Embeddedness within Police Recruitment: How social networks and relationships influence the hiring of new police recruits

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Acknowledgements

I was warned wholeheartedly about the pursuit of a PhD.

My family warned me about the fact that my wife was studying to be a vet full time; I was caring for my children whilst she worked long hours with a two hours plus commute. I was also a full time police officer, and during the course of this research was promoted twice to the dizzying heights of Chief Inspector in a busy seaside town. My colleagues would aften call me 'mad' and question how I had two seconds to rub together, never mind write a thesis. I would say now that all of those warnings were both well-meaning and absolutely correct. I fully appreciate the kind – and occasionally harsh - warnings that sought to turn me away from this endeavour. In my own 'true-to-my-self' style however, I have politely refused to pay heed to such kind warnings, and instead embarked upon one of the hardest, but most fulfilling things in my life to date.

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Abstract

Studies of police diversity in England and Wales have focused upon both the proportion of Police Officers from under-represented groups when compared with the community that they serve, and the cultural behaviours highlighted in critical inquiries such as the Macpherson and Scarman Reports. There has been no 'step change' in the recruitment of diverse police officers in the UK over the last decade, although Home Office figures illustrate a steady growth of under-represented candidates across the wider police workforce. These two main areas of diversity based research fail to examine the underlying social interactions, and the value and function of social networks, that underpin the process of police recruitment.

Utilising the theory of embeddedness proposed by Granovetter, this thesis provides a thematic analysis of new police officer's perspectives on the police recruitment process. This theory posits that processes usually discussed within the economic frame of reference are enmeshed with mundane social interaction and supported through agency and structures inherent within established social networks. Based on 26 semi-structured, in-depth interviews of recruits in a mixed rural and urban police force, this thesis presents a framework of ideas to inform on the concept of embeddedness within police recruitment.

The analysis illustrates significant levels of embeddedness between existing social relationships and the police recruitment process within the researched constabulary. The interviews illustrate that existing police based social relationships facilitate an exchange of information between serving officers and candidates. These interactions are both instructional and pastoral. The analysis also demonstrates that pastoral family and partner based support was seen to be more important to candidates than instructional support with regards to the recruitment process. Finally, the nature of the information passed through social ties, is different to that passed through positive action initiatives. In order to improve diversity in policing, these findings suggest constabulary's recruitment processes need to prioritise pastoral support and building community relations over providing instructional support through existing positive action initiatives.

Contents

Table of Figures

Tables

Page Number	Table Reference	Title
88	Table 1	Table of stages in the police recruitment process
94	Table 2	Table of the relative success for white and under-represented candidates nationally
107	Table 3	Table of ties of association and success outcome
133	Table 4	Sampling Cohorts
144	Table 5	Qualitative Validity Table
148	Table 6	Initial Coding Frequency
150	Table 7	Secondary Coding Frequency
156-7	Table 8	Social Tie Frequency Table
158	Table 9	Demography coding table
158	Table 10	Police recruitment stages
187-8	Table 11	Coding frequency of social ties per interviewee
189	Table 12	Frequency of social support per recruitment stage

Terminology

This is usually an area where a selection of acronyms is collated and explained, but this thesis remains a discussion of diversity in policing and this as a main point of terminology should be addressed and discussed prior to a fair reading of this thesis.

The initial writing for draft submission contained the term BAME throughout, this standing for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic candidates. In many ways, the choice of this term for me as a writer came from the institutions that are also mentioned throughout. These include Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the College of Policing (COP), and the Home Office. They have presented numerous governmental reports that both utilise the term as a definer for under-represented groups and also with regards to the setting of their targets for developing proportionate representation through the application of New Public Management techniques (NPM). The adoption of the BAME term was almost unconscious in that respect, as I chose to simply lift it and utilise it, as if it carried no further meaning than the words that it simply represented. This approach lacked reflexivity, and it became clear to me that not only was the term ontologically loaded, but that it also carried agency. In Chapter 1 I discuss how the term Diversity is synonymous with race in the police environment, and this is exposed not just in solid analysis of the research literature, but also within governmental publications. The Home Office report on 'Police Diversity' (2017) is so heavily focused on the proportion of BAME officers (the report utilises BME) that it assists with the notion that diversity in policing is solely focused on race as a definer, and not wider areas of diversity such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI+) community, the Gypsy Roma Traveller community, disability, cognitive diversity or other more commonly understood factors such as age, gender and social class. This creates a hierarchy of value for diversity in policing, and I believe that I am contributing to that hierarchy by utilising the term BAME throughout. This term is therefore only used when in direct reference to governmental reports where it is used exclusively. Within my methodology I allow for the disclosure of eligibility for positive action for all of my interviewees, and this was a conscious effort for them to be able to discuss their differences, without those solely being focused on race.

At numerous points during this thesis I will make reference to presocialisation. I have used this term purposively and in substitution for the more accepted and commonly utilised term of 'Anticipatory Socialisation' (Van Maanen, 1973, 1975; Bennett, 1984; Conti, 2006b; Charman, 2017). This is very deliberate, as from gathering

the data for this thesis, it became clear that socialisation was not something that occurred simply at the point of finally accepting the 'anticipation' to actually become an officer. In many of the interviews, candidates described periods of socialisation that existed, unnoticed for decades, and to not include this as a stage, or for that stage to be designated 'civilian' (Conti, 2006b) is to essentially remove it from meaningful consideration. I have chosen to use the much more inclusive term 'presocialisation' because it takes into account all of the *before*. It is hoped that the findings illustrated later in this thesis sufficiently justify this choice for the reader.

I have also chosen to refer to the researched constabulary as Westford Constabulary. This was a conscious choice to anonymise the constabulary, but also a mix of the popularly used 'fake' constabularies used in police recruitment scenarios that this reports focuses on; these being Sandford and Westshire. Please forgive me this slight indulgence.

For those readers who lean to the left or the right politically, this is not a thesis that intends to or indeed does play 'identity politics'. It was a conscious consideration throughout and I attempted to avoid it as much as possible. It does intend to discuss the ontological narrowing of the term diversity into race within the policing setting without ascribing value to this narrowing – in other words, in this thesis, no one 'type' of diversity holds any value over any other. Indeed, actors discussing and understanding diversity as synonymous with race within the police setting creates value and performs exclusion without any assistance from me.

This discussion notwithstanding, despite this ontological narrowing, race is a vital determiner that plays a prominent role in public discourse and is preeminent in large scale, policing related scandals. There are indeed deeply rooted issues within the police with regards to race, and these issues should not be ignored or underplayed. In an ideal world, diversity as it is discussed within this thesis would centre on difference as a determiner, and include all of the aforementioned groups and their definers. I have simply settled on the term 'under-represented' throughout this thesis, and I hope with good grace, that you can accept this as a genuine effort to try and steer clear from holding some aspects of identity as more important than others. As always, I remain open to suggestion with regards to this issue and would accept personal contact to discuss other possible options so that I may remain as sensitive as possible to those for whom – I hope - this thesis represents a hopeful analysis and critique.

An introduction to this thesis

When beginning to research this thesis, the researcher was motivated to explore the processes and procedures that sustained policing as a profession. They had completed two Masters degrees; an MSc at Warwick Business School (Stubbs, 2016) and an MRes from Canterbury Christ Church Police Research Center (Stubbs, 2017). These were sequential pieces of work. The first was a qualitative study of the perceptions of police officers of positive action initiatives, and the second was a quantitative study of the effects of existing social ties on the relative success of candidates in the police recruitment process. At this time, these studies bled into each other, representing two perspectives: one with regards to the internal perceptions of recruitment processes, and another on its external, social influences. Both of these studies assisted with developing the context for this PhD., which ultimately focuses in on how the police recruitment process is experienced by candidates in the researched constabulary.

These studies had developed a distinct motivation to gain greater understanding of what the term '*diversity*' means for the police, and whether our current processes are really contributing to improving it. The first chapter will explore this in greater detail, and illustrate that major governmental inquiries have both shaped and constricted how the term has developed. It aims to show how the internal culture of policing, shaped by external governance, has narrowed its meaning into that of representation. This constriction of meaning, twinned with high capital performance measures around that representation, has created a system embedded within police recruitment that aims to reduce disproportionality for under-represented groups often referred to as positive action. In the researched constabulary, this takes the form of extra informational sessions and feedback that assist under-represented candidates as they navigate the recruitment process.

The Macpherson (1999) and Scarman (1981) enquiries were seminal at the level of policy and governance in England and Wales. They brought to light institutional practices that created and sustained tensions in particular communities. The findings from these enquiries are broadly similar, yet Macpherson (*ibid*) becomes clearer and more critical of police actions, introducing the term *institutional racism* as a means of diagnosing the problem. There have since been critical analyses of the success of this report in changing police behaviour. The critics point out that police made choices about what and how to implement the recommendations, and these choices also created another layer of meaning for the term diversity; in particular the use of broad brush training programs to address the 'problem' of racism in the police.

This chapter culminates in discussing Holdaway's work (1991a, 1994, 1997a, 2003). Holdaway contends that diversity is synonymous with 'race' and holds that this meaning has been created through a process of racialisation within the police force. He states that the term and its meaning are dynamically constructed in repeated and often mundane interactions as part of an officer's daily work, and offers a treatise for researchers in this complex area to return to the roots of empirical observation. He argues that it is only through understanding the daily interactions and exchanges between the relevant actors that further understanding of what race actually means for officers can be brought to light. He offers a more complex and nuanced understanding of the term diversity within the realm of police research.

It is after exploring the influence of performance culture, the large scale race related inquiries, and discussion of the socially constructed approach to understanding diversity, that it becomes clear that defining the term is one of police's biggest problems. The term diversity operates at different governance levels in different ways, and is understood through a variety of different lenses – many of which are divorced from practice. The culmination of this review leads to the use of Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012) as the most fitting basis for this investigation.

Chapter 2 then ventures into the research in other disciplines, in particular that of social identity and the operation of labour markets. Labour market theory (primarily the work of Granovetter on embeddedness (1985)) is discussed as providing a much needed, empirical framework to improving understanding in police recruitment. Despite the problematisation of diversity as a term, which recruitment is seen as a method of remedy through improved representation, embeddedness suggests that recruitment will be socially influenced. These social influences can be pervasive, and in extreme cases in some professions an external, internal recruitment pool can be in action. The theory states that the abstracted models of the labour market, such as proportionate representation are too far removed from the daily interactions and socially informed exchanges to operate in any truly useful way. Granovetter argues that socially passed information is really developed currency in these exchanges and that understanding it within context is crucial.

Throughout the police recruitment process, these social interactions build the police identity in candidates, and the discussion which follows on social identity explores this concept. This is discussed in existing police literature as the stage of *presocialisation* and represents candidates *becoming* police, before they actually become sworn officers. This operates in different professions in differing ways, and whilst there is existing study on the training of recruits and the strong socialisation that takes place during this period of training, the

social interactions that precede joining the police have not been explored. The research in social identity provides some evidenced theory that assists with understanding how recruit's identities are created throughout the process of recruitment. Chapter 3 discusses the structure of this recruitment process, and although shorter than the other chapters represents the physical context for the study.

Following an exploration of these areas of research, Chapter 4 explores the chosen method. It discusses the experience of being an internal researcher, which resulted in improved access, but difficult exchanges with those involved in diversity based work internally. The study employs 26 long form interviews from 4 cohorts of police recruits. Utilising the theoretical framework provided by Granovetter (1985), their experience of traversing police recruitment is discussed at length, with emphasis placed upon their social exchanges throughout that process. Chapter 5 then explores the coding process, before summarising the major codes and areas drawn from the interviews. Positive action is discussed by 4 candidates, all of which value the assistance it provides them, it is however distinctly different from the social support received by other candidates – from a social identity perspective, it builds a relationship with the abstract organisation, and not with fellow police officers. This results in recruits receiving positive action assistance being at a different stage of identity development upon joining.

Chapter 6 then explores the results in more detail within the context of a candidate's journey. Their social journeys are explored, ultimately assisting with presenting a more detailed picture of embeddedness within police recruitment. The findings pose interesting challenges for candidates without heavy social support as they traverse the police recruitment process. The last part of the chapter represents a discussion of the findings, considering the level of embeddedness evidenced within the researched constabulary.

Finally, the last section explores the implications for this research, outlining the contribution to knowledge and the potential impact upon policy, within academia, and within practice. Several recommendations are made to reconsider what positive action represents within the constabulary, and how we may consider reforming parts of police recruitment to address strong social tie based impact for some candidates. This chapter reconsiders the nuance around what representation actually means for the constabulary, as simply improving the amount of under-represented candidates does not in any way guarantee integration or assimilation into the organisation, if indeed these are the objectives.

This PhD represents the application of an established theoretical framework into the in-depth, qualitative study of police recruitment. It illustrates that the term diversity in the police environment has been shaped into representation, largely defined by race. This has resulted in the design of positive action initiatives that have been developed to address disproportionality. These initiatives are well intentioned, and do offer informational support to potential police recruits. They don't however, build social identity between under-represented groups and serving police officers – a relationship well evidenced in the other candidates. The study represents a contribution to knowledge in the area of police socialisation and police recruitment, ultimately posing recommendations that challenge the current status quo.

Chapter 1: The Context for this thesis

1.1 An exploration of the meaning of 'diversity' in Policing

In order to properly investigate what is happening with regards to embeddedness in the policing labour market, it is important to understand the social setting and motivations for recruitment. The forthcoming chapter will explore the current political drive to increase police 'diversity,' and in doing so will explore what the term actually means within the policing setting. There will also be a discussion of how particular types of management practices in the public sector have contributed to its meaning; in particular how high profile governmental inquiries have attempted to drive activity in a particular direction. The literature discussed in this section is a mix of academic literature and official reports. Chronologically, they have developed side by side over time, and do reflect themes that eventually provide the setting for the forthcoming study.

The aim of this section is to provide some political and institutional background. This will allow the setting of clear aims and goals for the subsequent investigation. The literature from within this section was contained in key texts such as governmental and institutional reports into police diversity, and from within the policing literature on police recruitment.

Diversity in the area of policing is a dynamic and layered term. In England and Wales, there has been a number of high profile reports that have helped to defined its recent use and meaning that have come as a result of major Home Office enquiries (Scarman, 1981; MacPherson, 1999; Home Affairs Select Committee, 2009). In the last 40 years, there has been continued pressure on police forces to enact changes recommended by these reports, and to acknowledge that diversity is an enduring and important issue for them to focus upon (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005; Home Office, 2017). A number of studies have criticised the policing response to these reports, citing poor definition on the behalf of the reports themselves, and an even poorer response to meeting particular recommendations contained within them (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005; Souhami, 2007, 2014a).

When attempting to properly understand what the term diversity means within this bounded context, a large emphasis is place on proportionate representation within the ranks themselves. This essentially can be distilled

into police forces having the same proportion of diverse police officers, when compared with the communities that they represent. This has been termed Representative Bureaucracy (Kim, 1994; Wilkins and Williams, 2008; Bradbury and Kellough, 2011; Krislov, 2012) and has been studied in many different contexts. The fundamental problem identified by both the Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1999) reports is however, the disproportionate focus upon policing particular communities, and the subsequent poor relationships generated by this focus. There is an assumption inherent within much of the later governmental publications (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016; Home Office, 2017) that Representative Bureaucracy is causal in terms of affecting police behaviours within these communities, and therefore it remains a heavily discussed and focused area of work for senior officers. Other research indicates that there is complexity in this approach; with studies from the USA indicating that increasing diversity in terms of representation has little impact on daily practice (Regoli and Jerome, 1975; Marvasti and McKinney, 2011; Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty and Fernandez, 2017). This suggests that there may be other layers of the term diversity that carry significant meaning, and may be far more effective at addressing fundamental issues identified in Scarman (*ibid*) and Macpherson (*ibid*).

Holdaway (1994, 1997a, 2003) offers significant insight in this area, arguing that race is a dynamic social construction, fundamentally created at the micro transaction level between social actors. He argues for criminologists in this area to return to the roots of empirical study at the level of social interaction (Holdaway and Rock, 2005) and explore how these daily mundane interactions create an understanding of race that subsequently informs and creates action. It is these actions, Holdaway argues, that represent the fundamental facets of the problems identified in Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1989).

Despite this complexity with regards to the term diversity, the Representative Bureaucracy theory still holds primacy in public discourse, suggesting the proportion of police officer numbers when compared to their areas' demographics remains a salient priority for forces throughout England and Wales. Previous research (Stubbs, 2016) indicates that existing Social Ties (Granovetter, 1973) had some causal effect in the relative success of candidates at the point of police recruitment, with those who had existing ties holding a statistically significant advantage of being successful, when compared with those without these ties. This indicated that if forces wish to become representative in terms of proportion to their demographics, then they should be both aware and understand the social networks of candidates and their ability to access and exploit informational resource in this area. The argument proposed by Granovetter (1985) in his theory of embeddedness, is that the abstracted economic models of the labour market – in this case the police recruitment process – are informed and constructed at the level of micro social interaction. This is the same argument proposed by Holdaway (1991a) in

his discussion about race in policing. It is a fundamental argument that proposes that there is a relationship between the abstracted models of Representative Bureaucracy and that of the way that people are recruited and supported through the relevant processes. This is a stage of the recruitment process often called 'anticipatory socialisation' within policing related literature (Van Maanen, 1975).

When examining the literature on anticipatory socialisation, the main source of research was a group of well known studies concerning the socialisation process (Skolnick, 1966; Van Maanen, 1973; Bennett, 1984; Fielding, 1988; Conti, 2006b), and some contemporary mixed method research from Charman (2017). The concept rests upon the axiom that the adoption of a new occupational identity is not a simple switch from one identity into another, it is instead a negotiated and dialectical period where prospective candidates 'test the waters' and explore their possible interactions with the organisation to which they aspire to belong (Deaux and Ethier, 1998; Saayman and Crafford, 2011; Scott, 2016). When applying the theory of embeddedness within this literature, police recruitment therefore will be rooted in mundane, social interactions that represent and make up this negotiated and dialectical space. Degrees of embeddedness exist (Lin and Dumin, 1986; Grieco, 1987; Yuksek, 2017), with particular professions' labour markets infused with social interactions and influences, and others almost without such influence. This is an area that is sparsely researched in terms of empiricism in policing, but often speculated upon within the literature.

All of this literature has something to offer to the concept of police diversity, yet it is often disconnected and in many cases not linked together. Policing related diversity literature often focuses on large-scale enquiries and Representative Bureaucracy, yet the acceptance of both of these issues being important is strongly reinforced in relevant Governmental reports and other formal action plans. Difficult questions about what is happening at the level of micro-social interaction during these large scale enquiries and during police recruitment are often not answered, or simply speculated upon. It is therefore useful to understand exactly how the term has been constructed over time, and what its connotations are understood to be.

1.2 Context: Political Environment

Over recent decades, UK Policing has experienced a sharp rise and fall in New Public Management techniques. (Gruening, 2001; Diefenbach, 2009; Hough, 2010) These techniques were introduced into policing via New

Labour, along with the use of league tables across the service. These were accompanied by bonuses based on force's performance for senior officers. (Guilfoyle, 2012, 2013, 2015) The focus of forces shifted to what was measured, and into the measures themselves, resulting in a national scandal related to corrupt practices within forces up and down the country, culminating in a Parliamentary Inquiry. (PASC, 2014) The behaviours aligned to these targets and figures were seen across multiple public sector bodies, with research establishing similar practices being found within the NHS. (Bevan and Hood, 2006; Hood, 2006, 2007) The Francis Report (Francis, 2013) investigated and found evidence of similar behaviours that ultimately led to the deaths of many people within a UK hospital trust, making this trend prevalent across multiple public sectors.

As this period of striving to hit multiple targets across the police service waned, there has been a move away from such rigid targets and into a more nuanced field of performance management. The ongoing work in Cambridge has sought to introduce measures of Threat, Risk and Harm into UK Policing, and in particular focus on police encounters with vulnerability (Asquith, Bartkowiak-Théron and Roberts, 2017; Bartkowiak-Theron, Asquith and Roberts, 2017; Sanders *et al.*, 2020). On a macro level, these newer approaches that have been introduced within a climate of severe austerity (Ellison, 2012; Millie and Bullock, 2012; Hough, 2013; Hesketh, Cooper and Ivy, 2015; Smith, 2016) and seek to understand increasing levels of complexity; they herald a move away from targets singularly defining policing activity, and instead seek to redefine what policing really is (Goldstein, 1997; Hunt, 2014; Warner and McCarthy, 2014). This is a far cry from 'Zero Tolerance Policing' and 'Broken Windows' theory (Burke, 1998; Punch, 2007) which some speculate may have led to significant community tension. Although these theories are different in their approach, both can result in declining relationships with affected communities, as evidenced in the Ferguson riots (DOJ, 2015), and requires an effort from police organisations to reassess their priorities and dig below the surface of terms such as 'detections', and 'positive outcomes.' The most stark recent exemplar of 'hitting the target and missing the point' in UK policing was the Jay Report (2014) on the Rotherham Child Exploitation scandal, where thefts from vehicles and non-domestic burglary offences were given precedence over repeated, serious sexual offences involving children.

With regards to policing diversity, the legacy of these targets is still in evidence, with a recent parliamentary review into the progress that forces had made (Home Office, 2017) illustrating that the forces were 'way behind' their 'ambition' to be 'truly representative.' Within this context, the targets refer to the numbers of recruited under-represented candidates into the Constabularies in England and Wales. Census data informs the predicted percentage of under-represented residents within their respective county, and the police force must then strive to reflect that representative level within their workforce.

With regards to the recently cited studies that acknowledge the complexity of policing, the literature review which follows seeks to acknowledge the complexity of the term 'diversity' in policing, and expand upon the reductionist measures discussed above.

1.3 Context: New Public Management through to the social construction of race as a term in policing

The following discussion focuses upon the application of New Public Management (NPM) (Gruening, 2001) techniques within policing. It discusses the application of NPM within the police environment, and the subsequent performance management approaches that were generated. These behaviours significantly affected policing in England and Wales, and reductionist targets drove delivery across all forces. The argument within the following discussion is that this environment altered the definition of what 'diversity' means for policing. The governance methods employed by organisations such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) actively measured forces on their recruitment of under-represented groups, and these measurements became headlines in inspection reports and ultimately public inquiries ("House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2017; Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016). NPM techniques drive activity in particular ways, and these ways may be positive in part, but there is always an opportunity cost. It is not possible for forces to do everything, resulting in activity that supports the common maxim that '*what gets measured, gets done.*' The following pages therefore discuss how the NPM approaches have affected policing more widely, and therefore how these methods have contributed to the construction of what is meant by the term 'diversity' in policing in England and Wales.

Following the introduction of New Public Management into policing, the service has experienced the development and entrenchment of a number of performance management frameworks (Guilfoyle, 2012, 2013, 2015). These frameworks have been used for many years and have been supported by adoption of the computer system Compstat (Willis, Mastrofski and Weisburd, 2004; James J Willis, Mastrofski and Kochel, 2010; James J. Willis, Mastrofski and Kochel, 2010). The methods have underpinned the Metropolitan Police's approach to

'Total Policing' (Hogan-Howe, 2012), and performance behaviours and structures such as 'binary comparisons', daily performance meetings, and individual accountability have since flourished within police culture (Guilfoyle, 2015). Binary comparison is a method of performance management that seeks to count key performance indicators over specific measures of time. Today's performance is compared with yesterday's, this week is compared with last week, and this month is compared with last month – or the same month the previous year. This is a dyadic approach to performance management, as described by the term 'binary'; a performance system based on good or bad, 0 or 1, or as they became to be known, 'reds and greens' (PASC, 2014). This system has become infamous following the Public Affairs Select Committee investigation into police performance, following which the Office for National Statistics reduced police crime statistics to the level of 'junk' for the purposes of meaningful analysis (Official Statistics 2014).

Since 2009, there have been a number of public criticisms in the UK of this method of performance management; the research maintains that the insight and activity gained from utilising these methods is limited at best, and totally misleading at worst (McLaughlin, Muncie and Hughes, 2001; Maesschalck, 2004; Diefenbach, 2009; Guilfoyle, 2012, 2013, 2015). These practices do however direct activity, and as such focus specific effort into particular types of action. They essentially operate as an activity based heuristic, creating 'short-cuts' for organisations making decisions with limited resources. Within other public settings the application of NPM methods have led to serious breaches of trust. The Mid Staffordshire report into an National Health Service trust cited similar focuses on performance measures that led to serious unintended consequences including multiple deaths (House of Commons, 2013). These findings have not been limited to England and Wales, with policing in the US exhibiting persistent use of NPM practices that led to the Ferguson riots of 2015 (DOJ, 2015). Regular, measured and rewarded interactions with the public during routine interventions like traffic citations and stop and frisk were subject to performance regimes internally, and the cumulative impact of these measured interventions seriously eroded public trust and legitimacy in law enforcement. These examples illustrate that NPM was not limited to New Labour and UK Policing, but instead an ideology with an accompanying method; one which reduces and directs, raising focus in some areas and causing others to become neglected or even defunct.

It is not just the activities performed and measured that affect legitimacy. The opportunity cost of prioritising the measured activities over others leads to specific choices. In an abstract way the measures have agency and physically affect the choices within practice. The England based Jay Report (Jay, 2014) cites choices to prioritise burglaries and theft from vehicle incidents over child protection, with the ultimate outcome being

unchallenged, sustained abuse towards a very vulnerable set of victims. These choices may have received little resistance from a culture that has been said to prioritise macho pursuits and 'exciting' activities over the more difficult and complex areas of policing (Goldstein, 1997; Loftus, 2010). The measures associated with chasing and arresting burglars and car thieves were eagerly adopted by police forces across England and Wales, whilst the unmeasured harm caused by child grooming received a paucity of resource and officer time in many forces. The 'opportunity cost' in this particular case allowed the development of a sophisticated paedophile ring that operated almost without any form of challenge from police and partner agencies.

This method of performance management therefore influences the operational choices of those involved in policing and is constructed and sustained through a series of measures, interactions and behaviours internally. Daily meetings and hierarchical function govern the delegation and accountability of activity (Willis, Mastrofski and Weisburd, 2004, 2007; James J. Willis, Mastrofski and Kochel, 2010) holding leaders to account over daily, weekly and monthly delivery against the targets. These performance systems also ushered in operational decision making structures and terms from the private sector (McLaughlin, Muncie and Hughes, 2001), including the reference to 'customers' and 'customer service'. These operational changes conflicted with established informal norms and values within policing, both of which Chan (1996) discuss within her research in policing and England and Wales. It represented an enmeshing of private sector practice, structure and behaviour, that challenged existing police ideologies sustained through operational police culture.

Police Culture itself is a contested term, with Paoline (2003) arguing for a more nuanced understanding whilst making reference to the fact that using 'culture' as a catch all can in itself present problems of generalisation. This is well summarised as a problem by Crank (2014), who describes the examination of police literature on culture as often ignoring the '*mess and baggage*' of conflicting concepts and contexts. There is relevant and deeply discussed contemporary literature from Loftus (2010) who sought to investigate whether classic themes of occupational police culture from Bowling *et al.* (2020) still persisted within a heavily changing, wider context. Her conclusions were consistent with many of the classic themes, indicating that some underlying values and norms persist despite high levels of external change. This suggests that there may be some consistent and enduring facets of police culture that resist even drastic change in the wider context.

This wasn't true of the imposition of 'Compstat' based performance management however, with several studies noting pervasive influence over police structures and behaviours (Willis, Mastrofski and Weisburd, 2004, 2007; Weisburd *et al.*, 2006). Willis *et al.* (2007:162) describes the purpose of Compstat application being the:

> "[narrowing of] *the organization's goal to a sharp focus on crime control, to set a rational measure or benchmark for success, and to establish a single belief system to which all members are strongly committed.*"

This is essentially both an ontological and epistemological alteration from within and without of the organisation. Willis *et al.* (*ibid*) note that there is a distinct separation away from the model of community policing previously pushed in the US, which sought to make policing more complex, nuanced and relational, through to a business-like approach that narrowed activity to a defined set of deliverables. These deliverables serve to constrain organisational activity and clearly define success.

This environment affected not just crime and the management of crime, but the administration of the policing organisation. US practices were quickly exported to England and Wales and to 'perform' became intrinsically linked with numerical targets, defined by the performance structure imposed using NPM techniques. Diversity as a term was subject to the same narrowing of meaning, and activity was again clearly defined. Following the Macpherson (Home Office, 1999a) and Scarman Reports (1981), the recruitment and progression of those staff and officers from under-represented groups was prioritised. This use of 'diversity' as a reference to visible and racial differences is evidenced through the College of Policing's "Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Progression Plan" (College of Policing, 2018) and recent discussions in parliament (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016). That other categories of diversity are excluded, including neuro-diversity, age, gender, social mobility, and disability, indicate that particular weight is given to issues of race. This makes any consideration of multi-dimensional, identity based diversity difficult to even discuss properly; the boundaries are so well established and defined within race related, specifically defined terms.

Foster *et al.* and Souhami (2005; 2007, 2014a) discuss this focus at length, suggesting that the activity 'chosen' by police forces to pursue in the wake of the enquiries was that which was defined and tangibly achievable. Souhami discusses how this focus has in parts replaced the overall aim of introducing the term 'Institutional Racism' into the policing landscape, which although ill-defined by the Macpherson Report (1999) clearly led to a profound impetus for diversity based reform (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005). Institutional Racism as a term was coined in 1967 (Ture, Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967) and refers to a form of racism that is embedded in the laws and regulations of a country, but this has since been extended as a concept to encompass the regulations and practices of organisations through the Macpherson Report itself:

> *"The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."* (para. 6.34)

This is a wide definition, that allows for wider requests for reform, but it also makes the distillation into detailed actions challenging, as discussed later in this chapter.

In 2005, a review of progress into the recommendations made by Macpherson (1999) was conducted (J. Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005). The study found several areas had improved, including the recording and monitoring of hate crime, the organisation and structure of murder investigations, family liaison with murder victims, the levels of consultation with local communities, and the eradication of racist language within the force (p.viii). Notably, these improvements are mainly structural or procedural changes. The most problematic issue identified by the study was that the nature of the term 'institutional racism' was largely misunderstood and thus poorly actioned. This is further reinforced through Souhami's subsequent empirical critique (2014a) of the term itself, citing it as a poor lever for reform due to its inherent ambiguity. Delivering against a goal that is poorly defined has contributed to forces across England and Wales pursuing the more achievable – and measurable – indicators set to lift under-represented groups in both the frontline ranks and higher within the institutional leadership hierarchy (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016).

These traditional definitions that focus upon the counting and delivery of 'hard' figures provide a physical framework through which to define diversity within policing, evidenced in visible governance discussions in parliament (Home Office, 2017). This organisational and institutional choice towards the measurement of statistics as the main indicator of diversity is also 'of its time,' cited firmly in the wider context of New Public Management (Diefenbach, 2009). When the organisation's goals are defined and reinforced by numbers that are regulated and monitored via governing bodies, in turn driving activity through a defined structure internally, this constricts the understanding of what is termed 'diversity' to essentially what is measured. Asking wider questions about what we 'mean' by the term diversity is a problem removed from the agency of chief officers, who are provided with their clear goals via an established, centrally defined, governance mechanism.

When examining the seminal critical texts of the Macpherson Report (1999) and the Scarman Report (1981) there are important themes present that seek to widen both the understanding and the application of wider organisational reform. Although Scarman (1981) doesn't use the term institutional racism, it does refer to highly strained community relations and particular police practices that were used in order to combat crime that ultimately led to the Brixton Riots. Macpherson (1999) is a lot clearer in both diagnosis of institutional issues and decision making, going public for the first time with the previously discussed term 'Institutional Racism.' This term sought to establish that police forces were utilising practices, supported through their daily systems of work, that actively disadvantaged particular communities. There is an acknowledgement within the report that racism at the level of the institution is far more complex than that at the level of the individual – a problem which unfortunately led to a complicated challenge for forces seeking to address it. The term itself functions to abstract the operation of discriminatory action to the level of the organisation itself, largely removing the issues of individual agency and personal choice – both of which had been at the heart of decisions made during the investigation of Stephen Lawrence's murder. The application of NPM techniques within police forces had created an environment where what gets measured gets done; it is very difficult therefore to create and sustain simplified, meaningful measures that properly address racism defined at the level of the abstract.

There has since been a formal review of the outcomes of the Macpherson Report commissioned by the Home Office (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005). This report noted that there had been progress within forces in the area of diversity, including the removal of racist language, more intelligence led stop and search, and higher levels of awareness. The report also found that the change was largely centred on the Met, and that there was a large scale rejection of the term 'Institutional Racism' by frontline officers. Officers were of the opinion that the term deemed them to be racist, rather than it focusing on the decisions and embedded (and often implicit) practices of the organisation itself. In a slightly ironic twist, the abstracted term of 'Institutional Racism' was rejected due to officers embodying it.

