searching for the next big event. Once it is located, the attention is placed in that new location without truly resolving the previous crisis. I have conducted meaningful research that will benefit people of color instead of bolstering negative perceptions about police officers and their misconduct. Specifically, I approached the subject constructively by providing realistic approaches to combat those issues head-on and creating an atmosphere where all involved can learn from each other.

Purpose of the Study

My overall purpose of this mixed-methods action research study was to enhance participants' knowledge of Texas law. After three educational interventions, I examined the extent to which the educational interventions increase participants' knowledge of the law. Additionally, I investigated whether there was any shift in perceptions of police and civilian interactions because participants were made aware of applicable state laws and how to apply those laws to police-civilian encounters. This approach was premised on the notion that addressing the criminal justice system's challenges requires citizens to adequately assess the

fairness of police-civilian interactions, which can be hindered by a general lack of knowledge about the legal system. Action research offers an opportunity to conduct investigations while at the same time influencing positive change amongst the people involved. In this context, the research was a systematic approach that tested people's knowledge and offered them an opportunity to learn. Subsequently, the knowledge gained was tested to determine if the research contributed to the interventions made.

I engaged the participants in the following manner. We started with a pre-test designed to test the level of knowledge before any intervention. This was followed by a police and citizen encounter video, which led to a focus group conversation about the video. This was to capture the participants' initial thoughts and feelings. Next, we moved into the intervention to explain the law(s) related to the video. Afterward, the participants took a post-test. Once completed, participants viewed the video a second time. During this review, participants applied laws previously discussed. This was followed by a second group conversation about the video. During this conversation, I noted any changes in perceptions after applying the law. Lastly, approximately two weeks later, a third test was administered to participants. This was to determine if the information learned was retained. A survey was administered to participants before conducting the study and upon conclusion to assess participants' perceptions of police before and after the interventions. Participants had to retain what they learned during the study for this approach to be deemed to be successful. Therefore, a number of weeks later I followed up with participants to determine if they still retained the knowledge. By interacting and engaging in meaningful two-way dialogue, I created an environment in which participants and I collectively felt empowered and learned from each other. In the long term, building trust and repairing relationships will take continued participation from both parties.

Research Objectives

This research investigated and influenced perceptual change among African Americans males living in Texas regarding their perceptions of police. The research focused on engaging individuals in a transformative experience of understanding and reacting to information about police and civilian encounters from various sources. This was achieved by addressing the following specific objectives:

- Determining if knowing the law shifted perceptions of police/civilian encounters.

- Exploring how participants described changes in perceptions and determining the impact of those changes.

Research Questions

The following are the questions that are linked to the research objectives and addressed in this study:

RQ1. How does knowing law impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters on the part of civilians (African American males)?

RQ2. How do participant responses change because of taking part in an educational session about the law?

Significance of the Study

Law enforcement agencies can use this action research study to improve relationships and build trust with the African American community. Additionally, this study can serve as an example that police officers and African Americans can work collaboratively to achieve common ground. At the conclusion of the study, it was found that African American males became more knowledgeable about Texas law. This information can be used to empower African Americans as well as educate other members of the African American community. As a direct result, police

officers and the community can take a stand together in holding officers accountable for their criminal actions. The education of law could offer a level of understanding and explanation that has been widely absent from the decision-making process after watching excerpts of videos on media outlets.

This study is also unique from previous works as it involves and interacts with those most impacted by offering a new approach. Law enforcement agencies worldwide have citizen police academies, youth advisory groups, kids and cops, among others. However, what is mostly missing are programs that focus solely on African American males, with a specific goal of educating them on the law. For many decades, we have told individuals what they cannot do. However, there has been a failure to explain why. Many years are spent in school receiving an education, which is often subpar in minority communities. One important topic that is not being taught in disenfranchised communities are the laws of the state to inform African Americans how to navigate encounters with police officers legally. In the past, this has not been done. It is time to educate in the hope of saving lives.

Conclusion

The current chapter presented a background of the research topic. It made an argument for research on exploring the possible change effects created by educating members of a Black community on Texas law related to their perception of law enforcement. This study educated participants about Texas law to potentially improve the relationship between law enforcement officers and the African American community to save lives. The current chapter also presented the problem and purpose statement, research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. The following chapter (Chapter 2) will present a literature review of the relevant research on this topic. Chapter 3 will present the methodology and research design to include a

detailed description of the population, sample, instruments used for data collection, data analysis procedure, quality assurance practices, assumptions, limitations, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 will present the research findings, and Chapter 5 will provide a discussion wherein implications of the research findings, limitations, and recommendations for future research will be discussed.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

As discussed in Chapter I recent trends in police shootings of Black American citizens have catapulted the topic of racism and racial disparities in policing to the forefront of the country's agenda. After centuries of racial stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice against Black Americans, it seems that the issue has come to a head and will not dissipate until fully addressed by those in power. Although decades of research has been conducted on the racial disparities in fatal police shootings of minority populations, any prior initiatives implemented to mitigate racially biased policing have fallen short of creating the police force Black Americans' deserve. Although initiatives have been set to address racially biased policing practices, they have been unsuccessful, warranting additional approaches to addressing the problem (Simomson, 2021). The overall purpose of this research study was to further educate African American males on the law to improve the relationship between law enforcement officers and the African American community. This study's purpose was premised on the notion that addressing the criminal justice system's challenges requires addressing the challenges influenced by socioeconomic conditions and lack of knowledge about the legal system.

Therefore, the current chapter explores the literature regarding racism in America, police violence against Black Americans, and a discussion of what interventions have been tested and recommended. Specifically, the six pillars described by the 21st Century Policing Report aimed to foster transparency, trust, and legitimacy between police officers and Black citizens in the United States will be reviewed. These are policy and oversight, technology and social media, community policing and crime reduction, training and education, officer wellness, and building trust and legitimacy (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). The chapter will then discuss police legitimacy, introduce the procedural justice model of police legitimacy,

describe prior research attempting to bolster legitimacy and trust in the police force, and discuss Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as a theoretical framework underpinning the research study design. Finally, the chapter will close with an overall conclusion of the chapter and a description of what to expect from the remaining ones.

Racism in America

Racism in America is alive and thriving (Eberhardt, 2020; Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). This fact is evidenced by the racial disparities in school discipline (Carter et al., 2017; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2002), homeownership (Kuebler & Rugh, 2013), housing segregation (Akbar et al., 2020), property values (Bonam et al., 2016; Faber & Ellen, 2016; Sharp et al., 2020), and rates of execution (Baldus et al., 1998; Scott et al., 2017). For example, research suggests that White students are perceived by teachers to be more compliant and therefore are less likely to be expelled (Okonofua et al., 2016). Specifically, research in primary and secondary school systems (Carter et al., 2017; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2002) suggests that Black students experience "disproportional punishment for the same offense as White students" (Okonofua et al., 2016, p. 382).

Further, home values and equity shift due to perceptions regarding "Black space" (Bonam et al., 2016). Namely, one research study concluded that homeowners of color are perceived to be less responsible and clean as compared to their White counterparts (Bonam et al., 2016). Further, "Black spaces" were perceived to be located in poorer areas with higher crime rates and poorer school systems, thereby lowering overall property values (Bonam et al., 2016). Finally, racial disparities exist in execution rates between people of color and White criminals (Baldus et al., 1998). Research findings suggest that "White criminals are perceived as less blameworthy than criminals of color, which decreased their likelihood of being executed"

(Roberts & Rizzo, 2020, p. 1). Therefore, racism is alive and well living in the U.S. However, the question of how it has been allowed to perpetuate itself into the very systems set to protect American citizens is the question.

An article published by Roberts and Rizzo (2020) suggested that seven major factors contribute to America's racism today. Namely, they posited that the categorization, fractioning, and segregation of people, in addition to instilled hierarchies, accumulation of power, and media are the seven factors that significantly contribute (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). Specifically, Roberts and Rizzo (2020) argue that categorization leads to labeling and essentialism. Essentialism is the philosophy that an entity has a set of attributes or characteristics (Oxford Language, 2020). As a result of the assumption that members in a category share properties, stereotypes are born (Pauker et al., 2016). It is further argued that essentialism also leads to prejudice and discrimination (Roberts, Ho, Rhodes, et al., 2017). Specifically, it is argued that as a result of the belief that categorical differences are natural, it is implied that hierarchies dealing with race are natural (Rhodes & Mandalaywala, 2017).

Social categories are also suggested to shape political, social, and legal action as people find motivation in keeping themselves separate from other social categories resulting in discrimination. As a result of essentialism, differences between social categories are exaggerated and fuel people's drive to avoid contact, sharing of resources, and to instill boundary-enhancing policies, thereby shaping discriminatory policy and legislation, further fueling disparities between minority groups and White citizens (Rhodes et al., 2018; Roberts, Ho, Rhodes, et al., 2017). Finally, racial-stereotyping and prejudice are supported by the descriptive-to-prescriptive tendencies garnered by category labels and generics (boys instead of this boy or these boys), resulting in a development of expectations of certain members of a category (Roberts & Rizzo,

2020). Nonconformity to the descriptive-to-prescriptive assignment of a category is often met with strong disapproval (Roberts, Ho, & Gelman, 2017).

Roberts and Rizzo (2020) also argued that the fractioning of groups is accomplished through embedded practices and rituals, ultimately bolstering ingroup identification, "limited or negative experiences with intergroup contacts, and hierarchical differences between groups" (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020, p. 4). Those higher up in the hierarchy feel more threatened by those members perceived to be in the outgroup compared to members in a low-status group. Fractioning of groups is suggested to be supported by the Minimal Groups Phenomenon (MGP). The MGP suggests that people are motivated to attribute positive perceptions to themselves, and therefore to their ingroup fostering ingroup preferences. Also, members of an ingroup care about cooperative alliances and therefore expect members to "cooperate, trust, and support" each other leading to ingroup behaviors bolstering ingroup norms (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020, p. 4).

Regarding segregation, it is prevalent and pervasive across America (Licther et al., 2016). A research study exploring residential segregation in the U.S. and Europe revealed that White citizens predominantly occupy the northern states in the U.S. In contrast, non-White citizens are concentrated in the southern states (Licther et al., 2016). The study further concluded that segregation between Black and White citizens within the largest U.S. cities is high but low for Asian to White neighborhoods and intermediate for Hispanic-White neighborhoods. Further, it was concluded from this report that racial segregation in the U.S. was higher than what was found in Europe (Licther et al., 2016). A historical review of the housing market, practices, local, state, and federal policies reveals the direct link between these practices and racial segregation in the U.S. (Kendi, 2016).

For example, neighborhoods across the U.S. implemented racially restrictive covenants in new housing districts to prevent both Black and Asian citizens from living in certain areas (Kendi, 2016; Oyez, 1948). Specifically, in 1911 a St. Louis, Missouri neighborhood enacted a Whites-only covenant and was eventually challenged in 1945 by a Black American family, the Shelleys (*Shelley v. Kraemer*; Oyez, 1948). Similar lawsuits were brought against Black American Families and were won by the Whites-only plaintiffs because the Supreme Court stated these covenants were "private rather than state action" (Oyez, 1948, p. 1). Fortunately, in 1948 President Truman's Justice Department sided with the Shelley family and filed a brief in the case overturning the covenant (Kendi, 2016). However, many other state and government-issued policies preventing Black Americans from living in White neighborhoods and acquiring housing (Kendi, 2016; Rothstein, 2017). This intended segregation only further perpetuated racial stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination by preventing White Americans from having the opportunity to challenge their racist beliefs through interracial contact (McKeown & Dixon, 2017; Paluck et al., 2018).

Social hierarchies and power are also suggested to perpetuate racism (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). As of 2019, 76.3% of Americans are White, and 13.4% are Black (United States Census, 2019). However, White male Americans historically and consistently hold high-status positions of power. For example, the U.S. Census concluded that 88.8% of Chief Executives and 79% of Managers were White (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2019). Further, 98% of those holding the U.S. presidency have been White males. As a result, it is evident that the American hierarchy of Whiteness is rooted in history and perpetuated by racist ideals that further bolster racist ideologies and practices. As the majority holding high-status positions, White Americans have set the societal norms and control most of the resources. Further leadership is able to perpetuate

racism as recently witnessed with the U.S.'s 45th President, Donald Trump, and historical figures such as Adolf Hitler.

Finally, media is suggested to play a significant role in perpetuating racial stereotypes, prejudices, and beliefs (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020). Black Americans were not underrepresented in the 2000s in media (Tukachinsky et al., 2015). However, the types of roles Black actors played significantly changed from high- to low-class characters and tripled around 2003 to 2009 (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020; Tukachinsky et al., 2015). An analysis of local media in Los Angeles, California, in 2000 revealed that Black and Latino actors were portrayed more frequently as criminals as opposed to defendants (Dixon & Linz, 2000). Further, White actors were underrepresented as criminals compared to the California Department of Justices' crime reports in the Los Angeles region when this study was conducted (Dixon & Linz, 2000). Further, a research study exploring the nonverbal cues of White actors on 11 popular television programs concluded that actors "exhibited more negative nonverbal behavior toward Black than toward status-matched White characters" (Weisbuch et al., 2009, p. 1711). These research findings exemplify how American media can further perpetuate racism and bolster racial stereotypes, beliefs, and prejudices (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020; Weisbuch et al., 2009).

Police Violence Against African Americans

Since the release of the video of Rodney King's beating by Los Angeles police officers in 1991, the number of publicized incidents of this nature has continued to increase (Weitzer, 2015). Confidence in police departments nationwide has dropped substantially as a series of incidents have been reported over a short period by the media (Weitzer, 2002). As illustrated in Table 2.1, several high-profile police killings have caught the attention of the general public and

are a testament to the broken relationship between police enforcement and the communities they serve (Dungca et al., 2020; Weitzer, 2015).

Table 2.1

High-Profile Police Killings

Date	City	Victim	Outcome
July 2014	New York, NY	Eric Garner	No charges
August 2014	Ferguson, MO	Michael Brown	No charges
October, 2014	Chicago, IL	Laquan McDonald	Murder charges
November 2014	Cleveland, OH	Tamir Rice	No charges
March 2015	Madison, WI	Tony Robinson	No charges
April 2015	N. Charleston, SC	Walter Scott	Murder charges
April 2015	Tulsa, OK	Eric Harris	Manslaughter charges
April 2015	Baltimore, MD	Freddie Gray	Acquitted
July 2015	Cincinnati, OH	Samuel DuBose	No charges
July 2016	Baton Rouge, LA	Alton Sterling	No charges
July 2016	Minneapolis MN	Philando Castile	Acquitted
February 2020	Brunswick, GA.	Ahmaud Arbery	In progress
March 2020	Louisville, KY	Breonna Taylor	No charges
May 2020	Minneapolis, MN	George Floyd	Murder charges

Within the incidents listed in Table 2.1, Laquan MacDonald was carrying a knife that he used to slash a police cruiser tires, Tamir Rice was playing with a toy gun, Freddie Gray was later found to have a knife in his pocket, Eric Harris was attempting to sell a firearm to undercover police officers, and Alton Sterling and Philando Castile both had loaded weapons within their possession. All other victims were not armed (Dungca et al., 2020; Weitzer, 2015).

A research study exploring data from "213 metropolitan areas over a 21-year period" (1980–2000) suggested that White police officers were more likely to shoot Black suspects than any other group controlling for "racial difference in criminal activity" (Scott et al., 2017, p. 701). The research study suggested two plausible explanations. First, White police officers are racially biased, and second that Black suspects behave in a manner police perceive as more threatening than other racial groups (Scott et al., 2017). Several research studies have historically supported

the notion that police officers are racially biased in shooting incidents (Charbonneau et al., 2017; Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998; Nix et al., 2017; Sorensen et al., 1993).

A recent study exploring officer bias in shootings using data collected by the *Washington Post* suggested that Black civilians were less likely to be armed during the shooting and as likely to be attacking the officer as their White counterparts when they were killed (Nix et al., 2017). Journalists originally collected data through various social media and news platforms to compile 990 incidents of civilians killed in police shootings in 2015. The data set also included detailed information regarding each incident, including the victims' demographics, situational circumstances such as threat level and armed status, location of the shooting, and what agency was responsible for the shooting (Nix et al., 2017). These research findings suggest that although Black civilians were not physically any more threatening than their White counterparts, police perceived them to be, as evidenced by the prevalence of unarmed killings of Black civilians (Nix et al., 2017).

Another research study explored police-on-police killing of off-duty officers by on-duty officers further suggests racial bias of police officers (Charbonneau et al., 2017). Namely, in 2010, the New York State Task Force examined the rare incidents wherein an on-duty officer shot an off-duty policeman as the result of mistaking them for a perpetrator. Over 29 years, the New York State Task Force had identified ten incidents, of which eight victims were Black, one was Hispanic, and one was White. Although it was not possible to conclude a cause and effect, these research findings suggest that Black off-duty police officers are in more danger than the general population of Black citizens to be shot by a fellow officer (Charbonneau et al., 2017).

Other research studies have suggested variations in the availability of firearms for the public and policing practices to bolster fatal police shootings (Epp et al., 2017; Hemenway et al.,

2019). For example, Hemenway et al. (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study to explore the association between the "availability of firearms and the rate of fatal police shooting across the 50 states averaged over three years (2015–2017)" (Hemenway et al., 2019, p. 64). The research study reported a total of 2934 fatal police shooting incidents across the U.S. wherein 56% were armed when killed. Further, researchers found "the incident rate for fatal police shootings in the ten high-gun states was 3.6 times greater than in the five low-gun states" (Hemenway et al., 2019, p. 67). These research findings suggest a strong association between the availability of weapons to civilians and the rate of police-on-civilian killings.

A research study exploring the sources of racial disparities in policing suggested that investigatory stops conducted by police officers are the blame (Epp et al., 2017). The research study analyzed data from an original research study that used survey information from drivers in Kansas City, Missouri. Research findings suggested that racial disparities were found when it came to investigatory stops. Specifically, police officers were 2.7 times more likely to stop Black citizens in an investigatory stop than White. Therefore it was concluded that investigatory stops are used to target minority populations by police officers (Epp et al., 2017). As evidenced by the fatal shooting of Walter Scott, Samuel DuBoise, Philando Castile, and Daunte Wright, investigatory stops have the potential of escalating as the tensions between officers and citizens escalate (Apuzzo & Williams, 2015; Perez-Pena, 2015). This practice was found to erode trust in police action and since most citizens stopped are innocent of any wrongdoing. The researchers of this study suggested that "this erosion of trust in the police surely is part of the explanation for the current crisis in policing" (Epp et al., 2017, p. 175). This statement is further supported in the literature as it pertains to police legitimacy and procedural justice and connects with my interest in how trust develops between police and African American males and how it can be developed

between these two groups (Gau, 2013; Nagin & Telep, 2017; Walters & Bolger, 2019; Wheller et al., 2013).

Evidence of Interventions: 21st Century Policing Pillars

As a result of the prevalence and frequency of officer-involved shootings, police brutality incidents, and discriminatory practices, President Obama established a 21st Century Policing Task Force. The sole purpose was to identify "the best means to provide an effective partnership between law enforcement and local communities that reduces crime and increases trust" (Obama, 2014, p. 1). The Task Force aimed to "explore strategies for strengthening community-police relations, reducing crime, and advancing public safety" (Gupta & Yang, 2016, p. 3). The Task Force made several recommendations based upon six pillars consisting of: (a) policy and oversight, (b) technology & social media, (c) community policing and crime reduction, (d) training and education, (e) officer wellness and (f) building trust and legitimacy (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Each will be described in more detail in the following section.

Policy and Oversight

Policy and oversight were suggested to incorporate the use of community values when establishing policing policies. Specifically, the final report suggested the need for a more cohesive and collaborative effort between police and the community in reducing crime (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Policies were suggested to include training on the use of force and de-escalating strategies to address police-civilian shooting incidents. Transparency was also suggested wherein demographic and situational data should be collected and made publicly available. The Task Force also recommended establishing "a civilian oversight mechanism with communities" and conducting internal reviews of police

incidents to assess current practices and policies for revision. Finally, the Task Force recommended support and incentives be given to jurisdictions containing small policing agencies' to foster this initiative's implementation (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015).