There has since been a significant amount of dissection done with regards to the Macpherson report (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005; Rowe, 2007; Souhami, 2007, 2014b; Home Affairs Select Committee, 2009). There is an acknowledgement that the Police in England and Wales have progressed in many respects to address concerns over racism, but criticism about the lack of clear definition surrounding the term 'Institutional Racism' is repeated. There is little doubt that both the report itself, and the subsequent evaluations of its efficacy have affected organisational change based decision making, with senior officers making the choice to pursue objectives that are both tangible and reportable. There is a notable absence of behaviour based intervention

within any constabularies in England and Wales, other than that which is driven by the chosen key performance indicators. This focus may have been influenced by austerity, as even training interventions within forces are expensive. A National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) review in 2010 (Wheller and Morris, 2010) evaluated several systematic reviews for applicability in England and Wales constabularies, finding that an ongoing and sustained program of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), immersive training experiences, and reflection and experimentation were best supported by evidence. The NPIA review also stated that classroom based training proved ineffective in producing long term behavioural change, which was the method of choice from most Constabularies in the wake of the Macpherson Report (1999) as discussed in Souhami's *et al.* work (2005; 2014a). Connecting single diversity based training sessions with sustained and meaningful behaviour change is something not supported by research evidence in the police environment, yet it is one of the methods measured during evaluation and therefore implemented by forces.

When this contemporary research on police diversity in England and Wales is examined along with its context, there is a sustained trend towards more positivistic and visibly achievable goals. These have encouraged forces to use single input diversity based training, and a focus on the 'countables' as performance indicators. The recent reviews do however illustrate some progress, with the removal of racist language and a more informed use of stop and search tactics within forces. Research in this area does focus on the Macpherson Report's (1999) recommendations and forces' subsequent attempts to follow and implement them. Racism within the police in England and Wales appears therefore to have become synonymous with this report in both academia, the forces themselves, Government, and the related governance bodies of the College of Policing and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). This focus should not come as a surprise as the Macpherson Report (1999) was the most in depth and far reaching report on racism in the police in England and Wales in living memory. The investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence uncovered widespread racism within policing, generating ramifications and reform that have directed activity for over three decades. The context of NPM has assisted with shaping forces' response to this report, and research now indicates that attempts to influence culture and behaviour over time have been superseded by easier to achieve and measured indicators such as the volume of classroom based training delivered or the amount of stop and search conducted within defined geographic boundaries. It is of note that the removal of racist language (as discussed in (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005)) was achieved by the issue of clear dictate and the

application of the professional standards department; it was not part of a wider initiative to understand why such language use was both wrong and discriminatory.

There is some more critical scholarship in England and Wales policing research that focuses on the recruitment of under-represented officers. Holdaway (1991a) speculated that race relations between the police and the communities from which they wished to recruit was affecting the relative recruitment rates from those communities. He also discusses the lack of research into the recruitment process itself, highlighting that there may be levels of discrimination that have not been discovered. From this point onwards there is a dearth of England and Wales based research, with race relations again highlighted empirically in 2007 (Ian Waters *et al.*, 2007) when a study in one constabulary found high levels of animosity towards the police within particular communities. This has not been tested with a larger sample size and remains a cause for speculation. Johnston (2006) studied the recruitment of larger than previously seen recruitment of ethnic minorities into Police Community Support Officer roles. He discusses the often ignored staff roles within the policing environment but does highlight some concerns about the perceived 'over use' of positive action and the subsequent views of the workforce on these practices. In 2017 (Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017) a randomised control trial (RCT) was conducted within a single constabulary that acknowledged disproportionate failures of under-represented candidates at particular stages of their recruitment process. The Constabulary utilised a series of evidence based measures known as 'Nudge' techniques (Halpern, 2015; DellaVigna and Linos, 2020; Wolfe, 2020) that seek to alter behaviour. This experiment was conducted as an RCT and the treatment group saw a significant difference in success from the control group. This is a promising study in this area because it acknowledged the institutional racism inherent within policing recruitment and sought to remedy it utilising measures tested in other environments and disciplines. A criticism of his study and other positivistic studies in this area in other industries, is that the fundamental problems are not solved, only circumvented. The process as it stands disadvantages ethnic minorities disproportionately; rather than investigate why this is happening, the researchers have applied existing theory in other fields to 'guess' the nature of the problem, and have then tested possible solutions. This appears to be an accepted methodology for the testing and usage of nudge principles, which are based in psychological study and methodology. This is surface level intervention that changes outcomes, but the important question is why police recruitment in particular areas remains discriminatory? What is happening in particular places within the recruitment process that disadvantages candidates from an ethnic minority background? This study sought to eradicate the disproportionality caused within this particular recruitment

process and they used prompts and 'primes' to lift up the performance of ethnic minorities in those affected areas.

An important issue to raise in this area is one of ethics. The recently discussed studies largely explore the issue of disproportionality in existing recruitment processes. The application and testing and tracking (Sherman., 2013) of possible solutions, especially those that rely on nudge or psychological principles may amount to 'bringing under-represented candidates up to the standard,' rather than taking an informed view on that standard and how it is constructed or implemented. There is much debate on the ethics of nudge theory (Selinger and Whyte, 2011; Blumenthal-Barby and Burroughs, 2012; Raihani, 2013; Lin, Osman and Ashcroft, 2017) and these ethics can be applied within this context. They amount to the known application of language or techniques that manipulate the recipient to display particular behaviours. Within healthcare, based on the principle of utility, this may be reasoned as moot when people's lives are in question, such as with regards to obesity (Blumenthal-Barby and Burroughs, 2012). However, within the context of diversity based recruitment, it is clear that under-represented candidates are performing differently at particular stages of the process, and that nudge is being utilised to 'remedy' or 'address' this. The real question is why under-represented candidates need to behave 'differently' at all; and if the recruitment approaches are actually fit for purpose or represent an application of hegemony for the purposes of maintaining or developing the relative safety of ethnocentricity (LeVine, 2001).

Diversity as a concept within the recent policing context in England and Wales can be therefore viewed as a politically influenced term, reinforced and negotiated through formalised structures that inform daily activity. These structures and activities have been formed in part to address seminal reviews or 'moments in time', which have directed accountability towards performance indicators such as the amount of under-represented recruits and 'delivered' training sessions. Underneath these counted measures, attitudes and behaviours discussed in Macpherson (1999) have been largely untouched, as have the underlying social interactions that assist with the formulation of what police officers believe to *be* race and how it influences police recruitment (Holdaway, 1997a). In depth research into the recruitment process itself is largely absent, apart from a small number of studies that look at the outcome of the process itself, and not how that process 'works.'

In contrast to the research based in the performance management sphere of diversity, Holdaway has persistently published sociological analysis of the concept of race throughout this period, arguing throughout that the Police

in England and Wales cannot ignore the fact that race is built and sustained through the unmeasured and largely unseen daily interactions between officers, staff and the public (Holdaway, 1991a, 1994, 1997a, 2003). His argument rests on the process of social construction (Goffman, 1959; Berger and Luckmann, 1991) where '*racialization*' takes place via the interactions of social actors, constructing race through language and action over time. In 1997, Holdaway noted on current race related research in England and Wales:

> *"None of this work, however, has sought to identify social processes that construct and sustain 'race' during the day to day work of members of organizations. We know next to nothing about how mundane relationships and commonplace phenomena are racialized within organizations; next to nothing about how power is articulated and negotiated to construct and sustain relationships that fulfil the intended or unintended purposes of social exclusion; and next to nothing about essential and phenomenal forms of social exclusion based on racialized categories."* (p.21)

He discusses race as a concept that must be grounded in the everyday normal, rather than being lost within concepts of 'other' and ideology, (p.31) and applies a sociological methodology to qualitative data from within policing. He describes one of the research gaps clearly:

> *"Rather than scrutinize outcomes of the police use of legal and other powers, in particular how they are differentiated along lines of race and ethnicity, it is argued that the task of the criminologist is to describe and analyze social processes that lead to differential outcomes. Studies about the outcomes of police action are not dismissed out of hand. They are viewed as the starting point, rather than the endpoint, of research about policing in general and police race and ethnic relations in particular."* (p.49-50)

Through his research, he has found perceptions on the construction of race from both ethnically white and under-represented officers that illustrate the 'roots' and possible causes of police action. He has sought to draw beneath the surface of positivism and pursue the social interactions within the policing environment that sustain or develop inequalities. This is grounded in a treatise from Holdaway *et al.* (2005) in which they call for criminologists to return to their empirical roots of observation and the scrutiny of phenomenon.

More recent sociological investigations into race in policing in England and Wales include the investigation of Black Police Associations' (BPA) members' experiences, (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2004, 2013; O'Neill, 2007) and an exploration of under-represented officers' experiences prior to resignation (Barron, Anne-Marie; Holdaway, 2016). The Black Police Associations had been created through a recommendation in the

Macpherson Report (1999), and their membership and leadership was a subject of research for several years. The BPA represented Black and ethnic minority officers within any given force. In 'Resigners', (Barron, Anne-Marie; Holdaway, 2016) the application of processes within police organisations were found to have disadvantaged black police officers, resulting in them leaving their respective forces. This is a phenomenon subsequently investigated by HMICRS and reported upon by the National Police Chiefs Council (2019). Throughout this research, there is a repeated emphasis on the understanding of police officers' experiences, which then may grow into explanations on how or why larger bodies such as the organisation may be behaving or performing in a particular way.

This research gap illustrates how the social construction of race at the level of individual actors within the occupational culture is fundamental to understanding the processes at play. Within the police recruitment processes there will be 'mundane' and repeated interactions that create disparity and affect the chances of success for under-represented candidates (Holdaway, 1997b). Although there are significant discussions of racial tension through conflict contained within the Macpherson Report (Home Office, 1999b) and even earlier in the Scarman Report (Scarman, 1981), Souhami (2007) discusses how the construction of the term institutional racism was too unclear, and how it has subsequently failed to impact reform on the wider policing culture. There are other studies that consider the impact of Macpherson in the wider context (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2009; Rowe, 2013; Souhami, 2014a). This literature serves to illustrate that although governance within policing may focus upon what Pincus (2011) refers to as the diversity based 'counting' domain, a significant amount of studies and independent inquiries have sought to widen this definition through exposure to more nuanced explanation of systemic processes and mundane personal interaction.

The impact of this sociological research has however, been negligible in terms of the establishment of meaningful measures. One of the main recommendations that resulted from the Scarman Report (Scarman, 1981) was to institute diversity training for all police forces. This has been subject to criticism since, as it was a viewed as a panacea (Oakley, 1989) for behavioural change, when much wider reform was necessary. The Macpherson Report review conducted ten years after the Macpherson Report found (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2009) that few of the recommended changes had been implemented or assessed properly by forces, and research from Foster *et al.* (2005) found that due to the nature of the term '*institutional racism*,' many of the 'easy to do' recommendations – such as blanket, single session training – had been implemented, whilst other more complex recommendations had been poorly understood.

It is this poor understanding (and perhaps poor defining on the behalf of the Macpherson enquiry) that underpinned a drive to '*do something*' about the issue of race in policing, but not necessarily anything that is particularly meaningful in terms of influencing those smaller discretionary choices made by police officers in active operational roles. Wall makes this distinction (1994), citing long term socialisation as playing a far more active role in influencing behaviour than individual attempts to train officers into new ways of being. This is supported by influential ethnographies from Van Maanen (1973) and Fielding (1984), who believe that early socialisation following recruitment, and during training, is very influential in the shaping of world view and establishing the behaviours of officers. Mawby and Zempi in a recent study reinforce these findings, (2016) discussing how reductive measures of diversity prevent a richer understanding of what diversity and race mean for police attitudes and behaviours. They utilise intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1990) as a theoretical framework to discuss how employees navigate collections of layered stigma, identified and discussed by Goffman (1986). As a framework, intersectionality presents a critical perspective on diversity 'boundaries', stating single identity definers such as gender fail to take into account the true reality of stigmatised lived experience. Within this context, intersectionality presents as a further challenge to the established police based normative assumptions of what diversity represents.

It is this challenge that illustrates exactly what is excluded by the amalgamation of the above experiences. The scandals that had led to the parliamentary reports into institutional racism, coupled with the practices defined and reinforced by new public management narrowed the meaning of diversity into one that was focused heavily upon race. Holdaway's (1997a) assertion that race is a prevalent definer in the policing environment is discussed throughout this literature review, and it is certainly evidenced at the level of governance with various impactive governmental reports. That these reports are important, relevant, and well evidenced is certainly a positive; yet their opportunity cost in other areas of diversity cannot be ignored. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender, Intersex and other diverse identities are absent from all of the mentioned literature (LGBTQ+), yet there have been police practices sustained for many years within LGBTQ+ communities that are evidentially oppressive and disproportionate (Wolff and Cokely, 2007; Colvin, 2014). There is also some research into perceptions within the service towards LGBTQI+ communities that illustrate that similar exclusionary or discriminatory practices are evidenced in similar ways to how race is expressed (Belkin and Mcnichol, 2002; Miller, Forest and Jurik, 2003; Jr, DeValve and RL Garner, 2008). The same could be said of the Travelling Fraternity, disability related communities or individuals and groups with cognitive diversity (this list is not exhaustive) but there is little to no research available in these areas. All of these identities are part of what diversity represents as a

conceptual term, yet in comparison to race they receive little to no attention at the level of governance or official reports. Race has taken center stage, and it has beaten off all comers.

This discussion leads directly to the application of 'problem solving' within the boundaries of diversity. Although we have some defined 'problems' in the field, mainly illustrated politically through the Scarman and Macpherson Inquiries, and Representative Bureaucracy, the solving of these race related problems is elusive. Many possibilities could exist as to why this is the case, including the relatively poor definition of the problem inherent within both reports and an inability to define solutions to address the disproportionality issue. It is also possible that using a theoretical framework that expands our understanding of race and diversity such as that discussed by Pincus (2011), may assist our approach in progressing a solution to these issues. Proposed police solutions or approaches currently sit within the realm of the 'counting' domain, relying on the assumption that higher numbers of under-represented officers and staff may manifest changes in the physical use of discretionary powers. Although this may have an impact, current studies in the USA suggest the impact will be minimal upon police practice, and therefore a fresh look at the way that we construe and understand diversity as an institution is necessary. The gap illustrated here is similar to the problem discussed by Granovetter (1985) in his theory of embeddedness. In Granovetter's case he discusses that the economic labour market process is created and sustained through interactions based at a sociological level; in other words, our daily interactions and perceptions work to create and sustain larger processes. The same is illustrated here, as the smaller interactions between police and citizens within given communities are thought to have ultimately led to riots (Scarman, 1981) and ineffective and discriminatory criminal investigation (Macpherson, 1999b). Yet, the solutions presented often do not address the mundane interactions and instead function at an organisational level within an organisational setting – such as systems of training or 'awareness'. There is an assumption that this connection exists, and that organisational interventions will affect the operational sub-culture and the way that it expresses its authority, yet this connection is empirically weak and may represent significant organisational expenditure for very little gain.

As within the wider science literature, so there is also a split in the diversity and race based research within England and Wales with regards to policing. At one extreme, there is the concentration on positivistic determinism, which focuses upon NPM techniques, the amount of under-represented police officers and staff, and the measurement of the use of powers within specific circumstances and geographic areas. On the other

extreme, there is the push for development of research that seeks to understand how the issue of race as a determiner of diversity in policing is constructed, sustained and perceived. In both areas, there is a program of research, with accompanying agendas and varying elements of governance support. Although Holdaway *et al.* (2005) discusses the importance of rigorous qualitative collection and analysis, the connection between this research and the extreme of affecting the key performance indicators physically within forces is absent. To conclude, although there is some valuable research in both 'camps,' there is no currently defined road between them.

1.4 Diversity in Policing in wider research

In support of the previous literature, Marvasti *et al.* (2011) also describes diversity as having 'multiple and sometimes contradictory definitions,' so whilst having established that policing diversity research and practice in policing in England and Wales has been shaped by the wider political context and delivered through NPM, there may be multiple contexts internationally and internally that have differently constructed meanings. The previously mentioned Pincus (2011) acknowledges this complexity, and suggests a broad framework for categorisation following an extensive review of organisational literature:

- Counting – where diversity is often represented through numbers and 'countables' – this is strongly aligned to target or quota based operations
- Culture – where assumptions, heritage and values are the focus
- Good for business – where diversity is discussed through the lens of profit and loss. This is the approach to diversity within the constraint of economic action and process.
- Conflict – Where dominant groups suppress subordinate groups who seek liberation. This is a power based discourse.

Applying these categorisations to the previous discussion of diversity frames police diversity in governance in England and Wales mainly within the 'counting' category and centred upon race. The discussed dominant narrative that has helped define desired actions from a governance perspective has been centred around representation figures (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016), with proportions of 'diverse' police officers

being compared to corresponding, racially defined numbers within communities. This leads to success within this field of diversity being defined by a numerical recruitment figure, outlining the assumption that at some point it is possible to reach a representative level, where activity can stop or simply be set to be maintained. This numerical focus reduces a complicated concept to one of simplicity and achievability, yet it largely ignores research which indicates that this pursuit of numbers may ultimately have little to no effect upon behaviour at all. It assumes that diversity through the counting domain influences assimilation (Marvasti and McKinney, 2011), and that higher numbers of ethnic minority police officers may have some impact on current methods or behaviours inherent within policing, or that higher levels of representation is an important issue for those affected communities. Some contemporary studies from the US indicate that this is not the case (Sharp, 2014; Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty and Fernandez, 2017) These studies support decades of research in the US. As far back as 1975, Regoli & Jerome (1975) discuss this as relating to:

> "*The assumption is that black police are better able to recognise barriers between the police and minority groups and to understand the need to reduce them.*"

In the 1980's, Decker & Smith (1980) with a larger study, showed that there were no positive correlations between higher numbers of ethnic minority officers and subsequent satisfaction levels in corresponding communities. More recent research indicates further problems internally as forces diversify. Hur (2012) discusses how increased diversity can affect perceptions of internal justice and Maskaly *et al.* (2017) discuss how different perceptions of ethics and values between communities can cause tensions as those ethnically diverse candidates are elevated to rank. There are therefore several studies based in the US that indicate that higher levels of ethnic minorities in police forces do not significantly alter a force's behaviour, nor in the short term do they create greater integration and assimilation within the force. This is the same gap exposed within the prior chapter. Assumptions about both of these outcomes persist however, and are still discussed in contemporary UK policing debates at the highest level (Home Office, 2017). Removing this particular subject of increased ethnic minority recruits from the 'counting' domain and into the area of culture and heritage however, these higher numbers of representative officers and staff could carry an important level of symbolic meaning to those communities and the governance structure.

This presents an interesting challenge. Some of the rationale for increasing under-represented officers across the service in England and Wales is both well discussed and well understood (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016). Forces are under no misapprehension about their intended targets for recruitment in this area and work

continues within strategies in services throughout the UK in order to reach them. However, in both the UK and the US, reports which arguably have had the biggest impact upon practice, such as Scarman (1981), Macpherson (1999) and the Ferguson Report (DOJ, 2015) focus mainly upon the relationships between police and their communities, drawing what is ultimately speculative conclusions that these are linked to levels of demographic based (counting) diversity within forces. Empirically, this is unsupported, yet there is a strong argument that exists at many levels that proportionate representation in the counting domain is both necessary and worthwhile. There is now more evidence available and under development in the area of Procedural Justice (Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Blader and Tyler, 2003a; Tyler, 2003; Tyler and Blader, 2003; Hough *et al.*, 2010; Herrington and Roberts, 2013; Bradford, 2014; Bradford *et al.*, 2014) that strongly indicates that the fair application of process and procedure across multiple domains has a causal effect upon perceptions of legitimacy – both internally and externally. This should not be seen as an 'either/or' choice by forces, who could focus on procedural justice or the under-represented representation aspirations set by the Home Office. Indeed, it is likely that representation will be a focus of HMICFRS as targets have been established by the Home Office. However, in terms of overall effectiveness for communities, forces could utilise this growing evidence base to develop understandings around the behaviour of their officers and their operational choices. The research suggests that addressing these operational choices which are socially constructed, and officer's attitudes towards them may have a greater impact on perceived legitimacy and therefore address the underlying causes of the aforementioned race related reviews and reports.

Procedural justice research (Blader and Tyler, 2003a) offers a way of closing the aforementioned 'gap' in the research. The research tends to err towards positivistic practices and utilises larger data sets to measure the impact of particular initiatives upon public and police perceptions of legitimacy. These studies often examine the 'mundane' interactions, and some studies have gone as far as to suggest that if police officers adhere to 'scripts' (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2012) then the use of the script raises the legitimacy of both the action to which the script is ascribed, and the wider police force's actions as a whole. Again, the real question here is why a 'script' has such an effect? What is being altered or changed that raises legitimacy, and how do we seek to influence that more widely? Language and communication between officers, their managers, and members of the public is therefore causal in some respects, and procedural justice research contributes theory (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Tyler and Blader, 2003; Bradford, 2014) that aids in answering this question coherently.

Other theory suggests race can be described as a grand narrative (Lyotard, Bennington and Massumi, 1984) suggesting that the prevalence of race in the wider narrative will be a 'nesting' place for developing smaller but

complimentary narratives. Race and ethnicity related conflict has had a prominent place in the media across the Western world. The Ferguson (DOJ, 2015) Report from the USA discusses elements of this grand narrative as the use of race and ethnicity are common themes in the targeting of police resources, but it also makes mention of smaller social interactions that reinforce and create community tensions. In a practical sense, this can be discussed as the black community having a poor relationship with police departments (encompassed within the grander narrative of inter-racial tension and oppression), reinforced by the targeted use of the routine and in some places, mundane, social interaction of 'stop and frisk.' The assumption behind the numerical application of representative figures (i.e. Representative Bureaucracy) is an assumption based on the logic that increased representation will affect the smaller social interactions (Robert. M. Regoli and Jerome, 1975), in turn affecting the larger narrative of tension and oppression. Ultimately the logic relies on more under-represented officers being able to change or influence physical practice. As discussed, previously some current USA based empirical evidence indicates that the change on physical practice is insignificant, leaving the challenges created through established culture and behaviour present.

1.5 Summary

To gather together this diverse area of literature, how race as a term is meaningfully constructed within the both the government and governance levels within policing may present a fundamental challenge for those truly attempting to solve problems in this area. The term is constructed at multiple levels in multiple different ways. Holdaway describes it as being realistically constructed at the level of frontline staff, (1997a) and he stresses the importance of the micro level interactions and transactions that take place in this area with regards to how the police interact with race as an issue more widely. This is supported by developing international evidence in the field of procedural justice (Tyler, 2003). At more senior levels within policing, race is constructed largely in the domain of 'counting,' with reinforcing governmental targets and inspections that direct action and measurement. This could lead to an overall confusion about what race really means for an officer on the street, or indeed a under-represented officer within the service. Indeed, it could lead to what is aptly described in a study by O'Neill and Holdaway (2007) as a perception for frontline officers of the under-represented recruitment agenda being 'Window Dressing,' an outward display of efforts to readdress the perceptions of race relations for the Police England and Wales, without actually addressing the behavioural and procedural interactions that actually

contribute to how race is constructed within and without the service at the frontline. These studies and viewpoints suggest therefore that the connection between the sociological study of what '*is*' at the point of service delivery in policing, is heavily disconnected with what '*is*' at the organisational and political level. Race and its synonymity with diversity as an internal concept therefore becomes problematised, and without rigorous analysis of both of these viewpoints and their interactions, there could be significant conflicts present that frustrate any attempts to 'solve' the problem of race relations with regards to policing practice inside communities.

Police recruitment falls victim to this layered understanding of diversity, with overt pressure imposed through the system of applied NPM based measures and governance. These measures influence police recruitment practice, creating an impetus within the organisations to develop methods of improving representation and challenging disproportionality. The connections between these methods to alter recruitment practices, and their ability to influence the mundane actions that sustain officer's understandings and constructions of race within communities are not supported by existing research. It is therefore possible that existing recruitment practices may be beginning to address representation within forces with regards to race, whilst having no effect upon the daily interactions between police and their communities – the very interactions that are empirically supported through procedural justice to develop legitimacy and confidence. It is also fair to speculate upon disproportionate resource and focus to fall upon race related interventions, whilst more categories of diverse populations are largely unmentioned or even ignored as activity is focused into race related representation. In this sense, the current definition of diversity on the grounds of race is not just limited; it is exclusionary.

In summary, when beginning to organise and understand the literature in policing that discusses diversity, there is an emerging disconnection. Despite solid evaluation and critique of the highly influential Macpherson Inquiry (1999), the results of connected behaviour in frontline officers within under-represented communities has not been examined or reported upon in detail. It is this connected behaviour that has been used as the driver for developing higher levels of race related representation within forces. Limited literature suggests that higher race related representation is not causal in organisational behaviour change, and therefore the pressure placed upon changing recruitment proportionality should possibly not be the focus of highlighted governmental pressure. However, statistics do show (College Of Policing, 2017) evidenced race related disproportionality in the way that police in England and Wales recruit new officers. Despite the previously explored complexity of the term diversity, with its multiple layers of understanding and application, the service should not confuse an '*is*' with an '*ought*.' It is evidenced that there *is* disproportionality in race in police recruitment, and a subsequent focus

upon this may be connecting this with what police recruitment '*ought*' to achieve in an ideal world i.e. changed micro interactions at the level of the frontline in particular communities. It is also evidenced that police recruitment research lacks qualitative depth, with the use of 'nudge' principles being applied to address a disproportionality that is yet to be understood or properly explored. In order to narrow the field of diversity based research in policing into something that is tangible - where it is possible to understand more of the '*is*' of police recruitment disproportionality - the scope of the study must be more focused. Police recruitment disproportionality is therefore a fertile area of study, as it is known that at the macro level in England and Wales that under-represented groups are disadvantaged. This is collocated with a defined research gap around the micro transactions and interactions that take place during police recruitment. Recruitment as a process *is* a defined interaction with the communities that it serves, and it is therefore possible that disproportionality there may be a symptom of processes or activities that work together to sustain the very practices that Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1999) chose to illustrate. What is present within police recruitment in England and Wales that causes disproportionality, and how does the process of recruitment itself inform on the development of identity and behaviour? This is the approach towards research that Holdaway (1994) suggests; what is actually happening within police recruitment that assists with the construction of race related diversity, and what mundane interactions between actors may contribute to disproportionality in recruitment?

1.6 Research aims

With regards to this previously discussed literature it is necessary to properly define the problem that this thesis will address. Representative Bureaucracy as previously discussed, is difficult to posit as the *only* type of police related diversity. As a theory in the policing arena, it relies on a relatively weakly defined link between proportionate representation and police effectiveness. This is a collocation of the concepts of representation and legitimacy and is not strongly evidenced. Despite this however, politically, the influence of this theory at the level of government and within individual forces has been reinforced strongly by NPM, from within the media, and it has been driven strongly by seminal governmental enquiries (Waters et al., 2007). These conclusions therefore set Representative Bureaucracy as the defining, current theory for the purposes of understanding the term diversity within the policing setting.

It is also clear that there is a failure from most services to reach any sort of representative level in proportion to their communities. There have been some studies that speculate on the reasons for this, but none that delve into the level that Holdaway *et al*. suggests (2005). Something is happening that is causing police services in England and Wales to be unable to reach representative levels of police recruitment (House of Commons, 2017). This disproportionality is under-researched at the level of micro-transaction. The literature does not explain what exactly is happening during recruitment processes that disadvantages candidates from under-represented backgrounds and ethnicities from performing to the same level as white candidates. It is therefore not necessary to problematise police recruitment as a process, the literature and statistics provide enough evidence for there to be a clearly defined problem in the area of representation. The real question, is how to meaningfully address it?

This research aims to understand some of the *what* that *is* happening at the level of social micro-interaction within police recruitment. This is in order to allow us to gain a better understanding of what Representative Bureaucracy may represent within police recruitment as a process. This essentially deals with a small part of the diversity problem within the area of policing, but that does not mean that the findings may be insignificant.

Chapter 2 - Police labour markets and the influence of Social Ties on Police Recruitment

There is some specific literature in the policing arena that identifies the overall challenge of Representative Bureaucracy in UK policing (Waters et al., 2007; Rowe, Jeffrey and Ross, 2015). There have also been some suggestions put forwards by prominent scholars that the status of policing as a job affects the choice to become an officer, and that these choices will differ as per the culture and ethnicity of the applicant (Holdaway, 1991a; O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007; Murji, 2014a). This is a valid area of study and represents an aspect of labour market analysis. The making of these choices will be partially socially constructed, and as such career choice – whenever that choice is taken – may be created over time in the individual through social micro-interactions. There is a lack of research within the policing literature that specifically looks at how these choices are created, so although the literature informs on disproportionality to some extent, it is still unclear why career choices to become an officer are created or sustained. This thesis cannot address this question adequately, as the sample is made up of successful candidates. The choice to become an officer from within under-represented communities will clearly contribute to the overall numbers of under-represented officers who are recruited, yet this would involve research that is out of the scope of this current enquiry.

In order to begin exploring the aspects of police recruitment directly influenced by social embeddedness, a framework that allows for rigorous qualitative analysis to be performed needs to be identified. It is clear that there is a lack of study around the micro interactions and transactions that take place between relevant actors during police recruitment. These carry meaning and will involve performative exchange, but there are also likely to carry value; some of the forthcoming literature discusses them as carrying *currency*. The following discussion explores relevant labour market theory which allows the analysis that Holdaway (1997a) discusses. It presents a coherent body of theory that has been utilised in similar contexts to understand how the markets at a macro level are created and sustained at the micro level – this is the area that appears to be absent from existing police literature. The following collection of literature was located through open source scholarly searches on labour market theory.

From the previous examination of contemporary literature on police recruitment (Robert. M. Regoli and Jerome, 1975; Decker and Smith, 1980; Slater and Reiser, 1988; Holdaway, 1991b, 1994; Johnston, 2006; Ian Waters *et*

al., 2007; O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007; White *et al.*, 2008; Scrivner, 2010; Wilson *et al.*, 2010; Mashaba, 2013; Murji, 2014b; Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017; Spence *et al.*, 2017; Aiello, 2019; Koslicki, 2021; Rigaux and Cunningham, 2021), there is little to no mention of sociological theory that specifically relates to the behaviour or understanding of police related labour markets. The closest to discussing the relation of theoretical application to recruitment as a process is Holdaway (1991b, 1994) who reiterates throughout several publications how the mundane, day to day interactions are expressions of meaning that relate to and interact with much larger phenomena. In retrospect, this missing link seems almost obvious, yet research is often conducted from the perspective of the researcher and most research in this area is conducted by researchers who study policing, and not the systematic and functional movement of labour. There are assumptions present in much of this literature about how 'recruitment' as a process works, and even studies that suggest how to 'fix' it (Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017), yet very few delve deeply into the reasons behind why people actually move into policing beyond those that discuss the 'Police Personality' (Hogan, 1971; Balch, 1972; Fenster and Locke, 1973; Vastola, 1978; Adlam, 1982; James, Campbell and Lovegrove, 1984; Kirkcaldy, Furnham and Cooper, 1994; J. H. Skolnick, 2010). The assumption inherent within that literature is that the profession attracts particular 'types' of people, and in most cases within those studies this is measured by varying application and examination of the 'Big 5' personality characteristics. These characteristics are firmly rooted within personality research and have been studied in constantly developing forms since the 1960's (Norman and 1963, 1963; Tupes and Christal, 1992). The use of the 'Big 5' within these studies enables a large body of scientific study to underpin any conclusions drawn, and also allows for comparative groups to be used to draw those conclusions. There is an assumed connection in this police related literature between the personality and the profession; it is essentially that people move into particular professions because they suit their measured personality, something that remains variably static throughout their lives. This assumption relies upon personality having some sort of causal relationship with the labour market, this phenomenon is known as 'importing' your labour characteristics and tendencies and will be discussed later in this chapter (Charman, 2017).

In other fields, labour markets have been subject to study for several decades and the research has evolved over time in both sophistication and focus. Kalleberg *et al.* (1979) discusses the labour markets from within the discipline of economics, describing them as the "*the arena in which workers exchange their labour power in return for wages, status and job rewards*" (p.351). This is similar to Marxist theories (Marx, 2000/1848) that relate labour markets to expressions of power developed and reinforced over time in order to dominate the social classes. The economic determinant that relies on the 'exchange' of labour in return for tangible goods is a

relatively 'rational' approach that presupposes that decisions are made with rationality at their base (Ariely and Jones, 2008). There are underlying assumptions in these theories that form a basis for their expression, and these assumptions involve a conscious choice to 'forego' their labour in return for proportionate reward – with the caveat that this reward is subject to varying levels of the expression of power. Absent from these descriptions are discussions of the exchange of meaning or symbolic, non-economic, sociological factors that may also have a tangible effect upon the movement of labour. Ariely *et al.* (*ibid*) argues that rationality is only present in limited quantities, and that consumers are far more influenced by social factors than economists tend to believe. The spectre of the abstracted economic supply and demand model is deftly skewered by his application of behavioural science within the rational economic domain as he describes persistent examples of human behaviour distinctly not following the rational laws of pricing or utility.

It is these areas which are absent that Granovetter has sought to explore (Granovetter, 1973; Parnes and Granovetter, 1976; Granovetter, 1985, 1988, 2017). Granovetter is a Professor at Stanford University and has spent his career in the intellectual space between economic rationality and sociological research. This culminated in his latest book (Granovetter, 2017) where he develops upon and discusses his life's work on embeddedness (2002). Granovetter's fundamental argument which has remained static throughout his whole career is that discussing labour market practices without understanding the power of social networks and the social exchange of information leads to poor understanding and partial conclusions that are mostly without application. His early work focused upon the study of Social Ties, and his seminal work, 'Getting a Job' (Parnes and Granovetter, 1976) was a study of managerial roles and labour market social interactions. This study illustrated that 'Weak ties' as Granovetter described them (Granovetter, 1973a) were often causal in the changing of careers or in finding wholly new areas of work. Weak ties were social ties that were described at 'Friends' or 'Acquaintances' and can often be introduced via closer friends or family. By definition the social 'closeness' of the subject to their friends, family and acquaintances (in the case of this study; a police recruit) will be relative to the value of the information that can be gained in order to move into new areas or places of work. This is a theory based on the statistical study of social ties (Rapoport, 1963, 1979; Foster, Rapoport and Orwant, 2007) where early studies illustrated with very strong confidence intervals that people were more likely to spend time with those people that shared their lifestyle and world view. Granovetter's study showed that movement into particular professions or movement between managerial roles often depended not on those closer relationships, but on relationships that were formed from outside the close circle of friends and family that people spent most time with.

Social Ties are described as holding value due to their ability to facilitate particular exchanges of information and resource. Haythornwaite (1996) describes it simply as the "exchange of resources between actors" (p.323). Of particular interest to the sociologist is exactly what constitutes a 'resource' within this particular context, and how that resource has manifested itself in some sort of benefit to the receiver of that resource. The theory of Weak ties suggests that people moving into policing within the policing labour market are likely to access social resources in order to do so, and that those resources may not always come from within close friends and family.

Granovetter's (1973) basis for the theory of Embeddedness lies in:

> "*A fundamental weakness of current sociological theory is that it does not relate micro-level interactions to macro level patterns in any convincing way.*" (p.1360)

This is a philosophical argument at its root. Post modernism (Jencks, 1996) and its reliance upon the individuality of experience and social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann, 1991) has received criticism for its failure to acknowledge links with the real and natural world of biology and chemistry. Granovetter, rather than concentrating on neurochemistry or the science of Darwinian evolution, concentrates instead on the behaviour of social actors within economic markets. He criticises sociology for its failure to bridge the gap between much wider societal trends, and the individual lived experiences of observed, empirical qualitative and quantitative study. He posits that:

> "*…the analysis of processes in interpersonal networks provides the most fruitful micro/macro bridge… it is through these networks that small scale interaction becomes translated into large-scale patterns, and that these, in turn feed back into small groups.*" (p.1360)

Within the context of this study, the macro level patterns represent the failure to recruit from diverse background in terms of under-represented candidates. This trend is not just present in policing, but also across other sectors. The policing labour market in terms of recorded demographic is relatively static with no major fluctuations in race related recruitment, and despite speculation in current literature, no established link has been made between what micro level transactions within that market look like, or indeed speculated upon how they may influence the larger trend. Granovetter's theory represents a methodology to connect individual lived experience with those wider trends of demographic stability, in order for us to begin to challenge them or change them using an empirically informed, evidence based approach.

Granovetter's empirical basis for his assertions rely upon Rapoport's (1963, 1979) statistical and positivistic assertion created using mathematical modelling. He states that close friends were far more likely to associate with close friends, and this theory has been developed within the field of social network study into dyadic analysis (Borgatti, Everett and Johnson, 2013). His findings still remain supported in contemporary literature, and this has developed into theory that has been supported by further empirical quantitative and qualitative analysis. This theory is called Homophily (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001) and it asserts that we as humans are more likely to both choose and sustain relationships with those social connections that hold the same demographic definers as us, and those that support the same values and world view. The theory maintains that there is a 'natural' tendency for us to do this, supported by unconnected but sustained empirical literature in the social psychology discipline of preferential in-group bias (Turner, Brown and Tajfel, 1979; Williams, 2001; Tyler and Blader, 2003; Zomeren, Spears and Leach, 2008).

At a micro level, Granovetter (1973) discovered these tendencies within labour markets, operating through the simple 'contact with' variable in social settings:

> "*The smallest total number of people were reached through the networks generated by first and second choices [of close friend] – presumably the strongest ties – and the largest number through seventh and eighth choices*." (p.1369)

He found that if people wish to change job positions, there are social determiners involved that rely upon micro level interactions, such as a meeting at a bar after work, or an introduction to someone in that new place of work through 'a friend of a friend.'

> "*In many cases, the contact was someone only marginally included in the current network of contacts, such as an old college friend or a former work mate or employer, with whom sporadic contact had been maintained…*" (p.1371)

Within the context of the professions that Granovetter chose to study, he found that the theory of weak ties being the strongest for the exchange of relevant information explained how people eventually left their job and moved to another position in another company.

This theory has been reapplied in different settings (Tümen, 2017; Yuksek, 2017) since the initial study, with some professions (Grieco, 1987) illustrating a very different social structure and resource exchange, and

therefore a different weighting of social tie variable. Grieco (1987) studied micro level transactions within the fishmarket industry in Wales. She found that the locally based industry was heavily reliant upon 'word of mouth' referrals through close family and friends based ties. She describes the labour market which was her chosen area of study as a place of 'lads of dads' (1987:39). The employer almost never had to advertise any positions because word would be passed out into the places of work through managerial contact, and quickly disseminated through close knit social networks. In many cases, the industry was supported by a small group of larger families, with 'outsiders' from this family network being almost completely unable to even access or find out about any potential vacancies. The same finding is alluded to in an ethnographic book by Willis (2017) who studies how young working class males are socialised into entering the manual labour professions in Northern England. Jobs were often found through close friends and family and almost never formally advertised. There were prominent levels of anticipatory socialisation (Charman, 2017, p. 100), where the younger males were 'groomed' into their future roles via close social ties – often their parents. These micro level studies where observed empirical analysis of behaviours and interactions inform on greater trends that are evidenced in the labour markets, illustrate that the theory of weak ties may apply in some situations, but that those ties themselves are dependent upon both the industry and the social conditions of the profession that is studied. In summary, micro level studies within particular professions have been shown to illuminate behaviours and interactions, that then begin to inform upon and develop understanding of macro level labour market behaviour.

Granovetter (1973) describes these differences in both the relative distance and strength of the social tie as being partially responsible for forming and maintaining 'social cohesion' within particular jobs (p.137). In his study he described weak ties as being influential within professions that remain limited in size and well defined. He describes the sharing of resource within those particular fields as being supported by '*elaborate structures of bridging weak ties… that constitute operative networks in particular locations*' (p.1373). The weak ties represent a 'bridge' for the potential candidate through which they can both pass and receive information through a limited number of interactions. These interactions exist within a self-sustaining but ultimately closed network. When visually represented, weak ties offer a way to connect disparate groups of close friends and family to others in similar social circumstances – they are a mechanism that maintains and protects the passage of information between trusted individuals already connected by – mathematically speaking – the variables of demography and world view.

Granovetter develops his theory to speculate on the level of available bridging ties within professions (p.1373), and states that it is possible that the level of difficulty associated with the ability to organise may rely upon their

prevalence. Within the policing environment, this may have interesting connotations as some cultural pillars of policing as defined by Bowling *et al.* and Reiner *et al.* (2010; 2020) are described as sustained social isolation for officers and the workforce representing a tight familial structure (J. H. Skolnick, 2008; Loftus, 2010). Grieco (1987) discusses this at length within the fishmarket context, suggesting that a lack of weak ties within the labour market strengthens social cohesion, and may result in a more stable and cooperative workforce.

This was further reinforced by Windolf (1986) who argued that firms that wish to strengthen the status quo (reliant upon a stable world view and set of values) could explore recruitment from within employed and existing networks. This would necessitate staying with traditional and often used approaches and traditions of their recruitment processes. These approaches would be interdependent with existing labour market conditions, as when demand for new employees is low and there is an excess surplus of potential candidates, the requirement to move outside of existing modes of recruitment is reduced. This would allow social ties to maintain their existing levels of influence and information sharing (Windolf, 1986). This particular area of speculation is of interest to this study, as police recruitment had been frozen for almost five years when candidate recruitment began. The Constabulary demand was low, and the number of candidates very high. As discussed later in the context chapter, this meant that Human Resources and Media and Communication departments followed their usual information dissemination and recruitment approaches, choosing not to develop new connections or methods due to very tight staffing resources.

Granovetter speculates on the aforementioned theories further (1995) and states that reinforced recruitment channels and closer ties related recruitment may result in a workforce that tends towards the docile internally, rather than the militant. If Granovetter's theory in this area is correct, further research into the availability of bridging ties and recruitment methods within the policing environment may inform on the macro cultural behaviours discussed within extended policing literature.

There is also some criticism of the theory of weak ties. Grieco (1987) states that the theory relies upon an assumption that there is primacy of social structure over motivation (personal agency) (p.45). Granovetter explains in his work that although the level of contact and exposure to a close tie is far superior to that of a weak tie, the likelihood of resource exchange that results in exposure to a 'new' job opportunity or career change to come through that strong tie is far lower. Put simply, Granovetter initially speculated that the chances of bridging ties being more effective in relevant information exchange in this area is far higher, simply through the exposure to other sources of information. Grieco argues that this is too simplistic, and that cultural nuance and

social conditions represent a greater determiner than this simple supposition. She also provides some empirical challenge in the form of her study, which evidences familial complexity during the exchange of resource through social ties at the level of daily interaction. This is a solid criticism that Granovetter acknowledges in his later work. Granovetter moves from a theory that relies upon weak ties being causal, into a much more theoretical approach that simply links the interactions between physical social networks and their positivistic, economic counterparts. He argues that embeddedness (2002)– or the extent to which micro level interaction is linked to macro level outcome – is dependent upon context and that particular ties will manifest themselves in particular ways within particular industries. In this way he acknowledges the complex interaction between structure and agency, explaining that individual agency will interact with the labour market context in differing ways, but trends will remain and social structure will challenge agency because of the value of the information exchanged between social actors. This is explored further in Chapter 6. His fundamental criticism remains constant however, in that the described link between personal micro interaction and subsequent macro level interaction is weakly discussed and evidenced in both sociological and economic disciplines, and that research should seek a way to both explore and correct this disconnect.

Within the policing context, the application of the implications of the above studies raise interesting questions. The larger macro level statistics that illustrate some demographic deficits in the policing labour market, will be on some level informed by the micro level interactions present within the potential police candidates. Would the police service present as a profession where close family ties are causal in both job choice and the sharing of relevant resource, or would it represent a profession where weaker ties enable the passing of more subtle information unavailable to those candidates from within their close ties circle? This is ultimately a question of the typology of embeddedness and therefore an area for this research to explore.

This will depend upon many different variables such as the timing of the recruitment window, the availability of the vacancies, the amount of candidates, the entry requirements, and the structure of the recruitment itself. These variables will form the framework through which the social interactions create conditions that interact with the ultimate goal of economic employment. The influence of the 'counting domain (Pincus, 2011) on police recruitment numbers will influence the physical structure of recruitment and the existing goal of raising the amount of under-represented police officers will create some sensitivity around the performance of particular stages of the recruitment process. Each of these stages will be experienced by candidates in a physical sense,

and they will be informed and influenced by social interactions. At this point in terms of inquiry into these processes, there is very little information present to illuminate what these interactions look like or even if they exist in abundance or scarcity. Granovetter (1995) adds some context to these variables by suggesting that external factors such as recession or supply scarcity in particular economic markets will affect the approach that organisations wish to take with recruitment. In other words, the economic process of labour movement is informed by political and social context.

Labour market studies in other contexts have supported this more developed theoretical position. Studies in Japan have discovered that 6.3% of Japanese workers found current jobs utilising weak ties. This was then compared to a similar study in America where they found that 29.5% of Americans used Weak ties in similar circumstances. (Watanabe, 1987) Rogers, Everett and Kincaid (1981) conversely found that there was a prevalence of Strong Tie connections in the labour market in Mexico. These studies illustrate that international conditions and culture (and therefore the social conditions) affect physical labour markets, which are ultimately an abstracted, explanatory model. Granovetter (1995:162) takes this further, and suggests that the complexity of the social world will not just encompass place and culture, but also the intended employment. If the work is relatively long and secure in tenure such as local government work or institution (i.e. the police), he speculates that a higher prevalence of strong tie may be present in terms of social support for candidates. The theory of embeddedness therefore states that the context, culture and the nature of employment are all determiners of its features. Some jobs may be 'heavily' embedded in terms of social influence and may rely upon word of mouth to both publicise and develop its vacancies, with its candidates relying heavily on social interaction to navigate and understand the recruitment practices. Others may be 'lightly' embedded, with social interactions having little to no influence on either its recruitment or the process' navigation.

In the context of this study, constabularies were vastly over-subscribed in terms of potential candidates as the recruitment freezes had been in place for several years. People who had wanted to become a police officer had been waiting for the windows to re-open and in the previous research that formed the basis for this project, quantitative study illustrated thousands of candidates for just over a hundred positions. The candidates were recruited for this study over a several month period, encompassing an initial recruitment in which there were 2795 applications for an available 120 places. This resulted in approximately 23.3 candidates per available position. With regards to the economic perspective on this process, there is clearly a potential labour surplus, and this may influence future spending development in the area of recruitment. In a time of developed austerity, forces investing in a process that was already over-subscribed could be construed as money spent unnecessarily.

This is reflected in the process of doing 'nothing new' during the advertisement and sifting of the candidates in this study. There was no need to draw from a 'new' labour pool when the current labour pool was over twenty times more sufficient to fill the vacancies.

Current police employment is subject to Police Regulations (Police Federation, 2017). These do not operate on a commission basis, such as that of the military. The military model offers commission based employment on varying levels of tenure. Your 'offer' to remain employed is reviewed according to your skills, performance, and the demand within that area of military service. Conversely, police employment in England and Wales is unique. Officers become 'Servants of the Crown' and can only have their employment terminated if certain disciplinary conditions are met. Presently these conditions amount to a criminal conviction or serious misconduct. This means that the current tenure of a police officer in employment ultimately depends on age, but can run up to approximately 38 years. Relatively, this makes policing a very secure job, and under the theory discussed, this would suggest that strong social ties would certainly play a part in affecting labour market movement.

When discussing the relative differences in tie strength in particular labour markets, Granovetter explores areas of disparity in labour markets where particular demographics are under-represented. He links the social interactions gained through social contacts into demographic study, noting:

> "…*on average women belonged to much smaller organisations than men, and ones not orientated to economic activity but to local, domestically related issues...this makes women far less likely to be exposed to the kind of weak ties apt to carry information about job opportunities.*" (1995:169)

This is the application of the social ties research by Rapoport, and Rapoport *et al.* (1963, 1979; 2007) indicating that the social network structures of women differ to men in both number and type. This then changes the exchange of information as resource. In this case the Constabulary in question is approaching a 50/50 workforce in terms of gender, but how this relates to male and female social ties (level of embeddedness) is unknown. This area of the theory can then be extrapolated outside of just gender. Particular communities within geographic areas (in the case of Policing often defined through Counties) will have particular social conditions, and therefore the level of comparative embeddedness within the police profession will be different in those communities.

At its extremes, Manwaring (1984:169) speculates that if particular conditions of labour market demographic limitation are evidenced, this can amount to the creation of an '*extended internal labour market*' where potential candidates for the jobs have a significant advantage if they are "*outsiders connected to insiders.*" He also speculates that this is an 'in-group' mechanism that has evolved to "exc*lude others from material gain*" (1984:162). The speculation in this area begins to explore the root of the behaviour that Granovetter empirically evidences and the idea relies upon evidence gained from numerous disciplines including social psychology, psychology and neuroscience. Granovetter also discusses this phenomenon from within the boundaries of diversity:

> "*...Black [candidates] may be disadvantaged by the low level of access to jobs in their contact networks, and the related evidence in the literature on 'social resources' must be taken as more than mere descriptive facts: they are also the end result of particular groups doing whatever is necessary to close off opportunities to outsiders.*" (1995:173)

Granovetter notes at this point in labour market research that:

> "*Although a torrent of evidence makes clear that ethnic networks dominate hiring in many situations, we have virtually no systematic attempts to establish the detailed characteristics and differences amongst such networks.*" (1995, p.174)

This research gap was acknowledged however, and further studies have been conducted since, that begin to examine the micro interactions that influence the labour markets in question. Each individual market offers a different degree of embeddedness, depending on the social conditions of both the potential candidates and the labour market itself.

Waldinger (2005) has studied how the New York demography has changed over time, and has published extensively on the labour market movements of immigrants and ethnic minorities. He notes how the ethnic minority communities build internal labour markets of their own, and also discusses how assimilation into the dominant norm, irrespective of whether that norm represents an improved quality of life, is often something that does not happen. Communities are more likely to change as they grow along with their demographic make-up developments, accompanied by internal social networks, creating support systems which become causal in the movement of labour. This is still an area under study, with a recent study (Eckstein and Peri, 2018) reinforcing

that 'Niches' within immigrant communities can be very successful in perpetuating and developing representation within particular professions.

> *Once an immigrant group gets a footing in a particular line of economic activity, in-group social networks and informal dynamics contribute to that group's continued association with the niche. (p.2)*

Turning this research on its head, EckStein *et al.*'s study is a full volume of studies that examine niche social network behaviour in ethnic minorities), it can be assumed that the use of these internal social networks influence to promote and limit labour market movement also applies to dominant labour demographics. Within the context of this study, it can be said that there have been no studies that seek to understand any of the micro interactions currently influencing police recruitment in England and Wales.

When summarising this area of literature, there is a several decade history of research into embeddedness in economic labour markets. This embeddedness is contingent upon many variables from the nature of the career itself, through to the demographic and social make-up of the communities that supply it. Key studies such as Grieco (1987) and Waldinger (2005) illustrate clearly that groups dependent upon place have their own social ties that operate in idiosyncratic ways. These then affect the macro level, abstracted labour market. In the context of this study, the literature would suggest that there will be certain social conditions that are in operation at the level of micro interaction, that influence the counting domain of diversity. This will work in both directions, in that the dominant demographic may have interactions in place that result in some level of ethnic closure within the policing labour market, whilst under-represented demographics may have few social ties that offer the same level of resource. In theory this could result in what is a 'double whammy' for the police labour market; a dominant demographic will have in place social tie based resource, and the non-dominant demographics will not be able to access anywhere near that level of resource within their established social networks. Due to the lack of insight with regards to policing recruitment in this area, any current positive action that is in place may represent a 'shooting from the hip' approach. There is simply not enough understanding in the literature for informed decisions to be made to rectify any disparity in demographic based recruitment, that is supported and developed through existing social networks.

2.1 Ethnic closure in recruitment in Policing

A previous study (Stubbs, 2016) using the theory of weak ties (Granovetter, 1973b; Parnes and Granovetter, 1976) and the accompanying methodology had demonstrated that a very high proportion of those applying for a job in the researched constabulary already had at least acquaintances and friends in the police. The information gained from this study was of use in the current context of continuing efforts to diversify the service (Home Office, 2017; Metropolitan Police, 2017), as it pointed towards the candidate recruitment pool partly functioning at the behest of existing social contact with the police. Granovetter (1973a) and Grieco (1987) suggest that the main reason for this is the simple passing of information or exchange of other resource, be it in the form of support, insider knowledge or the development and sustenance of similar values and beliefs.

The physical manifestation of this is aptly described by Elliot (2001), who states:

> *"The hiring of new workers via employee referrals is presumed to be important for understanding ethnic divisions of labor because it creates a built-in bias toward incumbents: members of a particular ethnic group concentrate in particular jobs and when new employment opportunities become available at their workplace, they pass this information along to social contacts, often of the same race and ethnic background. In this manner many employment opportunities become detached from the open market, becoming rationed instead on the basis of insider referrals."*

The effects of this phenomena on the physical and psychological make-up of an organisation can create support for ethnocentrism (LeVine, 2001), a term which describes the tendency to describe your own group as superior. As a group continues to utilise its existing ties, it reinforces its own beliefs, often without challenge. This is a self-supporting mechanism and functions to create a world view that is recreated through the conditions and processes of the organisation. This creates stability within organisations, as there is a pre-existing presocialisation that essentially ordinates the candidate; they develop the '*becoming*' before they actually '*become*.'

The concept of ethnocentrism is rooted in anthropology, yet the descriptions of the physical steps which are taken to create and reinforce it are based in sociology. Psychology explores these concepts, using personality research, and group identity and group interaction study in the form of social psychology. These large bodies of

research examine both the physical creation of groupthink, and the subsequent effects of it. They suggest that group think is made of sometimes small and seemingly insignificant physical interactions in the form of a phone call to a friend about a job vacancy opening up, through to large scale identity creation and reinforcement of beliefs. They collectively represent a continuum of the mechanisms and societal effects of group creation and maintenance. Indeed, one of the most salient points made during the amalgamation of this literature, is that group 'think' is not the only product of group based interaction, there is also a very firm evidence base for a 'group-act,' that may be based upon unconscious or conscious cognitive process.

Returning from this rather large landscape, to a slightly more focused discussion; findings from a previous study (Stubbs, 2016) indicate that there is some physical reliance on connections from 'outside to inside,' within the constabularies recruitment processes. However, the variables needed to form any conclusions are not defined and will be dependent upon the social conditions. The MSc. research illustrated that established personal contact within the context of this research can be beneficial for a candidate in the form of close friends, friends and acquaintances, but it was not clear what *kind* of contact, its *duration*, or even how *prevalent* this contact is. In other words, success in this constabulary's police recruitment may be mainly predicated on the existing social networks of our current workforce, but what do these social networks look like and how do they work? These are the questions that once answered, will contribute to describe the micro level interactions that influence the macro level fluctuations in the abstracted labour market modelling.

Whilst researching existing literature to find the answer to these questions, there were repeated mentions of *'social isolation'* as an enduring factor in a lot of cultural research study that may inform on some of the external labour market. Mentions of the term were interesting, as although they have been designated as a 'cliché' of police cultural research (Loftus, 2010; Bowling, Reiner and Sheptycki, 2020), the empirical study of the concept appears to be based in disparate studies that remain unconnected. Mixed method research from Charman (2017), and ethnographic research from Loftus (2010), Skolnick (2010), Fielding (1988) and Van Maanen (1975) present conclusions from empirical observation and deduction, and this is in part, reinforced by some findings within decades of personality study using psychological methods. Within some of this psychological methodology and as a part of personality testing, social isolation is a measured variable, and in others it is absent. There also exists a large body of research in social psychology that discusses how social isolation is formed and dissolved, yet the theory used in this area of study is largely absent in policing literature. Social isolation is important and relevant to this study, as it informs on the nature of existing police officers social networks, and therefore their opportunity to share useful information with their social contacts. If a police

officer is typically socially isolated, then their social circle could be smaller and more insular than the average social network. When paired with social support having some sort of causal relationship with recruitment, this suggests that social isolation limits the assistance to a therefore limited social circle.

The limited literature review that follows discusses social isolation as a facet of policing using references to key existing police research. There then follows an examination of related literature from police related personality study, and social psychology. The aims of this area of the literature review are:

- To acknowledge social isolation as a topic within existing police related cultural literature and to examine the empirical basis for this in existing police personality based literature
- To understand better the social, psychological processes that may underpin this phenomenon and therefore inform on how that isolation may affect the dissemination of useful information for potential candidates in police recruitment.

Once these aims have been realised, the information will be used to inform on the potential structure of police officers' social networks, and therefore begin to form a hypothesis about how information may be disseminated through that structure. The theory would suggest that if police officers are routinely socially isolated as a product of their internal working conditions, then this would limit the availability of social ties through which they could share their resources. This literature may illuminate the opposite side of what the research is investigating. If recruits in the policing recruitment process provide information about receiving social support or otherwise, this literature may 'book-end' those findings and show just how narrow those opportunities may be. At its limits, if this results in some level of ethnic closure in the policing labour market, the implications for changing demographic based recruitment are potentially problematic.

2.2 Policing Personality and Social Isolation – Do they matter to disproportionality in police recruitment?

The following section explores the literature in psychology based research with regards to personality in policing. The motivation for the inclusion of this section mainly came through reading about ethnocentricity (LeVine, 2001; Hammond and Axelrod, 2006) and homophily (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001). These theories are at the level of the species/large group (ethnocentricity) and at the level of larger social groups (homophily). Having established that diversity is layered in its meaning and application through the previous literature review, the degree to which existing research contributes to disproportionality in the policing recruitment process should also be explored. During discussions of the MacPherson report's efficacy, (Foster, Newburn and Souhami, 2005; Souhami, 2007) reasons for the Police's lack of real change in the area of diversity recruitment were discussed. Pragmatic reasons such as austerity, the need for 'quick' change, and the measuring of deliverables as defined by the Home Office were cited as possible reasons for a lack of step change. These may all be valid, but the theory underlying the pragmatic reasons may begin to inform upon a framework for intervention that is based upon existing, but previously disconnected evidence.

Psychology at the level of the self is an important body of research to consider, as if this thesis simply concentrates on group level processes, contraindicating or supporting evidence may not be discovered. Personality literature often represents the amalgamated study of individual traits and individual behaviour, allowing us a possible insight into the minds and behaviours of our police recruits. This may inform on the social processes that create disproportionality in the process, but it also may not. The purpose of this section is to explore whether existing evidence at the level of the self allows us to draw conclusions that support the existing disproportionality in the process. These studies do not represent micro-interactions at the level of social actor, but they may represent some of the building blocks for those social processes.

The literature review that follows speculates upon the theories underpinning the processes in evidence with regards to the recruitment of under-represented candidates. Social isolation is an important indicator in the defining of current officer's social networks, and personality is an indicator when it comes to the formation of

social networks (Gosling *et al.*, 2011; Li, 2015; Ilany and Akçay, 2016). For example, if officers are more conservative with regards to their personality, then this informs on the relative width of their friendship groups. This is an area that has been subject to critique in the past, with Brieger and Ennis as early as 1979 stating that (1979) the study of structural social networks without a consideration of individual psychological traits may present an incomplete picture. This is similar to the discussion about the chosen theoretical position for this paper, where Holdaway *et al.* (2005) discusses the lack of integration between the observed mundane activity of police officers at work, and the wider research that discusses structural phenomena. In order to refer to the wider level of theory that social ties are embedded within the police labour market to some degree, it is useful to examine if any of the existing literature would contribute or allude to the nature of that connection. Personality literature is connected to the structure of social networks, and there is a cultural pillar of social isolation discussed by scholars such as Loftus (2010). This small body of literature within policing academe may therefore contribute to a greater understanding of embeddedness within the policing context.

The overall structure of theory in this area is complex. In a layered sense, ethnocentricity is the examination of a broad social phenomena. It is the assertion that groups will tend to perpetuate in-group characteristics through conscious and unconscious choice. Ethnocentricity as a theory underpins the concept of ethnic closure in a labour market. The concept of embeddedness is an explanatory theory that connects social network activity at the point of personal interaction with others, with the wider abstracted theory of economic labour markets. Personality based research is based fundamentally in individual psychology, but has been linked with wider social psychology and group interactions and social networks.

Theory layers	**Evolutionary Theory** At the level of the species
	Ethnocentrism At the level of a large group of the species
	Social Interactions and Identity Linking the individual to an in-group (Social Identity and Embeddedness based research)
	Personality At the level of the individual - the self (Personality based research)
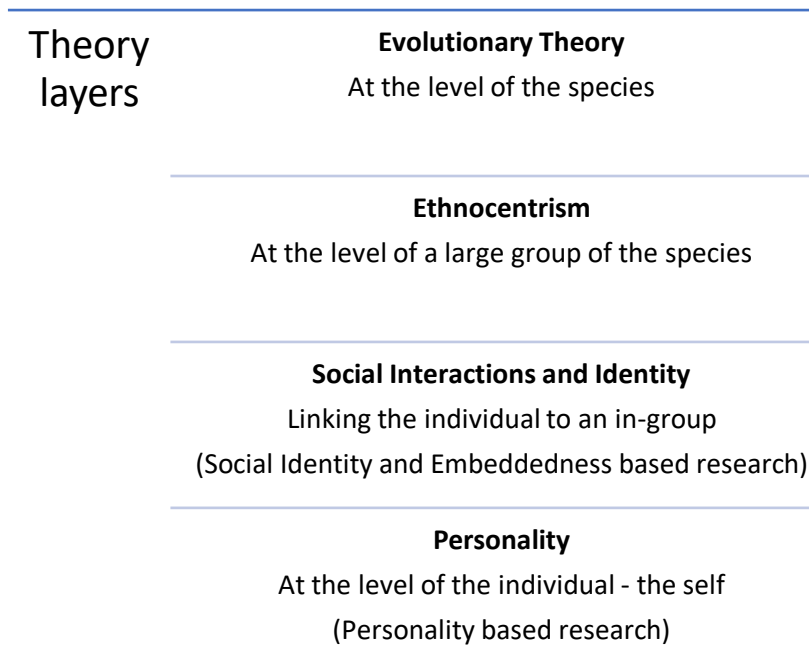
Figure 1. The Hierarchy of Theory in this area

With regards to the above hierarchy, each level of this theory will be interconnected and inter-dependent. Holdaway (1997a) will state that social actions at the level of the individual will contribute to the wider social phenomena, which is equally expressed in the same way in terms of social theory and abstracted modelling. The following psychological based literature may therefore already contain information relevant to this study, and it is pertinent to explore it and establish the level of this contribution.

2.3 Relevant Cultural Literature

Police culture has been studied in differing settings for decades. This literature is mixed, containing qualitative interview based study, ethnography and survey based quantitative methodology. There is similar development of complimentary – but not always linked – study into the existence of a 'Police Personality.' Rarely have the two different facets been discussed together as that discussion would cross academic disciplinary boundaries, but there is an inevitable possible connection that is inferred between a possible personality, and the subsequent 'output' of culture. The two areas of study may be linked in many ways, and there may even be some level of

causality present where individual personalities gathered together create and live out a particular world view. This then in theory, could influence wider decisions and behaviour in particular and sustained ways. Without actually physically witnessing the behaviours in situ, along with a knowledge of the social actors psychological traits, the linking of these two areas is difficult to solidly evidence.

The relevance of personality to the current study is one of 'selection' for that personality, from within the context of police recruitment. If there is a 'sameness' of candidates present, is this 'sameness' distinct enough to generate 'self-selection' and support? In other words, is personality at the level of the self, distinctive enough to perpetuate a 'typology' of its own, that fundamentally underpins and contributes to culture and the subsequent behaviours generated through its manifestation? It is possible that Granovetter's (2017) assertion that social networks as micro interactions influence the wider labour market, but that other factors such as personality, culture, and environment may also play a part in the setting of behavioural barriers, informing on social isolation and even willingness to share information within a select group of friends or acquaintants. This is the distinction between structural influence from the formation of social networks imbued with currency exchange, and the personal agency of the individual's personality.

Social isolation is cited in Loftus and Bowling *et al.* (2010; 2020) as an enduring and observed facet of police officer culture. When conducting the search for the empirical basis for this claim however, the results crossed a number of methods over several decades. Ethnographies described officers relating their experience of social isolation, psychological personality studies indicated in specific categories that officers scored highly in this area, and cultural studies provide some qualitative interview based phenomenological conclusions for isolation. When collated, these suggest a connection or inter-dependence between the social 'product' of isolation, and the results that were gained during psychological personality testing.

There are elements of the 'canteen culture' that have repeatedly been evidenced in cultural studies (J. H. Skolnick, 2010; Loftus, 2010; Bowling, Reiner and Sheptycki, 2020), describing policing as 'hyper-masculine' (Waddington, 1999) and 'gendered by design' (Franklin, 2007). Loftus's (2010) study attempts to reinforce the earlier conclusions brought by Bowling *et al.* (2020) with regards to persistent cultural traits. Loftus concludes that in general, these persistent traits are still present, despite a significantly altering external set of circumstances. The traits are listed as:

- An exaggerated sense of mission towards their role
- Crave work that is crime orientated and promises excitement

- Celebrate masculine exploits

- Willingness to use force and engage in informal working practices

- Continually suspicious

- Lead socially isolated lives

- Display defensive solidarity with colleagues

- Mainly conservative in politics and morality

- Culture is marked by cynicism and pessimism

- A simplistic, decontextualized understanding of criminality

- Intolerant towards those who challenge the status quo

Loftus describes these facets as 'cliché' (2010:1), but utilising empirical study then finds that many of these areas are present in her contemporary research. These conclusions are not without their critics, such as Waddington (1999), who identifies that the components above fall mainly within the critical perspective. He provides a more positive discussion of 'canteen culture', seeing it as a coping mechanism for officers who are immersed in difficult working conditions. By its nature though canteen culture assumes that officers engage in group gatherings during and before shifts. This is a time where officers relax and share how they feel about their work and their lives with other officers and police staff. The causality of the negativity, cynicism and pessimism is speculated on in many of the works discussed above, but empirical findings linking the negativity to working conditions is not present, and there is no before/after study that looks at world view in particular, although seminal studies have documented complex and powerful socialisation processes (Van Maanen 1973; Fielding, 1988, Charman, 2017). There is literature that examines the police personality however, and some of these are longitudinal and examine how a recruits' personality is influenced and changed over time during socialisation. There are also many studies that examine whether there actually is a police 'personality.' This is an attempt to answer the question of whether people coming into or attempting to join the police bring these characteristics with them at an innate level, or that they are a product of exposure and socialisation. In part, these studies have arisen because of the canon of literature on personality in the psychological field. There are a great deal of studies, including systematic reviews and meta reviews of personality study, and the methods in these studies are transferable into other domains. Policing is a closed environment in terms of both its working conditions and social conditions and therefore the study of its officers is relatively simple if research access is granted.