Technology and Social Media

The implementation of technology and social media was also suggested to foster "community trust and legitimacy" (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 2). Specifically, this pillar's main objective is for police departments to implement non-lethal technology to police citizens while increasing transparency to build trust and legitimacy within communities further. In addition, the implementation of technology is aimed at addressing "compatibility, interoperability, and implementation needs both within local law enforcement agencies and across agencies and jurisdictions," further contributing to transparency (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 3).

Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Recommendations for this pillar include the collaboration with community partners to address issues within the community and facilitate community policing. Further, the Task Force recommended youth leadership training programs and youth/police interactions to facilitate open communication and relationships with members of the police force. The Task Force requested police agencies to "adopt policies and strategies that reinforce the importance of community engagement in managing public safety" (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 3).

Training and Education and Officer Wellness

This pillar focused on the training and education of police officers. Again, the Task Force recommends that policing agencies should collaborate with community members who may have expertise regarding training and education (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Recommendations for this intervention further emphasized the importance of police agencies collaborating with community partners such as Universities and police academies to ensure the most up-to-date and state of the art training and education for police personnel. It was also recommended that "Peace Officer and Standards Training (POST) boards include mandatory Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)." This ensures that officers are prepared to deal with citizens in crisis or suffering from mental health disorders (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 4). Finally, extensive training and education in addiction, tactical skills, effective social interactions, procedural justice, implicit bias, and cultural responsiveness were also recommended.

Regarding officer wellness and training, police agencies are encouraged to implement multi-faceted officer safety, and wellness initiatives focused on improving officers' overall well-being and safety. Measures suggested included: (a) regulating shift lengths, (b) data collection and analysis of officer injuries and deaths to inform policy, (c) provisions to include anti-ballistic vests, (d) tactical first aid training and kits, and (e) compliance with standard laws such as wearing seat belts and bulletproof vests (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Finally, the Task Force also recommended financial support for officers interested in returning to school and enacting peer-review error management legislation.

Building Trust and Legitimacy

Finally, the most important pillar for the current research study's interests is the

recommendation of building trust and legitimacy between law enforcement and community

members. As described by the Task Force report:

> decades of research and practice support the premise that people are more likely to obey
> the law when they believe that those who enforce it have authority that is perceived as
> legitimate by those subject to the authority. The public confers legitimacy only on those
> whom they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. In addition, law enforcement
> cannot build community trust if seen as an occupying force coming in from outside to
> impose control on the community. (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing,
> 2015, p. 1)

Therefore, this pillar or recommended intervention is focused on building a trusting relationship

between law enforcement and the community it serves (President's Task Force on 21st Century

Policing, 2015). Police are suggested to take a "guardian" as opposed to a "warrior" mindset.

Procedural justice is also a major component of building trust between law enforcement and the

community and is suggested by the Task Force to be of the utmost importance in "guiding

principle for internal and external policies and practices to guide their interactions" (President's

Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 1).

Again, the Task Force recommended a culture of transparency with community members

and partners to garner public trust and legitimacy. Specifically, the Task Force report suggested

that "this is critical to ensuring decision making is understood and in accord with stated policy"

(President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 1). The Task Force further

recommended contact with the community in non-policing events to engage the community,

facilitate relationships, and regularly poll the community on their trust in law enforcement.

Finally, the Task Force recommended increasing diversity on the police force to better represent

the population they are policing and "improve understanding and effectiveness in dealing with all communities" (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, p. 2).

As suggested by President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, establishing transparency and trust is essential in addressing police shooting incidents and racism on the force (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Specifically, it was argued that increasing diversity in law enforcement is a critical step in building trust with communities (Gupta & Yang, 2016). A report published by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission suggested that in communities where members perceive law enforcement to be accountable, legitimate, and fair, and feel that police represent, understand, and respond to them, citizens trust them more (Gupta & Yang, 2016). Further, trust in law enforcement is suggested to boost citizens confidence in the government and support democracy (Gupta & Yang, 2016). Additionally, prior works have suggested that trust diffuses tension (Maweu, 2019). Within the context of law enforcement coupled with transparency, trust can bolster citizens' views of police officers as fair, thereby contributing to police legitimacy (Gupta & Yang, 2016). Therefore, the literature indicates trust to be extremely important in cultivating a positive view of police and is an important component of my research.

Police Legitimacy

The concept of police legitimacy is linked back to the concepts regarding the legitimacy of government in general. Synonymous with Weber et al.'s (1978) rational-legal form of government legitimacy, there is a general observable need for police forces to justify themselves. Namely, institutions of power must rationalize to the citizens they police a rationale or reason why citizens should willfully submit to their authority (Gau, 2014; Weber et al., 1978). An institution or agency that can successfully establish a justification or rationale is considered to

have legitimacy. Regarding government bureaucracies, justification of power is derived from the implementation of duties, procedures, and formalized rules that all members of the government must adhere to and all of society agrees with (Weber et al., 1978). Within the U.S., police forces are a segment of the government wherein a "monopoly on violence is delegated" (Gau, 2014, p. 189). Therefore, rational-legal legitimacy regarding the police force exists when citizens accept the laws in place and police roles in enforcing those laws in society. Further, citizens must be willing to defer to police authority due to their belief that police officers will enforce those laws within the confines of the established procedures (Gau, 2014). Therefore, police legitimacy holds a component of trust and obedience (Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

Tyler and Huo (2002) suggested that regulation's major issue is garnering widespread cooperation with legal forces such as the police. As described by Tyler and Huo (2002), "people's inferences about the fairness of the procedures they experience and their inferences about the trustworthiness of the motives of authorities shape their willingness to defer voluntarily to those authorities by accepting their decisions" (p. 77). Further, another component of legitimacy is institutional trust. Institutional trust is described as people's perceptions that the judicial system authorities are honest, fair, and ensure people's rights (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Tyler (2006) also suggested that an obligation to obey laws and police was another component of legitimacy. Specifically, Tyler (2006) suggested it was the degree to which citizens "felt they should comply with directives from police officers or judges, irrespective of their personal feelings" (p. 45).

Therefore, police rely heavily on legitimacy to elicit support, compliance, and cooperation from the public (Walters & Bolger, 2019). Specifically, citizens that perceived their police force to be legitimate show their trust by being more likely to cooperate with law

enforcement (Nagin & Telep, 2017; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003), providing information regarding suspects and criminal activity (Kochel et al., 2013; Tyler et al., 2010), taking a role in community policing efforts (Reisig, 2007), supporting crime-control efforts (Murphy et al., 2008; National Academies of Sciences et al., 2018), complying with police decisions (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2018; Tyler & Huo, 2002), and commands, and obeying laws (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2018; Walters & Bolger, 2019). Therefore, it is essential that police legitimacy is established for them to be able to do their jobs effectively.

To garner legitimacy, theorists have suggested that citizens attribute legitimacy to police based on their performance and process-based actions (Gau, 2014). Performance-based actions are suggested to consist of citizens' perceptions regarding how well police can control disorder and crime. In contrast, process-based actions consist of perceptions regarding how well or fairly citizens are treated and how well police exercise rational decision-making. However, research suggests that process-based actions are more strongly correlated with perceived legitimacy. This perceived legitimacy is commonly referred to in the literature as procedural justice (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Walters & Bolger, 2019).

Procedural Justice Model of Police Legitimacy

Perceptions of procedural justice and police legitimacy significantly affect levels of violent crime and trust among community members in structurally disadvantaged communities (Kane, 2005; Tyler, 2017). The premise behind procedural justice theory is that "procedurally fair police procedures are linked with greater trust in and satisfaction with police" (Gau, 2014, p. 187). This has been extensively tested within the literature and suggested to be empirically verified (Murphy, 2009; Murphy et al., 2009; Nagin & Telep, 2017; Reisig, 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Walters & Bolger, 2019).

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, police garner legitimacy (trust and deference) when they are perceived to act in a way that is considered unbiased or fair, respectful, take the time to listen, use facts and the law in their decision-making process, and explain their decision to citizens in the encounter (Gau, 2014; Reisig, 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Increased levels of perceived procedural justice increase citizens' perceptions regarding police legitimacy (Tyler et al., 2015; Wheller et al., 2013) and result in positive law-related behaviors such as compliance with the law and cooperation with legal authorities (Tyler et al., 2015).

Figure 2.1.

Procedural Justice Model
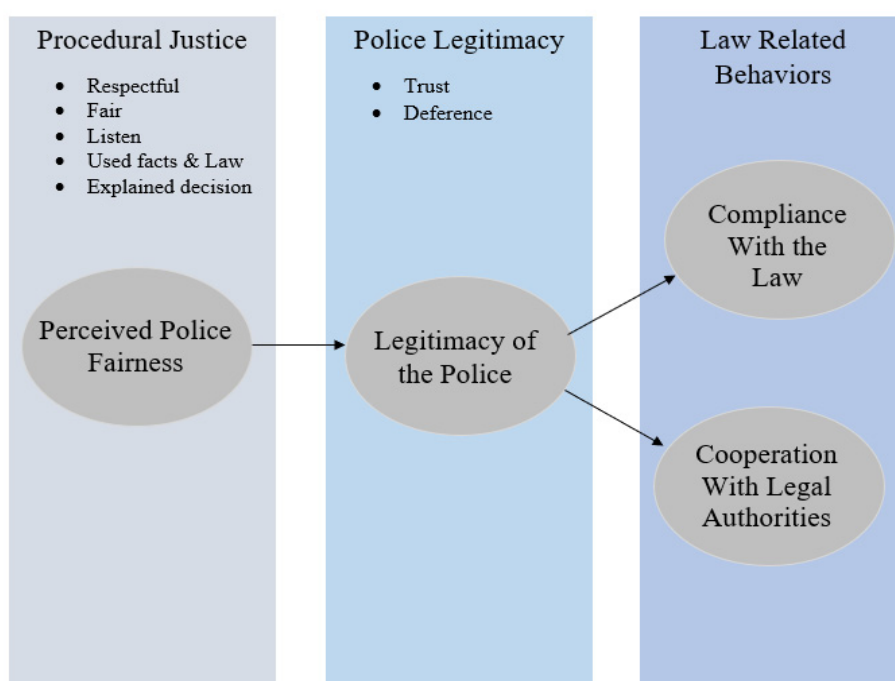
Note. The above figure was created using associations found between themes suggested by Tyler et al. (2015) and Wheller et al. (2013).

In contrast, for those citizens with repeated, involuntary, and negative exposure to the police, the presence or absence of procedural justice is particularly pronounced (Tyler, 2006). For example, a research study exploring the perceptions of arrestees' satisfaction with police

suggested that arrestees' level of satisfaction varied based on their perception of how fairly and respectfully their arresting officer was (Myrstol & Hawk-Tourtelot, 2011). Further prior research suggests that respectful treatment during an arrest could lead arrestees to be more willing to accept negative outcomes (Raymond et al., 1997). In contrast, procedural injustice is suggested to result in citizens questioning police intentions and motives (Gau, 2013). Regarding investigatory stops, if a citizen perceives that the police are targeting them because of their race and handle them unfairly during the investigation, the individual is more likely to be unaccepting of the officers' authority. In this situation, the individual may view the event as a procedural injustice, thereby lowering perceptions of legitimacy and trust (Kramer & Remster, 2018). The following section will explore prior research regarding bolstering police legitimacy and trust.

Bolstering Legitimacy/Trust

Prior research exploring ways in which police legitimacy can be bolstered suggested increasing transparency through the use of body cameras (Miller, 2016), increasing non-enforcement encounters with police (Peyton et al., 2019), using special prosecutors and outside investigators in the incidents of police shootings (Simmons, 2015), and educating community residents on policing topics to enhance trust (Perez et al., 2020). The current study aimed to build from research wherein education of citizens was used to build trust. All the studies mentioned aimed to increase police legitimacy through practices aimed at improving the public's perceptions of the police. Ultimately, each study aimed to improve citizens' perceptions of police legitimacy to improve public trust and, therefore, to enhance compliance and cooperation with the police force.

As a result of the massive numbers of bystander recordings of discriminatory police-civilian encounters, citizens are armed with the best possible weapon in holding police

accountable, their cell phones (Miller, 2016). In response to the increased number of cell phone police surveillance, police forces have implemented the use of body cameras to record police-civilian encounters to ensure accountability (Miller, 2016). A research study exploring civilians' perception of police legitimacy and procedural justice in traffic stops wherein the officer had on a body-worn camera (BWC) reported improved perceptions (Demir et al., 2020). The quasi-experimental study gathered perceptions from participants from two different conditions. The first condition consisted of a traffic stop by a police officer wearing a BWC, while in the second condition, the police officer did not wear a BWC (Demir et al., 2020). Police legitimacy was enhanced for those participants that experienced the first condition.

Another measure suggested to increase perceptions of police legitimacy is to increase the community's time with officers during non-enforcement activities. A randomized field experiment exploring the effects of positive community-police non-enforcement contact on perceived police legitimacy and trust suggested that one incident can significantly influence perceived legitimacy and willingness to cooperate (Peyton et al., 2019). Specifically, within this study, officers in uniform would randomly knock on civilians' doors to introduce themselves and inform citizens that they were making a "community policing visit in a non-enforcement capacity" (Peyton et al., 2019, p. 19895). Researchers reported a positive effect from this singular encounter that lasted 21 days (Peyton et al., 2019).

Another practice suggested to increase citizens' perceived levels of police legitimacy is the implementation of special prosecutors and outside investigators in police shootings (Simmons, 2015). A research article exploring the potential effectiveness of implementing such a measure suggested that the use of an outside prosecutor and investigator would mitigate any conflict of interest. Namely, ensuring internal investigations are not conducted by known fellow

officers would ensure the investigator's subjectivity (Simmons, 2015). However, this practice has only been implemented in a few states. It is suggested to have potential issues with overzealous tactics and conflicts of interest pertaining to political or ideological motivations on behalf of the special prosecutor (Simmons, 2015).

Finally, a research study exploring the effects of community police academies (CPA) on citizens' perceptions was conducted and found that the CPAs employed within the study suggested that although "CPAs were effective at educating citizens about practices and improving trust in law enforcement, the increased knowledge was not associated with improvements to public trust" (Perez et al., 2020, p. 2). However, research findings suggest that the garnering of knowledge did lower citizens' concerns regarding the use of force.

Perez et al. (2020) implemented 14 CPAs in the southwest region of the United States. Participants of the study consisted of 317 people, of which 6.4% were Black citizens, 41.6% Latino, 37.6% White, 8.1% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6.3% were designated as other (Perez et al., 2020). The CPA curriculum consisted of "Laws of Arrest, Patrol Operations, Training, Force Options, Officer-Involved Shooting Investigations, and Internal Affairs Investigations" (Peyton et al., 2019, p. 5). Ultimately, the research study concluded that education on police procedures might not be the best method to use when attempting to alter the public's perceptions regarding local police. Specifically, although the study did find a positive association between the events and the participants' perceptions regarding police as it relates to trustworthiness, honesty, and accountability, these results are suggested to be due to the interaction between law enforcement and citizens (Perez et al., 2020).

This research study is particularly important to the current study design because the study utilized knowledge of police procedures to alter participants perceptions of police legitimacy and

trust. Although Perez et al. (2020) did not find a significant association between participants'

acquisition of knowledge and perceptions of trust in the police force, it is important to note that

their study did not define what Laws of Arrest consisted of and the participants of the study were

predominantly Hispanic (41.6%) and White (37.6%). Further, several other studies have found a

positive association between the implementation of CPAs and positive changes toward citizens

perceptions of local police (Becton et al., 2005; Bonello & Schafer, 2002; Breen & Johnson,

2007; Brewster et al., 2005; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002; Schafer & Bonello, 2001).

　　　As illustrated in the Procedural Justice Model in Figure 2.1, the use of facts and laws was

a procedural justice component. Further, researchers have concluded that perceptions of

procedural justice significantly affect individuals' perceptions regarding police legitimacy. As a

result of these research findings and those regarding the use of CPAs in altering citizens'

perceptions of police, my study explored the association between citizens' acquisition of

knowledge regarding local laws and their perceptions toward police officers. Namely, it

hypothesized that participants will view police-citizen encounters as procedurally unjust prior to

being educated about the laws around the incident illustrated in a video module. Upon learning

of the laws associated with the video being watched, it is hypothesized that the incident will then

be given context. The police actions will be viewed more justly, leading to an increase in

perceived police legitimacy. The most recent study exploring CPAs was conducted in 2020 but

did not include many Black citizens in their study (Perez et al., 2020). Since this population is

the most negatively affected by police discrimination and has the most overall distrust in law

enforcement, testing whether Black males' perceptions do change as a result of learning the law

is a valid research question to pursue. As a result, the current study aims to explore the power of

knowing the law in pursuance of changing perceptions and restoring humanity for African

American males; the following section will explore Paulo Freire's Pedagogy as a theoretical framework.

Paulo Freire's Pedagogy as Theoretical Framework

In the current study, participants and the researcher served as co-educators in several dialogical focus group sessions. As stated earlier, the aim was to enhance knowledge as everyone in the intervention serves as teacher and student. It is grounded in action research that brings together power and reflection to overcome power inequities. With this approach, collectively, we are fighting to restore humanity for African American males, specifically while navigating police encounters. As a result, freethinking is embraced to enrich knowledge and begin breaking the barriers of oppression placed on the African American community.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire (2000) provides an exceptional theoretical framework for the work carried out in this study. Freire suggests that to begin restoring humanity, one must first start by examining how we are educated. One can select one of two paths; the banking concept of education or problem-posing education. The banking concept keeps individuals oppressed as the teacher controls the students' thoughts, as teachers are assumed to be the sole holders of knowledge. Thus, teachers deposit the knowledge they deem worthy into the minds of the students. Contrarily problem-posing education seeks feedback and promotes freethinking by students. The teacher is no longer the only holder of knowledge. Embracing the critical pedagogy model, teachers and students are equal contributors to promoting growth for all involved.

This concept falls in line with my study's intention; through dialogue, participants were not just docile listeners. In actuality, they were co-investigators in discussion with the teacher. Through problem-posing education, we can examine the individual and social context of

enforcement of laws. Additionally, critical thinking was encouraged as participants expressed ideas, thoughts, and questions. The "teacher-of-the-students and the students-of –the teachers cease to exist as now teacher-student with students-teachers emerge" (Freire, 2000, p.80). Furthermore, examining the communities in which participants lived on an individual basis is essential. As a part of this process, it is important to acknowledge that the enforcement of laws is not equally enforced, and capturing individual perspectives is paramount. Freire (2000) stated that "it is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours" (p. 96). Instead of standing around and doing nothing, Freire suggested that we must join the oppressed, build trust, and engage in meaningful communication. As we work towards liberation, we must evaluate the actions of all, the fundamental driver for attitudes of mistrust on the part of the oppressed, and seek new avenues of communion. We must come together to critically perceive the reality of what is occurring across the nation that has shackled African American males to such an oppressed state when encountering law enforcement (Freire, 2000).

By combining action research and Freire's theoretical framework, the researcher and community became one and shared equal power, responsibility, and knowledge. Critical analysis and thinking disrupted what many know as the standard form of education and communication. It is not very reasonable for one not to investigate one's cognition based on their everyday realities. By not doing so we become blind to the biases or views of ourselves and others, both successful and oppressed thus obstructing the view of the greater picture. It is imperative that all views are taken into consideration and most importantly becoming open minded to harness new ways of thinking. Without doing so, it is virtually impossible to become aware and transform realities. Lastly, both action research and the work of Freire strive for social justice.

Conclusion

As a result of the countless violations of Black Americans trust and faith by the police force, Black Americans are rightfully angry and distrusting (Brooks et al., 2016). Repeated exposure to a lack of "procedural justice in encounters" coupled with a racially charged policing history have left African Americans untrusting and the potential of being less law-abiding during an encounter (Brooks et al., 2016). As evidenced by President Obama's Task Force for 21st Century Policing, establishing trust between law enforcement through transparency and collaboration is essential in addressing the disparities in police-civilian shootings across the country. Although initiatives have been recommended, implementation and enforcement of these recommendations are subjective to each department and jurisdiction and focus on police action. Attacking this issue of racial discrimination in policing needs to be a two-pronged approach wherein initiatives and research need to be conducted within communities to foster trusting relationships between citizens and police officers and focus on training police regarding proper police action. Prior research has suggested a strong and positive association between procedural justice, police legitimacy, and law-abiding behaviors.

Based on these research findings and the population sampled in the Perez et al. (2020) study, it is evident that limited research has been conducted using the population most negatively affected by discriminatory police actions, Black citizens. The literature suggests that education of citizens on police procedures could positively and significantly bolster perceptions of police legitimacy, thereby increasing trust and cooperation between these two groups. However, no research was found exploring these practices with populations of Black citizens or in disadvantaged areas of the United States. Therefore, research is warranted exploring the effects of law education on Black citizens' perceptions of procedural justice and police legitimacy to

improve relations between these two groups. Chapter III will provide an overview of the

methodology and design of the current research study. The chapter will consist of a description

of the research questions and rationale, design, population and sample, materials and instruments

included in the study, study procedure for data collection, and analysis. The chapter will also

describe the assumptions made within the study, discuss the limitations, ethical considerations,

and conclude with a summary of the overall chapter.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

As described in the previous chapter, most Black males are suggested to have a great distrust for police officers because of either having experienced, witnessed or perceived racial discrimination on the part of police officers toward their person (Brooks et al., 2016; Nadal et al., 2017). This distrust creates a great deal of tension between these two groups and facilitates exaggerated and often aggressive behaviors toward one another. This tension often results in further discrimination towards Black males and further perpetuates the cycle. Black men in the U.S. are affected the most by police discrimination and therefore have the worst perception of police officers and the judicial system as compared to other races (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Brunson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler, 2005; Webb & Marshall, 1995). Prior research has shown that communities that trust their police force are more likely to obey laws and work collaboratively with police (Murphy et al., 2014; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). One possible way to improve Black males' issues with police discrimination is to improve the understanding of procedural justice and, through this increased understanding to build trust between these two groups (Murphy et al., 2014; Obama, 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

The purpose of this action research mixed-methods study was to explore the perceptions of Black males regarding police/civilian encounters before and after being informed of the law being enforced in particular incidents. Namely, the study aimed to explore whether a deeper understanding of what drives a police officer's behavior in an encounter with a civilian is enough to alter participants' perceptions of the police officer. Further, the study aimed to identify key constructs or variables that could help develop remedies to resolve the tensions between these

two groups and potentially aid in building trust. Hence, the current study aimed to explore Black males' perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters before and after being informed of the law to see if education alters their perceptions.

The proposed research study contributes to the existing literature and potentially provides the basis for future research regarding identifying factors that could diffuse the tension between Black males and police officers. Research-based evidence on identifying factors that could aid in diffusing the tension between these two groups is minimal. Therefore, these research findings could potentially benefit the Black community across the U.S. as it pertains to reducing racial tensions between police and Black males. Therefore, research findings contribute to the research literature, community, and individuals.

The following chapter provides details of how the research study was conducted. Specifically, the chapter describes the research methodology and design, population and sample, the materials and instruments used to collect the data, describes the study procedure including participant recruitment, data collection and analysis procedures, validity and reliability measures, and ethical considerations. The chapter concludes with a summary and forecast of the following chapters.

Research Questions and Rationales

The following are the questions that are linked to the research objectives and will be addressed in this study:

RQ1. How does knowing law impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters on the part of civilians (African American males)?

RQ2. How do participant responses change concerning police/civilian encounters

regarding probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force because of taking

part in an educational session about the law?

As previously described in Chapter II, there is a long history of discrimination and prejudice within the judicial system (Brooks et al., 2016; Jones-Brown, 2000). Recent events involving the wrongful deaths of Black males at the hands of law enforcement in conjunction with eliciting discriminatory and prejudicial acts against people of color have spurred the civil rights movement of 2020 (Chughtai, 2020; Updegrove et al., 2020). Conducting research that explores variables associated with the tumultuous historical relationship between Black males and law enforcement is imperative in deconstructing this issue to find ways to amend this relationship and build trust. How legal knowledge can impact Black males' perceptions of police/civilian encounters and shift perceptions of law enforcement, in general, could be a first step toward breaking the aggressive cycle between these two groups.

Research Methodology and Design

The action research study employed a mixed-methods concurrent nested design to help address the research questions. The practice of mixed methods research is defined as "the process of research when researchers integrate quantitative methods of data collection and analysis and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis" (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 58). Literature on mixed methods research suggests pragmatism is the appropriate philosophical paradigm to use when conducting mixed methods research (Brierley, 2017; Creswell & Clark, 2011; Johnson & Gray, 2010). Action is the central concept of pragmatism and the meaning of its Greek derivative "pragma" (Pansiri, 2005). Pragmatist philosophy:

> holds that human actions can never be separated from the past experiences and from the
> beliefs that have originated from those experiences. Human thoughts are thus intrinsically

linked to action. People take actions based on the possible consequences of their actions, and they use the results of their actions to predict the consequences of similar actions in the future. A major contention of pragmatist philosophy is that meaning of human actions and beliefs is found in their consequences. External forces do not determine humans; they are themselves capable of shaping their experience through their actions and intelligence. Pragmatists believe that reality is not static—it changes at every turn of events. Similarly, the world is also not static—it is in a constant state of becoming. The world is also changed through actions—action is the way to change existence. Actions have the role of an intermediary. Therefore, actions are pivotal in pragmatism. (Kaushik et al., 2019, p. 3)

Within my own study, I interpret this philosophy to mean that it is only through the action of addressing racial discrimination and police brutality toward African American citizens that change will happen. Otherwise, if police officers that participate in these discriminatory behaviors toward African American citizens do not perceive a real consequence to their actions, they will continue to behave in this manner. Punishment for these officers is not enough to change how they think or perceive African American citizens. It is only possible to address this research issue by attempting to bridge a gap between these two populations' perceptions about one another.

The ontological (nature of reality), epistemological (how reality is known), and axiological (role of values) stance of pragmatism consists of several assumptions. Namely, these include that reality is useful and practical, is known through various approaches, and the roles of beliefs and values are determined through conversations between researchers and participants (Adu, 2016).

The complexity of exploring this sensitive research topic warrants both qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a deeper understanding of the research topic (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Specifically, the mixed methods research approach will allow me to gather data to: (a) obtain complementarity or "more complete conclusions," (b) employ triangulation, (c) compensate for each methodologies strengths and weaknesses, (d) develop a "more effective and

refined conclusion," and (e) to "uncover and challenge oppression in society by" using both "methods to best conduct research guided by a social justice perspective" (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 81). Therefore, this methodology was best suited to answer the research questions.

There are several different types of mixed methods designs (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). However, overall, there are three different perspectives on how mixed methods research is conducted using advanced applications (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Mixed methods research can intersect with other approaches by embedding a secondary method within either a primary quantitative or qualitative design, or incorporating mixed methods with a methodological approach or theoretical framework (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Considering the first two approaches, embedding and incorporating other methodologies, the predominant methodologies used include incorporating mixed methods with an experimental, case study, evaluation, or action research design (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). A mixed-methods experimental design study (including quasi-experiments and intervention trials):

> is a research design in which researchers embed qualitative methods within an experimental design to enhance the application of the experiment for determining the effects of an intervention. As alluded to in this definition, many of the writings about mixed methods experiments come from the perspective of embedding (or "adding") qualitative methods within an experimental design. (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 145)

In general, a case study is a qualitative design wherein an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon under study occurs in a bounded system (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). A mixed-method case study is a research design wherein quantitative methods are embedded within this design to enhance the case study application. This research design is suggested to be a:

> useful frameworks for integrating multiple paradigms and approaches to understand a complex case (Luck et al., 2006), for enriching qualitative case descriptions with

quantitative information (Curry & Nunez-Smith, 2015), and for engaging with the complexities within bounded systems. (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 147)

Evaluation design studies are applied research approaches to determine the worth regarding a program and policies (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). A mixed-methods study with an evaluation design incorporates quantitative and qualitative methods when evaluating a program or policy. Finally, action research is an approach wherein the researcher and community members work cohesively to address a practical problem found in the community (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Mixed methods action research is "a research approach in which researchers integrate quantitative and qualitative methods within an action research methodological approach to enhance the application of action research for solving the practical problem of interest" (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 148).

As a result of the nature of the study, research questions, and collaboration with community members to solve a practical problem, the current study used an action research methodology with a concurrent embedded or nested design to examine a small amount of quantitative datum as it related to the larger set of qualitative data collected (Aultman et al., 2018). Therefore, the use of action research was warranted to address facets of the research problem such as assessing participants' knowledge of the law and perceptions regarding the police force both quantitatively and qualitatively. Specifically, although there is no one definition of action research, it can be broadly defined as research that brings "together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people. . ." (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 5). Action research is described as an orientation to inquiry instead of a methodology encompassing several general characteristics, such as collaboration, planning, acting, knowing, and reflecting (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Within this type of research, "communities of inquiry and action evolve and

address questions and issues that are significant for those who participate as co-researchers"
(Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 2).

It could be argued that the persistent and prevalent discrimination and prejudice against
Black men by law enforcement is a pressing issue that requires collaboration between these two
groups for there to be any possibility of resolution. The action research conceptual model aims to
overcome power inequities by using participatory knowledge strategies (Gaventa & Cornwall,
2006). Namely, the current research project will afford a better understanding of the research
problem and potentially address a facet of the problem by determining if educating Black
citizens on local laws promotes perceptual change regarding police intentions and, therefore,
legitimacy. If research findings suggest that educating Black citizens on local laws will alter their
perceptions of law enforcement positively, then an action plan can be created and implemented
to ensure the education of Black citizens on local laws. To answer the research questions, I
collected both the quantitative and qualitative data as described in the data collection procedure,
analyzed the research findings using the data analysis procedure, and used that comparative
analysis to determine if and how knowing the law impacts participants' perceptions regarding
police officers. The study's design also enabled me to explore how participants' responses
changed from before the educational intervention versus after. As will be seen in Chapter IV,
these research findings support an action plan toward educating Black citizens on the laws in
their area.

The qualitative data collected within this research study is the priority data being
collected. The use of a concurrent embedded or nested design afforded me the opportunity to:

(a) test difference and agreements of findings obtained from quantitative surveys and
qualitative focus group discussions, (b) clarify and build on the results of one method with
another method, and (c) demonstrate how the results from one method can impact subsequent

methods or inferences drawn from the results to add richness to the final results. (Aultman et al., 2018, p. 3573)

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the mixed methods concurrent embedded or nested design is

described by Zhang and Creswell (2013) as consisting of five steps. The first step consists of

Figure 3.1.

Concurrent Nested Design

1. QUAL + quan [concurrent data collection]

2. QUAL analysis
   quan analysis

3. QUAL / quan
   Nested Data Analysis

4. QUAL / quan
   Data Interpretation
   Phase I

5. QUAL
   Data Interpretation
   Phase II
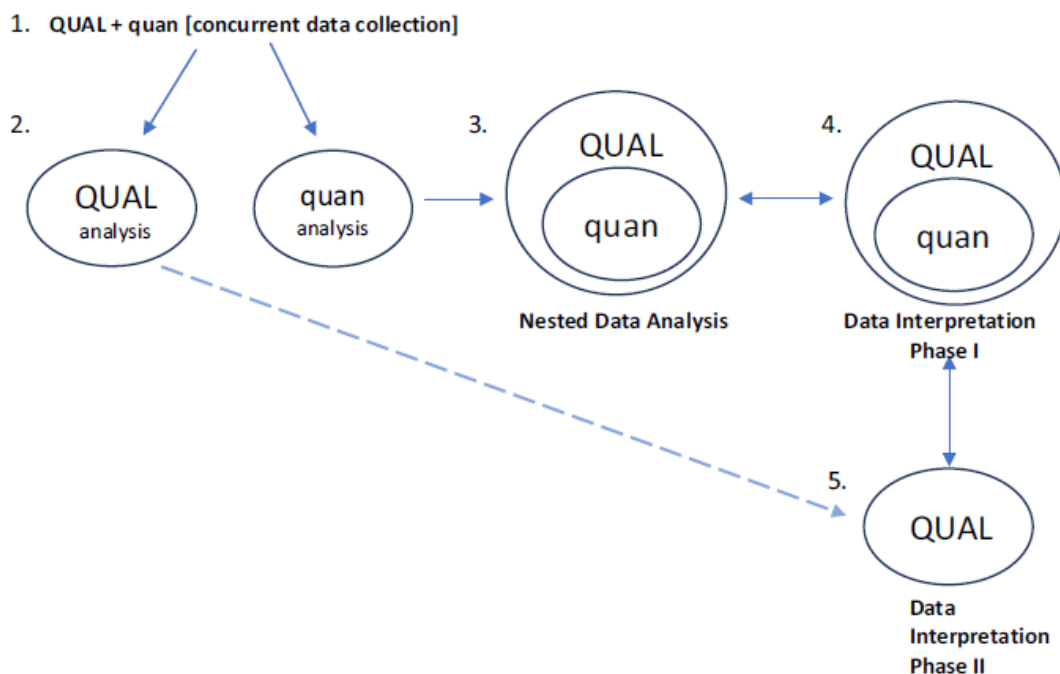
Note. (Aultman et al., 2018, p. 3574)

concurrent data collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. Specifically in my study, this

included survey responses and focus group interview data. The second step consists of a separate

or individual analysis of each data set (qualitative and quantitative). Namely, thematic analysis

of interview data takes place, and statistical analysis of survey responses conducted. In the third

step of data analysis, the results found from the initial data analysis are compared. In the fourth

step, initial data are identified in order to strengthen the research findings. In the current study,

the qualitative data was given priority and, therefore, is weighted more strongly than the

quantitative data. Because the quantitative approach plays a less dominant role in the study, the

quantitative findings could be used to complement the qualitative findings. They help to tell the

full story from both the qualitative and quantitative points of view. This is because the

quantitative data were included in this study to show whether research participants' knowledge

about the law and perceptions regarding the police changed due to the intervention. Three

additional analysis steps are needed to merge and interpret the data. These additional steps

include:

> (3) the transformation of qualitative themes into organizational categories for quantitative
> data variables in the analysis phase, and the merging of data during two phases of
> interpretation, including (4) interpretations of the nested data and (5) subsequent
> comparisons between nested data and the initial, thematically analyzed qualitative data.
> (Aultman et al., 2018, p. 3574)

As it pertains to the current study, both the qualitative interview data and survey

responses were analyzed individually. The survey responses were then nested with the interview

findings by interpreting both the interview and survey findings and comparing them to each other

to determine if the survey data supported the qualitative findings. Using this methodology and

design allowed me to explore the phenomena under study while strengthening my initial analysis

by using the concurrent embedded or nested design (Aultman et al., 2018).

Population and Sample

A total of 43 Black males between the ages of 18 to 35 years of age were recruited from

predominantly Black communities within the metro Houston, Texas area for both the qualitative

and quantitative portion of this study. The recommended sample sizes in qualitative research

range from 5 to 25 individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Therefore, the proposed sample size

exceeded this recommendation. Inclusion criteria were: (a) adult males, (b) between the ages of

18 to 35 years, (c) of African American descent, (d) volunteering for participation of their own free will, (e) not part of a protected group such as mentally handicapped, a minor, or a prisoner, and (f) single-person household income not greater than $28,500, per year or (g) two-person household income not greater than $40,000 per year. Participants consisted of individuals meeting the inclusion criteria parameters in the Houston, Texas region.

Potential participants were recruited using purposive sampling and the snowball technique. Snowball sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique usually employed within research studies where the desired sample is difficult to recruit or locate (Crouse & Lowe, 2018). Black males are underrepresented in research studies and are suggested to "mistrust researchers" in general (Toms et al., 2016, p. 695). As a result, using the snowball sampling technique was warranted. This technique allowed current participants to recruit for the study by passing study details on to known individuals and referring them to the study. There are several advantages to using this technique, which include: (a) increasing the likelihood of obtaining the number of participants needed for the study as a result of recruits already being familiar with an individual that has already participated, (b) as a result of participants being familiar with one another, "valuable social and interactional knowledge may be generated" (Crouse & Lowe, 2018, p. 1532), and (c) overcoming certain "cultural boundaries such as lower literacy levels and language barriers" (Crouse & Lowe, 2018, p. 1532). Both purposive and snowball sampling were selected to recruit participants into the study because they were best suited to ensure recruitment of the desired population and increase the likelihood of obtaining the desired number of participants.

To recruit participants, recruitment flyers (Appendix A) were posted in various locations in predominantly Black neighborhoods in the metro Houston, Texas region, including grocery

stores, laundromats, community centers, and other high-traffic areas. My contact information was provided on the recruitment flyers for potential participants to self-identify for participation in the study. Also, local Black advocacy groups were contacted and asked to distribute flyers. Once contacted by potential recruits, participants were required to sign an informed consent form (Appendix B) before participating in the study. Once participants signed their informed consent and returned it, they were asked for five dates and times (morning or afternoon) that they were available to meet for participation in the study. Two groups were created with 21 and 22 individuals in each. Additional study procedures and analyses are described under their respective subheadings in this chapter.

Materials/Instrumentation

Quantitative

Participants were asked to complete the Perceptions of Police Scale (POPS; Appendix C) (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015) before starting the initial pre-test survey. The POPS measure was used to assess individual perceptions of police and consisted of positive statements regarding police officers. The POPS consists of 12 statements wherein respondents are asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale the degree to which they agree with the statement. Specifically, one is equal to "I strongly agree," and five is equal to "I strongly disagree" (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015). Higher scores on the scale suggest a more positive perception of police, whereas a lower score suggests more negative perceptions of police. This scale is vetted, and prior research suggests an overall Cronbach's alpha score of 0.94 (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015, p. 808) with a reported Cronbach's alpha score of 0.92 for Black sexual minorities and 0.91 for heterosexual Black participants (Taylor et al., 2020). As a result, this instrument is suggested to be reliable in capturing respondents' perceptions regarding police officers. This measure was administered at the

beginning and the end of the study to assess if participants' responses and perceptions changed after the educational intervention was employed. The general steps of the research study are described in Table 3.1. However, a more detailed outline is provided under the study procedure section in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1

General Overview of Study Phases

Phase	Description
Phase I	Pre-Test Video Focus Group Session
Phase II	Educational Intervention Post-Test Re-Watch Video Post-Educational Intervention Focus Group Session

Participants were asked to complete pre-and post-test surveys regarding specific laws demonstrated in each of three police/civilian encounter videos. Specifically, a pre-test regarding the laws discussed in the probable cause video (Appendix D1), failure to identify video (Appendix D2), and deadly force video (Appendix D3) were created and administered. These surveys were specific to the videos being administered and created by me specifically for this study. As a result, there had been no reliability analysis done on these pre-test surveys. After the educational intervention, participants were asked to complete the same surveys as a post-test. Links to the probable cause and failure to identify videos are in Appendix E. I must be contacted for the deadly force video because it is not available to the general public online.

Qualitative

My observations were the primary data collection instrument for this study's qualitative portion during the focus group sessions. Six semi-structured focus group sessions were conducted with the study participants and consisted of three post-video focus group sessions and three post-intervention focus group sessions. This study's intervention is the law education provided to participants because it is the change agent. Semi-structured focus group sessions explored participants' perceptions of the police/civilian encounter depicted in each video. Questions focused on participants' perceptions of appropriate behavior and laws being broken or enforced. All interview questions are described in Appendix F. Specifically, participants were asked focus group interview questions following the probable cause video (Appendix F1), failure to identify video (Appendix F3), and the deadly force video (Appendix F5). Then, after the educational intervention, participants were asked to watch the original videos again and asked additional focus group interview questions (Appendix F2, F4, F6). Focus group interview questions ranged from four to seven questions. They elicited a rich and thick description regarding the phenomena under study to answer the research questions fully.

Study Procedures: Data Collection

Upon self-identifying to participate in the study, participants were asked a series of inclusion criteria questions to determine if they were eligible to participate in the study. Once participants self-identify and were found to meet the inclusion criteria, they were either given a paper-based copy of the informed consent. Participants were required to return the signed informed consent in-person to me for secure keeping.

The study took place over several months and consisted of two weekends, wherein I met with each of the two groups one time to conduct the study. The schedule for each group is

described in Table 3.2. Each group of participants was expected to watch three videos and complete a total of six pre-and post-test measures plus an additional POPS at the beginning and end of the day. Further, participants were contacted over the phone two weeks after completing the study to determine if participants retained knowledge gained during the educational interventions.