The above described 'pillars' of policing culture, present across continents and cultures (Chan, 1996) are often discussed and pulled into speculated causality in contemporary issues of organisational change. They are seen as 'blockers,' and have been the subject of official change programs in the UK police (Policing, 2016). There has however been a significant change in the context for UK policing, with the Winsor Reforms (Home Office, 2013) and a deep program of austerity; there is little truly contemporary cultural research since this period that has described the impact of these interventions on police culture. Bearing this altered context in mind, the pillars described by Loftus (2010) will form a point of reference for the ensuing discussion of police personality research, but social isolation is an identified pillar within police cultural research and there is some sustained empirical support from ethnographic and mixed method studies in differing contexts that support its existence. Social isolation may influence police recruitment directly, and is therefore an important facet in the following discussion.

2.4   'The' Police Personality

"*There is no such thing as the Police Personality.*" (Reiser and Davis, 1972, p. 81)

Granovetter (2017) has argued for a greater understanding of the social complexity involved with regards to abstracted economic labour market models, and this means that other variables such as personality should be understood within the context of the influence of social networks on police recruitment. It is possible that personality informs on the choice of friends, leisure activities, and associates of potential police officers. This may also have an effect upon the relative size of a police officer's social network. Do officers tend towards extroversion and openness and subsequently have wide friendship networks upon which to share their resourceful information, or do they have tendencies towards close and insular social networks that would restrict their capacity to help those in diverse communities? These questions influence the format of social influence prior to recruitment, as the psychology of the candidates is measured at the point of candidate selection. An extrovert will have a greater number of social contacts for example; this informs on the way that information can be passed through social groups during the recruitment process.

The subject of the 'Police Personality' has captured the efforts of researchers for half a century, with some scholars spending large proportions of their research career attempting to establish whether there is a significant evidence for the claim that imported psychological traits help to establish the occupational culture. The conjunction of the two words themselves assume the possibility of an institutional personality, a way of presenting a set of inter-connected traits or behaviours within the context of a public facing organisation. The founder of trait theory and a major influence on modern psychology: Allport, describes personality as,

> "…*the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristics, behaviour, and thought.*" (Allport, 1961)

The above definition from a well referenced source can be used as a starting point to speculate upon the overlay of the organisational context with this study of the psychophysical system. This then provides a foundation upon which to build hypotheses and ask questions. The police personality is therefore a description of the dynamic organisation of individual psychophysical systems, which collectively may function together within the wider organisation, that helps to determine characteristics, behaviour and thought. It is this shift from the individual context, into that of the wider, connected, inter-dependent context that will be discussed in the later section on social identity, but the ensuing discussion focuses on personality and its associated police related research at the level of the self.

The literature that addresses the subject of the police personality is eclectic, with many articles mixing sociological opinion based upon empirical qualitative research, with small scale psychological studies utilising existing methodology. Lefkowitz conducted a review of the literature up to and including 1975, and he noted even 50 years ago, that:

> "*A significant portion of the relevant literature is primarily mere opinion.*" (Lefkowitz, 1975)

This opinion is often speculative, even in the contemporary literature, as ascribing finite causality to complex, interdependent sociological systems is difficult. The following sections will pull together disparate policing personality studies, in order to generate possible links between personality study and the cultural tenets set out by Loftus (2010) and Bowling *et al*. (2020); specifically that of social isolation, which may in turn directly affect relevant social micro-interactions.

Balch (1972) in his early studies compared a number of different personality tests between officers and non-officers, concluding that many of the previously discussed cultural characteristics were poorly evidenced. He did find however, that the officers were more likely to believe in punishment as a solution, scored highly on deference and orderliness, and were far less likely to be independent and enjoy new experiences than other college students. There are issues with comparative sample sets in this study, as there were no random selections for the control group and all participants were enrolled at a law school where they taught criminal justice as a major part of the curriculum, affecting contextual validity. This suggests that officers have high openness to new experiences, but hold conservative leanings towards maintaining order through authority.

There are numerous studies that have compared the personality of police officers to that of the general public. Carpenter & Raza (1987) found that there were differences in police applicants prior to becoming officers. Utilising the MMPI methodology (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory)(Framingham, 2017) they found higher than usual assertiveness, higher levels of mental health (lower anxiety and depression), high homogeneity, and a higher willingness to present themselves positively. These differences however, can then be exacerbated or mitigated by ongoing exposure/experience. The MMPI tool is a methodology utilised by trained psychologists to tests levels of pathology in their subjects, and it has been updated periodically since its introduction (Greene, 2000). Like many tools in this area, it has been subject to criticism (Sellbom, 2019) but remains in use in psychology. It is however quite different from other psychological tools discussed in relation to the Big 5 characteristics (discussed later in this chapter) so this offers a complimentary set of findings to literature discussed in the forthcoming passages.

Gould (2000) discusses a piece of empirical and longitudinal study, in which he took account of gender and race differences in officers. Gould discusses whether the culture is perpetuated by partisan recruitment (recruiting particular personalities), or that it is self-perpetuating via socialisation and exposure. His findings examine the effects of culture over time, utilising the same officers and the same test (MMPI). The findings show persistent, gradual increases in cynicism, depression, anger, paranoia and dominant behaviour characteristics over the course of four years. Gould worked within this field for several decades, with relatively small differences found in recruitment 'personality', which slowly culminated and became more pronounced over time in this longitudinal study. This was supported by Adlam (1982) who conducted research to establish if some police based personality characteristics are traits, or are developed over time. His study concluded that much of the cynicism is generated over time, through exposure to incidents and the occupational culture.

This is reinforced by other studies that have compared longitudinal effects on officers over time, with Cottle *et al.* (2000) utilising the MMPI methodology to compare initial joining levels of personality traits, with those of officers who have accumulated tenure. Cottle found significant differences in measures of social isolation and depression, as well as hypochondriasis, and conversion hysteria. The latter two indicate a rise in physical complaints that have been associated with rising stress levels or psychosomatic injury. There are also increases in psychopathic devia and paranoia, which can be refenced directly to the cultural pillars discussed earlier, in particular suspicion and cynicism (Skolnick, 2010). This study is important as it reinforces the influence of profession exposure over time on social isolation. This indicates that officers with more developed levels of service in the force will have a more developed police 'personality' as according to the MMPI methodology, and this includes a more developed sense of self reported social isolation.

This differs slightly in more niche areas of the police, with specialist functions providing slightly more pronounced differences. It is difficult to say that there is solid comparison between studies, because the methodology is so variable, but there is consistency across several studies that illustrate these marked differences. Garborino (2012) conducted a study with contemporary methodology, that showed majority differences in two of the 'Big 5' personality traits (Zillig, Hemenover and Dienstbier, 2002), with a then non-significant parity with the general population. The 'Big 5' traits are a well-established set of traits created through factor analysis and decades of supported research in psychological literature. In this study, two thirds of candidates illustrated significantly higher levels of emotional stability, supported by high levels of self-deceptive enhancement. The remaining officers showed higher levels of resilience via low scores in anxiety, depression and professional exhaustion. As the Big 5 system of methodology has gathered momentum and precedent, it has fragmented into sub sections within the main 5 characteristics, this study began to apply some of this methodological development within the police personality context.

In addition to these single studies, Gould's longitudinal studies are accompanied by several others ongoing over the last few decades. Contemporary literature however discusses the interdependence between the slight – but significant – differences in personality upon recruitment, and the subsequent development of the characteristics over time (Evans, Coman and Stanley, 1992a; Gould, 2000). Twersky-Glasner (2005) points out some of the flaws in the previous research, which is understandably rooted in established psychological methodology, leaving a number of policing commentators speculating upon causality. Twersky-Glasner states that the prior mentioned research suffers from three deficiencies:

1. *The research separates the negative facets of police personality into independent boxes without considering if they are inter-related.*

2. *There has been very little research into the 'making' of the police personality, or its phases of development.*

3. *The third deficiency has been a failure to link the distinct personality traits to any measures of behaviour or performance information.* (Twersky-Glasner, 2005)

These are indeed deficiencies within the literature, and there is also mention of how this analysis is wholly dependent upon the development of personality based psychological research. Our understanding of police 'personality' is only as good as our understanding of what 'personality' is and how it is measured. There has been much discussion within psychology as to the validity of the tools used to measure personality, as discussed by Little recently (2014), who discusses differing levels of validity, reliability and repeatability, even with very popular and regularly used methodologies. This was reinforced by Eber (1991) who in a presentation to the annual Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology, discussed his large scale research on approximately 10,000 officers, utilising the second part of the CAQ personality scale (Block, 1978). His findings contradicted some of the previous studies done using different methodologies, and they showed that officers were remarkably free of any psychopathological issues, showing high levels of emotional stability. The data was subsequently re-analysed using a cluster based analysis (Lorr and Strack, 1994), and they found four different sub-clusters within the larger data set that showed differential levels of anxiety, with commonality still present across several distinct areas (extroversion, control, independence, emotionally tough).

It was also noted as early as Balch's work (1972) that the use of comparative control groups during these studies is rare. If there are studies utilising them, they are usually only usable as a control within a given context, so the John Jay Law school of Criminal Justice (Smith, Locke and Walker, 1968) study on authoritarianism utilised a control from the school of criminal justice; this raises questions about whether this control group was likely to be representative of the wider, general public. In short, even where there is comparison, the comparison is not general enough to infer any significant difference in police officers' personality. This study in 1972 is also reinforced in contemporary study, as Dantzker (2011) expresses exactly the same concerns, almost forty years on. His critique focuses upon the incompatible methods, stating that they create tangible inconsistency in the field and in doing so they hamper any deeper understanding of a police personality – should there even be one.

These discussed results don't show any sort of 'meta-finding,' but they do illustrate that data interpretation, manipulation and methodology present a huge problem for any exploratory research in this area. Sample sizes, method, interpretation, and generalisation represent continuing challenges, and they are dependent upon the speed at which the psychological research community accept and reject varying analytic approaches. This will always be a problem in cross disciplinary research, and although scholars have attempted to highlight inconsistency in the way that police officers are evaluated with regards to personality (Dantzker, 2011), no common ground has been found to allow the development of systematic review or meta-analysis. The above studies cross over three methods, utilising the MMPI, the Big 5 personality traits, and the CAQ methodology. Gathering and comparing the results across these fields is therefore both complicated and complex.

When considering these studies that essentially focus upon importation of trait based qualities that are enhanced over time, there is the sociological complexity that then compounds this problem. Geographic, environmental, and cultural context can not be ignored, and these expand the nature vs. nurture argument that is unresolvable. Bayley (1996) notes that the '*differences among phenomena [culturally] are so great that comparison is impossible..*', but then goes on to say that this is precisely the point of research. Many of the previously mentioned studies are based in America, with some notable exceptions taking place in Europe and in the UK. Although there is little contemporary research in the UK, Gudjonsson *et al.* (1983) compiled a personality profile of joiners, probationers and experienced officers, finding that the results supported the social image of a police officer as a '*controlled somewhat unfeeling individual*' (1983:512). But there is a cautionary addition, stating that the research also:

> "…*sound[s] a warning to those who would attempt to stereotype police officers, for clearly in some areas, there is a distinct variety of fundamental traits of personality*." (1983:512)

There exists further research in this area, confined to America, and containing conflicting methods and sample sizes/context. It is therefore very difficult to amalgamate the broad findings of this area of research, without alluding to its fundamental flaws. There is also, throughout this research a lack of comparative inter-disciplinary discussion. Although some studies do reference existing sociological, cultural research, such as the Cottle *et al.* study (2000), they are mainly confined to referencing studies from within the police personality sphere. This is no surprise, and it illustrates a slow but sure building of knowledge within that field from which to gain more and more robust findings over time. This is the same method of knowledge generation present in the

forthcoming Social Identity Theory section, but the personality literature has become more fragmented over time rather than convergent. One of the biggest issues – ironically – has been the rate of change within the defining variables of personality based research. The police based research has developed over time, as the methodology has. Although this may encompass increasing amounts of reliability and validity in quantitative methodology terms in newer studies, it seriously damages any attempt to look at changes in police personality over time and place.

The biggest question that arises from the analysis of the above studies, is 'What do they tell us with regards to this study of disproportionality in police recruitment?' Broadly speaking, in personality terms, there are some peculiarities to those that seek to join the police that are evidenced in some studies. The literature partially illustrates themes of authority, emotional stability (interpreted as low empathy in some studies), extroversion, and in some cases, high impulsivity (or risk taking behaviour). These initial themes then become subject to socialisation, and there are several studies that indicate the initial personality traits are changed and in many cases exacerbated by exposure to the culture and the nature of the work (Gould, 2000). The perceived nature of police work may then direct a particular 'type' of person to apply, and then that type is reinforced by exposure to the environment, the work, and the people. It would be immensely difficult to aggregate these influences and prescribe comparative causality, and the studies in some ways illustrate this. They show that context plays a part in both the attraction to, the success of, and the development of police candidates. The method of analysis also contributes, as what is measured defines much of what 'matters' in the analysis. As is the case with much research, the formulation of the context of the research question, creates an automatic contextual bias in the findings. In this case, it is the conscious choice of 'personality,' epitomised by the title of the article by Twersky-Glasner (2005):

"Police personality: What is It, and Why are They Like That?"

Many other articles referenced in the preceding discussion assume that there is an '*It*' and a '*They*.' A distinct and identifiable difference in personality that can be 'attached', 'found' or 'discovered.' Balch poses this question, (1972) aiming to find out whether the concept is a 'fact or a fiction;' irrespective of any questions that he may have posed, the literature grew incrementally over the next few decades.

Ironically, the study of psychology – specifically social psychology – aims to gain greater understanding of the mind within the context of group identity, specifically to reduce or influence the role of conflict in everyday life. There is a developed literature on the study of prejudice and stereotyping, with a definition defined as:

"...the process of ascribing characteristics to people on the basis of their group memberships." (Oakes, Haslam and Turner, 1994)

It could be argued that this is exactly what the last half century of study in this area has displayed; a general perception of the existence of an 'It' and a 'They' with regards to the police, which has then directed a large amount of study with the aim of understanding the depth of reliability of the stereotype. This could be described by the question: *Why are police different*? In practice although there may be many reasons why this *difference* is perceived, the decision to join the police may in fact be the definer, with police officers generally presenting with facets that do not diverge too far from the average in terms of measured psychological study. In other words, the difference may be teleological, in that a goal of becoming a police officer is the variable, rather than variables ascribed through psychological study.

The curiosity and perceptions that sit behind this question dovetail with some of the cultural literature. Police may present as socially isolated, as evidenced in ethnography (J. Skolnick, 2010; Loftus, 2010; Bowling, Reiner and Sheptycki, 2020), is it reasonable to speculate that those who are isolated from them form an opinion of 'difference?' If some of the function of policing is to maintain peace and order as Peel said (Durham Police, 2016), we could speculate that officers present as conservative and authoritarian guardians, arbiters of order. The function of their work is an expression of the power of a state, so are the people forming the perception of police personality simply perceiving a symbolic embodiment of state power and ascribing it anthropomorphic qualities? In other words, is it that the officers are authoritarian, or is it that socially, they represent authority?

Referring back to the original 'enduring facets' of culture, police personality can be connected to some but not others. The methodological issues remain; complete comparison/alignment is very difficult and illustrated by studies which present conflict in their findings. The findings that relate to social isolation are not part of any series, and indicate that the tendency to become cynical and isolated develops as part of the exposure to actually being a police officer. This may have some effect on the 'tightness' of police networks, indicating that the higher than 'normal' levels of ethnic closure may exist due to the development of these particular personality traits. It is of note that social isolation is also a measured variable within studies of police wellbeing (Hesketh, Cooper and Ivy, 2014; Hesketh, 2015; Smith, Charles and Hesketh, 2015). There are links between healthy variablity in social networks and wellbeing, indicating that this particular trait may be a contributor to officers' mental health. Most of the studies discussed above discuss varying degrees of 'emotional toughness' which

could be perceived by observers of policing as a lack of empathy. This in itself may be a contributor to social isolation. The psychological protection mechanism of distancing themselves from their work, may contribute to officers removing themselves from more wider social contexts.

From conducting this limited review of police personality, it is clear that there are far more references to particular facets of culture in the ethnographic/sociological study, than there is in the psychological literature. 'Celebrating Masculine exploits', 'deference,' 'excitement craving,' 'risk taking' and the 'exaggerated sense of mission' are not referenced particularly well in the personality based literature as they are not explicit parts of the established psychological methodology. Other facets that are part of the method may however contribute to the development of these, such as the 'authoritative' lean, contributing a view that being instructive is an effective tool whilst working in the police. Being authoritative may contribute to the views of 'heroic' problem solving, or lead towards masculinity in the workplace. This is to be expected, as some of the observed characteristics of culture may be interactional, rather than based in the individual, as measured by the psychological literature. These facets may be difficult to locate or even non-existent individually, but through social interaction, create or contribute to cultural tropes, upon which to hang persistent elements of communication or behaviour.

The studies that reference 'social isolation' specifically do so as a particular variable of personality. Qualitative evidence illustrates that officers often perceive themselves to be removed from society (Skolnick, 2010), whilst limited quantitative evidence indicates high scores on scales of social isolation (Cottle and Ford, 2000). The evidence is however sparse on how this phenomenon is realised or plays out in a psychological sense, not least because of the conflicting methodology over time. Some elements of personality that are referenced across decades - but in different methodological approaches - suggest that social isolation may be influenced by particular facets of personality. These could include emotional stability, authoritarianism, and higher than normal risk taking.

Personality research in this area therfore does not provide any clear findings, and the findings are also methodologically and contextually different. The exploration detailed in the introduction to this curtailed literature review was with regards to the police personality's influence upon policing labour markets. Charman (2017) discusses this succinctly, describing the axioms in this area as '*Importation versus Socialisation*' (p.103). Importation is discussed within this context as the potential candidates importing their particular personality

characteristics into the role of the police officer, also known as that candidate seeking '*value fit'* (Bardi *et al.*, 2014). This viewpoint suggests that candidates will seek out roles that fit into their established and performative concept of self, and this is reciprocated by organisations that also go looking for them (Schneider, 1987, 2001; Schneider and Smith, 1998). This is the axiom upon which the 'police personality' rests, as it implies that particular attributes are 'brought in' to the organisation, and then expressed, developed and reinforced through the work and social working conditions.

Sociologically, there is particular criticism of this approach, as empirical ethnographies evidence a strong identity based and behavioural development period once officers have joined forces. This is reinforced via the theory of social identity, which suggests that identity salience will change over time. The police identity is first discussed as being developed prior to even joining the organisation in the form of '*anticipatory socialisation*' (Charman, 2017). Van Maanen (1976) describes this period as being the stage where the applicant willingly begins to adopt and develop the occupational position that has been offered to them. More recently, Conti (2006a) argues that there is a 3 stage journey for potential recruits, these being: civilian, contestant and anticipatory recruit. There are then 'qualifiers' at each of these levels, as they offer the potential recruit to either further develop their identity through acceptance and progression, or fail to progress. This does offer a potential structure through which to examine the development of self prior to becoming a police officer, but this study will focus on the social influences on recruit's micro-interactions with social actors during police recruitment.

Charman (2017. p.100) discusses all of these areas of pre-socialisation, and notes that there is a temporal element that may be represented differently in each candidate. This is especially true of those candidates who have grown up within policing families, as their exposure to the policing norms would be threaded through their experience of growing up. Charman also notes that these influences may be experiential (as in physical contact with the police) and in some cases vicarious (family and friend's experiences). She finally discusses that the influence of the media may also be present during this period and may contribute to the development of their policing identity. This complicates the literature on police personality, as it relies upon self reported, pre-identified characteristics of the self, that may or may not have been subject to ongoing social influence. This is a 'chicken and egg' argument; is the policing personality a set of cognitive leanings that ultimately draw officers into policing because it suits their value set, or is the policing personality a world view developed by a policing influenced narrative and social context?

Goffman (1968) speculates in *Asylums* that when candidates are finally recruited into religious institutions that, '*...conversion seems already to have taken place, it only remains to show the neophyte along what lines he can best discipline himself*' (p.118). This is again a mention of a pre-development phase of identity, or a strong manifestation of the 'anticipatory socialisation' discussed by Charman (2017). Personality literature suggests that there are some leanings in terms of cognitive processes that may make some candidates a better '*fit*' than others, which when coupled with the '*conversion*' discussed by Goffman, could present as a strong blend in developing of future behaviours for new recruits. The literature in both psychology and sociology in this area is therefore complimentary, but not particularly connected. It is likely that personality as a base may play some role in the level of 'conversion,' or may make 'conversion' as a process easier, but there is no real empirical evidence for this.

There is therefore a mixture of evidence and critique with regards to policing personality. There is a theme in multiple studies that suggest existing cognitive leans into dominance and authority from recruited candidates, but over time some other facets begin to emerge. One of the most common findings across mutiple studies is the variable of 'emotional toughness' which suggests that officers are naturally resilient. These findings do not contribute to the understanding of how social isolation may influence their pre-existing or current social networks, and therefore do not do anything but suggest that physical social networks may lower for recruits as they spend more time as police officers, if we accept that social isolation leads to smaller social and relationship interactions. This suggestion is useful in the sense that it suggests that some of the resource based information passed by newer or more experienced officers to potential recruits may change over time. It is useful for this thesis as it suggests that existing officers who may coach potential candidates through the police recruitment process will have less opportunity to do this as their service continues. As Social Isolation as a developing facet progresses in the police recruit, the opportunity for them to share and develop their information about the profession diminishes. Although this is not in any representative way ethnic closure, it may provide a social argument for why social assistance and coaching fails to make its way into wider under-represented communities.

The findings are not developed enough to inform with any level of strong credibility on whether there is an influence upon ethnocentrism via the individual's personality, and it is therefore not a strong contribution to understanding the nature of social micro interaction.

2.5 Social Identity and Policing

When I was drawn to this area of literature through the study of the police personality, its relevance to this study became immediately clear. The move into policing is a clear change of identity for police recruits. This identity change was discussed in socialisation literature (Van Maanen, 1975; Bennett, 1984; Fielding, 1988; Conti, 2006a; Charman, 2017) as part of an identity based journey for the recruits at the level of the self. These studies examine the journeys of new officers as their identity shifts and warps in line with the organisation's wants and needs. However, identity change was not the body of literature that I chose to examine; I chose instead the identity as perceived through the social lens, the identity of group belonging and categorisation. This was a conscious choice because of the complimentary nature of its setting when compared with Granovetter's theoretical framework (1985). Granovetter examines the exchange of information within a social setting, and as part of existing and well-studied social processes. This has not been previously utilised alongside social identity literature, but the utility of this choice became very clear throughout the forthcoming literature review in this area. To be clear, this section does not propose a separate lens through which to code the findings, it instead provides an additional interpretive lens through which to examine the findings generated using Granovetter's framework. It does not represent a substitute, but instead a compliment to the existing micro-social interaction based approach.

2.5.1 Definition and Main Concepts

Within the context of social micro-interaction, the personality based research was informative but not wholly reliable or indeed consistent. Within the area of presocialisation therefore, the theory is raised from the level of the self, to that of the self within a group. Social Identity theory will be discussed in this chapter as an approach to examining the interaction of the development and presentation of the self with regards to others. Potential police officers will have established social groups at the point of recruitment, but there are few discussions in the literature about these social groups or their make-up. The introduction of the social group is important with regards to this study because new officers will access their networks in different ways, and social conditions are a defined variable in examining embeddedness, as discussed by Grieco (1987) and Granovetter (1985). The social psychological literature states that we do live and have evolved to live within social groups as part of our

evolution (Haslam *et al.*, 2016). Haslam describes this interaction as the groups themselves '*structure[ing] our psychology through their capacity to be internalized as part of our sense of self*' (Haslam *et al.*, 2016). This is based on theory devloped by Tajfel (1974a). Social identity provides us a series of different lenses through which to view the world, and as world view may change or be influenced by potential officer's social networks throughout the recruitment process, it may provide some explanation for the level of relative embeddedness. It is therefore an important variable in helping us understand the process of anticipatory socialisation, as recruit's identities will shift both prior and as they begin to become police officers.

This chapter of the literature review will therefore explore the theory of social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 2004) A discussion of the theoretical framework and empirical findings will follow, with those discussions then given context through policing related research.

2.5.2 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory has been studied since its emergence in 1974 (Tajfel, 1974a). The theory has been developed and tested in many forms. Over the following years, intricacies and nuance have continued to be found, but this development of the theory has also led to pitfalls in its application and use. Comment from leading scholars researching in the field states:

> "*In contrast to so-called single hypothesis theories, the theory is complex, multi-faceted, and dynamic.*"
> (Ellemers, Haslam and Platow, 2003)

In the decade following its emergence, scholars laid the foundations for the theory, with the stated aim of reducing inter-group conflict (Tajfel, 1974b; Tajfel, Earle and Chaffee, 2016) they and others have subsequently continued to refine the facets of the theory, which eventually led to the formulation of its basic assumptions.

Social Identity is a component of the perceived self that is associated with a person's membership of a particular social group. This membership is not defined in sociological terms through the existence of things such as formal membership or attendance at a particular workplace, they are instead rooted in the psychological self; the self that allows people to perceive, belong and act through the identity of something that is greater than the sum of themselves. Haslam, *et al.* (2012) emphasise that it is the lens through which people '*categorise themselves*';

a person's social identity assists in creating a cognitive and physical framework through which they perceive life.

Social Identity theory rests on two principles, as detailed in Haslam, *et al.* (2012: 161)

(a) people are motivated to define the self positively

(b) that there are many contexts through which the self is defined – not just 'I' and 'me,' but also 'Us' and 'We.'

These principles are joined by sub-theories, that feed into the grand theory. One of these is *Self-categorisation*, which builds upon these principles, adding deeper understanding and explanation. Turner (1987) suggests that one of the critical factors defining relationships between two parties is the level to which they perceive each other as members of the same social categ(Turner *et al.*, 1987). This suggests strongly that an element of affinity must be present for mutual self-categorisation to take place. This affinity has also been subject to research and is known as 'social identity salience' (Oakes, Haslam and Turner, 1994). Simplified, this suggests that people come to categorise themselves as belonging to a particular group via their longitudinal exposure to it, and the fact that it is an appropriate lens through which to understand their present self. The deeper the historical attachment and connection with current circumstance/context, the higher the level of the salience of that particular social identity.

> "*Identities, then, are self-cognitions tied to roles and through roles to positions in organised social relationships.*" (Serpe and Stryker, 2011)

These self-cognitions have also been referred to as 'cognitive schemata' (Markus, 1977). They are frameworks, or lenses, through which the self perceives its relationships with others and governs its behaviours (Stryker and Serpe, 1994). These lenses provide a way through which to view the world, but they are always overlapping and the salience can alter as per the present circumstance. This suggests that when a particular incident presents itself to a police officer, there will be an unconscious identity negotiation that takes place, where identities conflict and move together or apart in order for one to reach salience.

These many layers of self are reinforced by symbols and rituals that enhance the level of group membership experienced by those who belong to it. Police officers wear a compulsory uniform that carries with it a particular authority and a set of societally reinforced assumptions, representing the state and possessing powers that

distinguish themselves from other professions. It would be difficult to take possession and control of such a powerful symbol of authority, without in turn absorbing some of the perceived changes linked with the uniform and what it represents into the perceived self. The uniform represents a particular embodiment of history, one which assists with defining the control of the state and the exercise of deprivation of personal liberty.

Skolnick (2008) describes this as a 'defining' identity:

> *"...almost like being a priest or a rabbi. 'The day the new recruit walks through the door of the police academy,' the former New Haven police chief James Ahern wrote, 'he leaves society behind to enter a profession that does more than give him a job, it defines who he is."*

With regards to this 'shift' in identity, voluntarily donning the uniform of a police officer may be viewed as a bigger shift in the perceived self than taking a job as an administrative assistant in an office. This perception is relative, as moving from a Premier League footballer into a non-descript admin role within a small business would also be a significant shift in identity. There are however particular 'powers' that a police officer holds that create obligations and actions unlinked to 'normal' daily life. It is this distinction that will remain one of the main underpinning pillars of this research, as it begins to illustrate very particular conditions for the shift of identity associated with becoming a police officer.

There is a body of developed study into identity salience and the processes that take place where salience is manually and consciously manipulated. Recent research into social identity salience suggests that self-categorisation with a particular social identity will lead to a change in self that becomes aligned with:

a) Enhancing the overall wellbeing of the group
b) Greater understanding of other ingroup members (Haslam, Reicher and Levine, 2012)

These two principles are a distillation of the first two principles of social identity theory, a drive to view the self positively, and deeper understanding of differing contexts and how they relate to the self. These have also been subject to study.

2.5.3 Enhancing the overall wellbeing of the group and identity salience

As a member of any particular group, the need to enhance the overall wellbeing of the group leads to behaviours that bring about mutual support for other ingroup members. There are a number of studies that discuss bystander intervention with regards to shared identity (Mark Levine and Thompson, 2004; Jetten *et al.*, 2013; Levine and Manning, 2014; Drury, 2018) that rest upon the axiom that when shared identity is present, the assistance from other in group members is far more likely. This concept has important ramifications within policing. Officers attend incidents which threaten their wellbeing on an almost daily basis. In some cases, those officers finishing their duties without personal injury is contingent upon the level of social support that they can draw upon. At any given incident attended – even those where threat is not anticipated - they may need the support of their colleagues, thus suggesting that the sharing of a strong social identity in policing doesn't just hold importance for belonging, it holds enhanced importance for personal safety and wellbeing. It could also be linked to the cultural pillar of 'defensive solidarity with colleagues' (Loftus, 2010), as the wearing of the uniform helps to develop a strong feeling of togetherness and belonging, developing the unconscious need from members to protect other in group members who also carry the warranted powers. This may not just be a symbolic, sociological, meaning based behaviour, but one which is rooted in biological systems that seek to protect the life of in-group members to secure the future of your social group.

Social categorisation theory was developed further due to and along with the research discussed above (Haslam, Reicher and Levine, 2012). The researchers proffer that the level of identity strength or salience at any given time is variable dependent upon the individual circumstances present. To test the fact that the perception of the 'self' was unfixed, football supporter bystanders were confronted by a man falling over wearing particular brightly coloured football shirts. The bystanders involved in the study were randomly selected and were first asked a set of questions by a researcher prior to witnessing the fall. The answers were largely irrelevant, as the questions were designed to heighten the salience of their self-categorisation as a football supporter. In this experiment the level of support for the male in the Liverpool shirt rose to that of when they were wearing a Manchester United shirt when the overall identity of 'football supporter' had been heightened through the interaction. This illustrated that identity salience is variable and can be developed or reduced through social circumstances. This illustrates that particular identities within the self can be brought to the fore, or cultivated within particular circumstances. This is a highly relevant finding to this study as the interactions that can take place during the recruitment process with existing officers have the opportunity to either develop social identity

salience as an officer, or supress it. The study offers high validity due to it taking place in a real-life setting, utilising a controlled incident that could have taken place. The researchers manipulated circumstances to provide outcomes that reflect behaviour away from the controlled environments that can usually be used for similar behavioural research. Drawing upon this, when measuring social identity, the chosen salience that you wish to measure or examine is subject to conscious and unconscious choice and can be manipulated through social interaction.

Applying a critical perspective, it is possible that the researcher interaction to manipulate identity salience created a false environment to the point where it unduly affected what could be considered a 'natural' reaction. In this case, the 'natural' reaction of the crowd was first researched, and then the identity 'artificially' manipulated. In non-experimental scenarios, an affection of identity salience through non-researcher intervention may offer a greater authenticity. This is an area of experiment design that makes it difficult to replicate the findings, as bias may be present in the behaviour of the intervening researcher (Brown, 1996). This presents a weakness of the findings but more recent study has also addressed the manipulation of salience (Levine and Manning, 2014).

Joining the police may create an opportunity to precipitate particular social conditions. Social interactions that take place as per the theory of embeddedness will carry transfers of information that have the potential to develop both feelings of belonging, but also the relative salience of the policing identity in contrast to their already existing social identities. It is also possible that a link between social isolation (previously discussed) and identity salience is of particular interest as it may be causal in how the informational resource that is applicable during recruitment is shared and physically disseminated. In other words, a highly salient social identity in policing, may lead to social isolation as other social identities diminish. If there are higher levels of social isolation, this may lead to higher levels of unconscious ethnic closure. As an example, white, working class male candidates will comfortably share their informational and pastoral support with already established friends and family who are more likely to share the same demography (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001). This resource will offer some benefit, and therefore confers an advantage for those candidates that have already established links with existing police officers social networks. This would suggest that a dominant white workforce, will mainly support white candidates simply through the likelihood that their friendship groups will share their demography. These interactions will assist with developing the salience of the police identity prior to any formal adoption of the position.

Interestingly, this research also suggests that extrinsic factors can influence the perception of salience of a particular social identity, and in turn physically affect wellbeing and support based outcomes. This leads to interesting possibilities for the purposes of further research, as the 'distance' between the perceived self of the police officer, and the perceived self of the non-police officer may be 'shortened', via mechanisms that allow perceptions of the salient self to be altered. In other words, it's possible to subvert the perceived police identity, and in turn raise other possible identities to the surface. It is possible to hypothesise that these salience altering actions may occur during the period of anticipatory socialisation. Confirming or reinforcing encounters with current members of the established social identity assists with developing the salience of that identity. Someone with an underdeveloped social identity as a police officer, may therefore develop the salience of the officer identity through reinforcing interactions with established members of that identity. This may come in the form of simple encouragement, through to forthright and deliberate identity building (mentorship or tutoring).

The identity of the 'self' that is most salient therefore informs on the behaviour of those sharing that identity. Within the Police context, this raises an interesting discussion about how salient the 'police' self is during police work. Is it possible that the difference in salience between the police self, and the member of the public self is great? What does this distance represent? Is it possible to grow the salience of the member of the public self to mitigate a police self that may be 'too' salient? Are the identities separate enough for identities to be 'shed' once work is finished? Some ethnographic research may dispute this within the policing context, as the identity shift detailed in early works by Van Maanen (1973), and Fielding (1988) are severe and the 'blue code' demands an allegiance that could be seen as almost absolute.

Identity salience is a developed area of social identity research, with several working hypothesis about how to 'bridge' the conflict between social identities that are ultimately meant to be working together at a super-ordinate level, such as at the extreme of; 'towards the benefit of all mankind' (Haslam, Eggins and Reynolds, 2003). The British police and the British public are meant to be one and the same according to the pillars of Peel (Loader, 2016), so it is fair to interpret this theory within context as representing one of the foundations of Peelian Principles:

> "*the police are the public and the public are the police; the police are the only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the intent of the community welfare…*" (Durham Police, 2016)

These original principles of the British Police suggest that the shift in identity between an officer and a member of the public should be small, as the responsibilities placed upon the police officer are not dissimilar than those placed upon a member of the public. This relationship is still being reinforced by the heightened interest in recruiting and retaining Special Constables, a position which occupies the middle ground between a paid and full time officer, and those members of the public who take on the role as a volunteer. As mentioned earlier however, empirical ethnographic research indicates a severe shift in identity, which in turn may indicate that the Peelian principle of an ever-present police force is an aspiration and has not yet become embedded.

The rising prevalence of the Black Lives Matter (2017) in the US over recent years is an illustration of what may happen when inter-group conflict raises issues over persistent differences in perception. The question to be raised with regards to this movement, is whether the identity salience of the 'Police' is so far removed from that of the black public in America, that the relationship between both groups is too broken for super-ordinate group identity and motivation to take precedence. In other words, the 'good of all mankind' fails to bond the groups of some black citizens to the police, and vice versa; the fracture (or distance) in perceptions of group identity is too severe between the two groups. There is some empirical study to support this hypothesis from several studies (Bodenhausen, 1993; Wright, Aron and McLaughlin-Volpe, 1997), with Wright *et al.* pointing out:

> "…*interactions with out-group members, especially when group memberships are highly salient, can be fraught with anxiety, discomfort, fears of appearing prejudiced or intolerant, and other negative emotions. These negative emotions increase the likelihood of self-censorship, misattribution, and stereotype confirmation.*" (1997:74)

This has been studied in the context of deviance (police officer misconduct) internally (Maskaly, Donner and Fridell, 2017). The difference between the ethnicities and backgrounds of senior officers was measured against frontline staff, in the context of perceptions of deviance. The different ethnicities offer differing perspectives on what constituted misconduct, inevitably creating conflict in the operational police environment. The conclusion was that if higher ranked officers did not represent the ethnicity of the rank and file, there was a potential for further or more regular misconduct due to the discordance caused by the differing views and perspectives. The authors are keen however, to point out that this should not reduce the need to diversify the upper ranks, but in fact ensure the opposite by diversifying the lower ranks at greater speed. Essentially this is a study of how police identity is 'absorbed' by officers of differing backgrounds, the results indicate that the salience is not uniform. Officers from different ethnicities and backgrounds may not absorb the identity in the same way as those

representing the dominant demographics, putting them at greater risk of assimilation into policing. This may then create a differing level of social isolation in officers from ethnic backgrounds, which in turn may create differing networks of support for potential new officers from minority communities. This may manifest itself in many ways, and essentially rests upon the typology of anticipatory socialisation. If the socialisation is uniform across all groups (informed by interactions with the police and their social networks), then identity should develop in the same way and at roughly the same pace. If interactions socially differ, then the encouragement of a developed salience may in fact be highly changeable, encouraging a graduation in the level of salience instead. This means that the theory would support individuals entering the police service with highly developed notions of policing identity, encouraged, developed and cultivated by those who already have access to it. The opposite is also not only possible, but likely, should there be little to no contact with the social identity prior to joining.

This study also made mention of *homophily* (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001), a term which describes the likelihood of developing close relationships with those who reinforce homogeneity of background, values and ethnicity. Where homophily is high, there is a higher chance of friendship, bonds and empathy between people because they share so much of their social and economic norms. This may suggest that social identity, or the establishment thereof, may be far quicker where there are high degrees of similarity in place. This also supports the development of the following section, which through empirical study indicates that people are far more likely to offer help or assistance to those that they identify with in terms of similarity of culture.

The preceding literature discusses how members of a social identity will seek to enhance the overall wellbeing of the group, and this was also discussed within the context of 'sameness' or similarity between group members. If difference in ethnicity (and therefore values and backgrounds in the general sense) raise issues internally, then the difference in salience between the identity of a member of the public and that of an officer is therefore likely to be of importance in many areas of decision making, with clashes providing fertile ground for research. With regards to the issue of a new recruit's successful recruitment and socialisation, the above theory suggests that those who are already a part of the dominant demographic, who share the values and norms of those already established within the service will receive greater support for their wellbeing.

The outcomes of the above theoretical discussion become highly relevant when positioned in parallel with the theory of embeddedness. As police recruits navigate police recruitment, the socially embedded interactions that

they experience represent an opportunity for the building of social identity belonging and salience. The police based social identity will be developed through interactions with those involved within the social interactions. These interactions may or may not build salience in the prospective recruit, and the respective level of their social identity salience will then theoretically affect them physically and mentally in particular ways.

2.5.4 Greater understanding of other ingroup members

With developed salience comes a greater understanding of other ingroup members, and this has been shown to be linked with greater levels of social network based support (Levine and Thompson, 2004). The study by Levine, *et al.* found that the level of ingroup support provided to communities following natural disasters was higher, when there were higher levels of emotional impact/empathy. Haslam, *et al.* (2012) interprets this study, suggesting that persons within the ingroup receiving support from other ingroup members are more likely to see the intervention as originating from a genuine sense of care, thus suggesting a favourable response. This was supported by empirical study, that focused upon students assisting victims from floods in Europe and South America. The research found that students were more likely to assist those who were closer to home, with a dependent variable of social identity salience. When the researchers enhanced the European social identity of the students, the results were far more pronounced.

The above studies were within particular contexts, with primers designed to 'activate' or 'emphasise' salience prior to the observed actions taking place. They also took place in a controlled environment that provided a relatively sterile context for decisions to be made. The validity of the decisions made to support or not support the people in need were however not made in a 'real life' setting. The circumstances were manipulated, and in many cases when decisions would be made away from the context of the experiment, there may be existing social factors that manipulate salience in a way that is very different to that created via the chosen method. The results however were significant, and showed that an increased understanding of those in plight (even if it was mainly geographical, which in turn would enable some cultural understanding) enabled a greater support response in the participant. This support response is hypothesised to be created by that shared or deeper understanding, but ultimately it reinforces the initial principles of contributing to the overall wellbeing of the group, and in turn reinforcing a positive image of the self as part of that group.

With regards to the policing environment and culture, this may psychologically explain the pillar of 'defensive solidarity with colleagues' (Bowling, Reiner and Sheptycki, 2020). A strongly defined social identity reinforces acts of support that transcend international borders, so a smaller social environment beset by risk based deployment may develop very strong bonds of identity, and therefore strong acts of reciprocity. This can be seen in early ethnographies from Van Maanen (1973) and Skolnick (1966, 1968, 2002) who describe the supportive bond of tight knit teams, something that Waddington (1999) also discusses in his defence of canteen culture. These social processes may represent social identity maintenance processes, underpinned by psychological tools that seek to protect established and developed world views, and enhance the overall wellbeing of their salient identity.

This area again supports the view that the development of social identity salience affects the level of support for other in-group members. Those that feel deeply that they are a part of a particular identity, will seek to actively support and develop that in group identity in others, especially if they are in plight or at risk. This provides a further theoretical support for many of the social interactions detailed by Granovetter (1973) during his study of how social ties affected the labour market of professionals. New jobs were found through social ties that were classified as 'weak'; often based in referrals that originated through 'friend of a friend' contacts. The fact that there was a shared social identity already present through the existing 'friend' contact enables enough trust to share information that may strengthen or develop the wellbeing of the recipient. The sharing of the resource (in this case, information) is contingent on the social tie, and therefore social identity, already existing.

This particular section of literature is important for the findings within this thesis. There is the possibility for each interaction with a police related social resource to enhance social identity and feelings of belonging. The social interactions essentially act as 'primers' for identity development. In practical terms, contact from Human Resources in the form of written letter is a type of social micro-interaction that will weakly develop greater understanding of in-group members. In contrast, a meeting in a social setting with someone who belongs to the target identity, who is actively coaching the potential recruit to *become* can be construed as a very strong priming influence for identity development; the recruit is receiving incredibly strong signals from the in-group that they are inviting them into the group themselves. This is especially true if the person engaging in the support comes from a family or friendship group, as this would represent those closest to the candidate, pulling the candidate into the profession.

2.6 Discussion

The literature in this area is more developed and consistent than that which explores the policing personality, but there are no specific social identity based studies in the policing recruitment context. Therefore there is some theory that is informed by decades of empirical research, that also contains significant nuance, but no direct police related framework upon which to 'hang' it. The facets that have been discussed include self-categorisation, identity salience, collective wellbeing and greater understanding of fellow ingroup members. The most interesting of these with regards to social isolation and information passed through social ties, is the level of salience present within the policing identity. This can be interpreted as the level to which the policing identity is at the forefront of police officer's minds when they are performing their duties, and what this level of salience then 'does.'

One of the biggest insights created by this review of social identity literature, is that the theory is consistent and has been repeatedly tested. This puts it at odds with the previously discussed literature on personality – which at best is inconsistent (Dantzker, 2011). This suggests that this theory may be of greater use for interpreting facets of police recruitment based micro-social interctaion reliably and consistently, and may inform on the findings generated by the research itself. The development and sustenance of in group identity processes may have an influence not only on the formation and use of informal social networks, but may also have an effect upon the police's desire to actually become diverse. A strong social identity is linked with world view, and the world views of minorities may not reflect that of the established demographic. This particular facet has been discussed within some USA based literature (Hur, 2012; Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty and Fernandez, 2017) which has found that ethnic diversity presents significant challenges within departments post recruitment. Research in London that saw rising ethnic minority numbers in police staff recruitment (Johnston, 2006) found a number of unwanted results including poor attitudes towards new ethnic minority recruits and discussions of tokenistic recruitment strategies. These reactions towards the change in ethnic minority recruitment may present internally as a challenge to a very established social identity; a poke in the face of the current policing world view. This may manifest itself in negative behaviours, the isolation of new recruits or discussion concerning their value fit (Conti, 2006a) within the organisation.

2.7 Situating this study

With regards to this study, the initial theory used to contextualise the research question was that of weak ties (M. Granovetter, 19(20. This is rooted in the domain of 'culture' as defined by Pincus (2011) as it deals with assumption, heritage and visible/invisible processes. The theory of homophily (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001) and ethnocentrism (LeVine, 2001) stray between Pincus' areas of culture and conflict, offering further explanation for the background of these processes, but in turn then informing on how those processes may become dominant, or create dominance within culture. This study therefore, aims to posit diversity as something more complex than the counting that often becomes the focus of parliament (and therefore forces themselves), and instead allow for a discussion of how embedded social resources (Parnes and Granovetter, 1976; Granovetter, 1985; Lin, 1999) may create advantage for those who have ready access to employees of police organisations.

Importantly, the 'problem' discussed in this study cuts across all four of the categories as defined above. A focus on representation as the 'counting' based area may lead to issues with legitimacy and ultimately lead into the 'conflict' domain in policing, but there is little empirical evidence to prove this link. The police are however physically behind the representative levels of their communities (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016), there are cultural issues and conflicts with specific communities (Rowe, 2007; Souhami, 2014a) and there are issues with profit and loss if they are substituted with Peels' definition of purpose; the absence of crime. The Macpherson Report (Home Office, 1999b) discusses persistent break down with communities, and how that can lead to disorder and crime, defining diversity ultimately as a precursor to legitimacy. This is an important distinction as it begins to stray into areas of procedural justice (Blader and Tyler, 2003b; Colquitt, Greenberg and Zapata-Phelan, 2005), suggesting that it may be much more complex than any numerical target or aspiration.

In summary, the 'problem' is not well defined, and lends itself to poorly interpreted and implemented 'solutions.' The starting point should therefore be, how do we understand the 'problem' in an improved way, therefore enabling improved solutions.

In unpacking the term diversity for the purposes of this study, we come to the conclusion that the normative definition of diversity as it stands is a reductive one. It reduces diversity to a figure to be reached, instead of part of a process to increase legitimacy in areas where the police may experience a relative deficit. Both the Scarman Report (Scarman, 1981) and the Macpherson Report (Home Office, 1999b) cite the breakdown of relations with particular communities as fundamentally causal in the activity that led to the inquiries, yet the Police and the Home Office continue to focus on the 'countables' to direct effort and focus minds. If those assumptions are examined, as if to be laid on the table, we would have to understand how forces recruit, and what this recruitment then produces in terms of human capital for the exercising of police powers. If long exposure to police socialisation is more powerful than the ethnicity of the recruits that become police officers, what does this focus achieve, and what social processes between actors assist to develop disproportionality in recruitment?

This study therefore seeks to add new layers of understanding to how we understand and refer to police diversity through the lens of embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985). By utilising this theoretical framework, the prism through which police diversity is seen becomes switched. In turn, this new framework may shine a light on the social interactions that benefit some prospective candidates more than others. Persons define their self through the boundaries they establish with others (Cohen, 1978; Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles, 2011), and the prism through which we view diversity excludes and creates boundaries too. What do these boundaries look like and how can they be surmounted? Who do they exclude and how does this exclusion take place? This new prism may inform on the generation of cultural tropes, as discussed and evidenced by Bowling *et al*. (2020) and Loftus (2010), but it may also provide an empirical base for both the challenging of existing diversity mechanisms, and the provision of positive action currently being employed to address the disproportionality.

2.8 Reflections

In my second Masters in Research (Stubbs, 2017), I conducted a qualitative study of police attitudes towards positive action within the policing environment within two constabularies. One of the major themes found within the research was a profound negativity towards positive action interventions in both constabularies. Established white officers discussed the interventions as 'unfair', and a hierarchy of 'competence' previously established in policing was being perceived to be eroded by positive action initiatives. These initiatives were largely considered as tokenistic and ineffective. The strange things about these findings were that those officers subject to the positive action initiatives also believed that they caused more problems than they solved. Under-represented candidates felt that their obstacles to progression within the policing environment actually grew, and that there was an assumption on the behalf of established staff that they had only been promoted because of their race, rather than their ability to do the job.

On reflection, I understood these perceptions as a social phenomenon rooted in organisational justice issues. Positive action processes were organised and developed without any communication with the workforce, and positive action was almost a taboo subject that was never understood or even discussed by the workforce itself – unless it was on petrol forecourts at 4am under the protective bubble of small social groups. This literature has altered my perspective on this research, as although I still believe that the organisational justice around the application of such policy and procedures should be addressed by fully discussing and allowing feedback from the workforce, I also believe that social identity and fears about its fragmentation represent an unconscious barrier that may develop maladaptive coping mechanisms from the workforce. Policies introduced within the workforce that threaten established social identity should be noticeable and be accompanied by specific interventions, otherwise resistance in this area will continue as officers and staff unconsciously seek to maintain and develop world view. At best those inside policing will ignore out-group members that threaten it, and at worse may pursue acts of outward aggression or actions that develop their social isolation. The persons within the established social identity also act as gatekeepers to that identity. Resource that is disseminated to those who wish to become part of that social identity may rely upon the level of affinity that those within the identity have with them. Social Ties therefore represent the vehicle for the movement of this resource, but the development of identity is certainly a major part of the currency.

Chapter 3: Westford Constabulary Police Recruitment and the context of this study

Although the literature review has discussed some elements of diversity in policing, and explored social identity, the recruitment process which is subject of this study and the science behind it has not been explored. Official police recruitment as a process has always in some form existed since Peel first established the Metropolitan police. The process has undergone significant change, but the original methods and traditions in this area remain unreported. There are a number of contemporary studies that discuss the nature of current recruitment processes (Decker and Smith, 1980; Slater and Reiser, 1988; Holdaway, 1991b, 1994; Johnston, 2006; Waters *et al.*, 2007; Wilson *et al.*, 2010; Mashaba, 2013; Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017; Spence *et al.*, 2017; Aiello, 2019). These range in content from the direct discussion of the proportion of new officers that come from under-represented backgrounds, through to the diversification of the methods used and how to rectify inequalities. These are worthy of some exploration, yet the process itself that is subject to this study has not been defined. This chapter will seek to define the process itself, and illustrate that the process itself is not neutral in either design or execution.

The structural process information in this chapter was garnered through discussion with an Occupational Psychologist who had recently finished working at the College of Policing. Notes were conducted during the discussion, and then relevant professional literature from psychology was checked for triangulation. I have also worked on a national review of police recruitment, but could not use any of the information gathered during my work role in this study. Knowledge gained during this period also assisted with judging the accuracy of the information gathered. The two main professional sources for this chapter are 'The Design and Delivery of Assessment Centres' (British Psychological Society, 2015) and 'Assessment Processes for the Strategic Command Course: What to Expect' (College of Policing, 2021). The BPS report contains the best practice guideline for Occupational Psychologists who are responsible for assessment centre design. This is used as the base for exercise and centre design for Step Two as detailed later in the chapter.

The contextual information garnered in this chapter was collated as result of being a senior manager in the force itself. I was involved in corporate meetings on recruitment, retention, media and communications, and the impacts of austerity. This access was a privilege not afforded to many police researchers. At no point were there ethical issues or conflicts raised. The managers I worked with were all aware that I was studying the recruitment

process as part of the PhD and would offer their opinion in informal settings to discuss what I thought about the direction of particular decisions. I was allowed to attend all of the normal meetings that I was allocated as part of my role. No private information is discussed in this chapter, and all of the information provided on the structure of the process is available under Freedom of Information.

In retrospect, a lot of the research in this chapter would have had to have been conducted under formal interview, and the wider context of the decisions of management may have been difficult to discern. My role put me directly into most of the meetings that were involved in this process, and that allowed me to perceive the organisational context, without being actively involved in any of the decisions themselves. At no point was I involved in making any of the decisions to shape the process, but I was present as they were discussed and debated, and ultimately decided upon. I did not take an active role in any of these meetings, despite my knowledge in this area. This is because the decisions were made by Executive level officers, in discussions with Human Resources, Training and Media and Communications directly. I have not contained any personal references in the following chapter, but I have used external references where possible to triangulate the personal data gathered through simple exposure to these discussions. This positionality is discussed in greater depth in the following Method Chapter.

3.1.1 Studied Recruitment Process

The process that is subject to this study is displayed in the table below:

Table 1: Table of Stages in the Police Recruitment Process

Step one	Initial application	Pass/Fail
Step two	Assessment Centre	Pass/Fail
Step three	Final Interview	Pass/Fail
Step four	Fitness Test	Pass/Fail
Step five	Medical	Pass/Fail
Step six	Vetting and references	Pass/Fail

There are some details in each area that require some exploring as they will contextualise the findings. When designing the method, this structure essentially provided the scaffold for the question design.

The Media and Communications Department and Human Resources in the researched Constabulary were consulted with regards to the approach they were taking to publicise the recruitment window. At the time of this recruitment it was the third tranche of recruits after a significant recruitment freeze that had affected the whole of policing in England and Wales. This was primarily a result of austerity practices instituted by the government as a large proportion of costs in policing are revenue based staff costs. When forces were asked to reduce significant amounts of costs annually, a large proportion of their savings came from reductions in both police officers and staff (HMIC, 2017). As police officers cannot be made compulsorily redundant due to their terms and conditions, this left forces removing larger percentages of police staff in support departments, and accepting attrition over time to reduce policing numbers. This led to a period between the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and this research where recruitment was mostly frozen across the country. Forces reached their savings targets year on year by absorbing retirements along with recruitment freezes; this over time led to persistent attrition of officer and staff numbers. As HMICFRS found during their inspections however, this was accompanied by a disproportionate reduction in police staff, as they were a revenue based cost that could be realised far more quickly than police officer numbers. Some forces attempted to even this balance by offering voluntary redundancy and early retirement schemes for officers, but their take up within forces was minimal and did not impact heavily on officer strength as a whole.

These contextual changes led to reduced staffing in support departments such as Media and Communications, Contact Management, Human Resources, Finances, Procurement, Information Technology and Training as they were the departments that held high numbers of police staff. This study therefore takes place just as the halt on police recruitment has been lifted. The first tranche of recruits for this study was only the third recruitment that the force had seen in six years. This is an important contextual feature as there may have been a significant build-up of potential police officers in this period who have been unable to access any employment in police services as they reduced costs.

Media and Communications as a department had been almost halved in number and were running campaigns in what they described as their 'typical channels'. These included Facebook, Twitter, the Constabulary Website, and SnapChat. This meant that there was no extraordinary attempt to change the 'usual' recruitment channels for the purposes of this study. This was a typical approach to gaining new police recruits that had been used over several years, even if it had been 'paused' through austerity.

Human Resources had been reduced in number but not as severely as Media and Communications. Their approach to this recruitment was typical with no 'special' considerations. Upon speaking to the operations manager for the department about the recruitment process they described the process which is detailed in the next section, but also stated that they would be running their usual approach to assisting under-represented candidates through the process. I enquired about what support was in place and it transpired that there was a list of potential candidates compiled over several years that were interested in becoming a police officer who were from under-represented backgrounds. These were pro-actively contacted about the recruitment window opening up and were offered positive action support. This was provided in the form of a HR specialist who tutored them with contextual advice about the stages of the recruitment and what they could expect. These were group sessions that could be attended in person or through a phone call. When I enquired about any special marketing or projects other than the current list of potential under-represented candidates who were interested, I was informed that there had not been anything put in place to specifically target particular communities. Upon probing the reasons for this approach, a number of practical issues were raised such as reduced staffing through austerity, the sheer number of applications, and the time pressures associated with the recruitment window itself.

It became apparent during these initial conversations across departments that there were many channels of work, each carrying their own inertia. Media and Communications had their own approaches to publicising and promoting the recruitment window. Human resources had their own approaches to conducting the process of

recruitment itself. The Equality and Diversity department also had established methods which were implemented alongside these other organisational approaches. These were also accompanied by medical, vetting, and fitness test protocols that were timed to start as the process progressed. When viewed as a whole, the technicality and complexity of these interconnected processes creates an organisational inertia (Larsen and Lomi, 1999; Criscuolo and Narula, 2007; Ashok *et al.*, 2021; Ozawa, 2021) that essentially represents the 'normal.' These processes are interdependent, so any change that is instigated will represent a thread that may unravel the whole. This makes the inertia in this area very strong.

In conclusion with regards to context, the recruitment windows studied in this research project were typically conducted and advertised, with a larger than usual number of candidates per proffered position. It is not clear why there was a larger than usual amount of candidates per position but likely variables include the long term recruitment freeze, and larger than usual numbers of redundancy in the public sector. For the purposes of this future discussion, it is worth noting that the inertia in this area will make meaningful change technically very difficult.

3.1.2 The process itself: Step One

The initial application provides the first step for completion for the potential candidate. This application form contains a split between marked application questions and answers (5 in the cohorts studied) and a selection of demographic data such as age, gender, recent work experience, qualifications and address. These incorporate eligibility criteria which are national standards and maintained by the College of Policing (2021). These include but are not limited to the disclosure of criminal records, the age limit of 18 years, and to be a British or European Union citizen. If these and other basic criteria are met, the main criteria for sifting at this stage were the subsequent scored and moderated questions. The following examples are slightly altered to prevent publication of actual application questions. The questions included basic conflict resolution:

"Provide an example of when you have faced conflict. How did you find a solution?

Diversity:

"Provide an example of when you have worked together with diverse members of the community. What happened and what did you learn?"

And experience with mental health:

"What experience do you have of working with people who are experiencing issues with Mental Health?"

The examples are then provided by the candidate who fills in the application online. Human Resource specialists collected the applications after they had been printed out, and were allocated a closed room for several days whilst they were graded and sifted. All HR Professionals were suitably trained and qualified members of CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development). The questions were designed with content often designed by senior officers, and CIPD qualified and trained staff would subsequently then convert that into content that would allow for competency based specific marked questions and answers. This is a typical approach to application form design, which has an overall very limited reliability and validity (BPS, 2015). Discrimination on the basis of particular demographics is unlawful and once the eligibility criteria is passed only the marked answers in the form are considered a suitable measurement for sifting. This approach is common in Civil Service selection methodology (Kappeler, Sluder & Alpert, 1998), but research has also suggested that navigating this process requires a '*conformity to a select set of middle class norms*' (Conti, 2006 p.223). This assertion indicates that information about the process in terms of how to pass it, may not address underlying cultural norms that assist with developing and forming world view. It therefore may be possible to learn to fill in an application form in the accepted 'way', but the process of that form developing and sustaining the expected norms may be far more subtle and rooted in social networks and expectations, reinforced through social contact.

3.1.3 Step Two – Assessment Centre

The SEARCH (acronym source unavailable) Assessment Centre (College Of Policing, 2017) itself offers a national standard for police recruitment. It is run by the College of Policing and forces pay into the College on a 'per candidate' basis. At this time there is no way to find out whether a force uses the assessment centre easily. It requires Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and several have been published via forces who have

requested data on pass rates. In the researched constabulary's case, they used the assessment centre as Step Two, and the attrition then removed a pool of candidates for the following stage to begin.

The format of the centre itself is based around a Situational Judgement Test (SJT), a Competency Based Interview, a Written Exercise, and a Briefing Exercise. All of these exercises are designed by College of Policing occupational psychologists with their roots within the current policing environment. Garland (2021), a qualified Occupational Psychologist and previous exercise design consultant with the College of Policing describes this process as adhering to the British Psychology Society Assessment Centre Guidelines (2015) as the fundamental structure for centre exercise design. The SEARCH centre as it was known, was in place until the pandemic forced changes in 2020 that saw the exercises move into an online environment.

The written test is there to check a basic level of reading and writing and ensure that potential officers can conduct exercises such as taking a statement or writing a basic crime report. The SJT and Briefing Exercise are comprised of current policing challenges, and these are drawn from the workplace in their entirety. Occupational Psychologists will interview current police officers about the challenges that they face, and how they approach dealing with them. These challenges are then designed into exercises and candidates are therefore faced with non-police (the context is removed to provide a fairer assessment for candidates not within the policing environment) problems to solve, and judged against how current police officers would approach solving them. This approach has a higher level of validity as it measures candidates against current work samples (British Psychological Society, 2015) – offering them a chance to essentially perform as if they were already in the role itself.

As this study progressed the candidates explained their experiences and social assistance with this stage of the process, it became clear that although this method carried high validity, and repeatability, it also created particular challenges that may have reinforced the impact of social resource exchange. This will be subject to some critique as part of the Discussion in Chapter 6; not because of the higher validity which has been tested in systematic reviews in other disciplines, but because of the reverse teleological approach where the service goes back into itself to gather both the challenges and solutions to today's problems. This is a model again based one the principles set out in the BPS (*ibid*).

The stages are detailed as follows:

Stakeholder Consultation – The setting of organisational context and collating of background and foreground information. This may include desktop research and senior manager discussion around current organisational needs.

Job Analysis – This is a stage that seeks to fully understand the challenges and expectations that are directly relevant to the role for which the exercise is recruiting. This is where assessment material is then designed around those contemporary challenges and expectations.

Initial exercise design - This is where the material is used to design a physical exercise. This is usually done within organisations whilst working with HR, but the College of Policing will be utilising constabulary stakeholders to gather and design the material with the expectation that they then buy into the processes for the purpose of selection.

Pilot/Validation - The exercises are piloted with existing post holders. Forces are required to provide a set number of officers at the specific rank for which the exercises are designed, and the exercises are tested for relevance and quality. It is at this point that the marking guides are developed. Once they have been developed, the exercise is repeated for the purposes of validation of the marking guide.

Final sign off and assessor training – This is the stage where the test as a whole is discussed and hopefully validated by the stakeholders, followed by the training of relevant assessors in the newly designed material.

In terms of scientific validity, this process is in line with best practice within the psychology community. It is also able to be tested rigorously for disproportionality as the results over time can be statistically measured. The full statistics for disproportionality with regards to SEARCH as an assessment method are unavailable, but an FOI request from Thames Valley Police (2018) has provided the last five years of data for candidates in England and Wales, and their relative success at each stage has been sub divided into a number of categories. There is some evidence that suggests strongly that there is disproportionality, but the data does have some caveats (see below the data for ethnicity and second language variables):

Table 2: Respective Levels of Success for White and under-represented Candidates Nationally

White officers	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number attended	7131	9351	5192	9326	11252
Number % Successful	6416 (90%)	7810 (83.5%)	4371 (84.2%)	7117 (76.3%)	8364 (74.3%)
Number % Unsuccessful	715 (10%)	1541 (16.5%)	821 (15.8%)	2209 (23.7%)	2888 (25.7%)
BME officers					
Number attended	793	1688	803	1671	1968
Number % Successful	597 (75.3%)	993 (58.8%)	497 (61.9%)	1018 (60.9%)	1088 (55.3%)
Number % Unsuccessful	196 (24.7%)	695 (41.2%)	306 (38.1%)	653 (39.1%)	880 (44.7%)

The methodology involved in the exercises was reviewed and changed in 2015*

(College Of Policing, 2017)

The sample in this data is provided by the national provider. The sample is large considering the total police service in England and Wales numbers approximately 150,000 towards early 2017. This data represents a tenth of the current national force and is therefore likely to be a sufficient sample for the purposes of identifying any obvious problems. Although the variables cannot be understood properly in any sense of the word as the data is aggregated, the outputs of the recruitment process are clearly disproportionate with regards to under-represented candidates. Speculating upon why is difficult without far more detailed data and investigation.

3.1.4 Step Three – Final Interview

This is a stage that is optional for forces as the Assessment Centre contains a competency based interview. This is conducted within forces and each force in England and Wales uses its own choice of methodology. This presents an interesting problem for the purposes of analysis. The College of Policing when conducting the assessment centers is bound by British Psychology Society guidelines. These are evidence based and the

Occupational Psychologists are officially accredited. Police Forces are not bound by these guidelines and although there are isolated cases of them employing Occupational Psychologists, during austerity most forces delegated to Human Resources to develop interview questions and marking guides. Within the bounds of this research project, this presents an area of high risk for diversity. Senior officers are often involved in exercise design and are untrained in professional exercise design or assessment as a rule (they do not appear on any of the accredited College of Policing Courses or Senior Command courses). This is an area where rank can be a highly influential factor (Davis, 2019, 2020). Senior Officers are the employers of Human Resource professionals so the power balance during exercise design and interview could be problematic. Senior officers may request questions that are difficult to measure objectively, or request questions that resemble idiosyncrasies with regards to their perceptions of policing. This suggestion will carry the meaning associated with a rank based organisation and may find its way into the assessment process. This is an area that could yield some interesting research due to the exercise of rank into a selection based process that benefits from neutrality and objectivity.