Table 3.2

Research Schedule for Each Group

Phase	Event		Duration of Event (minutes)
Phase I	Pre-test	POPS Probable Cause Pre-Test	10
	Probable Cause Video		5
	Probable Cause Focus Group Session		10–20
Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws		10
	Probable Cause Post-test		5
	Watch Probable Cause Video Again		5
	Post-Educational Intervention Probable Cause Focus Group Session		10–20
Phase I	Failure to Identify Pre-Test		5
	Failure to Identify Video		13
	Failure to Identify Focus Group Session		10–20
Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws		10
	Failure to Identify Post-test		5
	Watch Failure to Identify Video Again		13

	Post-Educational Intervention Failure to Identify Focus Group Session	10–20
Phase I	Deadly Force Pre-Test	5
	Deadly Force Video	1
	Deadly Force Focus Group Session	10–20
Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws	5
	Deadly Force Post-test	5
	Watch Deadly Force Video Again	1
	Post-Educational Intervention Deadly Force Focus Group Session	10–20
	POPS	5

All participants were asked to attend a meeting at a predesignated site. Upon arrival, participants were asked to take the POPS to obtain a baseline of their perceptions regarding police officers and a pre-intervention test to measure their knowledge regarding the laws covered in the video before watching it. Each module: probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force was conducted in two phases. Phase I consisted of the pre-test, video viewing, and then the focus group discussion. Phase II consisted of an educational intervention where participants were educated on the laws pertaining to the module covered, then took a post-test, re-watched the video, and then a post-intervention focus group session concluded Phase II. Educational interventions for laws pertaining to the probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force modules are located in Appendix G (G1, G2, and G3). The probable cause module took an average of one hour and thirty minutes, failure to identify took an average of one hour and fifteen minutes, and the deadly force module took one hour to complete. A ten-minute break was

implemented after the probable cause and failure to identify modules resulting in two ten-minute

breaks and a total average time to complete all three modules to be four hours and five minutes.

All focus group sessions were digitally recorded. Upon completing the third module, participants

were asked to complete the POPS one more time and thanked for their time.

Quantitative

Quantitative data were collected using four surveys. Namely, the 12 item POPS and three

constructed surveys regarding the laws covered in each of the three modules were collected. The

surveys for the modules were taken twice by each participant on the day of their participation,

and all surveys were paper and pencil based. Participants were assigned an alphanumeric during

this first pre-test, which was used to label subsequent surveys. I collected all surveys upon

completion, which took no more than five minutes each to complete. Surveys consisted of a total

of 11 questions between the probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force surveys.

Specifically, the probable cause survey consisted of six questions, the failure to identify survey

consisted of two, and the deadly force survey consisted of three as illustrated in Appendix D.

Two weeks after participants completed the study, they were contacted via phone, and the 11

pre-test questions were asked again to determine if they retained any of the information learned

during the educational intervention. Therefore, participants were asked at the beginning of the

study to provide a working phone number for me to contact them to conduct the two-week

follow-up survey.

Qualitative

Three 10 to 20-minute semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted and

digitally recorded with participants. All focus group interview sessions were conducted

face-to-face, the same as in the quantitative data collection section. Participants were re-informed that the session was being recorded and to limit talking over others during the focus group discussion so that I would be able to transcribe the digital recording for later analysis correctly. All focus group semi-structured interview questions are in Appendix F.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Quantitative Data

As described above, quantitative data were collected through the POPS and pre-test surveys. Participant responses were assigned an alphanumeric designation at the time of administration, which were uploaded to Microsoft Excel. I converted the quantitative data from an Excel format into an SPSS format to facilitate the execution of the statistical analyses. I ran a simple frequency analysis for each of the survey items within the data set. The purpose of these simple frequency analyses was to identify any issues with missing data. If issues with missing data emerged, I either deleted cases from the analysis or replaced missing responses with means calculated from the data set (Donders et al., 2006; Downey & King, 1998; Fox-Wasylyshyn & El-Masri, 2005).

At this point, I assessed the internal consistency of responses within the measures by running four separate reliability analyses. I ran one reliability analysis for the POPS measure using responses from both the pre-and post-administrations of the measure within the same analysis as a mechanism for increasing sample size. I ran additional reliability analyses for each of the outcome measures used within the study (probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force). I combined data from each administration of the outcome measures to increase the sample size within the analyses. The outcome of these reliability analyses was two-fold. First, I

compared the reliability estimates within this sample against the previously published estimates of reliability within the literature for the POPS (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015).

Second, I established the reliability of the measures established for this endeavor. None of the items were deleted from the measures before creating scale scores. After interpreting the reliability analysis results, I created scale scores for each of the measures administered within the study. For example, there was a pre-and post-score for the POPS. There were also pre-post and follow-up scores created for the measures relating to probable cause, failure to comply, and deadly force. After calculating scale scores for each of these measures, I ran simple descriptive statistics (M and S.D.) for each of the measures mentioned above. I also developed specific analytical strategies for analyzing the data from the intervention.

Regarding assessing changes in perceptions of police, I leveraged a paired samples t-test to assess for differences in mean scores between the pre-and post-administrations of the POPS measure. This version of the t-test is the fitting test, given that I analyzed responses from the same group of research subjects from two separate administrations of the same measure. I reported results regarding the assumptions of the analysis, results from the analysis, and any relevant effect sizes in the event significant differences emerge within the statistical test.

Regarding testing the hypotheses related to changes in knowledge of the law, I leveraged a Repeated Measures-Analysis of Variance (RM-ANOVA) to assess differences in means score for each type of law between the pre, post, and post and follow-up administrations of the measures. The RM-ANOVA was the appropriate test for analyzing this data. The analysis was best suited to test for differences between multiple (more than two) administrations of a measure within related groups, not independent of each other. In this case, I tested for differences in mean scores on the measures related to knowledge of the law between the pre, post, and follow-up

administrations of the measures. I reported data and insights relating to the assumptions associated with the analysis (Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances), the results of the analysis (*F*-statistics, *p*-values, and differences in means between the groups), and any relevant effect sizes.

Additionally, I ran three separate RM-ANOVAs, one for each of the type of laws being assessed within the project. To this point, running multiple iterations of the same analysis (RM-ANOVA) increased the likelihood of committing a Type I Error. I leveraged the Bonferroni adjustment (Cabin & Mitchell, 2000; VanderWeele & Mathur, 2018) to decrease the likelihood of committing a Type I Error by dividing the standard level of significance ($p = 0.05$) by the number of analyses to be conducted, three, and used the adjusted level of significance when interpreting the results of these analyses ($p < 0.02$).

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Semi-structured focus group sessions were transcribed and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis approach. The thematic analysis approach consisted of the following phases: (a) obtaining a familiarization with the data set by reading and re-reading interview transcripts while taking notes about initial thoughts, the data was then (b) initially coded as a result of identified recurring ideas and words systematically, the coding was then (c) grouped into themes, (d) these themes were then reviewed and compared to the initial coding results, and overall emerging themes, (e) the major themes identified were named and defined, finally (f) all themes were reported in the results chapter of this paper (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To better facilitate the six-phase thematic analysis, the software program NVivo 12 was used. As a qualitative software program, NVivo 12 made it easier for me to compare, analyze, and group initial coding and themes by organizing the data into an easy-to-use format. Coding of

each line of the transcript was made easier by using the software program. I used inductive reasoning to group codes into themes because they were derived from participants' specific responses instead of a particular theory (deductive approach). Field notes from the focus group sessions were considered and reviewed when conducting the thematic analysis of participants' responses.

Quality Assurance

Prior research has established the POPS's internal consistency and overall reliability (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015; Taylor et al., 2020). Therefore, to assure the research findings' reliability, I selected a well-vetted survey to measure participants' before and after perceptions of police officers. However, the pre-and post-tests related to each video were explicitly created for this study and could not be validated by prior research. I attempted to create short and easy-to-read/understand questions and statements regarding the pre-and post-test surveys created. The surveys were also created to ensure participants' attention would not be lost while completing the surveys and ensuring completion.

In qualitative research, the researcher's observations are the primary tool of data collection and analysis. As a result, implementing validity-enhancing strategies to reduce researcher bias in data collection and analysis is important. At least two validating strategies are suggested by Creswell and Poth (2016) to be included within a study to ensure both the reliability and validity of research findings. Validity strategies include triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking, conducting external audits, the generation of rich and thick description of the phenomenon under study, employing a peer review or debriefing, the acknowledgment of disconfirming evidence, collaboration with participants, and clarification of researcher bias (Creswell & Poth, 2016). I identified researcher bias to employ reflexivity,

generated a rich and thick description of the phenomenon under study, and employed triangulation as a result of using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Identifying and clarifying personal biases regarding the phenomena under study and participant groups was essential in mitigating any potential influences these biases may have had on the research findings. Identification of personal bias afforded me the ability to employ reflexivity. Reflexivity consists of the researcher considering their personal beliefs, values, and biographical experiences concerning the research phenomenon and study population. Specifically, I considered how these personal biases could have affect participant behavior and overall research findings. Therefore, I attempted to control any reflection of my personal biases, such as approaching this study as I already knew and understood everything because I am African American, raised in a disenfranchised community, and now serve as a police executive. To keep me grounded in this position, I understood this was the opportunity for participants to share their stories, perceptions, and understandings of law. This stance guided how I posed questions, my responses, and body language when conducting focus-group sessions. It is important to note that because of the fact that I am an African American man means that I was probably able to both get people to take part in the study, and potentially have more truthful discussions than if I had been a white man or woman.

In addition, generating rich and thick descriptions of the phenomena under study increases the research findings' transferability (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Namely, other researchers can draw similar conclusions within their research if they are provided a rich and thick description. Specifically, transferability "refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings" (Trochim, 2006, p. 1). Therefore, by generating a rich description of the context and research findings, the

likelihood that other researchers can transfer or apply these findings to other contexts or settings is greatly improved. However, there is no way to completely mitigate all the confounding variables associated with qualitative data collection and analysis. As a result, implementing these validating strategies in conjunction with digitally recording focus group sessions with participants ensured the proposed study conforms to best practices in research today.

Assumptions

Assumptions are the existing knowledge, information, or beliefs held by the researcher related to the phenomena under study (Van Manen, 1990) and signify what the researcher believes to be true (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). I made several assumptions in this study including the following:

1. Participants are volunteering on their free accord to participate in the study and have not been coerced.

2. Participants will respond honestly and openly.

3. Participants will have varying experiences with police/civilian interactions and have variations in opinion and passion regarding the subject.

4. It is assumed that participants of this study will have a vested interest in the research topic and, therefore, be positively motivated to endorse change.

5. Participants will have a literacy and competency level high enough to understand the survey and interview questions.

6. Participants will complete the entire duration of the study and concurrent surveys and focus group sessions.

Ethical Considerations

Approval from Antioch University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained before collecting data. The proposed research study was considered minimal risk. However, because participants were asked questions regarding a sensitive subject (racial discrimination), some discomfort was associated with participation in the study. Since the research study explored perceptions of police/civilian officer encounters in Black males, participants may have experienced negative thoughts and feelings associated with the interview questions related to racial discrimination. However, it was expected that these effects would be short-lived. No suspected physical or social risks were expected to be associated with participating in this study. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Participant's personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Certain people may need to see the study records. The only people who were allowed to see these records are the research team, advising professors, the University IRB, and myself.

During the phone-screening process, any protected group was excluded from the study, including those with mental handicaps, minors, and prisoners. To ensure participants' mental health wellness upon completion of data collection, participants were provided with a flyer with my contact information and the IRB's contact information. Additionally, information regarding retaining mental health services was provided to participants if they felt any unwanted or upsetting emotional disturbances resulting from participation within the study.

Regarding anonymity, participants were assigned an alphanumeric to protect their identity. This alphanumeric was created during the first pre-test session and recorded in each interview for later transcription during data analysis. All audio recordings and transcribed data were saved on a password-protected zip drive and used only by me. The only form with

identifying information was the signed consent form. These forms are kept in a locked file cabinet. No other identifying information was collected during data collection. Upon completing the research study, all research materials, including the audio recording and transcribed files, will be wiped from the password-protected zip drive.

Summary and Organization of the Remaining Chapters

The chapter provided a description of the research methodology, research questions, population and sample, materials and instruments used to collect data, study procedures for data collection and analysis, quality assurances, assumptions, limitations, and ethical considerations. A mixed-methods action study design was selected to answer the research questions. The purpose of the study was to explore Black males' perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters before and after being informed of the law being enforced to determine whether transparency of the incidents is enough to transition perceptions. The study's rationale was that research findings could be used to identify key variables that could aid in developing remedies to resolve the tensions between these two groups and potentially aid in building trust. Data were collected using qualitative and quantitative methods in the form of focus group semi-structured interviews and surveys. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed using a six-phase thematic analysis of focus group session responses to answer the research questions. I employed reflexivity, triangulation, and rich and thick descriptions of the phenomena under study to ensure the validity and reliability of research findings. The study was suggested to experience several challenges and limitations: recruiting an underrepresented research population (Black males), data collection during the Coronavirus pandemic and BLM movement of 2020, and potential researcher bias resulting from being the primary tool of data collection and analysis. The following chapter described the research results

for this study (Chapter IV), while Chapter V discusses the implications and limitations of the

current study. In addition, Chapter V provides recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

As previously explained, police discrimination against African Americans is a significant problem that needs immediate intervention. In addition to the implementation of reform in policing practices and policy, a significant way to address this problem is by improving trust between police and Black communities (Murphy et al., 2014; Obama, 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). My overall purpose of this mixed-methods action research study is to enhance participants' knowledge of Texas law in the hopes of shifting participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters more favorably. By interacting and engaging in meaningful two-way dialogue, I hope to create an environment where we collectively feel empowered and learn from each other. Building trust and repairing relationships will take participation from both parties.

The following chapter presents the research findings from focus group interviews and surveys of 43 Black citizens between 18 to 35 years of age located in the Houston, Texas, area. A deeper understanding of the target population's perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters before and after being informed of the law was gathered to understand the phenomenon under study better and to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. How does knowing law impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters on the part of civilians (African American males)?

H_{01}: Knowing the laws does not impact participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters as measured by the POPS survey.

H_{a1}: Knowing the law impacts participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters as measured by the POPS survey.

RQ2. How do participant responses change concerning police/civilian encounters

regarding probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force because of taking

part in an educational session about the law?

H_{02}: Taking part in educational sessions about the law does not change participant's

knowledge or responses.

H_{a2a}: Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding probable cause

changes participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

H_{a2b} Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding failure to identify

changes participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

H_{a2c} Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding deadly force changes

participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

This chapter will present the data collection results to include a description of how the

data was collected. Then the chapter will explore the findings for both the quantitative and

qualitative portions of the study grouped under each educational intervention: probable cause,

failure to identify, and deadly force. First, the quantitative data will be presented for each

educational intervention, then the identified qualitative themes. A discussion of the two data sets

will be presented in Chapter V, the discussion section of this dissertation. Themes will be

identified and presented predominantly using project maps from the NVivo 12 software program

where applicable. Finally, the research questions will be addressed using both the qualitative and

quantitative portions of this study.

Data Collection Results

I used a non-experimental mixed-methods concurrent nested design to address the

research questions. Therefore, quantitative and qualitative data created by surveys and focus

group interviews were used to collect data. As a result of the design of this study, survey data were collected with paper and pencil surveys, and all focus group interviews were digitally recorded for later transcription and analysis.

Recruitment and Data Collection Procedure Results

Participants were purposefully recruited into the study. Specifically, recruitment flyers (Appendix A) were posted in predominantly Black neighborhoods in the metro Houston, Texas region. I placed flyers in five grocery stores, three laundromats, one community center, and six apartment complexes. I also contacted the African American Chamber of Commerce and was authorized to send them a flyer for distribution. Sixty-three individuals contacted me. However, only 43 were found to meet the inclusion criteria and were included in the study. Once self-identified, participants were asked if they could attend one of two interventional sessions and were then assigned. A total of 21 participants were in the first intervention group and 22 in the second for a total number of 43 participants. Participants were asked at the beginning of their session to provide their name and recent working phone number so that they could be contacted for the final follow-up survey to be conducted over the phone two weeks after their designated session. This information was uploaded in an excel spreadsheet and saved on a password-protected zip drive separate from other data collected within this study. The zip drive was also stored in a locked filing cabinet to ensure the anonymity of participants of the study.

All participants of the study went through the same process as described in Table 4.1. Namely, all participants took the POPS survey at the beginning of the first session and at the end of the last session. Participants then took a pretest for each video before watching it, participated in a focus group interview, educational intervention regarding the laws pertaining to the video watched, took a post-test, and then watched the video again, followed by another focus group

interview. By conducting the study in this way, I gathered participants' pre- and post-perceptions regarding the police/civilian encounter depicted in each video (probable cause, failure to ID, and deadly force). Focus group interview length times varied from 15 minutes to 49 minutes and therefore averaged 32 minutes each. Discussions regarding probable cause for the pre-and post-intervention focus groups were the longest in both groups (group 1: 1 hr 23 minutes; group 2: 1 hr 37 minutes). The shortest focus group interview times were associated with the deadly

Table 4.1

Participant Schedule

Video	Phase	Event
Probable Cause	Phase I	Pre-test POPS
		Probable Cause Pre-Test
		Probable Cause Video
		Probable Cause Focus Group Session
	Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws
		Probable Cause Post-test
		Watch Probable Cause Video Again
		Post-Educational Intervention Probable Cause
		Focus Group Session
Failure to ID	Phase I	Failure to Identify Pre-Test
		Failure to Identify Video
		Failure to Identify Focus Group Session
	Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws
		Failure to Identify Post-test
		Watch Failure to Identify Video Again
		Post-Educational Intervention Failure to
		Identify Focus Group Session
Deadly Force	Phase I	Deadly Force Pre-Test
		Deadly Force Video
		Deadly Force Focus Group Session
	Phase II	Educational Intervention Regarding Laws
		Deadly Force Post-test
		Watch Deadly Force Video Again
		Post-Educational Intervention Deadly Force
		Focus Group Session
		POPS

force video (group 1: 48 min; group 2: 32 min). Due to variations in research topics, the

relationship between the researcher and participants, and the participant's characteristics, there is

no research standard for interview length. Hence, interviews are expected to "have an extremely

individual character and will differ widely in terms of both the topics discussed and the length of

the interview itself" (Corbetta, 2003, p. 276).

Data and Analysis Results

Quantitative Data

Participants were asked to complete paper and pen-based pre-and post-test surveys for the

study for all surveys except the two-week follow-up survey. The two-week follow-up survey was

conducted over the phone. Therefore, each participant was provided a pen and the survey on

paper for all other surveys used in the study. Participants were then asked to complete each

survey at the designated times in the session, as outlined in Table 4.1. Upon completion of each

survey, I collected them from the participant for later analysis. Participants were not asked to

provide their names on the surveys to protect their anonymity. However, each participant was

prescribed an alphanumeric for response comparison. Two weeks after the last session ended,

participants were contacted over the phone and asked to complete each post-survey for each

video again. Specifically, I asked each participant to respond to each survey question and

collected their data over the phone. All survey responses were then added into an Excel

spreadsheet upon conclusion of the session for later analysis. Data were saved on a

password-protected zip drive and locked in a cabinet when not in use. This practice was

employed to protect participant data.

Qualitative Data

This section will describe how the qualitative data collected in this study were analyzed to answer the research questions. More specifically, how the data were transcribed, coded, grouped for themes, and how the overall themes were identified will be discussed. I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis approach and a qualitative software program called NVivo 12 to help me organize, analyze and present the data.