Upon reflection, the inclusion of this more subjective process acts as a counter-balance to the College of Policing designed, BPS influenced, assessment methods. Symbolically this could be viewed as an attempt by the forces themselves to maintain their operational independence and subvert the influence of governance in the selection of their future staff. It could represent a counter balance to evidence based practice, (Sherman, 1998) in that the College of Policing based selection processes are fully evidence based and rooted in psychological, scientific method. Force final interviews have the option to utilise evidence based practices, but are vulnerable to the influence of rank with regards to their selection practices. The only quality assurance in place for these processes are internal ones instigated by the forces themselves, and with a background of austerity and reduced human resource departments, it is likely that senior officer control and influence over the content of these processes has developed over recent years.

3.1.5 Step Four – Fitness Test

This is a pass/fail test that is administered to national standards. It is enforced by Police Regulations (Police Federation, 2017) and has recently been reviewed and altered via the Winsor Review (Home Office, 2013). There was some evidenced demographic disparity in fitness testing prior to this report, but Winsor sought to

rectify this by changing the national standards and aligning pay to particular roles. It is comprised of a bleep test that requires a 5.4 pass level for all candidates (Home Office, 2013).

3.1.6 Step Five – Medical

This is a part of the process that varies by force. There are no mandatory requirements listed by the College of Policing and therefore forces set their own medical standards. These are established via occupational health within each constabulary and may contain eyesight, hearing, colour-blindness, back flexibility and lung capacity. There are no recorded statistics about failures at particular stages of the medical. This may be due to issues with medical confidentiality as data will be unavailable if there is any possibility of identifying the candidates involved.

3.1.7 Step Six – Vetting and References

This stage is again subject to individual force's preference, although it is underpinned by the College of Policing's Vetting Code of Practice (2017). The Code of Practice details the ethics that are expected to be upheld throughout the vetting process and dictates the National Decision Making Model as the model through which forces should make and record their decision making. Internal standards will be created and met with every candidate, subject to this Code of Practice. There are no nationally available statistics with regards to either the criteria used by forces or the presence of disproportionality with regards to any of those criteria. This is another area that could be a focus for future research.

3.1.8 Overview

This entire process contains six steps of quite high complexity. The assessment centre takes place over a full day and is a number of exercises that span all of the competencies contained within the role of constable as defined by the College of Policing. This in itself would usually be the primary source of any sifting for potential

candidates in some professions, yet further stages of the application form, the internal interview, plus the administrative stages of the fitness test, medical and vetting/reference checks elongate the process further. It makes sense that some national standards are adhered to and utilised to prevent the 'post code lottery' in terms of officer baseline capability, however there still appears to be a significant proportion of discretion for forces to choose to set their own standards across other areas. Furthermore, without any released statistics within these areas, it is unclear if any of these stages have a disproportionate impact on diversity in terms of candidate attrition.

This is a problem in this area, as research in this field is difficult for England and Wales. Although the previously discussed statistics from the FOI request illustrate disproportionality across the varying steps of the assessment centre, no similar comparator is available for in-force final interviews for example. It is not possible to say whether the extra stages chosen to be implemented by individual forces make recruiting under-represented more difficult, or that they approach recruitment stages in a way that is different to those standardised processes at the College. The lack of centralised control around this process maintains operational independence for all of the 43 forces in England and Wales, but there is no way to examine their efficacy or their changing approaches in this area. The quality and frequency of recruitment processes is not a set indicator for inspection content and is therefore not reported upon. At this current time, it is not possible to say whether the steps included and examined in this study are typical of other similar steps and approaches in other constabularies.

All of the stages discussed were however present within the chosen constabulary, and as such they are therefore to be considered for discussion with the candidates. Each was examined with regards to the theory of embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985) as they may or may not be subject to varying levels of social influence and support.

3.2 Applying a critical lens

There are a number of criticisms that can be discussed with regards to this process. These are based upon the period prior to the research taking place, where I was working in Human Resources, whilst also studying the literature around selection and recruitment. There were many instances where established best practice was simply not evident within the current recruitment approach, yet fully accepted by the professionals within that area. The criticisms which follow are therefore simply identifications of weaknesses within existing practice, they do not take into account the practical barriers that may accompany addressing them effectively in real life situations and scenarios.

1) **The process is a '*Gated Process*.'**

A gated process represents a process where each of the stage is essentially a gate. If the candidate passes the relevant stage, then they are through the gate. The gate is closed behind them. This is an attrition based model of recruitment where numbers of potential recruits are filtered out. This results in a large number filtered at application form, a smaller number filtered at assessment centre, a smaller number filtered at final interview, and very small numbers being filtered via the medical and vetting. By the end of the recruitment process, candidates have been measured in multiple different settings, against multiple criteria. This works well for the organisation, as it is able to 'whittle' its candidates down via these gated stages, applying wide swathe gates initially, and much more resource intensive, smaller gates in the later stages. It would for instance, be entirely impractical to offer an initial interview to all 2000 candidates, but it may be able to offer them to 80 candidates at the end of the gated processes.

It does not however offer the scientifically 'best' approach (British Psychological Society, 2015). Assessment centres are held to be the best approach for the appropriate selection of candidates (*ibid*), as they offer many different methods of assessment to a single candidate. This allows the organisation to view the candidate's performance against multiple exercises at once. This allows for lower grades in some areas for the candidate to be balanced out by higher grades in others. The 'scorecard' delivered at the end of an assessment centre can show the candidate across their strengths and weaknesses; in other words, it offers multiple gates at once, none of which represent immediate attrition for the candidate. Although minimum standards are often enacted at assessment centres, they are often lower than stricter gates at the point of application form. An example may be

that the lowest score for a candidate in a particular centre exercise may be 2/5, whilst the existence of a qualification will simply bar the candidate from progression altogether. Assessment centres offer the candidate a better chance to showcase their strengths, allowing the organisation a more informed choice once completed.

In the researched process, the second stage is an assessment centre designed and delivered by the College of Policing. This stage takes place after the force has sifted its initial tranche of candidates. This sift takes place at the point of the application form, and it can be based upon many things. Demographics, previous experience, previous qualifications, previous brushes with the law, and previous experience may all be relevant. There was also a significant mark allocation to the completion of competency based questions. These standards are unpublished at this time and are often agreed between Human Resources and the senior officer team. It is not possible to judge whether these sifts are effective without publication of both the proportionality of them in terms of demographic success, and their content or criteria. This area remains a mystery within policing in England and Wales, and may also represent its biggest risk in terms of efficacy of gate during selection.

2) The Social Embeddedness of work based sample tests

Work based sample tests have been assessed in recruitment and selection literature for decades (Robertson and Kandola, 1982; Callinan and Robertson, 2000; Roth, Bobko and Mcfarland, 2005). The general consensus is that they offer similar validity to cognitive ability testing (Roth, Bobko and Mcfarland, 2005) and offer higher validity than previous experience based hiring criteria (van Iddekinge *et al.*, 2019). They represent an approach where an actual sample of work is selected, designed into an exercise with an altered context, and then delivered as a scenario based assessment exercise. The approach utilised in the researched process contains these work sample tests within the College of Policing Assessment Centre.

The method for the design of this content follows the BPS Guidelines (British Psychological Society, 2015) and is managed by the team of occupational psychologists housed within the College of Policing. Psychologists tasked with the design of these exercises follow established practice by visiting the policing workplace, and consulting with serving officers about the problems that they are currently facing in their roles. Serving officers are also consulted on how they face these problems and what they would do when designing and implementing solutions. These findings are then taken into the formal exercise design stage, where they are reimagined outside of the police workplace. An example of this may be a police officer dealing with an irate complainant who has not received the policing service that they should, being redesigned into a supervisor of a shopping centre

dealing with an irate complainant in exactly the same position. The rationale for this change of setting rests within an attempt to remove the advantage of those with existing police experience and 'level the playing field' for other candidates.

Although this conscious effort is present, the test itself still lends itself to assisting those with existing police social contacts. Full examples of these tests exist at the tip of every candidate's fingers within a simple Google search. It is possible to find example scenarios very easily, which then allows candidates with police contacts to simply ask existing officers how they would approach their solutions. The existence of these work sample tests therefore presents an interesting conundrum. Although they represent a relatively high level of validity in assessment, they are now considered as being on a similar level of validity to cognitive ability testing (Roth, Bobko and Mcfarland, 2005). It is therefore theoretically possible to maintain similar levels of recruitment efficacy with a cognitive ability test, something that is far cheaper to administer, with significant potential for disrupting existing social ties' influence. The relative implications of this change should also be considered, as the perceived validity of the exercises by the candidates also matter (Robertson and Kandola, 1982). It is likely that the current culture may not accept the cognitive tests as valid due to the implication that intelligence is a pre-requisite for effective police officers. This would go against the predominant *a posteriori,* experience based model of knowledge generation and currency for the vast amount of existing police officers. The long serving majority of officers were essentially home vetted by existing, high ranked serving officers and only more recently were tests to look at basic maths and English considered part of the recruitment landscape. This has left cognitive ability a relatively minor consideration for police recruits.

3) The compatibility of existing culture work sample tests with reform

There are fundamental issues with existing work sample tests in police recruitment. The most salient is that of the fact that the exercises are based on current police practises, which presuppose operational legitimacy (Bradford and Quinton, 2014; Bradford, 2017). Using Bradford's recent article on this as a base (2017) for further speculation in this area, the way that officers conduct their current duties generates a level of legitimacy within the communities that they police. The current practise of exercise design omits a very important step in the process which leaves out this legitimacy generation process.

When occupational psychologists go into existing police stations to ask about the problems that they are experiencing, a sample collection of work samples are generated. The operational legitimacy of these work

samples is assumed, and with good reason. If existing practices are enduring in the work place, then there is logic inherent in the exercise design that qualifies those practices as legitimate. In order to make this more clear, an example will be provided:

1) Occupational psychologist goes into the workplace to source current problems for exercise design. A suitable problem is identified which considers a police officers' duty to formally manage a complaint from the member of the public.

2) This problem is redesigned into a non-police scenario.

3) Serving officers are consulted on potential solutions to the problem.

4) A marking guide is created based on these solutions.

5) Exercise is formally generated and tested as a working scenario.

6) Outcomes are measured for exercise validity and feedback from examiners and candidates is collected.

Of note, is that the process above does not require any contact or validation from members of the public. This means that the work sample is purely based on the current practices of those existing within and executing the work itself. This is of course, entirely the point of the work sample exercise design. It does not examine how those practices will be received by members of the public; the legitimacy link is missing.

If a purely critical lens is used to examine this from the standpoint of public legitimacy, the public's voice is completely absent in the sample tests that are used to select police officers. This adds a new dimension to Waldinger's (2005) external, internal labour market. The standards of the internal work practices form the acceptable benchmark for the selection of new officers. What is already there, ensures that the 'new' candidates reinforce what is already there. This is a circularity that would undoubtedly contribute to the stability of the organisation, as it socially embeds the content of the exercises within the current workforce, simultaneously generating a system that reinforces social tie based resource transfer. In other words, existing officers will always hold very valuable information on how to traverse the selection exercises in the assessment centre, because they are the ones from which the content was generated. This creates a great deal of value for potential recruits who already know existing police officers. Not only are new officers with existing ties able to receive the social identity building interactions where someone from within is 'pulling' them in, the information that they receive will directly benefit them in these socially constructed assessment exercises.

If there are issues with current police legitimacy, the critical lens could immediately be turned to examine why the police are using current cultural practices to assess the competence of prospective police officers. Other

sources such as the public's view on legitimate solutions to policing problems may serve to offer a greater lever for reform, and potentially limit the power of social ties for these particular exercises.

4) The opacity of police recruitment as a process

Whilst the data around disproportionality in the police recruitment process remains opaque, the ability of any researcher or commentator in this area as a whole remains limited. The current best indicator of disproportionality is the overall statistic of representation over time in the Home Office reports (House of Commons, 2017). This statistic is a useful and powerful benchmark, but it tells us little about how it has been achieved, or indeed how many diverse candidates are being filtered out of the process, at which particular point, and through which mechanism. It is therefore not possible to discuss in any detail the relative efficacy of changes to the process. They appear to happen in isolated constabularies (Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017; Linos and Riesch, 2020), or small regions (Hong, 2015, 2017), where enough is known about the process in detail to allow specific changes and developments to be tested and measured.

Whilst these studies are immensely welcome, they cannot form a basis for widescale reform. Each constabulary continues to hold primacy over its recruitment approach, rendering generalisability very difficult with regards to statistical methods. Gathering enough data together to correctly represent existing constabularies across multiple sites would likely cause much of the data to be discarded due to the incompatibility of the chosen recruitment methods. In fact, the most uniform approach to police recruitment in England and Wales is the assessment centre generated by the College of Policing. Most forces do buy into this mechanism, so decent data can be generated and interrogated. This however, is true for only *one* of the gates. There is no available data for the stages of initial application form, situational judgement tests, vetting, medical, fitness, or final in service interviews. Due to the absence of this data, the real origins of any disproportionality in the process itself is totally obscured.

This renders meaningful reform in this area almost impossible without some form of central mandate to the system of recruitment. Improvements in this area will likely be piecemeal and ungeneralisable if utilising any form of quantitative measurement – this purely due to the available data and problems with its synthesis due to the plethora of parochial decisions still present in initial police officer recruitment practices.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This research, based on 26 semi structured interviews with newly hired police constables in one UK police constabulary explored their experiences of recruitment. This chapter will provide a reflective account of the research experience (Ellis and Bochner, 2000), and perhaps most notably the decision to change my methodological approach whilst in data collection. This chapter will aim to discuss aspects of method choice, approach and finally the limitations of the research so that there can be some confidence in the findings.

First, the chapter will establish the formation of the research topic and questions, followed by a discussion of the research philosophy. There is then a discussion of method design, which leads to the preliminary findings of those choices, and provide an explanation for how the method shifted over time in order to properly answer the chosen research question. The research process itself will then be explored, including the choices which led to sampling, the design and implementation of the interviews themselves. The chapter will then discuss access to the sample itself, ethical implications of the research, and conducting the interviews. It will end with a discussion of the limitations of the approach taken and the data gathered.

4.1 Context and positionality

The research topic itself was selected after several years at Masters level examining police diversity. The topic of the Masters in Research studies before the PhD contributed directly to the research question that was selected. Yet the continued parallel between my service as an officer, and my research as a budding academic served to create many conflicts over time. This led to me considering my positionality before finally settling upon the chosen topic.

In previous policing research, the insider outsider framework (Breen, 2007; S. Dwyer and Buckle, 2009) has been used to investigate positionality for the police researcher. An 'Insider' is considered to be someone who holds some shared identity characteristics with those others who are considered inside. In this case, as a police officer investigating police processes, I clearly shared some of the characteristics of police officers, rendering me inside to a significant degree. Some of the empirical evidence for this lay in my ability to navigate the organisation from within, securing increased access and being able to recruit participants very easily as discussed later. These tangible advantages have been discussed in other literature (Westmarland, 2016) as non-police researchers have struggled in places to access policing organisations previously. There was other empirical evidence present however in the feeling of being inside for some of the research, and this included the participants asking me for advice following the interview, or asking for my perspective on challenges that they may face in their recently gained position as an officer. As I experienced these interactions I was aware of the fact that the inside-outside boundaries were intensely blurry, and something that required some thought as the research progressed.

There were also strong indications of 'outsiderness' for me. These included a direct clash between things that I could see very clearly through the application of the theoretical framework during the research, and the way that things were done on a day to day basis. The reflexivity developed during the research process allowed me to identify the outsiderness quite quickly, but constant navigation became very intense and could be exhausting. Sitting in corporate meetings and disagreeing with almost everything that was said due to knowledge of previous research, and then having to attempt to address this divide in a way that was not threatening to those in the room represented constant effort. Over time, this reflexivity amplified, making what were quite trivial outsider based things such as the use of even cursory data for decision making, seem like a huge problem to

traverse. On reflection, this could have been a cumulative effect over many years of study as a serving police officer.

This led to me reaching a positionality of 'Insider Outsider' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). The inside definer was relevant because I am a serving officer, the outside because the thinking trained into me through the research process significantly altered my world view. This dichotomy has presented me with unique challenges, as the topic of diversity in policing was not without controversy. Throughout this study I was an actively operational middle and senior manager, managing 5 teams of 40 immediate response officers, and 50 neighbourhood policing officers. At the point of submission, I had left the service to pursue a role in academia, but on reflection the work pressures within these latter police roles were considerable. The identity challenges offered me many obstacles as I navigated the insights gained through the research, against the time, knowledge and resource constraints of the operational culture. Some researchers (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007a; S. Dwyer and Buckle, 2009) suggest that it is possible to maintain both objectivity and validity whilst conducting 'Insider' based research, whilst detractors such as Morse (1998) suggest that conducting role dualism as both an investigator and an employer makes gathering objectively valid data very difficult. Notwithstanding these perspectives, in reality the active navigation of both identities simultaneously presented many practical and theoretical challenges that resulted in high levels of emotional labour (Hochschild, 2020) for me as a researcher. Discussing the issues of embeddedness within the police labour market, when there was an active missive to simply increase under-represented recruitment from senior officers was simply not tenable. Information from this research as it progressed made things more complicated in the work environment, and as such, those working within diversity based recruitment departments within the constabulary did not actively involve me or my findings in any ongoing work to improve or address issues with recruitment. This led to an ongoing struggle with Cassandra Complex (Schapira, 1988) within the work environment, where I actively questioned both the validity and the value of my research topic and findings.

Despite this persistent identity challenge as an 'Insider Outsider,' the research topic that I chose to investigate remained static throughout the PhD, it was only the lens through which it was investigated that changed. Whilst part of an in house national talent management program as a police officer, I was exposed to an exercise in which the lecturer leading a particular session on diversity in policing asked those present in the room (approximately fifty on the program) to stand up in the lecture theatre. He then asked those present to sit down if they had family in the police before they joined, and then slowly worked through friends, family and acquaintances. At the end of the exercise, there were four of us left still standing, of which I was one. The

lecturer went on to discuss this as one of Policing's biggest challenges, implying that the social influence on recruitment was under-studied and under-appreciated. This insight led to the motivation for my masters (Stubbs, 2016, 2017), and later became the direct object of this study.

Initial study into the sociology of labour markets (Parnes and Granovetter, 1976) and its interaction with economic theory (Granovetter, 1985) suggested that spatial relationships (Hess, 2004) of the kind discussed by the lecturer did indeed play a causal part in both initial job selection and even the choice to search for future employment (Feinberg, 1978; Bloemen, 1997; Faggian, 2014). This then led to an MSc research project conducted with Warwick Business School, the results of which are below:

Figure 2: The effect of social tie upon chances of success in the recruitment process
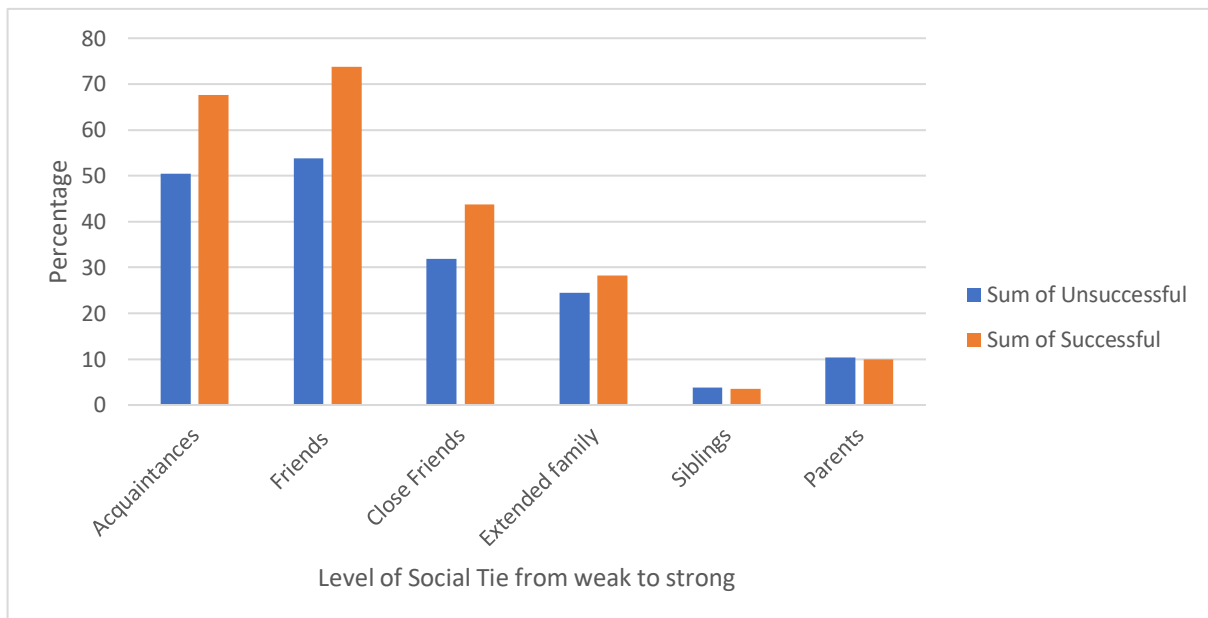
(Stubbs, 2016)

Table 3: Table of ties of association and success outcome

Association	Unsuccessful % (n = 477)	Successful % (n = 535))	OR (95 CI)
Parent	10.4% (n = 90)	10.0% (n = 14)	-
Sibling	3.8% (n = 33)	3.5% (n = 5)	-
Close friend*	31.9% (276)	43.7% (n = 62)	1.65 (1.15-2.37)
Family Member	24.5% (n = 212)	28.2% (n = 40)	ns
Friend**	53.8% (n = 466)	73.8% (n = 104)	2.41 (1.62-3.59)
Acquaintance**	50.5% (n = 439)	67.6% (n = 535)	2.05 (1.41-2.98)

*sig at .01 level; ** sig at .001 level

Stubbs (2016)

The research question in this case was:

Do prior social connections with policing influence the chances of being successful in police recruitment?

This research was conducted via survey. It was sent to all of the 2795 applicants within a particular recruitment window in my constabulary, and a two-week timescale was introduced to allow responses. I received 981 responses.

There were only 160 jobs for these applications, and of those 160 successful applicants, 141 responded to the survey. This represented a return rate of 88.125% for successful candidates. Out of the remaining applicants (2635), there were 840 responses, representing a 31.9% return rate. When comparing the two cohorts, their existing social ties were compared against their relative success rates. The Chi Squared results indicated that there was a significant relationship between the existence of close friends, friends and acquaintances in the police, and the candidate's relative success in the recruitment process.

This research project led me to the topic of choice for this study. The literature review considered the relevant literature from several different angles in order to really investigate some of the processes that were in operation at the point of police recruitment.

1) The first part of the review was a contextual discussion of the meaning of diversity within policing in England and Wales. this led to the conclusion that the term is layered and constructed in different ways within and without of the organisation. Police recruitment therefore, which has been designated by governance mechanisms as a means to an end in terms of raising race related diversity in the police, is a crucial area. It identified that the most prominent meaning for diversity in the policing context was 'Respresentative Bureaucracy' (Krislov, 2012).

2) Labour market theory was then examined as police recruitment operates within an existing labour market. Current police research in this area concentrates on representation and disproportionality due to its prevailing meaning. This features in existing labour market theory, but is not the sole concentration within it. The theory of embeddedness illustrates that abstracted labour market modelling, such as that discussed by the Home Office (2017) fails to address or understand properly, underlying social micro interactions and transactions that take place at the level of the social actor. This is a defined research gap in policing.

3) Finally, social identity research was explored as a lens through which to understand presocialisation. As the social networks develop and build the policing identity, this lens could be most appropriately used to assist in understanding the social processes in action.

4.1.1 Research Questions

These previously discussed stages led directly to the formulation of the research questions. Using the three areas within the literature review, two questions were generated:

1) **How socially embedded is the police recruitment process?**

2) **How do these social processes then inform on the development on the policing identity in police recruits?**

These questions directly address the issues identified in the literature review, and when investigated will offer a significant contribution to existing knowledge in the police research literature.

4.2 Research Philosophy

Following the completed literature review, I discussed with my supervision the research approach at length. I was encouraged to explore the more critical literature, that held its roots in intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1990). I pursued this avenue for some time, reading work from authors such as Kendi (2012, 2016). These books offered a very critical lens through which to view the policing labour market, yet were grounded in rhetoric and underdeveloped empiricism. The primacy of lived experience throughout the literature narrowed any exploration within this area to one of a single perspective. It drew on Theory (as in Critical Race Theory) and its development, yet did not seem to interact meaningfully with the data discussed heavily in Granovetter. The assumption underlying any racial disparity was one of racism, yet the sociological research suggested that unconscious group processes and networked connections worked to create advantage and disadvantages without any sort of intent, and that this was very much a human process and not one based in racial categorisation. A direct example of this is Waldinger's work on niches (2005) where ethnic minorities have been shown to develop, maintain and sustain employment niches in cities through entrenched and largely unconscious social processes that revolve around their respective ethnic networks. Although there is an argument for the inclusion of power dynamics in this conversation and the relative pay within the respective industries, there is also a multitude of other considerations such as competence, knowledge and experience. The critical perspective therefore offered an interesting but relatively shallow philosophical approach that may cause a 'jumping to conclusions' to suggest that racial disparity is to blame, when the actual processes may be far more nuanced and without intent, malice or significant effect. I therefore discarded this philosophy for offering a useful, but very limited approach to answering the research questions.

In order to address the research questions utilising an approach rooted in the scientific method, a methodology was needed that would directly investigate the social micro processes that inform on the larger macro processes (Granovetter, 2017), without the predetermined perspective on the relative cause of those processes. The investigation of social processes can be investigated quantitatively, or qualitatively, yet both approaches are more empirical than the application of simple critique. The theoretical framework provided by Granovetter (*ibid*) allows a structure for enquiry that is already grounded in empiricism in other contexts, and as such, further empirical enquiry will contribute to existing literature on social embeddedness, whilst simultaneously offering a new lens for police scholars. The existing theoretical and empirical evidence in this area grounded the

enquiry more firmly in collected individual reports of experienced phenomena. This established the first arm of the research philosophy as empiricism.

When considering the options following this decision, realism and logical positivism were considered (van Fraassen, 1980). Realism was rejected, as the enquiry as pertains to the research question did not intend to uncover an underlying reality for which there is a universal truth. From the existing literature in social embeddedness discussed in the literature review, it can be inferred that there are degrees and gradations in severity of embeddedness, suggesting that no singular truth exists. In fact, the truth that Granovetter (2017) seeks to expose is that of the existence of an underlying relationship between existing social processes and the related macro-economic processes. As his work progressed over the decades, evidence of differing relationships between the micro and macro in this area became very prevalent through scholars such as Waldinger (2005), Grieco (1987), and Lin *et al*. (Lin, Ensel and Vaughn, 1981; Lin and Dumin, 1986). They persistently showed that each labour market operates within profoundly different social settings, which in turn are often under-appreciated when considering wider macro processes in the economic realm. Granovetter's argument is therefore a simple yet elegant one: Abstracted economic processes are constructed through interdependent social processes that are context dependent. To investigate this proposition, there are two important areas to consider.

1. The first is that if the social processes are context dependent, than a universal truth is unobtainable. The chosen methodology must accept that the empirical evidence to be gathered will contribute to a perceived construction of a truth, that rests upon a probabilistic reality. The social processes contribute to a likelihood of social action, yet they do not determine it.

2. The second is that Granovetter does not argue that the social processes exist and operate independently. They intertwine with existing economic processes such as career status, pay, development opportunity, working hours etc.. His argument is that these processes operate together, there is no one universal, explaining truth that determines job choice.

These two conditions, relate directly to constructivism as an approach (van Fraassen, 1980, 2001). Van Fraasen (*ibid*) describes the validity of a theory as relating to its representation of the truth. The application of the theory helps the scientist better understand the scientific image of reality, yet will never really uncover any universal truths. He argues that science constantly recreates itself by bettering approaches that were previously held as universal truths, now debunked through further theoretical development. The best that one can hope for in

scientific enquiry, is the construction of an image of reality, supported through the use of empirics – constructive empiricism.

This approach suggested by Van Fraasen (1980, 2001, 2010) allows the proper investigation of the social embeddedness of police recruitment without an assumption that racism is present prior to the enquiry. It allows the proper consideration of the relative strengths of embeddedness within the policing context, without ascribing malice. It also allows an empirical approach that will seek to construct an image of the social reality of police recruitment, that will contribute to the overall scientific understanding of social phenomena within the policing recruitment process. It does not seek to prove anything other than a degree of interdependence between social and economic phenomena.

As with choosing any methodology, this relies upon an assumption too. This assumption is that Granovetter's theory ultimately holds some practical application and that it is a reliable enough lens through which to begin to construct an image of a proportion of the policing recruitment reality. I have evidenced throughout the literature review however, that there is a great deal of empirical evidence built up over decades that supports this claim. This is a relatively stronger claim to that offered through the application of more critical theoretical lenses, therefore offering a greater opportunity for a more accurate generation of the constructed image of police recruitment. Put simply, there is enough existing evidence to trust that Granovetter's approach has scientific merit in many different labour markets.

4.3 Methodological Framework

Following the choice of the research philosophy, it was necessary to establish a means of empirical data collection. In order to construct an image of embeddedness, evidence was required that allowed not only the discussion of the experience of the process itself, but also aimed to capture specific interactions that contribute to social embeddedness. This resulted in a two-pronged approach.

1. It was necessary to gather data from the participants that explored the actual experience of police recruitment.
2. It was necessary to then situate this data within the social context of those participants.

These two approaches together would allow an improved construction of the image of police recruitment as experienced by the candidate, but also allow Granovetter's theoretical framework to be properly applied during analysis.

4.3.1 The lived experience of police recruitment

When considering directly the research questions, the actual observational study of the social resource transfer between candidates and their existing social networks seems eminently desirable but ultimately impractical. The exchanges between the social actors involved in information and resource exchange take place at any time, utilising many different mediums. To observe this exchange, it would be necessary to follow prospective police officers before they became employed, and monitor physically the physical and digital exchanges with their social contacts. Observation in this instance would also not illustrate the significance or meaning of these interactions to the researcher, and as the hermeneutic aspect (Laverty, 2003) of this research is important in order to situate the interactions as significant or otherwise, this choice of method was considered and discarded. Husserl discusses this as a form of subverted empiricism, where much of the substance of the observed practice is missed, as it is in the eye of those participating (Detmer, 2013). It was therefore necessary to determine an approach that allowed those new police officers to discuss these interactions in a way that would allow me to interpret both their content and their meaning. This is a common approach to the collection of qualitative data and is described as both phenomenological (Husserl and Welton, 1999) and hermeneutic (Yates, 2003). I wished

to collect data from the candidates that discussed both their interactions and lived experiences with their families and associates during the recruitment process (the phenomenon of resource transfer during the recruitment process), but also the meaning of that transfer to them as potential candidates (the hermeneutic focus). Laverty (2003) describes this as follows:

> "*The focus is toward illuminating details and seemingly trivial aspects within experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, with a goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding.*" (p.24)

It is possible that social interactions formed through complex and established relationships between families and friends may go unnoticed by the candidates as they navigate recruitment. This is why the introduction of the phenomenological method allows some rigour of analysis of those experiences across a group of candidates. Gathering these experiences should illuminate some of what physically happens and the development of meaning or understanding between the parties involved.

During data collection and analysis, a process of interpretivism takes place, as it is an essential component of phenomenology (Husserl, 1970; Husserl and Welton, 1999; Laverty, 2003). This will involve the researcher seeking to interpret the candidate's perspective, feelings and position within the contextual boundary of Granovetter's theory. This presented as an area of risk for me as a researcher. Experiences (both as a police officer and as a researcher) had shaped my choice of research question, and I had already settled on a chosen method that proved not to find the data that I required. Upon reflecting upon this choice, I had to ask myself whether I had chosen to change my method because the results had not discovered what I had wanted to find. Heidigger *et al.* (1962) discusses this as being difficult to remove, as pre-understanding provides a structure for being in a person's world. It was therefore important to not try and remove my levels of pre-understanding provided by my masters research, but instead to be relatively aware of it and reflexive during both data collection and analysis. Phenomenology as an approach allows for what is called phenomenological reduction (Detmer, 2013) where such prior beliefs or experiences are 'bracketed' by the researcher, in order to glean data that captures the lived experience of the phenomenon in isolation. This particular area did offer some challenge for me as a researcher and it is discussed later in this chapter.

4.3.2 The application of the theoretical framework

In order to situate the lived experiences within the social context, it was necessary to provide some framing questions during the interviews themselves. This was in order to properly use the empirical basis in previous literature that allows us to draw conclusions into the relative embeddedness of the police recruitment process. Without pointedly gathering data on the social connections and their relevance during the recruitment process, it would not be possible to rely upon the theory to draw sound conclusions.

This related directly to the 'construction' inherent within Van Fraassen's (1980, 2001) research philosophy. The use of Granovetter's theory in this study presupposes that its use will have some application. It is possible that the data collected will refute this, and present a recruitment process that has only slight reliance upon social embeddedness. The image of reality constructed through the method would therefore show that the theory has limited application in the policing context. The theory's relative (and therefore probabilistic) usefulness within this context would be determined.