All interviews were initially transcribed automatically using Microsoft Word's dictation feature. Specifically, using the digital recording device used to record interviews, a headset with a microphone, and my computer, I was able to play the audio file on the recorder into the microphone on the headset to dictate to Microsoft Word. The only limitation to this transcription method is that Microsoft Word's dictation feature shuts off automatically every 10 minutes. Therefore, I set a timer and stopped the recording and dictation every nine minutes to restart it again. I chose not to use a transcription service because I did not feel that these platforms were secure. Once all transcripts were automatically transcribed, I then listened to the audio files and went back through each transcript manually to make corrections where the automated system may have failed. Once manual correction was complete, I color-coded each file by bolding text wherein I was speaking and leaving participants' responses unbolded. This color-coding practice was a helpful strategy in helping me to quickly identify when I was speaking versus participants for data analysis. Transcripts were separated by each focus group interview question and time-stamped. The document was then saved with a title that ended with "edited version" to ensure I knew the document had already been proofread and altered. I then went through each draft and "cleaned" the data by removing duplicate or repeating words in sequences such as "like, like," or "um um," etcetera. Small talk or introductory and closing conversations unrelated

to the research topic were highlighted in gray to let me know that I did not need to focus on these sections during the data analysis process. Once the data was cleaned, I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo 12 and created nodes or placeholders for each of the focus group interview questions based on the type of video being watched (probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force) as illustrated in Figure 4.1. Once created, I grouped participants' responses to the focus group interviews for both groups under the relevant interview questions for analysis.

Figure 4.1.

NVivo 12 Placeholders for Corresponding Focus
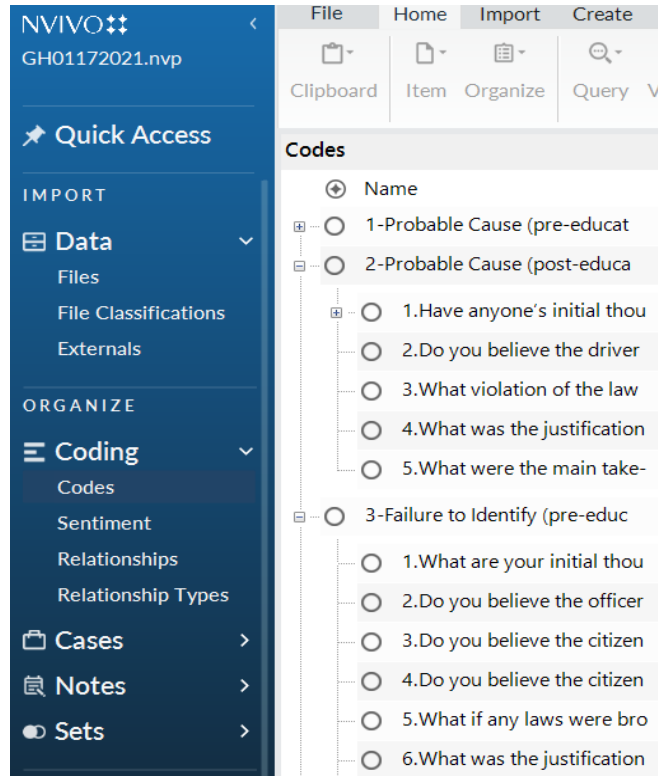
In line with Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis approach, I read and re-read participant responses for each focus group interview question. Therefore, I was able to familiarize myself with the data and took notes during this part of the analysis process. I then began to create initial codes due to systematically identified recurring ideas and words. For

example, a code of "untrustworthy" and "unjust behavior" were identified by participants'

responses resulting in the overall theme of "unfavorable police conduct" as illustrated in Table

4.2.

All participant responses were reviewed, coded, and produced the themes identified

within this study. Major themes were then reported in this draft with supporting participant

responses to validate each theme finding. The following section will present the research data by

exploring the pre- and post- video findings for both quantitative and qualitative data portions of

Table 4.2

Initial Coding and Theme Example

Participant Response	Initial Code	Theme
No, I don't believe that the driver acted appropriately but I kind of wondered if the officer acted the way that he did was because of the camera it's on TV, So I kind of wonder if that affected their behavior. That's what I think a lot of times we'll be seeing on TV the cops and stuff they are good on camera but what are they off camera.	Untrustworthy	Unfavorable Police Conduct
When it come to getting pulled over and getting searched, I really don't know how boundless the opposite with how they going to justify searching my car. You know? It's you don't know, like, so it's in your best interest to just let them search the car. Cause I really don't know. I don't know what you're going to come up with, but I know it's boundless creativity. That you're good at how you going to justify getting in my car.		
Um, I want to ask you for your ID but you don't have to give it to me. It would help us out in this situation. You just explain what you're doing, not just come out there and just say, Hey, you gotta do it. Would, you know what you telling him Is a lie especially if he knows that that's what he's thinking is tend to escalate.	Unjust behavior	

this study. However, the section will begin with a presentation of the POPS data and then review participant response regarding each of the three police/civilian encounters discussed in focus groups (probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force). The interpretation of these results will be further discussed in Chapter V.

Perceptions of Police Scale (POPS)

The frequency of responses to each survey item was reviewed to identify any missing data. One question (Q6) had a single missing value from both the pre-and post-tests in the POPS. These missing values were replaced by the mean value of the remaining responses (n=41), 2.02 for the pre-test and 2.37 for the post-test. To assess the reliability of each measure, Cronbach's alpha (α) was calculated separately for each instance of data collection. For both the POPS pre-and post-tests, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$. This is consistent with previously published research where the reliability ranged from 0.91 to 0.94.

For the 12 POPS survey items, mean scores ranged between 2.33 and 3.69 (Table 4.3). The survey items with the highest pre-test score were "the police are helpful" ($M = 3.33$; $SD = 0.93$) and "the police provide safety" ($M = 3.31$; $SD = 1.09$), although these mean scores indicate only slight agreement with the statements. The survey items with the lowest pre-test score, or most negative perception, were "the police do not discriminate" ($M = 2.02$; $SD = 1.01$) and "police officers treat all people fairly" ($M = 2.33$; $SD = 1.03$). Post-test scores for each item were higher than pre-test scores, although only five showed a significantly more positive perception of police. Notably, the two lowest-scoring items from the pre-test demonstrated a significant improvement, yet these only represented a slightly more neutral perception.

Table 4.3

Mean Scores Associated with POPS Pre-and Post-test

Scale and Items	Mean (SD)		P-value
Perceptions of Police Scale (POPS)	Pre	Post	
Police officers are friendly	3.02 (0.95)	3.14 (0.84)	.37
Police officers protect me	3.10 (1.14)	3.40 (1.06)	.06
Police officers treat all people fairly	**2.33 (1.03)**	**2.64 (0.93)**	**.01**
I like the police	3.05 (1.06)	3.19 (1.04)	.26
The police are good people	**3.02 (0.87)**	**3.36 (0.96)**	**.04**
The police do not discriminate	**2.02 (1.01)**	**2.37 (0.92)**	**.04**
The police provide safety	**3.31 (1.09)**	**3.69 (1.02)**	**.01**
The police are helpful	3.33 (0.93)	3.52 (0.94)	.18
The police are trustworthy	2.67 (1.12)	2.83 (0.91)	.27
The police are reliable	3.10 (1.12)	3.21 (1.00)	.40
Police officers are unbiased	2.57 (1.17)	2.69 (1.05)	.56
Police officers care about my community	**3.17 (1.19)**	**3.52 (1.13)**	**.03**
Overall Score	**34.69 (9.32)**	**37.58 (8.61)**	**.02**

The overall mean score among participants on the POPS pre-test was 34.69 (*SD* = 9.32) and, on the post-test, 37.58 (*SD* = 8.61). This difference was statistically significant ($t(41)$ = -2.31; p = .02); thus, we reject the null hypothesis that knowing the law does not impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters on the part of civilians. Therefore, according to these findings, and given that the only difference was that participants had been exposed to this

educational intervention and the POPS had changed significantly, it can be surmised that knowing the law was what made a difference in participant's perceptions of police officers. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted in that knowing the law does impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters.

The pre- and post-survey data show that participants' perception of police significantly improved after the educational intervention. Data met the four assumptions of the paired sample t-test: (a) the dependent variable (perception) was continuous, (b) data were collected from categorical, related groups (same study participants, multiple time points of administration), (c) the distribution of differences approximated a normal distribution (pre-test: $W = 0.99$, $p = .95$; post-test: $W = 0.97$, $p = .29$), and (d) there were no significant outliers in the data as illustrated in Figure 4.2. Each participant is represented by a column showing their pre- and post-test score. The pre-test is depicted using orange columns and the post-test is depicted using blue columns. Cohen's d revealed a small effect size ($d = 0.36$), which is consistent with the practical interpretation of the differences in scores.

Figure 4.2.

Column of POPS Pre-Test and Post-Test Mean Scores
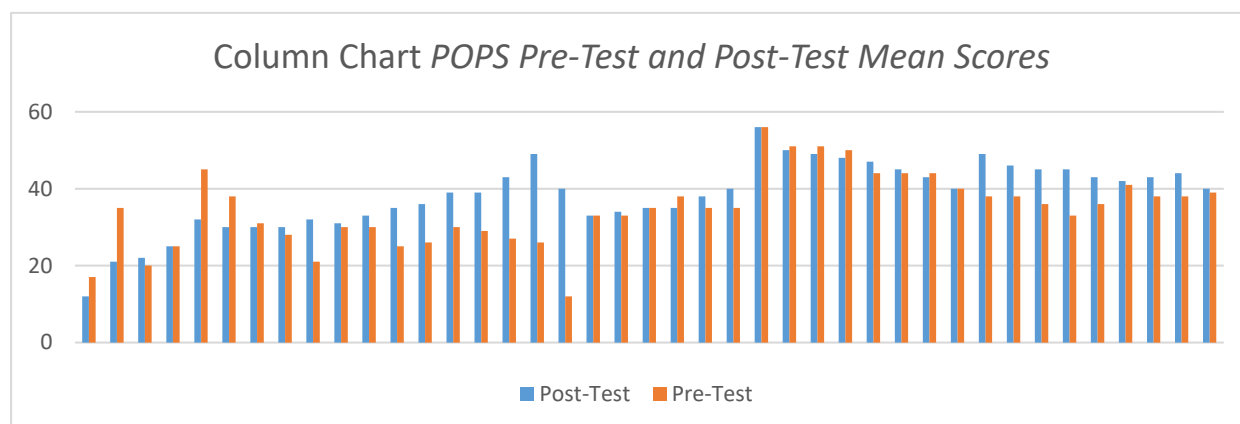
Pre-and Post-Probable Cause Research Findings

Probable Cause Video

After participants completed the POPS survey (Appendix C), they were then asked to complete a pre-educational test regarding their perceptions of probable cause. Survey questions for this pre-test are in Appendix D1. Once completing the pre-test survey, participants were asked to watch a video of a police/civilian encounter regarding probable cause. Once completed, a focus group interview was conducted, followed by an educational intervention that informed participants of probable cause laws. Participants were then asked to retake the probable cause survey to test their perceptions after being informed of the laws. Upon completing the post-intervention survey, participants were asked to watch the video again and then participate in a final focus group interview regarding their perceptions. Note that a link to the probable cause video is located in Appendix E and can be viewed to better orient the reader to the data findings. However, a short description of the probable cause video will be provided in the qualitative findings section for the probable cause video. The following section provides the quantitative results of the probable cause video followed by the qualitative.

Probable Cause Quantitative Survey Findings

Participants were asked to take a probable cause survey created for this research study before watching the video and obtaining the educational intervention and after the educational intervention. Questions for the probable cause survey are located in Appendix D1 and consisted of six multiple choice questions. They were also asked to take the survey a third time two weeks after completing the study to assess their retainment of the knowledge taught in the study. This section presents the quantitative findings for this survey at three different points in the study. Namely pre-educational, post-educational, and at a two-week follow-up.

Among the 37 participants who completed all three administrations of the knowledge measures, two missing values (5.4%) for Q3 and one missing value (2.7%) for Q4 of the probable cause pre-test were identified. There were no missing values on the post-test or 2-week follow-up test. Because the probable cause measure used multiple-choice responses, it was not possible to substitute a mean value. Missing values were excluded from further analysis.

For the knowledge measures, including probable cause, responses were first dichotomized into correct (1) or incorrect (0) responses. In this case, internal consistency measures the degree to which individuals with more correct responses (e.g., a higher total score) answered each specific item correctly. A higher Cronbach's α corresponds to a better match between high scores and correct answers for particular items (Black & William, 2011). The probable cause pre-test had an $\alpha = 0.53$. Q2 had a low item-test correlation (0.31), and its removal resulted in an increase to $\alpha = 0.62$. On the post-test, $\alpha = 0.53$ and the removal of Q2 resulted in an increase to $\alpha = 0.58$, with an item-test correlation of 0.37. The two-week follow-up test demonstrated the lowest reliability at $\alpha = 0.26$. Even after the removal of Q2, reliability remained low at $\alpha = 0.25$. The removal of Q2 did not significantly improve the reliability (i.e., it remained moderately lower than the standard accepted threshold of 0.7). Thus, no items were removed from the probable cause measure. The proportion of correct responses during the probable cause pre-test ranged from 27.0% to 67.6% (Table 4.4) and increased to a range of 48.6% to 97.3% on the post- and two-week follow-up tests.

Table 4.4

Frequency and Proportion of Responses to Probable Cause Knowledge Measure at Pre-, Post-, and Two-Week Follow-Up Test

Item	Pre		Post		2-week FU	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Probable Cause						
Police can legally search my car if…						
…they feel like it.	5	13.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
…they have a hunch or think that I did something.	4	10.8	1	2.7	0	0.0
…they ask if they can search and I say yes.	5	13.5	2	5.4	4	10.8
…the police officer notices something (see, smell, hear) that suggest that I may have committed a crime or that I am about to.	**23**	**62.2**	**34**	**91.9**	**33**	**89.2**
A police officer can legally search my car without my permission if…						
…they smell weed or alcohol.	**18**	**48.6**	**31**	**83.8**	**34**	**91.9**
…my eyes are bloodshot or I look high.	4	10.8	3	8.1	0	0.0
…they see an empty beer can or liquor bottle in my car.	8	21.6	2	5.4	2	5.4
…I have prior arrests or convictions.	7	18.9	1	2.7	1	2.7
The fourth amendment protects my right to…						
…bear arms.	5	14.3	2	5.4	2	5.4
…freedom of speech.	8	22.9	2	5.4	4	10.8
…right to a lawyer.	6	17.1	0	0.0	1	2.7
…prevent unreasonable search and seizure.	**16**	**45.7**	**33**	**89.2**	**30**	**81.1**
The Carrol Doctrine allows police to…						
…use deadly force.	4	11.1	0	0.0	2	5.4
…search my vehicle without a warrant.	**21**	**58.3**	**35**	**94.6**	**31**	**83.8**
…hold me without cause.	7	19.4	1	2.7	4	10.8
…pull me over without cause.	4	11.1	1	2.7	0	0.0
Police are able to enter my home or vehicle without my permission if…						

…they believe someone needs help or aid.	**10**	**27.0**	**18**	**48.6**	**25**	**67.6**
…they believe or have reason to believe that I am armed and dangerous.	18	48.6	7	18.9	12	32.4
…they believe I will destroy evidence or contraband (illegal items).	4	10.8	12	32.4	0	0.0
…they have a hunch or suspicion I am up to no good.	5	13.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
A police officer can pat me down if…						
…they suspect I have a weapon.	**25**	**67.6**	**32**	**86.5**	**36**	**97.3**
…they feel like it.	8	21.6	3	8.1	1	2.7
…they have a gut feeling.	1	2.7	1	2.7	0	0.0
…they have a hunch.	3	8.1	1	2.7	0	0.0

Overall scores representing the number of correct responses were also calculated for each administration of the measure (Table 4.5). The probable cause measure demonstrated an increase in the mean number of correct responses from pre-test to two-week follow-up test from $M = 3.11$ (SD = 1.66) to $M = 5.09$ (SD = 0.78). Larger differences were generally observed between the pre- and post- tests than between the post- and two-week follow-up tests. A discussion of these research results will be provided in Chapter 5, the discussion section.

Table 4.5

Mean Number of Correct Responses to Three Knowledge Measures (Probable Cause, Failure to Identify, and Deadly Force) at Pre-, Post-, and Two-Week Follow-Up Test

Event	Mean (SD)			*F* statistic	*P*-value
	Pre	Post	2-week Follow-Up		
Probable cause	3.11 (1.66)	4.97 (0.86)	5.09 (0.78)	35.7	< .00
Failure to identify	0.97 (0.79)	1.69 (0.58)	1.77 (0.43)	22.4	< .00
Deadly force	2.49 (0.95)	2.91 (0.28)	2.97 (0.17)	8.5	< .00

Qualitative Portion of Probable Cause: Pre-and Post-Educational Focus Groups

During the probable cause video, a police officer pulls over a civilian because the tint on his front window is too dark and is only authorized on SUVs on the back and side windows as mandated by Texas law. Once the civilian is pulled over, the officer explains to the citizen that his front window tint is illegal. Upon speaking with the citizen, the officer can smell marijuana coming from the vehicle and then asks the citizen if he has marijuana in the car and has been smoking. The citizen says no and is asked to exit the vehicle where he is pat-down, and a bag of marijuana is found in his front sweater pocket. The officer asks the citizen to wait in another squad car and asks the passenger to exit the vehicle. The vehicle is then searched, and a large bag of marijuana is found. At this point, the officer begins to question the citizen regarding the marijuana and its intended use. The citizen becomes belligerent and states the officer had no right to search his vehicle without a warrant.

Pre-Educational Focus Group Findings. After watching the video, participants were asked five pre-education intervention focus group interview questions in Appendix F1. Focus group interview questions consisted of questions such as: (a) what are your initial thoughts about the video, (b) do you believe the officer acted appropriately, why or why not, and (c) do you believe the driver acted appropriately? As previously described, all focus group interviews were digitally recorded for later transcription and analysis. Therefore, each focus interview was recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis. Themes were identified as described in a prior section.

Four major themes were identified in participants pre-education focus group responses and included their perceptions that the stop was justified (n = 27), the driver acted

inappropriately (n = 36), a vehicle cannot be searched without a warrant (n = 19), and a lack of trust in the police (n = 31) as illustrated in Figure 4.3.

Specifically, by a show of hands, 15 participants out of 21 in the first session group and 12 participants out of 22 in the second session group believed the police officer was correct in pulling the citizen over for having illegal tint on their vehicle windows in the pre-education focus group. Therefore, 63% (27/43) of the participants within the study felt the police officer was justified. A total of 86% (n = 36) of the participants believed the driver was acting

Figure 4.3.

Pre-Education Probable Cause Focus Group Themes
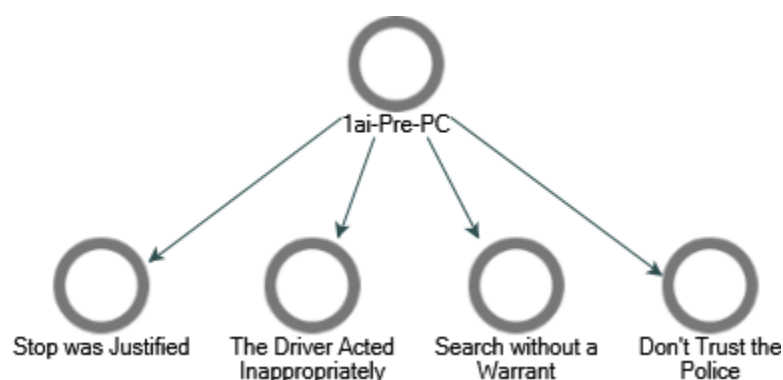
inappropriately. Specifically, participants commented on the citizen's disrespectful behavior toward the police officer once the marijuana was found on his person. Participants made multiple comments about how the citizen should not have been "riding dirty," also known as driving high in a vehicle with illegal tint and large amounts of marijuana in the vehicle. For example, one focus group member stated:

> cause I mean, number one, you're riding dirty, I mean, you got your windows, they illegal, you get pulled over, I mean the officer smelled weed coming out the window. I mean he, then the whole thing was just stupid. It's hard for me to watch shows like that, cause he was all cool and everything at first, then when he got caught up, then he just flipped the switch.

Similarly, a focus group participant stated, "the guy was stupid," another stated, "unfortunately he wanted to get high with a half a pound and a quarter, so I think that it was, uh, on his hand, that was stupid" suggesting that they both also believed the citizen was acting inappropriately. Another focus group participant commented on the citizen's behavior stating:

> I thought he was alright making it at first, and once he found out, oh snap I got this weed on me, I guess showing out for the camera and this and that, but I know when he was in the back of the car ride to the County, it's like, dang, shut up.

Another common theme identified between the two session groups regarding probable cause was the perceptions regarding searching a vehicle without a warrant. Initially, participants were under the impression that an officer could not search their vehicle unless given permission, regardless of if the vehicle smelled of marijuana. Focus group participant responses supporting this theme are described in Table 4.6.

The fourth recurrent theme identified in focus group participant responses was that the police could not be trusted. Specifically, participants noted that the officer might have been acting "correctly" because he was being filmed. Several participants suggested that the actual behavior of officers on the street is quite different than what was displayed in the video. For example, one focus group participant stated:

> No, I don't believe that the driver acted appropriately but I kind of wondered if the officer acted the way that he did was because of the camera it's on TV, So I kind of wonder if that affected their behavior. That's what I think a lot of times we'll be seeing on TV the cops and stuff they are good on camera but what are they off camera.

Another focus group participant alluded to the distrust he felt toward the police by making the following statement:

> what determines the traffic stopped? Let's just say you do, you do pull me over for running a red light. Okay. Let's say the light was really yellow, and your video shows it. Do you still, is that search that you're going to do when I'm detained? Is that true? Is that going to hold up in court?

Table 4.6

Search Without a Warrant Participant Quotes

Theme	Participant Quote
Search without a Warrant	The police officer didn't have a warrant…. How does he, okay, he smells marijuana, you know, with the stuff that's going around these days, and he's got a bunch of options, as far as marijuana. You got CBD, marijuana, a lot of obstacles that you know kind of go up and smell fake stuff. I mean, how does he know for sure that there was marijuana?
	If you are real old school Viking, then you put that in the trunk. Ain't no smoking, ain't no nothing. When you get pulled over, they do want a search that you gotta walk. You gotta get a warrant for the trunk.
	I don't know man, I think he should need a warrant to search the car, I'm just saying, doesn't seem right. The lawman should have to get a warrant, they can make up anything they want to search your car otherwise.

Finally, a focus group participant further suggested his distrust of the police by stating, "so the cops they understand what the law is, they know what it is, but like he said, you have some that want to do it by the book and some that just do it half-ass, you know?"

Post-Educational Focus Group Findings. After the educational intervention, participants were asked to watch the probable cause video again and then asked five post-educational focus group interview questions: (a) have anyone's initial thoughts changed? Why or why not, (b) do you believe the driver acted appropriately? Why or why not, (c) what violation of the law did you witness, (d) what was the justification for the search, and (e) what were the main take-aways after watching the video and having Focus Group Conversation?

Overall, participants' perceptions post-education was that their initial perceptions of the video changed significantly as a result of the knowledge they garnered from the educational portion of the study. Specifically, participants' perceptions that the stop was justified changed from 27 to 43, perceptions that the driver acted inappropriately changed from 36 to 41, the perception that a vehicle cannot be searched without a warrant changed from 19 to 0, and a lack of trust in the police went from 31 participants to 29.

The educational materials used to inform participants on the laws in Texas relating to probable cause are located in Appendix G1. Specifically, one focus group participant stated:

> knowledge is powerful. So now looking at the first video, you may not have had the knowledge that you have after looking at it and listen to what other people say. So now that you know what the police can and can't do, that's where your knowledge comes in now, you know, what's right, and what's wrong.

Pre- and Post-Failure to Identify Research Findings

As was described in the probable cause portion of the study, participants were initially asked to complete a pre-educational survey on their perceptions pertaining to the laws regarding failure to identify. Specifically, participants were asked two multiple choice questions regarding failure to identify as described in Appendix D2. This survey was administered three times, prior to the educational intervention, after, and during the two-week follow up. The following section will provide an overview of the quantitative findings and then the qualitative. These research findings will be discussed in Chapter V, the discussion.

Quantitative Portion of Failure to Identify

On the failure to identify pre-test, there was one missing value (2.7%) for Q1 and two missing values (5.4%) for Q2. No missing values were identified on the failure to identify post-test or two-week follow-up test. Because this measure used multiple-choice responses, it was not possible to substitute a mean value. Missing values were excluded from further analysis.

The failure to identify pre-, post-, and two-week follow-up tests had a low Cronbach's α of 0.33,

0.50, and 0.17, respectively.

      The failure to identify measure saw a similar increase in the proportion of correct

responses to each survey item as was demonstrated with the probable cause measure (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7

Frequency and Proportion of Responses to Failure to Identify Measure at Pre-, Post-, and Two-Week Follow-Up Test

Item	Pre		Post		2-week FU	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Failure to Identify						
I have to give my name, address, and date of birth to police if…						
…asked for.	17	47.2	3	8.1	6	16.2
…I've been arrested	**17**	**47.2**	**29**	**78.4**	**31**	**83.8**
…they believe I'm acting suspiciously.	2	5.6	5	13.5	0	0.0
…I don't want to be arrested.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Detention is when an officer…						
…stops me from being able to walk away.	**17**	**48.6**	**32**	**86.5**	**35**	**94.6**
…writes me a ticket.	3	8.6	2	5.4	0	0.0
…forces me to pick up trash or do community service.	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
…handcuffs me and puts me in jail for breaking the law.	14	40.0	3	8.1	2	5.4

However, it is important to note that the pre- to post-test questions almost doubled in the failure

to identify survey. The mean number of correct responses during the two-week follow-up test of

the failure to identify measure approached a "perfect score," with a mean of 1.77 (SD = 0.43)

(Table 4.5). These research findings will be discussed in Chapter V, the discussion section.

Qualitative Portion of Failure to Identify: Pre-and Post-Educational Focus Groups

During the failure to identify video, a photographer is approached by two police officers and asked for his identification (ID) because he is taking pictures of the police station while standing on a public sidewalk. Although the photographer has not broken any laws, the police continue to request his ID and ultimately detain him for not providing it. He is then eventually released by the assistant chief of police because it was unlawful for the police officer to detain him without cause.

Participants were asked a series of questions after watching the video, which can be found in Appendix F3. After educational intervention, they were informed of the laws and asked to watch the video again. Before the pre-educational intervention, by a show of hands, 26% of participants would have shown the police officer their identification (n = 11). Themes for this section were derived as described in the prior section regarding initial coding and finding of themes. The overall theme identified for this section of the research study was unfavorable police conduct. Namely, participants felt the police officer should have conducted himself differently toward the citizen instead of throwing his authority around. Specifically, participants questioned if the police officer knew that the civilian was not committing a crime, then why did they approach the citizen as though he was. The consensus was that if the police officer had been more open about the fact that the citizen was not actually breaking the law but was just making them nervous, then the citizen may have been more compliant with providing their identification. For example, one focus group participant stated:

> Yeah, I think they also acted inappropriately because, if you know the law and he's out there taking pictures, just say, Hey, you could have just came out there and said, Hey guy, um, we're getting a few calls on you out here taking pictures. We just want to come out here and just check on you, make sure everything is okay. Um, you hadn't broken any law, but you have, you are creating, um, a little anxiety towards other people because of, I mean, just at this point, I hate to say, just throw some crazy out there like we, we used

to do we say, well, you know, given the, the, uh, situation in the United States with 911, when they bombed the towers or with other secure facilities, this agency is considered a secure facility. So you're making people a little nervous about being out here, taking these pictures. So we just come out here to check on you. You're not doing illegal. Um, I want to ask you for your ID but you don't have to give it to me. It would help us out in this situation. You just explain what you're doing, not just come out there and just say, Hey, you gotta do it.

Participant responses further alluded to focus group participants' distrust of the police, which was an initial code in the analysis process leading to the theme of unfavorable police conduct. For example, a focus group participant stated:

My initial thoughts were, this is why people do not like the police. You know, if a man and I disagree with, him saying he on public property, he minding his own business and here it is, this officer asking him what you doing, you know, giving you on the, you know, the riot act and all types of stuff, so what's my initial thoughts was if he told, if you the police over here making up stuff, he knows the law, but he's still going to detain him, why? You know, this is why people don't like the police, you know what I mean? Like it was public property. He's on the sidewalk, taking the pictures. What's wrong with that?

Post-educational interviews again revealed that participants agreed that knowledge of the laws was essential in determining their perceptions of the police. They perceived it would alter their behavior in the future if dealing with this situation. For example, one focus group participant stated the following:

Yeah, I definitely didn't know when I was legally allowed not to show my ID. The lawman asks I give it, too many people getting shot up over stupid **** like this. I'll definitely think twice in the future about my situation before giving my ID, but with the way the lawman acts out here, I'll probably still have to give it regardless.

An interpretation of these research findings will be further discussed in Chapter V, the discussion section.

Pre- and Post-Deadly Force Research Findings

As described in previous sections, participants were asked to take a pre-educational survey regarding their understanding of their rights related to deadly force. Participants were asked when is an officer justified in using deadly force three separate times and given several

multiple-choice options. As with the other sections in this study, participants were asked to fill this survey out three times. Namely, before the educational intervention, after, and two weeks after the study had concluded. The following section will provide the research findings for the quantitative portion of this study for deadly force and then present the qualitative findings. An interpretation of these findings will be discussed in Chapter V, the discussion section.

Quantitative Portion of the Deadly Force: Pre-and Post-Educational Intervention

The deadly force measure yielded more missing values than any of the other measures. One missing value (2.7%) was identified for Q1, Q2, and Q3 of the pre-test, as well as one missing value for Q2 and Q3 of the post-test. No missing values were observed on the two-week follow-up test. As with the other knowledge measures, it was not possible to substitute a mean value. Missing values were excluded from further analysis. The deadly force measure fared slightly better than the other knowledge measures when evaluating reliability, with an adequate α = 0.80 on the pre-test but an α = 0.45 on the post-test. Reliability could not be calculated for the two-week follow-up test because all participants correctly answered two of the three survey items.

The deadly force measure also saw a similar increase in the proportion of correct responses to each survey item. In addition, this measure had a higher range of correct responses on the pre-test (75.0% to 88.9%) than the other two measures (Table 4.8). As with the failure to identify measure, the mean number of correct responses during the two-week follow-up test of the deadly force measure approached a "perfect score," with a mean of 2.97 (SD = 0.17) (Table 4.5).

Compared to the probable cause and failure to identify sections of this study, participants scored very highly on the quantitative portion of the study regarding deadly force. Specifically,

participants scored 75% or higher regarding when it is justified for an officer to use deadly force.

However, these research findings will be further discussed in Chapter V, the discussion section.

Table 4.8

Frequency and Proportion of Responses to the Deadly Force Measure at Pre-, Post-, and Two-Week Follow-Up Test

Item	Pre		Post		2-week FU	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Deadly Force						
When is an officer justified in using deadly force?						
When they feel like it	4	11.1	1	2.7	1	2.7
When no one is watching	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
When someone is in the act of attempting to kill someone else	**32**	**88.9**	**36**	**97.3**	**36**	**97.3**
If a citizen refuses to answer their questions	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
When is an officer justified in using deadly force?						
When witnessing sexual or aggravated sexual assault	**27**	**75.0**	**34**	**94.4**	**37**	**100.0**
When being spit on by a citizen	4	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
When being cussed at or called names by a citizen	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
If a citizen runs away from the police for no apparent reason	5	13.9	2	5.6	0	0.0
When is an officer justified in using deadly force?						
When they feel like it	3	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
When their partner says it is ok	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
When witnessing someone being kidnapped or robbed	**31**	**86.1**	**36**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**
If the person being arrested doesn't listen and do what the officer says	2	5.6	0	0.0	0	0.0

Qualitative Portion of Deadly Force: Pre- and Post-Educational Intervention Focus Groups

In the deadly force video, the video cam of a police vehicle records the chasing and subsequent running over of an armed White female running from the police after she had fired shots. The video does not show if the perpetrator is firing at the police vehicle but shows the

perpetrator running from the police with a gun in her hand outside a school. The video shows the perpetrator being run over by the police vehicle from the dashcam and then again from the view of another police vehicle on the scene. Upon conclusion of the video, focus group participants were asked a series of pre-educational intervention questions and then shown the video again after being educated on the laws regarding deadly force.

Participants' pre-education responses regarding the deadly force video were predominantly in favor of what the officer did. Specifically, one focus group member stated, "hey, she was threatening their lives. I mean, they had to do what they had to do." Similarly, other participants stated, "I believe that the officer acted appropriately, running her over, absolutely," and "he did right, he was protecting his life, she was shooting at him, what more can you expect?" However, after participating in the educational intervention, 11 participants were not convinced that running the suspect over was the right course of action. For example, participants made statements such as, "it could have went different, he didn't have to run her over," or "he took the wrong approach, he should have shot her," and "that cop committed murder in that video." Therefore, unfavorable police conduct was the major theme identified when reviewing focus group interview responses. Namely, a variation in participants' perceptions regarding how the police officer should have conducted himself during this event was found in the second focus group session after the educational intervention. All participants agreed that deadly force was warranted. However, the type of deadly force used was still a source of tension amongst the group.

Assessing All Three Knowledge Measures using Analysis of Variance Modeling

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RM-ANOVA) tests confirmed that these increases in all three knowledge measures were statistically significant at the $p < .02$ level.

Participants had a significantly larger number of correct responses on subsequent probable cause tests ($F(2,68) = 35.7$, $p < .00$), failure to identify tests ($F(2,68) = 22.4$, $p < .00$), and deadly force tests ($F(2,68) = 8.5$, $p < .00$). The differences demonstrated a moderate effect size among all three measures ($\eta^2 = 0.64$, 0.61, and 0.50, respectively). Data met only three of the five assumptions needed for best use of RM-ANOVA: (a) the dependent variable (number of correct responses) was continuous; (b) data were collected from categorical, related groups (same study participants, multiple time points of administration); and (c) there were no significant outliers in the data (because of the small range, outliers were not practically possible). The assumption of approximate normal distribution of the distribution of the dependent variable was violated. However, this was not unexpected due to the small number of items comprising each measure. Similarly, the assumption of homogeneity of variance, or sphericity, was violated (Levene's W < 0.01 for each measure), but results of the RM-ANOVA tests remained significant at the $p < .02$ level regardless of the correction factor utilized (Huynh-Feldt, Greenhouse-Geisser, or Box's conservative).

Post-hoc paired t-tests were performed to determine between which survey collection points the differences occurred. In all three knowledge measures, significant differences were observed between pre- and post- tests, as well as between pre- and two-week follow-up tests as illustrated in Table 4.9. For example, pre- versus post-test results for the probable cause module was significant between the pre- and post-test analysis ($p = .00$), pre-test versus the two-week follow up ($p = .00$). No significant differences were observed between post- and two-week follow-up tests, suggesting that the educational intervention was effective in increasing and maintaining knowledge of the law among participants.

Table 4.9

Test Statistics (t, p) of Post-hoc t-tests with 34 Degrees of Freedom

Video Module	Pre v. Post	Pre v. 2-week FU	Post v. 2-week FU
Probable cause	-5.94	-7.65	-0.56
	$p = .00$	$p = .00$	$p = .58$
Failure to identify	-4.91	-5.94	-0.77
	$p = .00$	$p = .00$	$p = .45$
Deadly force	-2.76	-3.24	-1.00
	$p = .01$	$p = .00$	$p = .32$

Research Questions Answered

How Does Knowing Law Impact Perceptions of Police/Civilian Encounters on the Part of Ccivilians (African American Mmales)?(RQ1)

The research findings suggest that knowing the laws significantly impacts participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters predominantly in a more favorable way. Therefore, the research findings reject the null hypothesis because a significant difference was found between participants' initial perceptions about police/civilian encounters after learning about the law. As evidenced by participants' interview responses and the quantitative portion of this study, knowing the law shifted participants' perceptions to favor the police action exhibited on the videos.

Overall, participants perceptions post-education was that their initial perceptions of the videos changed significantly as a result of the knowledge they garnered from the educational portion of the study. For example, one participant stated:

> knowledge is powerful. So now looking at the first video, you may not have had the knowledge that you have after looking at it and listen to what other people say. So now that you know what the police can and can't do, that's where your knowledge come in now, you know, what's right, and what's wrong."

Similarly, another participant stated:

> Yeah, I definitely didn't know when I was legally allowed not to show my ID, the lawman asks, I give it, too many people getting shot up over stupid **** like this. I'll definitely think twice in the future about my situation before giving my ID, but with the way the lawman acts out here, I'll probably still have to give it regardless.

Therefore, knowing the law was found to significantly impact participants perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters in the sample used for this study.

How Do Participant Responses Change Because of Taking Part in an Educational Session About the Law? (RQ2)

Under each situation presented, probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force, participants' perceptions changed from focusing predominantly on the police officers' actions to that of the civilian or perpetrator in the video. This shift is further supported by the quantitative portion of the study wherein participants' ratings regarding perceptions of police fairness, whether they are good people or not, discriminatory, whether they provide safety, and care about the community showed statistically significant positive improvements in participants scores between pre and post-study measures. However, knowing the law evidently made participants more heavily question police officer's intent. Namely, unfavorable police conduct was a major theme identified in the research study. For example one participant during the failure to identify focus group session stated:

> My initial thoughts were, this is why people do not like the police. You know, if a man and I disagree with, him saying he on public property, he minding his own business and here it is, this officer asking him what you doing, you know, giving you on the, you know, the riot act and all types of stuff, so what's my initial thoughts was if he told, if you the police over here making up stuff, he knows the law, but he's still going to detain him, why? You know, this is why people don't like the police, you know what I mean? Like it was public property. He's on the sidewalk, taking the pictures. What's wrong with that?

Similarly, during a focus group session in the deadly force module, several participants made statements regarding the officers action as being unfavorable. For example, participants stated,

"it could have went different, he didn't have to run her over," or "he took the wrong approach, he should have shot her" and "that cop committed murder in that video."

Therefore, although participants' perceptions regarding police shifted on the POPs and in the pre-and post-educational surveys, there were some questions by the participants regarding police officer's intentions and how they conducted themselves. These research findings suggest that even though the educational intervention worked in shifting perceptions, there is a great deal more work to be done to bridge the gap between these two populations and build trust.

Conclusion

An action research study with a mixed-methods concurrent nested design was conducted to garner a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters and whether an educational intervention would shift their perceptions. Research findings suggest that an educational intervention does significantly shift participants' perceptions regarding police/civilian encounters in a positive direction. However, participant responses suggest that knowing the law brings police conduct into question, and it is evident that the police are not trusted. Therefore, research findings suggest the importance of law education for this population and the need for future research on how to bridge these two populations. Chapter V will provide a discussion of the implications of these research findings, the limitations of this study, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

As a result of either having experienced, witnessed, or perceived racial discrimination on the part of police officers, Black males in the U.S. have a great distrust for police officers (Brooks et al., 2016; Nadal et al., 2017). This distrust creates a great deal of tension between police officers and Black citizens and facilitates exaggerated and often aggressive behaviors toward one another. This tension often further perpetuates the cycle of discrimination towards Black males. Prior research suggests that Black men in the U.S. are affected the most by police discrimination and therefore have the worst perception of police officers and the judicial system as compared to other races (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Brunson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler, 2005; Webb & Marshall, 1995). Research suggests that communities that trust their police force are more likely to obey laws and work collaboratively with police (Murphy et al., 2014; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). Prior research implies that a possible way to improve Black males' issues with police discrimination is to improve their understanding of procedural justice with the intent of increasing their understanding to potentially build trust between these two groups (Murphy et al., 2014; Obama, 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

Therefore, this study aimed to enhance participants' knowledge of Texas law by utilizing action research mixed methods. Secondly, the study aimed to explore the extent to which the educational interventions increased participants' knowledge of the law. Thirdly, the study aimed to investigate whether there is any shift in perceptions of police and civilian interactions because of participants being made aware of applicable state laws and how to apply those laws to police/civilian encounters. Lastly, the study aimed to identify key factors or variables that could help develop remedies to resolve the tensions between these two groups, potentially aid in

building trust, and reduce the number of deaths resulting from contacts between police officers and Black males.

The following section will discuss the research findings for each of the police/civilian scenarios portrayed to participants of this study. Namely, an interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative findings will be discussed, followed by a summary of the research findings. The chapter will then provide a discussion regarding the implication for practice and research recommendations, followed by a discussion of the key contributions of the study. The chapter will also review the study's limitations, include a final reflection, and draw a conclusion.