Granovetter's theory (2017) therefore was a direct 'fit' with the research philosophy, and allowed not just an interpretive angle to the data collection and analysis, but a deductive one too. Its use compliments the phenomenological approach of collecting the lived experience of participants, by applying an empirically tested theoretical model. These two approaches together assist with a stronger construction of the overall image of police recruitment.

The further use of Social Identity (Jenkins, 2014)as a complimentary lens through which to view both of these approaches was an addition that came late within the PhD. Granovetter's theoretical approach, twinned with the phenomenon of police recruitment as experienced by the candidates began to expose identity based challenges and interactions. It is important to note here that Social Identity was not use din the construction of the method, but in the interpretation of the above two approaches. This choice came about through exploring the findings and during the coding process.

4.4 Research Aims

As discussed in Chapter 1, the contemporary UK based diversity narrative in policing has centred around the recruitment, retention, and progression of under-represented (Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority) officers and staff (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee Police diversity First Report of Session 2016-17). This is known as Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012). The Home Office report states (pg.3) that current 'performance' in this area is objectively very poor:

- In 1999, 2% of police officers in England and Wales were from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background, compared to 6.5% of the population and 9.5% of the UK workforce.

- In 2015, 5.5% of police officers were from a BME background, compared to 14% of the population, and 11.4% of the UK workforce.

- No police force in England and Wales has a BME representation which matches its local demographic.

- In the Metropolitan Police Service BME police officer representation is 12.4%, compared to 40.2% of the population.

- Only two Police Chief Officers self-identify as BME.

- 4 police forces—Cheshire, North Yorkshire, Dyfed-Powys and Durham—employ no Black or Black British police officers.

- 11 forces have no BME officers above the rank of Inspector.

These statistics illustrate a significant deficit, showing that the Police have serious challenges to overcome in order to become representative in terms of its under-represented recruitment across the country. It is of note that the report is titled, 'Police Diversity' as this defines its epistemological boundaries clearly within the framework of the recruitment of under-represented officers. This is an example of the reduction from complexity into single figures that symbolise representation as a term – the racialised notion of diversity. This boundary has been developed in policing, with official reports reinforcing the term's weight with regards to scrutiny and governance mechanisms (Home Affairs Committee, 2016-17; Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016; Police.UK, 2016). Diversity in other literature remains however, a contested term, indicating that within particular contexts, diversity will become constructed as according the influence of those particular structures in combination with the expression of individual agency.

Within police recruitment, as a process progresses, individual actors will interact socially. These interactions will contribute to the construction and expression of race, and the construction and salience of social identity. The aims of police recruitment are tacit, apart from the objective of reaching the goal of a representative service, and it is therefore intrinsically linked with the concept of race. Perceptions of officers viewing the advertisement, the organisation and the execution of recruitment processes will be doing so whilst aware of the senior officer and governmental expression of diversity, and they will be doing so whilst the term is expressed and constructed dynamically around them. Race therefore, will be partially, occupationally expressed and constructed within the process itself.

With regards to this study, the theoretical framework provided by Granovetter (1985) and discussed in Chapter 2, provides a lens through which to examine this dynamic construction of race related diversity and social identity throughout the recruitment process. With regards to Pincus' domains, (2011) this approach resides within the domain of 'culture'. It encompasses social interaction and influence, along with elements of heritage and legacy. Theories of homophily (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001) and ethnocentrism (LeVine, 2001) travel between the areas of Pincus' culture and conflict, offering further evolutionary and biological explanations for the background of these processes, but they are theoretical in nature and simply inform our understanding around possible underlying psychological processes. They may offer some explanation for how recruitment processes may reinforce dominance, or establish power within established cultures, but they do not inform on the phenomenological experiences of those candidates involved in the process. Recruitment occurs before candidates *become*, and it must therefore be considered as a step in presocialisation where the neophyte is striving to become the initiate. Candidates are developing their police identity, and social conditions will inform on both its salience and its fit amongst other negotiated identities that they may or may not possess.

Existing literature in this area does provide a range of viewpoints on diversity, from Holdaway's assertion that micro transactions and interactions socially construct both identity and the concept of race dynamically (Holdaway, 1994), through to the positivistic determinism of nudge (Linos, Reinhard and Ruda, 2017).The studies appear on a spectrum, but there is little empirical evidence upon the phenomenon of recruitment as a process, or how that then builds meaning and belonging, ultimately interacting with the perceived self at the level of individual and social identity.

The aim of this research therefore, is to follow the philosophy that has already been established, and explore the studied police recruitment process with a view to improving the constructed image of police recruitment. It is

clear that the context of Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012) has forcibly shaped the context of police recruitment, yet the diversity based police literature does not settle on any kind of developed, constructed reality of the police recruitment process. The research questions examine embeddedness and the creation of the policing identity, so the aim must encompass a construction of a fuller picture in both of these areas, in order to inform on the applied and heavily evidenced context of Representative Bureaucracy. A more complete image in this area may begin to inform on the selection processes that are currently used, and also begin to explain what is a quite developed narrative of racial disparity in the police recruitment process (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016; House of Commons, 2017).

4.5 Research ethics

This research was conducted in line with the research ethics detailed in the British Society of Criminology Code of Ethics (BSCCE). The following sections discuss each main area required in order to maintain high ethical standards in police research.

4.5.1 Informed Consent

The BSCCE stipulates that any research conducted should be done with the informed consent of the candidates. There is research that describes the dominant police leadership approach as 'command and control' (Grint, 2010a), so it was important that I as a senior manager did not sub-consciously allow rank to subvert my candidate's informed consent. Grint would posit the use of power in command and control situations as coercive in nature; this was a dynamic that I wished to actively avoid. I also did not want to be untruthful with the candidates as it was highly likely that some would be coming to work under my command at some point in the future; simply not discussing rank wasn't acceptable to me either.

This unique research position meant that informed consent with respect to this study necessitated an open conversation with all of my candidates, where I offered the opportunity to ask me anything about the research, and as a thank you to those who listened, an 'Ask Me Anything' about policing. As discussed later in the 'Research Sample' section, I consciously tried to 'undo' rank and break down barriers by discussing the research in a relaxed way, and allowing them every opportunity to decline to take part. I removed rank from the recruitment discussion, which took place within a police training block in Westford Constabulary by always attending in plain clothes. I omitted my rank from the provision of the information sheet (contained in **Appendix 4**), and made it clear that the candidates could choose or not to choose to fill in the participation sheet, and that I would not be present when that decision was made. I did not collect those sheets, and as such provided them with agency and without pressure to choose to take part on their own terms. I explained that the obligation would entail a conversation in person or on the phone – whatever best suited them – about the recruitment process and their existing social networks. I also made it clear that if they made the decision to take

part, they could withdraw that consent at any time. This was provided to them in the information sheet for them to take away if they so wished.

4.5.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Gravelle *et al.* (2014) describes confidentiality as the non-disclosure of information, whilst anonymity is defined as the protection of an individual's identity. Both of these are necessary under the stipulations of the BSCCE. Anonymity has been preserved via the allocation of numbers to all of the candidate's interviews, there is no way to connect their identity to the interviews and the interviews were kept offline so that no data could be transferred or lost. The initial consent forms with the names detailed are kept in a locked drawer in a secured house until submission and these will be shredded once submitted in order to preserve anonymity over time. Some research has noted that there is low trust within the culture of the police between 'street cops' and 'management cops' (Holdaway, 1983; Van Maanen and Reuss-Ianni, 1984) and this could have influenced my candidate recruitment. However, research from a similar period (Van Maanen, 1973; Fielding, 1988) notes that the process of socialisation takes time, and as such as I was recruiting candidates within their first week of attendance at training school. Unless the candidates were prior employees of the organisation and already had been socialised, it is likely that my discussion of being anonymous and their identity remaining confidential was taken at face value, without the cynicism and suspicion that develops over time whilst a part of profession.

Hammersely & Traiano (2012) discuss that 'true' anonymity and confidentiality is very difficult, as by the very nature of research there is a publication of the views and words of the candidates. With defined samples and timeframes, it may be possible to discern who indeed, said what. In this case, the cohorts were sampled within a specific timeframe. The recruitment percentage of the cohort was however low, making it more difficult to identify the candidates. As the research interviews progressed and some of the candidates discussed their work histories, it became clear that if certain references within their accounts were published, their anonymity would be compromised. For this reason, some details in the analysis and results section have been substituted for generic references. An example would be a change from 'Forensics Fingerprints department,' into 'Crime Scene Investigation.' This change does not completely anonymise the data; some detail is necessary to discuss the context of the social networks and relationships. Keeping a balance in this area is necessary to properly understand and interpret the findings. All candidates have therefore been offered the opportunity to read the thesis should they have any concerns about its content.

As well as making sure that the candidate's identity was protected, it was important to make sure that Constabulary was also able to take findings from the research but avoid unnecessary scrutiny. I have therefore chosen to use 'Westford' Constabulary as a pseudonym. I have chosen to maintain some macro demographic and profile data in the Sampling section to provide some high level context, but remove any other detail within the text reported. This is to protect both the candidate's themselves and the organisation. Having worked inside the organisation itself, it was important for me to maintain a relationship with them after my research.

4.6 Initial Research Design

When first attempting to design a methodology with the research aims and topic in mind, I was working with a scientist who was monitoring the identity change of a group of prisoners involved in a rehabilitation project using a social identity mapping tool: SONAR (Best et al., 2016). The tool was a high validity, pre-tested tool that sought to understand how social identities were changed over time when people were introduced to new circumstances and challenges. It was adapted from an identity based recovery measuring tool used to understand an addicts journey from his previous identity steeped in addiction, through to his healthier identity of 'in recovery' (Best et al., 2016).

I believed that this model, with its validity, tendency towards measured positivism, and its connection to social processes through social identity measurement, would be a good tool to accurately capture the social journey through to being recruited in the police, and subsequently offer an evidence base for how a police identity is socially constructed prior to recruitment for some candidates. The hypothesis was that the creation of this social identity would allow that candidate to perform better during the recruitment process, as they were already – in a way – part cop. There have been other studies within policing that specifically examine the creation of the policing identity (Teasley and Wright, 1973; van Maanen, 1973; Bennett, 1984; Fielding, 1988) and the policing personality (Skolnick, 1966; Balch, 1972; Fenster and Locke, 1973; Vastola, 1978; G. Gudjonsson and Adlam, 1983; James, Campbell and Lovegrove, 1984; Beutler, Nussbaum and Meredith, 1988; Evans, Coman and Stanley, 1992a; Griffin and Ruiz, 1999; Gould, 2000) but none that seek to understand a pre-creation of a policing identity prior to even joining the police. Although this research gap had been identified, in hindsight, the tool that I had chosen did not offer the means through which I would gather the correct data.

I had designed a longitudinal case study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013), aiming to study two cohorts of new entrants. The model would be used to measure the creation and development of their policing identity through interactions with their social networks, mapping how their social self changed as they became more 'police' and less 'none police'. This was essentially a measure of identity salience development. I justified this choice by creating a 'logic leap' where I conjoined the use of social contacts to facilitate entry into the police, with the creation of social identity. This leap pre-determines that identity itself is influenced by these social contacts, when in fact the opposite could in fact be the case. It was possible that any 'help' a candidate received during their recruitment journey through their use of social contacts was simply a social exchange of resources (Lin, Ensel and Vaughn, 1981) and not something to be used in the construction of their new identity.

I discussed the choice to use this initial method as my research initially focused upon the social construction of the term diversity and its subsequent racialisation. I argued that other alternative meanings or phenomenological experiences had remained unconsidered or at best unacknowledged, and so had the products of these experiences. I had initially chosen a method that explored perception in a snapshot approach that measured changes longitudinally. I justified the use of SONAR as a method to measure exactly what I was seeking; I had chosen not to measure the perception of race related diversity as a social construct, but of the self within a social context. It is this distinction that, I argued, distinguished the research from the lived social reality, offering instead an alternative that looks at the perceived social self – something that exists within a social reality, but which may offer a totally different perspective on diversity. I justified that the research would be concentrating on the creation of the social-self as a result whilst conveniently ignoring how that self could have been influenced via the social process. This is the crux of my proposed and accepted method change. As I sat and conducted the interviews utilising the SONAR model, I was measuring these 'snap-shots' of their perceived social-selves, without actually exploring how they were being constructed or deconstructed – I was ignoring the lived experience of the candidate. Following the logic of this, the results would have mapped a perceived change in social-self, and their relationships with their non-police and police related social groups. This would have illustrated the product of identity change, and speculated upon the means of that change via the social group mapping, but there was something missing from the data. I still believe that this approach held merit and would offer another contribution to knowledge, but it would not explore what was happening experientially by the police recruit, or how it was happening.

The interviews themselves felt unfulfilling and the 'rich data' that I had expected to collect became quantitative measurement of a small case study. I found myself wishing to ask extra questions as I had in a previous MRes

(Stubbs, 2016) utilising semi-structured interviewing, as candidates brought up pertinent interactions with police connections that they either had or were developing. As I made notes, it was clear that these interactions had been or were being pivotal in their perception of self, and the rigid model I had selected did not allow me to explore these in greater detail, or speculate upon causality. The cohort did not provide enough statistical data for robust generalisation, and in order to grow the cohort I would have had to devote myself full time to the project. This was simply not possible due to my home and work circumstances.

When undergoing this process, I began to feel feelings of hopelessness. Whilst engaging with the method and discussing the candidate's changing social self, it became very clear that I had missed this element of social construction that had been the crux of my intended method. I was still working full time and although I was enjoying the process of taking part in the PhD, I was aware through personal experience with colleagues that the process can be punishing and affect the mental health of those undertaking it (Levecque *et al.*, 2017; Mackie and Bates, 2019; Mattijssen *et al.*, 2021). This led to me seeking support from my supervisor, who requested an intended change of method proposal, which I subsequently populated and found support for. The methodology which follows is the result of that submission.

4.6.1 Reflections

As a researcher, I have taken a great deal from the process of getting this particular part of my PhD so wrong. Although I look back on the process as a necessary one in order to reach the goal of submission, it was clear that I was subverted from my original goal through the speed at which I located and chose my method. Although I had established a research question through my prior MSc. (Stubbs, 2017), I had chosen a method based on my current area of work and interest. This has taught me a great deal about the process of choosing the correct method in order to answer the research question, rather than choosing the method which you wish to pursue through individual preference. The method I chose was cutting edge and scientifically valid, it just didn't measure the research gap which this PhD is seeking to address. It measured 'snapshots' in the creation of a new social identity, and mapped the change in a new police officer's social network. This would not offer an insight into the social processes involved in the construction of a police officer's identity prior to becoming a police officer, which in turn is what may be influencing the Police's objective to become a more diverse and representative organisation.

In the initial method, I conducted 11 hour-plus long interviews with new police candidates. This data has been retained and is stored electronically. It still remains an uncharted area of research, and a potential area of interest for research in the coming years.

From a personal perspective, this methodological change indicated several areas of risk when it come to my research design. In order to find my way back to the research question, I revisited the initial Social Ties research that had led to the PhD proposal (Granovetter, 1973a, 1985, 1988; Parnes and Granovetter, 1976). Granovetter persisted over decades in his efforts to begin to join together the research areas of economics and sociology. His enduring point is one of clarity; the two systems of the market and the labour market are irrevocably linked and even interdependent with that of social relationships and networks. Referring back to Smith (1776) he discusses how atomization is a prerequisite to '*perfect competition*' (Parnes and Granovetter, 1976), and therefore the perfect economic models are those which rest upon the removal of familial and social interaction. He then discusses how the opposite is true within the study of Sociology, where there is an assumption that people act in particular ways because it is a social custom or there is some unseen obligation in place (p.215). He posits that both of these models are false and undermine each other's validity. He argues instead that both of the models are embedded within each other and interdependent (Granovetter, 1985, 1988). He describes this as a 'classic question of social theory' (p.211), where discussions or perspective tend towards either the under-socialised or over-socialised extremes.

The previous perspectives of 'diversity' discussed earlier largely fall into the two 'camps' that Granovetter discusses above. Within the boundaries of under-represented recruits and the concept of representation through proportionate recruitment of visibly different races, there is a largely economically and demographically based measured model. Higher numbers of under-represented recruits meet the government's and therefore forces' objectives to 'increase diversity'. The numbers provide boundaries that define success and failure, and forces are able to 'measure' their progress. This is a reductionist approach to the discussion of a complex social phenomenon; the positivistic diagnosis of success and failure obfuscates the meaning that is discussed in reports provided by MacPherson (1999) and Lord Scarman (1981). The use of quantitative data excludes any interaction with the social reality that lies beneath the surface of recruitment; discovering this excluded data will therefore shed some light on a previously overlooked area of policing diversity.

This concept of 'embeddedness' proposed by Granovetter (1985) is a framework for understanding how the police recruitment system is navigated by its candidates. There will be structural considerations such as pay,

working hours, the type of work offered and the pension, but these should – according to Granovetter's theory – be intertwined and interdependent with socially influenced familial or network based considerations. The real insight which needed to be garnered via this study, was how embedded are each of these areas in police recruitment? To what extent is the process an economic or a social action? As this clarity emerged from the re-reading of the initial literature, I redesigned my method to answer the question put forward by the earlier MRes research; what was really happening between those friends, close friends and acquaintances when they were contacted by and meeting with prospective police officers?

4.7 Research design

To explore the extent to which social networks and social influences are embedded into the process of police recruitment, it is therefore important to think carefully about the depth of the data needed. A series of closed questions which had high validity within their field had been chosen in my prior method, yet I knew from implementing that method that the data I was collecting missed the vital part of why I was collecting it. The data did not explain 'how' the advantages were gained during the recruitment process, it simply found a set of way-markers to prove that it was indeed happening. Greater detail could have been gleaned about the process of social identity creation and transfer of knowledge as resources, and I may have been able to speculate on what this means for the recruitment process. It did not however provide any indication as to how this social process was occurring. In order to address this, it was clear that I needed rich, contextual data (Schofield, 2012), and to also remove a good deal of the prescriptive agency that I had introduced into the process of interview via my chosen method; as proscribed via the SONAR model (Best et al., 2016). The process required the removal of boundaries created by closed questions utilising a specific framework, and a far more exploratory approach that sought to provide the interviewee with the freedom to discuss their thoughts and feelings.

This choice was also a challenge to the established 'truth' of policing diversity. The quantitative data gathered through the use of the SONAR model would illustrate that police officer's sense of social self would change as presocialisation becomes actual socialisation at the point of successful recruitment. This would essentially become study of identity salience; it would prove that as the police identity builds within the self, the officer's perceptions of themselves with regards to other social interactions and networks changes too. This could be referred to as an already researched phenomena of developing greater identification with a profession, and

through that profession developing greater and more connected individual identity within it (Stryker and Serpe, 1994). This would be a contribution to knowledge within the area of policing as there is no available research that specifically measures identity salience during police socialisation, or indeed how this may inform on existing social networks. It is still however not answering the research question. It does not address how the presocialisation process is contributing to this shift in identity; it is not catching the dialectical and actively negotiable identity based interactions as they happen, it is simply measuring their outputs.

This measure of outputs is deterministic and positivistic; it does not capture how embeddedness works, it captures its effects. To this extent there is no exposure of a deeper truth through this research. The outcomes of a SONAR based methodology would be derivative from social identity theory, and essentially test a hypothesis created through existing research within this field. In choosing to switch to qualitative method, the research process became more flexible, allowing some inductive and deductive process. Embeddedness would provide a structure and some empirical support for the design of the interviews themselves. This would allow an exploration of embeddedness within policing, in turn allowing for an inductive approach to theory generation surrounding how embeddedness works within policing recruitment. This change in the research design is a challenge to the existing race related ontology of police diversity; it allows an empirically informed exploration of the 'how' and focuses less upon the result of recruitment processes.

4.8 Research Access

Researchers have found gaining access to police organisations difficult, especially within the area of Diversity (Rowe, 2016). Rowe discusses access across several levels, including the macro level, the micro level and the meso level (p.179). He posits some strategies for gaining, maintaining and keeping access to police institutions, yet it was clear from my experiences as an 'insider outsider' (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007a, 2007b; Dwyer and Buckle, 2009) that access was certainly not going to be a problem. I was in contact with the Chief Constable who initially sponsored the research, and the support from my peers and colleagues in training school when requesting to attend the recruits first week in class was straightforward. I had knowledge of who to contact, what notice to give, and the physical problem of site clearance, navigation and security was absent. This meant that as an insider within the researched constabulary, I could remove the use of administrative contact, and instead make direct contact with the actors involved. Picking up the phone and speaking with 'Lisa' about access to training classes was a very simple and straightforward affair once I had received ethical approval and senior officer support. This reduced the amount of time spent organising physical access considerably and in hindsight represented significant privilege. Having read others' contemporary accounts of gaining access and issues with access (Westmarland, 2015; Rowe, 2016; Davis, 2020), I was aware that the position I was in with regards to this was a significant privilege. It did however create other challenges.

Within Westford Constabulary, there was an Equality and Diversity department that was focusing on increasing the representation of under-represented officers within the Constabulary. They had specific methods which centred around utilising intensive positive action for pre-identified candidates. During both of my previous MSc's (Stubbs, 2016, 2017), I had been studying qualitatively and quantitively various aspects of diversity, and had struggled to access pre-existing data through the HR department due to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). I had instead collected my own data, but it was certainly true that a great deal of that data was already available, but inaccessible. The 'insider outsider' position provided me therefore with access benefits in terms of meeting new candidates for my study; but it also created challenges with regards to voice.

Within UK policing, a significant amount of prestige is attached to 'operational credibility' and in particular 'Command and Control' skills (Grint, 2010b, 2010a). Grint posits that the Police have a bias towards activity that remains within the domain of crisis and management problems – which require 'Command' and 'Management' skills accordingly. He goes onto critique the usage of 'Leadership' skills which seek to deal with

long term problems and solutions, relationship building and accept that failure is inevitable if there will be any significant progress to be had. Whilst exploring this research, and opening up dialogue with the organisation with the Diversity and Equality unit, it was clear that they were comfortably lined up with improving the number of under-represented recruits. I asked questions about the quality of those recruits, if we were properly engaging with the communities where they were from, and if there had been any consideration given to cognitive, class and identity based diversity. Utilising Procedural Justice research (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001; Colquitt, Greenberg and Zapata-Phelan, 2005), I also attempted to work with the constabulary to change internal culture and procure diversity training. Both of these efforts were rejected in favour of expenditure on further positive action and operational courses. I found the access in terms of physical recruitment of interview candidates fairly straightforward, but the access required to change practice and for my research voice to have traction in the organisation, was just as tightly controlled as if I had been an 'outsider, outsider.' Research in this area discusses this as a 'Dialogue of the deaf' (Engel and Whalen, 2010). This relates to both 'sides' of the police-academia relationship failing properly to listen to each other. Although some studies are beginning to show a thaw in this area (Bradley and Nixon, 2009; Johnston and Shearing, 2009), conducting this research as a police officer within the organisation that you are attempting to research, and thus influence with regards to practice seems to have been a difficult experience for me. This appears to be because access to the data, and access to a voice when you have your findings are two completely different things. 'Doing' research in terms of being able to access subjects and data was incrementally easier than had I been an 'outsider outsider,' but the roles felt completely reversed at the point where findings could be shared or lessons could be learned. This was particularly true with regards to rank within the organisation, as per Davis' research (2019, 2020). Strangely, the access to senior ranks through the research appeared to be straightforward. I was able to discuss my findings throughout my research in biannual one to one meetings. It was clear that the findings were helping them understand some of the issues behind diversity recruitment through a different lens. This was the opposite of the experience at the level of practitioner, as there appeared to be an inertia of practice that appeared to 'steam-roll' any discussions past the point of conjecture and ideas exploration. This was a fairly surreal experience as the expression of rank and authority within a police context often presents in the opposite way. This helped me reflect on my position as an outsider insider, as I was conducting myself in the area of practice as an insider in my day job, but felt this role reverse when I stepped into practice that concerned my research outcomes.

With regards to the dialogue of the deaf, this felt like an expression of that phenomenon; as long as I was expressing myself in a work capacity that did not involve research, I was well received and supported. When I

stepped into the other identity my voice was significantly diminished. Comments associated with credibility and experience in the diversity field were discussed with regards to my contribution, and there was a solid belief amongst those in the diversity unit that what they did 'worked.' At no point did I attempt to dispute their current practice, and worked to remain on the continuum between practitioner and researcher, rather than stray into one of the two 'camps' (Breen, 2007; Adu-Ampong and Adams, 2020). I believe that this positioning assisted with me keeping access to Human Resources throughout the study, but access did not and has not led to any tangible change in the methods of recruitment. Within the department there was a tangible inertia, linked into rigorous timescales with targets for recruitment that 'drew' practice into it and 'pulled it' along. There was so little time to really consider new approaches, as the recruitment windows, amount of candidates, and the sheer amount of stages, combined with reduced staffing through austerity led to very high time pressures. Staff were overwhelmed with volume and as such, as I tentatively broached utilising the findings, it often led to conversations cut short by the sheer amount of practical considerations that they were already struggling to meet. The definition of the 'insider outsider' from Brannick *et al.* (2007a) was in evidence through my personal experience. I was able to function as an insider for the purposed of access, yet the activity of the research and its output defined me as an outsider because of its removal from daily practice. This was the precise challenge that I experienced following the conclusion of the research, where the research itself had been heavily supported by the Constabulary, but the chances of the output carrying meaning or change felt remote.

Despite these pressures, staff were polite and would facilitate me meeting with potential cohorts via email. I had no problem physically reaching the classes themselves, and would purposefully wear my civilian clothes to attend and speak with potential research participants. I was also able to access overall recruitment numbers, but could not access any demographic data due to GDPR. As far as I could tell, this was a legitimate restriction and not one connected with my status as a researcher or the subject of my research.

4.9 The Constabulary

The Constabulary (Westford Constabulary) selected is based in the North of England and has approximately 6000 police officers and staff. It was selected due to the high level of access granted to me as a researcher through my position as an 'insider-outsider.' This was an area of privilege that some other researchers would not have access to, and with a culture of insularity and suspicion for outsiders (Loftus, 2010; Bowling, Reiner and

Sheptycki, 2020), this access saved me valuable time in determining an appropriate sample. I did not work with any part of the recruitment process for new recruits, although I was trained in recruitment and selection. This allowed some level of basic insight into how the process was likely to be structured, but I had not explored or had chance to access the content of any of the stages of recruitment. I was unaware of both the timescales involved, or the obligations on the candidates, despite being able to access this information. This was a conscious attempt to 'bracket' my work access privilege against the experience of the research.

The Constabulary is a mix of rural and urban areas. There is a mix between upper, middle and lower class demographics, and the geography is large for the amount of per capita police. Constabularies within the UK are split into Most Similar Groups (MSG) for the purposes of comparison by HMICFRS (Inspectorate body) and Westford is in a comparison group with several other constabularies. It is amongst the largest within that group. HMICFRS reports have been largely positive for some time with few areas of concern highlighted in recent inspections. At the time of the research, the Chief Officer Team was comprised of six officers, of which one had been hired from an external force. The Chief Constable had been in place for several years and had served only within the researched constabulary.

4.10 The Scoping Phase

This study has contained two phases; the Scoping Phase, and the Main Phase.

The initial methodology was tested as a pilot (Stake, 1995) upon the first four candidates and I received feedback from those candidates on how it had felt to them. The first set of eleven interviews in the initial method were then conducted, these led to the method redesign and a second set of 26 interviews. Feedback from the first three phenomenological interviews was slightly more positive than the initial interview guide, this is likely to be because the format was less prescriptive and provided more agency to the candidate, making the interview process a participatory rather than 'one-way' process (Warren and Karner, 2005). Research has indicated that there can be significant power imbalances (Richards, 1996; Littig, 2009; Lancaster, 2017) when interviewing *to* senior leadership positions or positions of high influence. This research discusses some strategies or approaches that can assist researchers in gaining trust and rapport. This research was the opposite in some ways, as I conducted the interviews as a senior manager. There is little research in this area and as such I

relied upon the research from Davis and Davis *et al.* (2018; 2019, 2020) to guide my 'undoing' of my rank. I made it clear at all times that this was a non-official activity and that the research was voluntary. I did not encounter any specific difficulties in this area and upon reflection, it really helped forge some future relationships when those officers joined my station. I was able to provide updates on the research and discuss how they were settling in. When I joined the force eighteen years ago, these conversations between a senior manager and a constable simply did not happen, so the research assisted with breaking down barriers rather than creating them. Upon reflection, my positionality was affected by these interactions, both at the point of candidate recruitment, and following interview. At the point of candidate recruitment the officers had already been recruited, so my contact with them was not affecting the subject of study – all of which occurred prior to their acceptance into the organisation. These interactions did however provide candidates with an accessible senior officer, through which they could ask questions and discuss their experiences, and upon reflection this is anything but typical. In reality, the study of the significance of social ties in presocialisation, assisted with the creation of a social tie for the candidates during and after the period of socialisation. It is unknown how the creation of the social tie affected candidate's ability to build social identity, but evidence from the gathered interview discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 would suggest that as they spoke with me in the workplace post interview, I had provided some positive reinforcement of social identity. These interactions were only offered through the research experience, and therefore they were anything but neutral.

Following this period, the scoping phase took place directly before the main data collection. Candidates made remarks such as:

> "I actually enjoyed that, it feels good to look back and talk about it now that we are through it."

> "I didn't actually notice how much I relied on the people that I knew, that was an interesting chat."

> "That helped me remember how frustrating it all was, thanks for letting me get that off my chest."

Receiving this feedback helped with the fact that I was asking for more of their personal time, to talk about work. Before every interview I would again discuss their agency and thank them for providing their time. I did not want their first experience with police based research to be dry or uninteresting, so I let them take control during some of their answers and lead into the next subjects without asking them specifically. I would then use active listening skills in the form of minimal encouragers (Noesner and Webster, 1997; Huerta-Wong and Schoech, 2010) to allow the candidate to flow through the discussion on their terms. This did lead to some interviews being long in terms of time, but the detail gained during the discussions was rich and assisted with
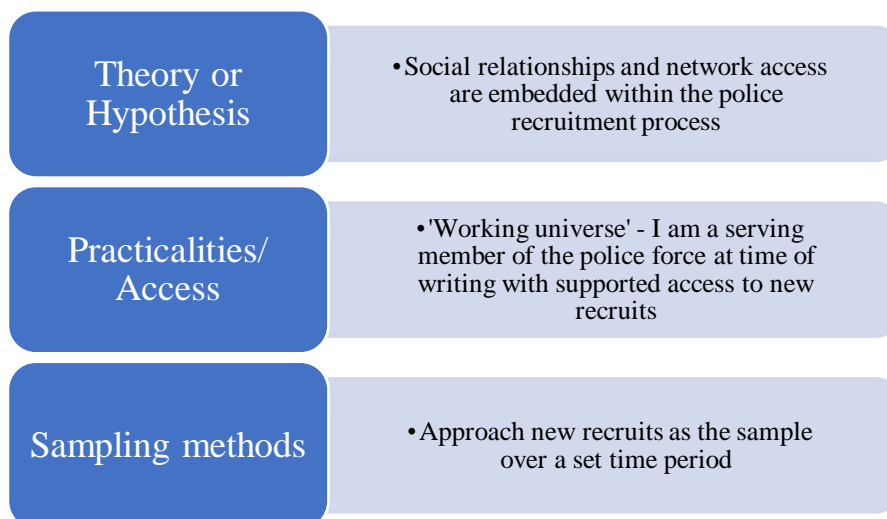
proper understanding of both the 'Act' of police recruitment itself, but also their 'conscious' (Husserl, 1970; Husserl and Welton, 1999). After these scoping interviews, I settled on the final interview guide version that is included within the appendix (Appendix 1).

The Main Phase

4.11 The Research Sample

The sample was selected using the framework suggested by Sjoberg & Nett (1968).

Figure 3: Sampling Approach

Theory or Hypothesis	• Social relationships and network access are embedded within the police recruitment process
Practicalities/ Access	• 'Working universe' - I am a serving member of the police force at time of writing with supported access to new recruits
Sampling methods	• Approach new recruits as the sample over a set time period

It was purposive sampling strategy (Yates, 2003) due to both the method and the theory selected for the study. New recruits were those who had just navigated the recruitment process and had recent memory of their social interactions during it. Recruitment itself is a time bound phenomenon; depending on how many officers are required to meet the need of the Constabulary, the Constabulary can alter and develop its processes accordingly. It was important therefore, to retain the sample within a set time period with as little alteration as possible to ensure a similar frame of reference for the participants, which meant selecting the sample from consecutive recruitment cohorts with a static, unaltered process. Only successful candidates were chosen as this limited the findings into those of relevance with regards to the candidate's consideration of the importance of

embeddedness in their recruitment journey. It was not the researcher's intent to compare the relevance of embeddedness to success, but instead investigate its significance in successful candidate's experiences. This is a limitation and should be noted for further investigations in this area.