Discussion of the Research Findings

Probable Cause

Participants' survey and interview responses supported each other within this study. The themes identified during the pre-educational focus group interviews were that most participants felt the stop was justified, the driver acted inappropriately, that the officer's search of the citizen's car was not lawful, and that the police cannot be trusted. Consistent with these themes, the quantitative portion of the study before participants were educated on the laws further reflected these notions. Namely, participants were under the impression that an officer could not search their vehicle unless given permission, regardless if the vehicle smelled of marijuana or alcohol. Specifically, according to the quantitative portion of the study, 19 participants (51.3%) believed an officer could not search their vehicle without their permission or a warrant even when the presence of marijuana or alcohol was suspected.

This perception changed post-education significantly and resulted in 84% (n = 31) of participants identifying with an officers' right to search a vehicle because of probable cause based on the officer's perception that other laws were being broken (smell of marijuana or

alcohol) (z = -3.25, p = .001). The qualitative results further supported this after participants were educated, wherein they stated their perceptions had changed due to the knowledge they garnered.

Police Can't be Trusted. A recurrent theme in both pre- and post-education for each focus group was that the police could not be trusted. Specifically, participants noted that the officer might have acted "correctly" because he was being filmed. Several participants suggested that the actual behavior of officers on the street is quite different than what was displayed in the video. For example, a post-educational participant quote was, "so the cops they understand what the law is, they know what it is, but like he said, you have some that want to do it by the book and some that just do it half-ass, you know?"

Overall, participants indicated a substantial change in their pre- versus post-educational perception related to all the themes identified (justified stop, driver acting inappropriately, and vehicle search without a warrant) except for trust. Although their post-education perceptions shifted for a couple of participants regarding trust (29 to 31), the change was not as significant as those found for the other themes identified. These research findings suggest that an educational intervention can shift citizens' perceptions of law enforcement and could therefore be a tool for bridging the gap between Black citizens and police officers. Namely, although the findings suggested there was not a significant shift in trust, there was a more favorable shift in participants perceptions of police.

Failure to Identify

Consistent with interview findings, the quantitative analysis revealed that participants were confused about their rights related to showing their identification to police officers. Initially, as illustrated in Table 4.7 in the quantitative portion of the study, participants scored

low on two main questions on the survey relating to having to give their identification when detained or witnessing a crime (n = 17) and when being stopped from walking away on the streets (n = 17). Once informed of the laws regarding failure to identify, participants showed significant improvement in their understanding of when they had to show their identification. Specifically, a statistically significant difference was found between participants' pre- and post-educational responses regarding showing their identification when detained or witnessing a crime (n = 29) and when being stopped from walking away on the street (n = 32).

The quantitative findings in this study further supported participants' interview responses. Namely, less than 50% of focus group participants correctly identified that they had to show their ID when asked due to being detained, arrested, or witnessing a crime or when they are stopped from being able to walk away. However, upon post-education, participants scored above the 75th percentile for correctly identifying that they needed to provide their ID in those situations. As found in the previous module, post-educational perceptions suggested that knowledge of the law significantly affected their perceptions of police and responses. However, because of how the civilian in this module coaxed police officers, this module amplified participants' questioning of police behavior. Namely, because the civilian in the video was coaxing police officers and was aware of his rights, and the police behaved in an unfavorable way, the study participants became more critical of the officer's behavior in this instance. Namely, it was evident from the video that the police officers themselves may have been unaware of the law. However, the study's participants perceived that police officers were aware and willingly violated the civilian's rights by demanding to see his identification and then ultimately detaining him by bringing him into the police station. Therefore, the post-educational theme identified in the qualitative portion of this module was unfavorable police conduct.

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative findings were complimentary and provided evidence that an educational intervention can shift citizens' perceptions about police/civilian encounters. However, the qualitative portion of this study provides insight into a potential reason why no significant findings were found on the POPS regarding police trustworthiness. Participants were dissatisfied with police behavior and considered it unfavorable in that they believed the officer should have offered more explanation to the citizen instead of using their authority in an attempt to force the citizen to comply.

Deadly Force

Participants scored the highest on the pre- and post-educational measures in deadly force of the three video modules. Specifically, in the quantitative portion of the study, participants scored 75% correct pre-education and 88.9% correct post-education. These findings suggest that citizens better understood the law regarding when deadly force can be used before this research study than laws regarding probable cause or failure to identify. Although most participants agreed with the police officer's actions in this instance, post-education focus group interviews revealed 11 participants that did not agree with how the officer handled himself in this situation. Namely, although they agreed that deadly force might have been authorized, they did not agree with how it was carried out. Therefore, the post-education focus group theme identified was unfavorable police conduct.

However, 11 participants were not convinced that running the suspect over was the right course of action. For example, participants made statements such as, "it could have went different, he didn't have to run her over," or "he took the wrong approach, he should have shot her," and "that cop committed murder in that video." Therefore, although the pre-and

post-educational findings were complimentary and suggested an increase in citizens'

understanding of the laws governing the use of deadly force, some participants expressed their

distrust of the police-related to their unfavorable behavior in this instance. Participant responses

suggested that they felt there was a more "humane" way of handling the situation.

POPS

At the beginning of the day, the POPS was administered before any police/civilian

modules were viewed, and then it was administered again at the end of the day, after all modules

had been watched and focus groups conducted. Participants' perceptions significantly improved

between the pre-and-post-intervention concerning the perception that police: (a) treat all fairly,

(b) are good people, (c) do not discriminate, (d) provide safety, and (e) care about the

community. Although participants reported higher post-intervention test scores on all questions,

they were not statistically significant for participants' perceptions regarding seven items on the

survey. Namely, the participants' perceptions that police: (a) are friendly, (b) protect me, (c) are

liked, (d) are helpful, (e) are trustworthy, (f) are reliable, and (g) unbiased did not change

statistically after the intervention.

Therefore, findings from the three educational interventions, focus group interviews, and

the POPS suggest that although participants voiced concerns about how police officers

administered justice, overall, they viewed police/civilian encounters more favorably after being

educated. As a result of these findings, the current study suggests that citizens' perceptions can

be altered using an educational format, thereby suggesting an intervention that could aid in

developing remedies to resolve the tensions between these two groups and potentially aid in

building trust.

Summary

The research findings from this study suggest that knowing the laws significantly impacts participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters predominantly in a more favorable way. Therefore, a significant difference in perceptions was found between participants' initial perceptions about police/civilian encounters and after learning about the law. The qualitative portion of this study further supported the quantitative findings, showing that knowing the law shifted participants' perceptions to be more favorable in relation to the police action exhibited on the videos. The primary way participants' perceptions changed was through a shift in the focus of each video used in the study. Specifically, under each situation presented, probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force, participants' perceptions changed from focusing predominantly on the police officers' actions to that of the civilian or perpetrator in the video. This shift is further supported by the quantitative portion of the study wherein participants' ratings regarding perceptions of police fairness, whether they are good people or not, discriminatory, whether they provide safety, and care about the community showed statistically significant positive improvements in participants' scores between pre-and post-study measures.

Although research findings indicated a positive shift in participants' perspective, knowing the law made participants more heavily question police officer's intent. Namely, unfavorable police conduct was a central theme identified in the research study because participants questioned how officers conducted themselves considering the law. Namely, participants suggested that even though the officer was abiding by the law in their initial contact with the citizen, they did not agree with the manner in which the officer handled the situation. Specifically, participants' responses suggested they felt the officers could have handled the situation more respectfully. These research findings suggest that even though the educational

intervention worked in shifting perceptions, there is a great deal more work to be done to bridge the gap between these two populations. The remainder of the chapter will discuss the implications of the research findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Relating the Findings to Previous Research

As a result of the prevalence and frequency of discrimination against Black males by police officers, President Barack Obama implemented the Task Force on the 21st Century Policing wherein he suggested establishing transparency and trust as essential elements in addressing issues with police shooting incidents and racism on the force (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). In line with this call to action, the research findings from this study suggest that measures can help abridge the relationship between Black citizens in the U.S. and police officers. Specifically, the current study findings resulted in a rejection of the null hypotheses since a statistically significant difference was found in participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters. The research questions and hypotheses were as follows:

RQ1. How does knowing law impact perceptions of police/civilian encounters on the part of civilians (African American males)?

H_{01}: Knowing the laws does not impact participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters as measured by the POPS survey.

H_{a1}: Knowing the law impacts participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters as measured by the POPS survey.

RQ2. How do participant responses change concerning police/civilian encounters regarding probable cause, failure to identify, and deadly force because of taking part in an educational session about the law?

H$_{02}$: Taking part in educational sessions about the law does not change participant's knowledge or responses.

H$_{a2a}$: Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding probable cause changes participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

H$_{a2b}$ Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding probable cause changes participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

H$_{a2c}$ Taking part in educational sessions about the law regarding probable cause changes participants' knowledge, thereby changing their responses.

These research findings suggest that the implementation of community workshops and events centered around educating community members on current laws is a potential way to open the lines of communication between these two groups. Although prior research has explored the use of Citizen Police Academy's to foster a relationship between the community and police members, participants of the prior study consisted of 317 people, of which 6.4% were Black citizens, 41.6% Latino, 37.6% White, 8.1% Asian, or Pacific Islander, and 6.3% were designated as other (Perez et al., 2020). Therefore, the study did not focus on the most susceptible minority population, Black citizens. Therefore, the research findings from this study can address this gap in the literature.

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as other (Perez et al., 2020). Therefore, the study did not focus on the most susceptible minority population, Black citizens. Therefore, the research findings from this study can address this gap in the literature.

The current findings provide support for prior research regarding the distrust Black male populations in the U.S. feel toward police officers (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Brunson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019; Tyler, 2005; Webb & Marshall, 1995), and that perception of procedural justice and police legitimacy is significantly "linked with greater satisfaction with police" (Gau, 2014, p. 187). This has been extensively tested within the literature and suggested to be empirically verified (Murphy, 2009; Murphy et al., 2009; Nagin & Telep, 2017; Reisig, 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Walters & Bolger, 2019). Namely, participants perceived police actions and the police themselves more favorably when they understood the law governing the event being policed. However, this study did not provide support for a statistically significant link between participants' perceptions of police as more trustworthy after knowing the law. I believe this is directly related to participants in the study feeling that police officers should function with higher levels of integrity. Specifically, participants felt that police officers took advantage of minorities as the majority are not as well versed in the law as police officers are. Additionally, one of the videos depicted an officer demanding and eventually detaining someone for not providing their identification. In this particular incident the citizen was under no legal obligation to identify himself to the officer. The participants felt that this unjust behavior is what they are most often subject to and it also highlights police officers misunderstanding and misapplication of law. This finding is consistent with some existing research (Perez, et al, 2020) but contrary to other existing research (Murphy, 2009; Murphy et al., 2009; Nagin & Telep, 2017; Reisig, 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler,

2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Walters & Bolger, 2019). Although participants scored higher on the post-test (2.83 [0.91]) as opposed to the pre-test (2.67 [1.12]) regarding the trustworthiness of police, the findings were not statistically significant (p = .27) within this study.

Prior research regarding the implementation of CPAs to alter citizens' perceptions has suggested that the alteration in perceptions was due to contact with police officers during non-enforcement activities instead of the educational intervention (Perez et al., 2020). However, in the current study, the change in participants' perceptions is only partially attributed to one-on-one contact with Black police officers, namely, myself. I do believe that participants were more prone to participate in the study not only because I am an African American male but also within the age range of the participants and they were aware I grew up in similar environments. Furthermore, I often relayed that I wanted participants to show up as their authentic selves. This was intended to be an open and honest conversations in which we all could grow and learn from one another. Lastly, I also believe it was helpful that I am well aware of the various disenfranchised neighborhoods where the participants were recruited and understand what occurs in those communities as well as the Houston slang spoken in those environments. It is my opinion that this helped me tremendously as being perceived as an insider and not someone from outside of the community seeking information. However, there is no way to attribute participants' change in perceptions to one over the other. Therefore, research findings are partially consistent with prior research regarding a shift in perceptions of citizens because of implementing an educational intervention (Becton et al., 2005; Bonello & Schafer, 2002; Breen & Johnson, 2007; Brewster et al., 2005; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002; Schafer & Bonello, 2001). This variation may be because the population in this study were all lower-income Black males, whereas prior studies did not have a predominantly Black sample. Another plausible explanation for the

variation is the type of education provided and how it was provided. The way I designed the research study, selecting the meeting locations, and selecting the questions that would be used to initiate dialogue was intentional. I researched the most common reasons for police contacts in my target areas and chose to focus on those topics, as I believed it would be the most relatable and impactful. Secondly conducting the study in neutral locations also seemed to be beneficial as participants were relaxed and more open in dialogue. Lastly, with the recent death of George Floyd more African American males eagerly voiced their frustrations and opinions on police related encounters. Variations in education provided, how it was provided, who was providing it, and how data were collected could all affect research findings. This fact has implications for future research projects and will be discussed in the recommendations for the future research section of this chapter.

Implications for Practice

Concerning implementing these research findings into practice, it is important to note that I am a police officer, which could have affected the outcome of this research study. Therefore, a police officer must be used to collaborate with Black citizens to increase the likelihood of replicating the research results. Prior research suggests the importance of building community trust and collaboration through interaction during non-enforcement events. Specifically, prior research suggests perceptions of police legitimacy can be bolstered by increasing the community time with officers during non-enforcement activities (Peyton et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important to note the potential effects of my mere presence as an officer of the law during this educational event and concede that this may have affected participants' perceptions. Prior research has reported a positive effect from a singular non-enforcement police encounter that lasted 21 days (Peyton et al., 2019). Therefore, it is essential to consider that the implications of

the research findings in community workshops should include education by law enforcement instead of other civilians.

It is also important to point out that I am a Black police officer. It is well documented within the literature that Black citizens are challenging to recruit within research (Barrett et al., 2017). Specifically, barriers to recruitment are suggested to include: "mistrust based on historical and current medical abuses; lack of understanding of the purpose and process of research; the influence of social and familial relationships (gatekeepers); and competing priorities such as family or work responsibilities" (Barrett et al., 2017, p. 453). Therefore, it could be suggested that my ability to recruit this population was influenced by my race and therefore provide further implications for these research findings. More importantly, to achieve optimal involvement from community members with the most favorable outcome, Black police officers should recruit and educate community members.

I found this premise to be obvious from the beginning of my attempts to recruit participants for the study. Potential participants and the individuals I asked for assistance in reaching potential participants were concerned about the race of officers that were going to be present in the study. The vast majority of participants made it extremely clear they would not feel comfortable participating if White police officers, whether male or female, were present. The most common reasons were that they did not feel White police officers cared about them or their communities. Secondly, they suggested that the conversations would not be meaningful as White Police officers would not understand how African American males were treated and what was required to survive. After listening to their concerns, I reassured them that no White officers would be present at any focus group sessions. I advised them that these focus group studies had nothing to do with any specific police department in the nation. I then began attempting to build

rapport and credibility with potential participants. I informed them that I knew what it was like to grow up in those communities as I grew up in a disenfranchised community in Houston. I informed them that I shared the same level of distrust for all police officers before becoming a police officer. It was simply the way I was raised. I stressed that I was not hoping to conclude the session with everyone feeling great about the police, which is highly unrealistic. However, I did not want social media to misguide their actions, resulting in them being seriously hurt or killed. I informed potential participants that my sole motivation was to save the lives of African American males and create a dialogue where we learn from each other. I ensured that my passion was evident when having these conversations, which I believe contributed significantly to their responses. Almost everyone that committed to participate stated that they are participating because "I am real," "they fuck with me," or stated, "I believe you." The fact is, the conversation would not have gone far at all if I was not African American.

After the focus group studies were concluded, I thanked everyone for attending. Most waved, others came to shake my hand, and I noticed others hanging around. It was evident that they were waiting around to speak with me. I approached them and began to engage in conversations. The majority wanted to thank me personally and share that they enjoyed participating. Others inquired about me doing more focus groups in the future as they had friends and family they wanted to join. I informed them that if they gathered the individuals, I would gladly host another focus group. Over the next several weeks, I received additional calls and text expressing how glad participants were that they had participated and that they were trying to look at police/civilian situations differently. The following are a few of the text messages I received from participants: "all my potnas glad they really came and we learned some shit nocap appreciate you." "Damn bro that was the truth," "man you put me on game," and "everybody like

it, and dey said it was a great class, nuttin like they thought, now they all think they know

something now."

Another implication of the research findings into practice is facilitating focus groups and

open discussion about the police/civilian encounter being discussed. The presence of other Black

citizens within the group could have fostered a more welcoming and open discussion instead of

one-on-one encounters with just me. By having other Black citizens from the same neighborhood

present, I believe it offered community members the feeling of a safe haven or place where they

could express their ideals and concerns more freely. This open collaboration allowed me to have

deeper conversations with Black community members about their experiences and garner a thick

and rich description of the phenomenon under study.

Implications for Research and Recommendations

Although the current research fully addressed the purpose of the study, it only partially

addressed the problem. The problem is that both Black citizens and police officers are caught up

in an aggressive and reciprocal pattern fostered by Black citizens' agitation, anger, and

frustration toward police officers because of either having witnessed or experienced past

discriminatory behaviors. The perception is that the police react to such behavior with no

compassion and excessive force, triggering a more negative reaction from both parties.

Therefore, resolving police discrimination and the perception of unfair treatment directed

towards African Americans is complex, as evidenced by participants' responses in this study.

Namely, although educating participants on the laws altered their perceptions of the

police/civilian encounters, some participants began to question the way officers handled certain

situations and suggested they disagreed with how the officer dealt with the citizen. Therefore,

although the research findings showed a significant shift in participants' perceptions of police for

the better, participants still did not fully agree with police action. This finding further supports the notion that it requires both groups' participation and cooperation to move this issue forward.

It is important to note that the historical context from which the police force was created may also play a role in Black citizens' perceptions of the police today. It is implied by prior research that rebuilding trust between Black citizens and the police force is needed even to begin to address this issue (Murphy et al., 2014; O'Brien & Tyler, 2019). Although the current study results suggest participants' perceptions moved more favorably toward their perceptions of police/civilian encounters because of the education received in the intervention, a statistically significant shift was not found in participants' perceptions of police officer's trustworthiness. The findings from the study revealed that there are interventions to assist in changing individual dispositions. Still, there is also much more research to be conducted regarding the purpose(s) of the study.

First, future research exploring participants' perceptions of police/civilian encounters following an educational intervention is warranted. The current study highlights the need for future research because the current study was partially addressing the problem statement. Although an increase in perceptions of trustworthiness of police officers was found within this study, the findings were not significant. Therefore, research exploring trust-building interventions in addition to education on local laws is warranted. It is also recommended that future research be conducted with Black citizens from lower-income demographics as the primary population of focus regarding research attempting to bridge the gap between police officers and this minority population. A potential research study could explore if there is a variation in arrest rates between Black citizens based on their skin tone and determine if there is a variation in their behavior toward police officers. Aside from this study, minimal research was

found exploring the lived experience of Black citizens as it relates to police/civilian encounters. In addition to these recommendations, future research could also replicate the current study with several provisions.

Namely, random sampling could be employed as opposed to purposive with a larger population of Black males. Further, participants should be sampled from a larger geographic area where a more significant percentage of the population are Black males. Specifically, a longitudinal study could be conducted wherein participants are recruited from New York, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Jackson, Mississippi; Birmingham, Alabama; Memphis, Tennessee; and Baltimore, Maryland, to name a few (Jones, 2017). These cities and states are suggested to have a large population of African Americans and would therefore be ideal for participant recruitment and the use of random sampling.

In addition to random sampling and using a larger geographic area for recruitment, a longitudinal study design would also bolster research findings. As previously mentioned in the limitations section of this chapter, due to monetary and time constraints, the current study was unable to conduct a longitudinal study to garner a deeper understanding of the effects of the educational intervention. Therefore, future research should consider using a longitudinal study (1 year or longer) across multiple geographic areas to understand the phenomenon under study better.

Future researchers should also consider the use of additional validation strategies to strengthen research findings. Namely, the use of triangulation could significantly improve the validity of research findings. Triangulation is the practice of using multiple sources of data, collection methods, and investigators to ensure a comprehensive research design (Creswell &

Poth, 2016; Yin, 2011). Specifically, the employment of an additional investigator is recommended to reduce subjectivity in the collection and interpretation of research findings.

The logical next step in research upon conclusion of this study is to conduct more research using a prominently Black male population from a larger geographical area to conduct a validated trust interventional study to assess shifts in Black citizen perceptions. It is also further warranted to conduct studies using validated trust interventions using police officer populations to determine how to shift police officers' perceptions of Black citizens to build trust within communities.

Key Contributions

Although the current study results suggest participants' perceptions were moved more favorably toward their perceptions of police/civilian encounters because of the education received in the intervention, a statistically significant shift was not found in participants' perceptions of police officers' trustworthiness. The findings from the study revealed that there are interventions to assist in changing individual dispositions. Still, there is also much more research to be conducted regarding the purpose(s) of the study.

Limitations

Several limitations of the current study are expected. First, the target population of Black males in the community has been historically underrepresented in research (Lewis, 2003; Toms et al., 2016). Therefore, it was suspected that obtaining the number of participants needed for this study in this population would be challenging, which it was. I employed snowball sampling to mitigate this impending limitation, hoping that familiarity between participants would increase recruitment efforts. However, as a result, the sample collected may not be fully represented by

the desired population since most participants may have been a part of a singular cohort of respondents.

Another potential limitation of the proposed study is that it occurred during the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic and bolstering the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement (civil rights movement of the 2020s). These environmental factors may have significantly affected participants' willingness to participate in the study and alter participant responses and behaviors. To mitigate some of these potential challenges, I provided the necessary personal protective equipment and environmental conditions conducive to foster open and relaxed participation within the study. For example, social distancing was observed, and PPE was used to include masks. In addition, single-serve refreshments were provided during each weekend session, and hand sanitizer stations were available in the meeting area. The area was also well ventilated and offered a climate-controlled environment and comfortable seating options. It is also plausible that the community may have been more eager to participate in this study because of the BLM movement.

Further, the videos used within the current study may have elicited overly emphasized emotions related to police/civilian encounters. Therefore, it is plausible that participant responses were affected by the current climate of the nation. As a result, I encouraged a relaxed environment and was sensitive to participants' feelings and behavior during the study. Aside from the inherent design limitations, the current study had additional limitations to include: (a) the use of purposive sampling, (b) all respondents came from a singular geographical location, (c) risk of potential response bias, and (d) monetary and time restrictions.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique and, therefore, reduces the research findings' generalizability (Palinkas et al., 2015). Unfortunately, because the population

sampled consisted of a small percentage of the overall population, probability sampling was not feasible in this context. However, probability sampling techniques would have been more favorable because random selection increases the generalizability of the research findings (Smith, 2020). The second limitation of the research study is that participants came from a concentrated area of the state. Specifically, participants were recruited from predominantly Black communities within the metro Houston, Texas area. Therefore, the research findings of this study have limited generalizability but might be transferable to other communities with similar demographics.

In addition to the limitations associated with purposeful sampling and participants selected from a limited geographical area, some participants may have exhibited response bias during the focus group interviews. Social desirability is a response bias wherein participants respond to the interviewee in a way that they perceive to be more favorable to the researcher (Villar, 2011). Namely, I am a Black police officer; some participants may have responded less truthfully or honestly because of my authority. However, they may have also been more open because I am Black and showed a willingness to open a dialogue with them about law enforcement, as evidenced by their communication with me upon the study's conclusion. Another contributing factor is that my urban dress attire could have also resonated with the participants. Most some relieved when I shared that I also grew up in the same type of disenfranchised, crime-ridden communities they currently reside in . Therefore, they may have perceived me as being more on their side, as opposed to being just a police officer there to impose the law.

Further, there is the potential for other variables relating to my demographics and interview characteristics that could have potentially biased participants' responses. Villar (2011)

has suggested that variables such as the interviewees' gender, ethnicity, and "pace of speech" all could significantly facilitate bias in participant responses (Villar, 2011, p. 754). These factors could have influenced participants' responses and, therefore, the research findings of this study.

Finally, due to monetary and time restraints, the study had to be conducted to abide by those constraints. Therefore, a longitudinal study could not be conducted to add further support for the research findings. Suppose I had money and time to conduct a more thorough investigation of the research topic. In that case, more participants could have been reached, thereby giving way to a richer collection of data for analysis. However, the current study methodology, design, and time used to collect data were sufficient to find statistically significant findings and inform the current literature.

Final Reflection

Currently, the law enforcement climate and relations with the African American community are so broken that I believe this study was extremely timely. However, it raised concerns about obtaining participants and the type of energy that would occupy the space if participants agreed to partake in the study. Although there were many excuses I could have provided to redirect my dissertation study, I understood the importance of following through. This particular subset of African American males has been absent from research discussing their perceptions and knowledge surrounding law enforcement in previous research.

This study has confirmed that African American males have a voice that they want to be heard in academic research. However, trust and credibility are mandatory to move the conversation forward. My being African American was mandatory in moving this conversation forward. However, trust and credibility remained a qualifying factor. The openness shared in discussions confirmed injustices in enforcement actions carried out in minority communities.

Based on the feedback received, it is clear that most participants felt that law enforcement is not part of the community but instead there to employ abusive and strong-arm enforcement tactics.

The study also confirmed that officers' actions were often the first thing critiqued without giving much thought to the actions of the civilian. Through communication as a group, we were able to look at each encounter in its totality and identify improper behavior by officers and civilians. Through group dialogue about the videos watched, combined with Texas law, there was a level of understanding of why officers could respond with various levels of force. I always reminded the group that I was not asking if they felt the behavior was right or wrong but was more concerned with whether their interpretation of the law justified the behavior. This study was beneficial and a positive step in sharing ownership of issues that arise from police encounters.

This study further highlights the disconnect in trust between African American males and police officers, specifically White Officers. This study highlights that there are members of the African American community willing to have courageous conversations. However, it is up to local law enforcement entities to leverage their diversity to build rapport and trust with the African American community. This study is evidence that conversations can take place. It is just up to individual agencies to bring this to fruition.

Further, as a law enforcement executive, it ignites the duty to bring this conversation forward amongst my colleagues and involves multiple constituents in hopes of obtaining community support. This effort could also be viewed as an accountability measure as we want the community to hold police officers accountable for any wrongdoings. However, in achieving this, we must educate those most impacted by the injustices of the criminal justice system on

what the law views as justifiable and unjustifiable. Let's do more than say the community has the power. Let's take calculated measures as mentioned here to empower the people truly.

Finally, my findings relate to Freire's work as it highlights the importance of a shift in knowledge and power. Specifically, this study highlighted that no one person held power or was the sole source of information. Instead, everyone involved equally contributed, creating a process in which we all grew and learned from each other's input. The interactions between the participants and I also emphasized that effective dialogue is communication, and without communication, there cannot be education. Knowledge was able to be gathered because no one tried to impose their views on others. However, we were able to speak about individual views to gain a more informed understanding of how different people's life experiences shaped their views. At the conclusion of the study, it was evident that most participants felt a sense of empowerment as they were better equipped to navigate oppressive law enforcement behavior.

Conclusion

As a result of the growing distrust between Black citizens and police officers, negative police/civilian encounters within Black minority populations continue to grow. Addressing the issues between these two groups is essential in establishing trust and reducing discrimination against Black minorities. The purpose of this action research mixed-methods study was to explore Black males' perceptions of police/civilian encounters before and after an educational intervention regarding the laws being broken in the encounter. Therefore, I sought to determine if a deeper understanding of the laws would alter participants' perceptions toward the police officer in a more positive way. Further, the study aimed to identify key constructs or variables that could help develop remedies to resolve the tensions between these two groups and potentially aid in building trust.

The research findings suggest that interventions can be implemented that alter Black citizens' perceptions regarding police behavior. These research findings are important because they suggest that something can be done constructively to bridge the gap between Black citizens and police officers with the hope of reducing discrimination and prejudicial behaviors toward Black citizens. The literature suggests the importance of building trust between these two groups to foster more amicable police/civilian encounters and interactions. Therefore, this research topic is of extreme importance in addressing police discrimination. The current study provides a strong foundation for future researchers to build from addressing this research topic. Several recommendations for future research have been made, building from the current study design and new recommended studies. After centuries of discrimination against Black citizens, this issue is again at the forefront of America's mind as recent police killings of Black males have surfaced over the last decade. The time to take proactive action to address this issue is now and can be guided by scientifically sound research into this topic for viable interventions.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer

Please Consider Participating in this Civilian-Police Encounters Interventional Research Study

We are seeking individuals to participate in a research study to explore perceptions of civilian-police encounters and experiences of an educational intervention. The research findings from this study could potentially benefit the Black community across the United States as it pertains to aiding in extinguishing the racial tensions between police and Black males.

Eligible to Participate

- Between the ages of 18 to 35 years old
- African-American descent
- Fluent in English
- Are coming forward to participate voluntarily
- Available and willing to participate in a 4-hour session
- Single person household income not greater than $28,500, per year or two person household income not greater than $40,000 per year.
  - Not a member of a protected group such as:
    - A minor (under 18 years old)
    - A prisoner
    - Mentally handicapped

Contact Information

Glynell Horn Jr.
Principle Investigator

This project is being conducted by Glynell Horn Jr. (student principle investigator) and Dr. Donna Ladkin, Ph.D. (Chair) at Antioch University and has been approved by the Antioch University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Appendix B: Consent Form

Project Title: A History of Distrust: How knowing the Law Impacts African American Males Perceptions of Police Encounters
Project Investigator: Glynell Horn Jr., PhD Program in Leadership & Change
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Donna Ladkin, Ph.D., FRSA

1. I understand that this study is of a research nature. It may offer no direct benefit to me.

2. Participation in this study is voluntary. I may refuse to enter it or may withdraw at any time without creating any harmful consequences to myself. I understand also that if I choose to withdraw from the study the investigator may choose not to include my data in the study. Also, I understand that the investigator may drop me at any time from the study.

3. The purpose of the study is to determine if perceptions about police behavior as it relates to police/civilian encounters is understood differently before versus after being informed about the law being enforced.

4. As a participant in the study, I understand that I will be asked to take part in the following procedures:

   a. In one day, attend 3 sessions wherein I will be asked to do the following in each session:
      i. Take a pre-test survey
      ii. Watch a police/civilian encounter video
      iii. Participate in a focus group discussion regarding the video just watched
      iv. Participate in an educational session
      v. Watch the police/civilian encounter video again
      vi. Take a post-test
      vii. Participate in another focus group discussion

   b. I also understand that I will be asked to complete a survey at the beginning of the day and at the very end of the day regarding my perception toward police officers.

   Participation in the study will take four hours of my time and will take place at, I was wondering if I could list the exact location later. Due to Houston being a large city, I was going to establish location(s) based on proximity of participants.

5. The risks, discomforts, and inconveniences of the above procedures might be:

   i. I may recall painful or uncomfortable memories because of the topic being discussed
   ii. I may feel angry or upset because of the topic being discussed.

  iii. I may share thoughts or feelings with other participants of the study that could bring about social consequences.

  iv. I may choose to contact Cypress Creek Mental Health Services at 281–586–7600 for assistance if these feelings persist

  v. There are no financial or physical risks to me.

6. The possible benefits of the process might include:

 a. An increased awareness of local laws and citizen rights.

 b. Also, I may experience self-awareness regarding my own thoughts and feelings as it relates to law enforcement.

 c. I may obtain a deeper understanding of how to manage police/civilian encounters.

 d. I may form positive relationships with other community members because of participation in the study.

 e. By participating, I may be contributing to research that helps diffuse the tensions between law enforcement and Black males in the community and nationwide.

7. Personal identifiers will be removed, and the de-identified information may be used for future research without additional consent.

8. Information about the study were discussed with me by Glynell Horn Jr. (principal investigator/researcher). If I have additional questions, I can contact him at (281) 974–0917.

9. Though the purpose of this study is primarily to fulfill Glynell Horn Jr.'s requirement to complete a formal research project at Antioch University, the investigator intends to include the data and results of the study in future scholarly publications and presentations. All data will be de-identified so that participants will not be known to anyone but the investigator. The confidentiality agreement, as articulated above, will be effective in all cases of data sharing.

If I have any questions about the study, I will contact Glynell Horn Jr.

If I have any questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact Dr. Lisa Kreeger, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, PhD in Leadership and Change Program, Antioch University at lkreeger@antioch.edu

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Appendix C: Perceptions of Police Scale (POPS)

This section contains statements, which describe the perceptions that you may have regarding police officers. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

(Response format: 1= I Strongly Agree; 2= I Agree; 3= I Neither Agree nor disagree; 4= I Disagree; 5= I Strongly Disagree)

1)	Police officers are friendly
2)	Police officers protect me
3)	Police officers treat all people fairly
4)	I like the police
5)	The police are good people
6)	The police do not discriminate
7)	The police provide safety
8)	The police are helpful
9)	The police are trustworthy
10)	The police are reliable
11)	Police officers are unbiased
12)	Police officers care about my community

* "higher scores indicate more favorable perceptions of the police, while lower scores indicate less favorable perceptions of the police" (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015, p. 4)

Appendix D: Pre- and Post-Tests

Appendix D1: Probable Cause Survey

1) A police officer can legally search my car if:
    a. They feel like it
    b. They have a hunch or think that I did something
    c. They ask if they can search and I say yes
    d. The police officer notices something (see, smell, hear) that suggest that I may have committed a crime or that I am about to

2) A police officer can legally search my car without my permission if:
    a. They smell weed or alcohol
    b. My eyes are blood shot, or I look high
    c. They see an empty beer can or liquor bottle in my car
    d. I have prior arrests or convictions

3) The fourth amendment protects my right to:
    a. Bear arms
    b. Freedom of speech
    c. Right to a lawyer
    d. Prevent unreasonable search and seizure

4) The Carrol Doctrine allows police to:
    a. Use deadly force
    b. Search my vehicle without a warrant
    c. Hold me without cause
    d. Pull me over without cause

5) Police are able to enter my home or vehicle without my permission if:
    a. They believe someone needs help or aid
    b. They believe or have reason to believe that I am armed and dangerous
    c. They believe I will destroy evidence or contraband (illegal items)
    d. They have a hunch or suspicion I am up to no good

6) A police officer can pat me down if:
    a. They suspect I have a weapon
    b. They feel like it
    c. They have a gut feeling
    d. They have a hunch

Appendix D2: Failure to Identify Survey

1) I have to give my name, address, and date of birth to police if:
   a. Asked for
   b. I've been arrested
   c. They believe I'm acting suspiciously
   d. I don't want to be arrested
2) Detention is when an officer:
   a. Stops me from being able to walk away
   b. Writes me a ticket
   c. Forces me to pick up trash or do community service
   d. Hand cuffs me and puts me in jail for breaking the law

Appendix D3: Deadly Force Survey

1) When is an officer justified in using deadly force?
   a. When they feel like it
   b. When no one is watching
   c. When someone is in the act of attempting to kill someone else
   d. If a citizen refuses to answer their questions

2) When is an officer justified in using deadly force?
   a. When witnessing sexual or aggravated sexual assault
   b. When being spit on by a citizen
   c. When being cussed at or called names by a citizen
   d. If a citizen runs away from the police for no apparent reason

3) When is an officer justified in using deadly force?
   a. When they feel like it
   b. When their partner says it is ok
   c. When witnessing someone being kidnapped or robbed
   d. If the person being arrested doesn't listen and do what the officer says

Appendix E: Links to Videos

Probable Cause Video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLedllETYD4&t=999s

Video shown to participants starts at 13:33 and ends at 17:49.

Fail to Identify:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH0QXaO4nNs

Deadly Force:
Please contact researcher for video footage.

Appendix F: Focus Group Interview Questions

Post-Video Interview Questions (PVIQ)

Appendix F1: Probable Cause Focus Group Interview Questions (PVIQ)

1. What are your initial thoughts about the video?
2. Do you believe the officer acted appropriately? Why or why not
3. Do you believe the driver acted appropriately? Why or why not
4. What if any laws were broken?
5. What was the justification for the search?

Appendix F3: Failure to Identify (PVIQ)

1. What are your initial thoughts about the video?
2. Do you believe the officer acted appropriately? Why or why not
3. Do you believe the citizen acted appropriately? Why or why not
4. Do you believe the citizen should have identified himself as the officer requested?
5. What if any laws were broken?
6. What was the justification for the detention?
7. Was it lawful? Why or why not

Appendix F5: Deadly Force (PVIQ)

1. What are your initial thoughts about the video?
2. Do you believe the officer acted appropriately? Why or why not
3. Do you believe the officer should have taken other action? Why or why not
4. Did the officer take lawful action? Why or why not

Post-Intervention Interview Questions (PIIQ)

Appendix F2: Probable Cause Focus Group Interview Questions (PIIQ)

1. Have anyone's initial thoughts changed? Why or why not
2. Do you believe the driver acted appropriately? Why or why not
3. What violation of the law did you witness?
4. What was the justification for the search?
5. What were the main take-aways after watching the video and having Focus Group Conversation?

Appendix F4: Failure to Identify (PIIQ)

1. Do you believe the officer acted appropriately? Why or why not
2. Do you believe the citizen should have identified himself as the officer requested?
3. What if any laws were broken?
4. What was the justification for the detention?
5. Was it lawful? Why or why not

Appendix F6: Deadly Force (PIIQ)

1. Now what are your initial thoughts about the video?
2. Do you believe the officer acted appropriately? Why or why not
3. Do you believe the officer should have taken other action? Why or why not
4. Did the officer take lawful action? Why or why not

Appendix G: Intervention-Introduction to Laws Presented to Participants

Appendix G1: Laws Pertaining to Probable Cause Video

Probable Cause

- Facts and circumstances within the police officer's knowledge that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the suspect has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime.

- Probable cause must come from specific facts and circumstances, NOT only from the officer's hunch or suspicion.
  - Facts and circumstances are drawn from the officers observation, using their sense (sight, smell, hearing, or touch), training and experience as well as based on officers working knowledge of an area etc.

- **The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution:** The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against Unreasonable Searches and Seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Vehicle Exception- "Carrol Doctrine"

- Carroll v. U.S., 267 U.S. 132 (1925)-Police may conduct a warrantless search of a vehicle stopped on traffic if there is probable cause to believe that the vehicle contains contraband or evidence. The search without a warrant is justified based on the exigent circumstance that a vehicle stopped on traffic could be quickly moved out of the city or jurisdiction (readily mobile vehicle) of the investigating agency.

Exigent Circumstances

- Circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to believe that entry (or other relevant prompt action) was necessary to prevent physical harm to the officers or other persons, the destruction of relevant evidence, the escape of the suspect, or some other consequence delaying legitimate law enforcement efforts.

- There are three categories of exigent circumstances that justify a warrantless intrusion by police officers:
  - 1) Providing aid or assistance to persons whom law enforcement reasonably believes are in need of assistance;
  - 2) Protecting police officers from persons whom they reasonably believe to be present, armed, and dangerous; and
  - 3) Preventing the destruction of evidence or contraband.

Pat-Downs

- **Pat downs** are permissible if the officer has reasonable suspicion that the suspect has a weapon. That reasonable suspicion is required to be founded on specific, **articulable facts** known to the officer, and not simply a hunch or gut feeling.

Appendix G2: Laws Pertaining to Failure to Identify Video

Failure to Identify

- A person commits an offense if he intentionally refuses to give his name, residence address, or date of birth to a peace office who has lawfully arrested the person and requested the information

- Class C Misdemeanor

- Texas Penal Code 38.02

Failure to Identify

- A person commits an offense if he intentionally gives a false or fictitious name, resident address, or date of birth to a peace office who has:
  - Lawfully arrested the person;
  - Lawfully detained the person; or
  - Requested the information from a person that the peace officer has good cause to believe is a witness to a criminal offense.
- Class B Misdemeanor
- Texas Penal Code 38.02

Detention

- The act of keeping back, restraining, or withholding, either accidentally or by design, a person or a thing.
- Detention occurs whenever a police officer restrains an individual from walking away.
- Detention is not a formal arrest however it is an element of a TORT of False imprisonment.

Appendix G3: Laws Pertaining to Deadly Force Video

Appendix H: Permission for Use of Figure

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