At the time of writing, the Constabulary was going through a very quick phase of police recruitment. A substantial cash injection had been received by the Government, and cohorts of recruits were being processed into the Constabulary every six to eight weeks. These cohorts were as many as twenty eight, and as few as sixteen in number. They all experienced the same process of recruitment, described by them as follows:

- Application Form
- National Assessment Centre comprising of a number of exercises created and run by the College of Policing
- Final Interview conducted within the Constabulary
- Vetting
- Fitness test
- Medical

This structural process created the framework for the interviews themselves, and provided some consistency through which to begin analysis. I utilised four consecutive cohorts (following on from two earlier cohorts which had been recorded and discarded as my previous method) to recruit my sample of twenty six interviewees.

I was aware through contemporary research in UK Policing that rank was an important carrier of meaning within the constabulary (Davis and Bailey, 2018; Davis, 2019, 2020). Davis speculated in her research that the 'undoing' of rank within policing spaces may be a valuable approach for creating safer spaces within constabularies. As I was a senior manager at the time of data collection, and recruiting the sample would necessitate an introduction by training school, I had to plan my introduction and recruitment. Just the presence of my rank during the recruitment of candidates may overtly influence decisions by constables to take part in the research, and as such I considered strategies where my rank was 'undone' to ensure that their recruitment into the research was truly consensual.

Having had training as a police negotiator, I had been trained in motivational interviewing and advanced listening skills, and was aware that '*getting things out from under the table*' (Noesner and Webster, 1997) was a

valid strategy to build trust. With that in mind I discussed my rank during my initial introduction, but explained that I was not there to recruit them as candidates in the research as part of my position as a police officer. I explained that I had been involved in studying throughout my police career, and what my thesis was aiming to examine. I had organised prior to me meeting the new constables, for the consent form to be on every desk, so I explained what it meant for them to take part and that it would not be a part of a professional relationship in work, but a research one done in our own time. I explained that there was no obligation to take part, and as I did not know any of them professionally or where they would be working, their decision would have no bearing at all on their future careers. This may sound severe, but I attempted to operationalise Davis's research in a way that made it very clear that my rank wasn't in the room and had no influence on them whilst there or if they chose to take part. I further reinforced this practically by explaining that if they wished to take part, they only had to fill in the participant sheet on their desks and leave them there after reading and signing them. This was not done in my presence, and the consent forms were then collected at the end of their class by the trainers. I did not want to remain present whilst asking them to take part as this represented another method for rank to be 'done' (Davis, 2020). I collected them later when none of the students were present.

The initial recruitment rate was high at almost 50% per cohort, however during the process of data collection, this dropped to almost 20%. At this time of the research I was recontacting candidates and they were not returning my calls. I had explicitly stated during their recruitment that they had the right to withdraw from the research if their professional or personal lives became busy, or simply because they chose not to. On reflection, I believe that I may have 'undone' my rank in a way that emphasised their agency, which in turn made not taking part easier for them. On reflection, I am satisfied with this and believe that the data collected from the cohort provides sufficient insight into the phenomenon of police recruitment for those selected candidates.

Table 4: Sampling Cohorts

Cohort	Number of persons recruited	Male	Female	Percentage of total study
1	9	6	3	34.6%
2	4	2	2	15.4%
3	4	2	2	15.4%
4	9	5	4	34.6%
	Totals: 26	58%	42%	100%

The two larger catchments were from larger groups of recruits. There was a higher proportion of female candidates in the recruited cohorts (slightly over 50%), meaning that I was slightly more successful in recruiting male candidates than female candidates, but with the low sample size, this discrepancy is not significant. I was also able to interview four under-represented candidates, and this was over represented in the sample (15%) when compared with the recruitment cohorts, of which 8% were from under-represented backgrounds. During my recruitment explanation to the cohorts I did explain that I was attempting to understand how we recruited from diverse and non-diverse backgrounds so this could possibly have been viewed as an incentive for under-represented candidates to take part.

4.12 Interviews

In order to select a physical basis for my data collection, I considered various types of qualitative approach. I initially explored Grounded Theory (Cohen, Glaser and Strauss, 1969), but quickly decided against using it as there was theory in place through Granovetter (1973a) that informed upon a framework of enquiry. This meant that the study was therefore not exclusively inductive. This framework discussed the existence of social influence on what had been a traditionally economic process, and therefore provided a guide for the collection of relevant data. I had already experienced the closed interview approach through SONAR, and I knew that whilst utilising that approach, there were social interactions alluded to between the candidate and their social network that would inform on the concept of embeddedness. Because it was the 'degree' of that embeddedness that I wished to uncover, this necessitated the exploration of those social processes. The 'in depth interview' is one of several standardised approaches to explore these areas (Arksey and Knight, 1999; Yates, 2003), yet if the interview were not guided towards the social interaction that I was seeking to investigate, a great deal of information gathered would not be relevant. I therefore chose to make that interview semi structured (Yates, 2003 p.156) in order to focus the discussion into how social processes had informed their experience of the recruitment process.

This was a conscious attempt to allow me to interact with the participants, in order to allow me to reach a shared understanding of their perspective on those interactions. I was aware that their perspectives on how important

those social interactions were would differ, but this could illuminate the privilege behind these regular interactions i.e. Some candidates may not realise that there could be an important and active exchange of resource ongoing between them and their social network. Yates (2003 p.158) also specifically singles out the starting of a new job as an experience most suited to qualitative, in depth interview.

In total, a further 26 interviews were conducted, resulting in almost 34 hours of recorded transcription. The interview content was informed from a phenomenological hermeneutic (Husserl, 1970; Detmer, 2013) perspective, as it aimed to collect not just the lived physical experience of the recruitment process, but also the meaning of those parts of the process and their social interactions that the candidates could describe (Arksey and Knight, 1999). This resulted in a split within the interview content between discussing a candidates experience as they remember it, but also how they felt about that experience. Following the philosophy of phenomenological hermeneutic research, this is an attempt to connect the 'Act' with the 'Conscious,' – a method of seeking a more informed reality (Laverty, 2003). This sought to capture the data that would have eluded an observer (Patton, 2002; Detmer, 2013) who could have reported on the structure and content, but not the experiences of those within the process itself. This represented the dichotomy experienced during the use of the earlier SONAR (Best et al., 2016) methodology, where snapshots were able to be captured longitudinally, but nothing about the journey itself or how the participants felt about their experiences. The interview itself is also a shared process between researcher and candidate (Patton, 2002; Yates, 2003), allowing dialogue between the person attempting to capture data which accurately reflects the lived experience of the candidate, and the candidate themselves.

The theoretical context followed the framework of embeddedness described by Granovetter (1985). The theory provided a basis for the structure of the questions themselves. The primary goal was to understand the lived experience of the recruitment process (associated economic action) via the social relationships and interactions (social structure and influence) experienced by the candidate. To explore the level of embeddedness between these two concepts, it was important to fully understand the 'Act' within the boundaries of the 'Conscious' (Husserl, 1970; Husserl and Welton, 1999).

This then poses the question about what is truth within this context? As a researcher in this area, it was my role to make the interview respondents as comfortable as possible whilst undergoing the interview itself, and I concentrated on reinforcing the conditions under which they volunteered to be a research participant at the start of each interview. As part of the process I would mention the following:

1) The fact that the interview was wholly voluntary and that they could opt out of the interview process at any time. This included at any time during the interview itself and that they could notify mid question of their intention to withdraw if necessary. I emphasised that there would be no blockers to that withdrawal or no feelings of resentment on my part. I felt this latter addition was important because of the unseen but disclosed issue of rank.

2) I would address my rank directly at the start of the interview before beginning and discuss how it made them feel. These were interesting conversations, but they allowed me to remain reflexive and attempt to judge whether there were any underlying worries that I should address before the interview itself. Surprisingly, there were few disclosed issues at this point. I speculated upon the reasons for this throughout my research, but as there are a large amount of possible causes, I found it best to listen without judgement, reflect on the relative impact of rank for that particular interview, and then reassure appropriately. This took the form of discussions about possible future supervision by me, how they perceived my rank with regards to me as an interviewer, and then the conscious removal of it. This was a method supported by research (Davis, 2019, 2020) and I wished not leave rank as the 'elephant in the room.' I was seeking truthfulness in their account of their experiences, so any 'removal' of undue influence was very important during data collection.

3) I would also discuss with them their access to possible findings at the end of the research, and make sure that I thanked them for their volunteered time. It was at this point that I considered disclosure of the research philosophy and discussions of my motives as a researcher, but I never felt it was appropriate as it could influence future disclosures. As an example, had I disclosed that I was seeking to reform recruitment with my research, this could have led to unconscious leanings to support that objective, especially with the issue of rank behind the scenes of the conversation. Any discussion in this area was omitted consciously, and replaced with a sincere discussion of their current circumstances and my expression of gratitude. This actually turned out to be important throughout some of the interviews as they discussed childcare arrangements, or obligations to meet family later that day. This allowed me to adjust when I could hear children in the background or 'mummy' needed to jump into action.

On reflection, this 3rd addition during interview began to establish some reciprocity with the interviewee and it is only whilst writing this that I realise that I had been using Police Negotiation a(Mullins, 2002; Donohue and Taylor, 2006; Braten *et al.*, 2016)ylor, 2006; Braten et al., 2016). There was a conscious attempt by me to readdress any power balance that had been in the background of the interview using approaches 1 and 2, and 3 became a natural addition to get discussion started and 'feel out' any physical blockers that may be in place, but also to put them in control of the process of interview itself. I had been taught these tactics as a Police Negotiator and used them weekly in deployments. Looking back, I now realise that some of them were in unconscious use prior to the interview beginning. Reciprocity is a means of building trust between interviewee and interviewer, and trust makes it more difficult for a participant to consciously use untruths.

In total I conducted 26 interviews. These interviews were all audio recorded using a non-network enabled Dictaphone. In total there was almost 34 hours of audio. I assured all the participants of their anonymity prior to the beginning of the interview in order to 'undo' (Davis, 2020) more rank based symbolism and power before beginning to ask the opening questions. Once completed, I then transcribed the interviews personally. In spite of Bird's research experience (2005) I did not enjoy the process of transcription due to the time pressures it created. It gave me an excellent insight into my data, and enabled me to begin my coding process mid-way through data collection, but it also led to a large amount of time away from family. On reflection, this is definitely something that I would attempt to find support for in future research projects.

The interview guide used during these interviews was designed specifically to do three things:

- Capture the phenomenological experience of the candidates as they traverse the recruitment process (Husserl, 1970; Husserl and Welton, 1999).

- Explore the meaning that was created and experienced by the candidates through their social interactions with others (Laverty, 2003).

- Collect data directly relevant to the theory of embeddedness; the assertion that social relationships and networks are embedded within economic processes such as police recruitment (Parnes and Granovetter, 1976; Granovetter, 1985, 1988).

To prevent the issues that I experienced with the first method, the questions were specifically designed to remain open (Ostrander, 1993; Yates, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2016). Closed questions within this context were confined to initial ones about demography of the candidate and whether there existed social contact between the

candidates and the police prior to them going through the recruitment process. These questions allowed some context for whether the phenomenon differed through age and also allowed some examination of the relative 'strength' (Granovetter, 1973a; Tümen, 2017; Yuksek, 2017) of the ties that were present for each candidate.

The interview was structured to follow the structure of the recruitment, to allow for some chronological progression to aid memory recall. This is a feature of cognitive interviewing (Saywitz, Geiselman and Bornstein, 1992; Prescott, Milne and Clarke, 2011) and as a trained police interviewer, I knew that taking the interview through a structure that mirrored the experience would aid with improved recall.

The interviews were conducted at a time of the participant's choosing. They were conducted over video or phone call. In practice this meant some rather differently spaced interviews due to the shifts that the candidates were experiencing. The audio was recorded on a non-networked Dictaphone.

A copy of the Interview guide is contained within the Appendix at Appendix 1.

4.13 Data Analysis and Coding

The theoretical basis for the research was that of embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985), with the underlying principle being that there is some level of interaction between the social relationships and networks, and economic action. In this case, the economic action being the recruitment of new police officers, and the social relationships and networks being that of new police recruits. The method chosen for the research was that of in-depth, semi-structured interviews, to be analysed using a phenomenological hermeneutic approach, and theorugh the coding framework generated via Granovetter. The analysis structure can be clearly separated into the 'Act' being that of experiencing the economic action and their social network interactions, and the 'Conscious' being the thoughts, feelings and reflections of the candidate themselves. Taking both together, the study should produce an understanding of how these two concepts intertwined and whether they were interdependent.

The coding was created using a content analysis methodology, described as: "*a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication*" (Berelson, 1952). Moretti *et al.* (2011) discuss it as a conscious attempt by the researcher to classify written or oral communication into similar, codified categories. In this study the categories were both emergent and pre-defined. An example of this is that I utilised the pre-defined codes of differing strengths of social network ties to

policing based on the theory of Granovetter (1973a) to classify their connection to policing prior to joining, but allowed codes of '*frustration and anxiety*' to emerge from the candidates themselves. This approach contains both inductive and deductive methodology:

> **Deductive:** The use of the theory of embeddedness to provide a framework for the structure of initial coding and to test its presence within this window of police recruitment.

> **Inductive:** To explore the experiences of the candidates and how those experiences made them feel.

Cho *et al.* (2014) describe this process well:

> *"One unique characteristic of qualitative content analysis is the flexibility of using inductive or deductive approaches or a combination of both approaches in data analysis…The key difference between the two approaches centers on how initial codes or categories are developed. An inductive approach is appropriate when prior knowledge regarding the phenomenon under investigation is limited or fragmented... In the inductive approach, codes, categories, or themes are directly drawn from the data, whereas the deductive approach starts with preconceived codes or categories derived from prior relevant theory, research, or literature." (p.4)*

As described earlier in the chapter, we have existing theory that has been evidenced elsewhere and discussed for decades within the social sciences (Granovetter, 1985) to form the basis of the interview structure. However, as discussed in the literature review, we also have little to no knowledge of how this theory is evidenced within police recruitment and evidence of how the police recruitment actually 'works' is under-represented in police research as a whole. Therefore, the study was initially coded based on the presumption that the theory of embeddedness is to some extent present in police research, whilst attempting to discover (or inductively gather) both its nature and to what extent it takes place.

NVIVO 12 was used to support the analytical coding for this research. Initially I conducted a process of 'full coding', where the transcripts were coded line by line. This has been referred to as coding the 'manifest' and often results in full text coding (Cho and Lee, 2014). The second stage was to begin to unlock the 'latent' meaning, in order to connect up both the 'Act' and the 'Conscious' (Husserl, 1970) Cho *et al.*, (2014, p. 4) states that it is often the latent meaning that is the subject of content analysis researcher's intent, yet in this case I was

aware of the research gaps in this area that meant any deductive contribution to embeddedness theory and police recruitment represented useful and insightful research.

The second stage of coding was to begin to develop themes from the full text coding. This process attempted to make the many themes (full list contained within **Appendix 3**) more manageable and begin to create some informative structure from the data. The intention was not to amalgamate the descriptive codes into conceptual codes, but rather collate the descriptive codes into meaningful descriptions of the 'Act', so that they could be overlaid during later analysis with the themes that describe the 'Conscious.' The overall aim was to combine the two during analysis and be able to inform on the embeddedness of both within this particular window of police recruitment.

4.14 Limitations and considerations

When attempting to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it, an interview is a standard method of exploration (Yates, 2003). The following section provides a critique of the use of the semi-structured, in depth interview within the context of this study.

4.14.1   Generalisability

The typical understanding of the term generalisability within this context, refers to the ability to extrapolate the findings in order to understand and interpret much wider experiences (Hammersley, 1992). This is a feature of positivism (Heidegger, Macquarrie and Robinson, 1962), and is predicated on there being universal theories or 'laws' through which the universe is structured. Once these phenomenon have been 'discovered and measured' numerically, then this can then be used to predict other outcomes in similar situations. Within policing research, there is a long standing and prestigious school of thought based on randomised control trials (Bueermann, 2012; Sherman., 2013; Sherman, 2015, 2020; Slothower, Sherman and Neyroud, 2015). One of the most prolific areas of study is that of hotspot policing (Kennedy, Caplan and Piza, 2011; Mohler, 2014), where timed 'dosages' of patrol are tested against relative crime and antisocial behaviour. These have been studied for decades and the rationalistic, positivist approach has in some cases become synonymous with the term Evidence Based Policing (Sherman, 1998; Sherman., 2013; Sherman, 2015). This is an epistemological 'lean', where other methods that traditionally made up notable policing research have become less fashionable, such as the work of noted, influential ethnographers (Skolnick, 1966, 1968; van Maanen, 1973, 1984; Holdaway, 1983; Fielding, 1988).

The notion of generalisability as a whole is predicated upon there being underlying laws that are waiting to be discovered and tested (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, 2000). This assumes some element of neutrality, in that these laws exist without there being variables that can affect them. Social Constructionists such as Lincoln and Guba (*ibid*) argue that generalisability does not take into account the complexity of social life and all of its many variables. They go as far as to say that the individual case study should never be used to generalise, but that it can contribute to understanding of a phenomenon as part of one of many approaches to understand it. The process of reduction to a base 'law' is discussed as overly deterministic and removes nuance, ignoring power dynamics and influence that need to be properly understood. The method in this study therefore does not intend

to generalise towards a 'law' of embeddedness in police recruitment, it simply seeks to find out the degree to which it may be there, and try and understand how it may manifest itself.

The initial method of this study erred towards positivism, as the exploration of social identity through longitudinal, cohort based study utilising a tool used in other areas, was an effort to bring an aspect of 'measurement' to a complex social phenomenon. I had chosen a social psychology based method that was the opposite of phenomenology, and in hindsight, it did not address the important research question that had been raised through my previous Masters. In the process of researching for this PhD, research has since emerged that has criticised in many cases the replicability of psychology and social psychology based experiments (Pashler and Harris, 2012; Pashler and Wagenmakers, 2012; Aguinis, Cascio and Ramani, 2017; Świątkowski, Social and 2017, 2017; Anvari, Psychology and 2018, 2019; Compass and 2019, 2019; Guttinger, 2020). The criticism in this area of scholarship is severe and several of these articles could almost be construed as polemic in their approach to criticise the use of methods that draw conclusions that have since proved to be unreliable in other contexts. Despite this criticism, smaller case studies in the psychological field still do make claim to some generalisability. It is not the aim of this research to provide detailed themes that represent the wider police recruitment process, but it must be noted that the investigated process is very representative of most of the Constabularies in England and Wales' processes. The findings cannot be said to accurately represent any other constabulary's processes, or indeed inform with any accuracy on any other social context too far removed from the chosen Constabulary's methods or demography, but this similarity should not be ignored. The insights in this study offer an in-depth understanding of Embeddedness within a process that represents a large proportion of other Constabulary's recruitment processes, and should therefore be considered important in this area for the purposes of starting much needed, reliably contextual conversation. It is also of note that saturation (Creswell and Miller, 2000) was reached during the interviews, indicating an understanding of the phenomenon that was more than just surface level.

The above discussion illustrates an approach that does not attempt to locate a universal law or some other positivistic, and statistically generalisable finding. The entire research philosophy rests upon subjectivity of experience, collated over many instances of long form interview. Broad themes will be interspersed with individual experience if the doctrine of constructionism is evident within the findings, with no claim to overall generalisability necessary. This does not however mean that generalisability is absent; it should just be considered with an air of caution.

4.14.2   Validity

In quantitative research, validity is often related to generalisability and refers to the quality and relatability of the data gathered, to the research question (Bryman and Bell, 2016). To describe this succinctly; is the data that has been gathered valid for the subsequent interpretation of that data using statistical methods? As this is not a quantitative study, the principle of validity applies but within the context of 'truth':

> *"An account is valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomenon that is intended to describe, explain or theorise"*

> (Hammersley, 1992)

The key question for me to ask with regards to my methodology, was whether the questions that I used in in my interview, elicited data that was a true representation of the phenomenon of being recruited by the police within the chosen constabulary. This establishes the context of representation over reproduction; the objective was not to create data that could effectively reproduce any underwritten laws or rules within the context of that police recruitment, but to represent the experience as truthfully as possible.

The process of using myself as a 'yardstick' from which to judge truthfulness is rooted in complex subjectivity, making active reflexivity important.

> "Given that there is no bedrock of truth beyond all doubt which we can use as a basis for our assessments, the process of assessment is always potentially subjective to infinite regression" (Hammersley,1992:69).

Hammersley discusses this as an epistemological problem, where there is no ultimate answer. This establishes reasonable judgement as a means to an ends, where the reflexive researcher manages the problem of 'truth' actively when conducting the interviews. In support of this active process, a more in depth critical analysis is then conducted when coding, interpreting and discussing the content of the interviews. This allows a twin filter of dynamic and active reflexivity during the interview process, and a more deliberate and methodical reflexivity throughout analysis.

Creswell and Miller (2000) describe the process of exploring validity as challenging in qualitative enquiry, and warn against engaging in multiple perspectives and typologies of validity. They do however state that wrestling

with the credibility of qualitative research is important, and therefore recommend a set of common procedures for establishing validity in qualitative projects (Lincoln and Guba, 1986). The framework for the intersection of paradigm and researcher lens was utilised to provide some positionality with regards to the research:

Paradigm Assumption / Lens	Postpositivist or systematic paradigm	Constructivist paradigm	Critical paradigm
Lens of the researcher	Triangulation	Disconfirming evidence	Researcher reflexivity
Lens of the study participants	Member checking	Prolonged engagement in the field	Collaboration
Lens of the people external to the study	The audit trail	Thick, rich description	Peer debriefing

Table 5: Table of Qualitative Validity Cresswell & Miller (2000:126)

The arguments of Holdaway (1997a) rely upon the social constructionist paradigm, and this was identified as an area of research that represented a significant gap in current understandings of police recruitment. Through narrative inquiry, the study is aiming to understanding how social actors influence the abstract economic models of the policing labour market. It is distinctly not postpositivist, as there is no universal law of embeddedness that indicates a static or non-negotiated relationship with the individual contexts of each labour market (Windolf, 1986; Grieco, 1987; Waldinger, 2005; Eckstein and Peri, 2018). There is also no application of an overtly critical lens that seeks to explore new viewpoints and underlying meaning, removing the critical paradigm from the choice of options. This cites the study as within the constructivist paradigm.

Creswell & Miller (2000) then describe that the *lens* of the inquiry is key to understanding the interaction between the data gathered and its ability to become a true account of the phenomenon that it represents. In this study's case there was an interaction between prolonged engagement in the field, and a constant search for disconfirming evidence. The long form interviews that were often led by the participants discussed the entire recruitment experience from application to acceptance, with accompanying probes to direct enquiry towards the interaction with social actors. As part of this process, the prolonged engagement led to saturation at approximately 23 interviews. As a researcher, this was a comforting place in which to address my need to

complete the research, with a feeling of 'predictive satisfaction.' The hours that were spent with the candidates led to a familiarity that allowed a strong personal feeling that I could foresee the answers and discussions that were about to take place during the interview, after only a few confirmatory questions about existing social ties. This was a feeling that emerged from the process of the research, as I did not embark upon the data collection with anything but a drive to understand the level of embeddedness within the researched constabulary, rather than a pre-described phenomenon that I was seeking to discover or 'find out.' As this feeling emerged, it was a difficult but necessary process to self-check and ensure the same rigour of questions and freedom for the participant to direct the interview after this had been reached. It was at this point, that prolonged engagement in the field began to lead to a themic understanding of embeddedness within the policing context. These themes were then rediscovered and established during the coding process.

There is significant evidence of 'disconfirming evidence' (Miles and Huberman, 1994) contained within Chapter 6. Three candidate accounts were chosen to illustrate the main themes of embeddedness that were broadly representative for the candidates. The fourth candidate presented as an anomaly, which in turn confirmed that the methodology, allowing for reflexivity and consideration of social construction, was a valid method of exploration. No universal rules were exposed, but rich social interactions over long periods of time, and their meanings to the candidates were explored. Triangulation in the form of the embeddedness explored adhering to established principles including the exchange of value laden, informational resource was unearthed by the study. It's contextual nature, and the make-up of police recruitment processes and their ossification are also further examples of contextual discoveries that validate the constructivist paradigm. The findings indicate (as discussed in Chapter 6) that the policing environment has its own particular 'brand' of embeddedness, one which assists within that environment to construct race and social identity.

It must be noted at this point that there was a large representation of prior employees in the sample, and that this may have affected the overall validity of the findings. It is difficult to come to any conclusions about this particular limitation, as comparative data is unavailable. The relationship between relative embeddedness and prior employment in the policing profession was not the subject of this study, but remains an area that can and should be subject to future research.

4.15 Summary

When beginning to engage my method, I had an inability as an inexperienced researcher to properly connect that which I was trying to find out, with the method through which I could find it. I spent almost a year working through and developing a method that would begin to examine how officers would develop their social identity throughout their initial period of recruitment, in order to find out how that affected their social isolation and network groups. Although this study would have been a positive contribution to knowledge in this area, the findings would not illuminate what was happening within those social networks, and how they may develop and sustain the sharing of informational and emotional resource. I remained reflexive through these initial interviews, and could see how the data collected would not inform on the ultimate aim of the research question, and made the switch into a far more relevant method.

This selected method offers a twin approach to understanding the exchange of social resource during the phenomenon of police recruitment. As candidates talk through their experiences, the data gathered illustrates their passage through it, and their understandings about it. This exploration is informed through an application of social ties theory to the interview guide. The result is a chronological, phenomenological exploration of the lived experience of police recruitment, underpinned by the framework of the retelling of their social interactivity during that process.

Methodologically there are numerous limitations. The sample size is limited and measures a single instance of recruitment design over several intakes. The interviews are also only conducted with successful candidates so it lacks comparative data sets, and there is little opportunity for wider generalisability. It does however offer an in depth insight into the interaction between social resource and police recruitment, and just that distinction marks this research out as a contribution to knowledge. The chosen method directly addresses the research questions and properly explored embeddedness from both a phenomenological and theoretically informed standpoint. This layered approach offers a perspective that is simply absent in current police research literature.

Chapter 5: Results and Coding

5.1 Using NVIVO and the initial coding process

I have used NVIVO previously during my Masters in Research so already had a working knowledge of the software. Journal Articles such as those by Leech *et al.* and Richards (1999; 2011) assisted with the process of establishing coding, and the coding was completed in three stages.

5.1.1 Stage 1

The initial coding practice sought to establish the theoretical and methodological approach as a framework for data collection. This resulted in broad categories which were created to hold the main categories of the research. They were created as follows:

Phenomenology of recruitment as a process:

- Demographics

- Motivation for joining

- Locating the application

- Application process

- Assessment Centre

- Medical and Vetting

- Fitness Test

- Interview

Social Capital resources

- Social Ties

- Social Support

- Meaning - Belief

Although the coding order was initially established to reflect the chronological interview guide, as the interviews were coded it was clear that the structure did not assist with coding. Candidates would refer to social support throughout the research interview, rather than it being an isolated set of questions. As a researcher it was important for me not to try and separate this interaction as it was discussed. Establishing a formalised structure that separated out social ties form the process would not allow me to discern the connection and interaction between the theory and the lived experience. This made coding a dynamic process, and following transcription the coding would 'jump' around the codes. This mean that the graphical representation of coding through NVIVO allowed a particular level of understanding that would have been unlikely to have been as easily discovered had more traditional methods been used.

The frequency for the coding was split amongst the interviewees as follows:

Table 6: Initial Coding Frequency

Interviewee number	**Codes**
Interviewee 1	12
Interviewee 2	23
Interviewee 3	16
Interviewee 4	30
Interviewee 5	20
Interviewee 6	25
Interviewee 7	27
Interviewee 8	24
Interviewee 9	15

Interviewee 10	20
Interviewee 11	17
Interviewee 12	23
Interviewee 13	24
Interviewee 14	24
Interviewee 15	20
Interviewee 16	18
Interviewee 17	22
Interviewee 18	20
Interviewee 19	21
Interviewee 20	27
Interviewee 21	20
Interviewee 22	15
Interviewee 23	27
Interviewee 24	24
Interviewee 25	26
Interviewee 26	24

On sub code frequency, it is clear that some of the candidates had a lower level of social interaction to report during interview. Some gave very detailed descriptions of the support that they had received, some provided very brief or almost absent levels of social support. This was in some way expected, as not all candidates will have had access to social resources, and others may have accessed non-familiar social resource in the form of positive action.

5.1.2 Stage 2

Following the initial coding, I created a set of sub codes. Some of these were created from the theory (social support and social ties), others were created through the data (meaning). This led to a mix of codes that were generated through the process of analysing and recording the data in NVIVO, and the initial framework developed through the methodology.

Table 7: Secondary Coding Frequency

Interviewee number	Codes	Sub Code References
Interviewee 1	12	18
Interviewee 2	23	54
Interviewee 3	16	31
Interviewee 4	30	66
Interviewee 5	20	40
Interviewee 6	25	47
Interviewee 7	27	44
Interviewee 8	24	55
Interviewee 9	15	25
Interviewee 10	20	31
Interviewee 11	17	23
Interviewee 12	23	30
Interviewee 13	24	41
Interviewee 14	24	43
Interviewee 15	20	28
Interviewee 16	18	31
Interviewee 17	22	40
Interviewee 18	20	41
Interviewee 19	21	32

Interviewee 20	27	38
Interviewee 21	20	33
Interviewee 22	15	17
Interviewee 23	26	41
Interviewee 24	23	29
Interviewee 25	25	36
Interviewee 26	23	47

Some of the sub codes were again generated by theory. Examples include the splitting of the 'Social Ties' code into the sub codes of Close Family, Family, Close Friends, Friends, Acquaintances and No Social Ties. This was informed by the categories used by Granovetter (1973a) in his initial research. The defining characteristic of these categories is the length of time spent with that contact. This is explained to the candidate as the interview takes place, and it allows them to discern between a friend or acquaintance based on their own experience of having both throughout their lives. The choice of these codes were both practical in terms of clear categorisation, but also will allow for comparative discussion with the already established literature in this area.

The sub codes had to be narrow enough to allow for further examination, but capture enough information to allow for the next stage of 'nesting' the detail.

5.1.3 Stage 3

The larger sub codes were then split into more detailed codes that will allow for micro level study of each area. The figure below illustrates the 3rd stage of the coding process for the Code Social Ties. The frequency for intial coding with regards to stage two is in the second column, and the figures on the right relate to the Stage 3 codes that separate out the related detail. In this particular case, the initial understanding that the candidate had friends in the police is enough of a definer to make particular conclusions about the data, and the 3rd stage of coding then allowed greater understanding around what type of friends these were and how often they spent time with them. These separate levels proved to be very important during analysis, as the cross tabulation between more

detailed codes and demographic codes illustrated relationships that were not evident when viewing the data as a

set of listed codes and sub codes.

Figure 4: Coding Structure Example

Social Ties	0	0
Acquaintances	0	0
Acquaintances	16	29
Did not access acquai	1	1
No Acquaintances	9	10
Family in the police	0	0
Distant family	1	1
Immediate Family	4	6
No family in the polic	21	21
None-Immediate fam	1	1
Friends in the police	0	0
Close friends in the p	5	6
Friends in the police	16	45
No friends in the poli	10	10
General Social Contact	2	2
No family ties	1	1
Prior employee	0	0
Not a prior employee	11	11
Prior employee	13	20

'Prior Employee' as a sub code was generated from the data, as it became clear during the interview that this was a dominant theme. This was not planned, and eventually resulted in a hybrid approach between the codes 'deducted from theory' such as the Social Ties codes, and those 'inducted from data'. This allowed for a reflexive approach to creating the codes for coding, and ensured that the data based codes and the theory codes were actually developed in concert as the coding was progressed.

At the end of the coding at Stage 3, there were 11 major codes, which split into 65 sub codes, which split into a further 20 minor codes. In total there were 551 Major code references, and 950 sub code references.

These codes were then subjected to varying modes of analysis, which will be discussed as each of the Major split codes are discussed below. Relationships between them are also explored with a view to finding out how the phenomenon of police training interacted with the codes that were created using the theoretical framework created through Granovetter (1973).

5.2 Social Ties

This code is a major code and will in places set the defining variables for interpreting the data. The 'level' of tie is discussed within a set of sub codes, and these are expanded through the dialogue of the interview. As an example, an interviewee was able to state whether they had friends or acquaintances in the police at the start of the interview. These determiners were in their hands initially, but as the interview progressed, I would probe how they understood those terms. This was done using probes which explored the frequency and depth of social contact. If the frequency suggested that the officer's acquaintances were friends that they spent quite a lot of time with, this was explored with the interviewee and coded into the 'friends' category. This means that over the course of the interview, social support was filtered into the 'correct' category by myself, relying on the determiners discussed in the theory of Granovetter (1973).

The code split is detailed in the figure below:

⊟ ◯ Social Ties	0	0
⊟ ◯ Acquaintances	0	0
◯ Acquaintances	16	29
◯ Did not access acquaintances	1	1
◯ No Acquaintances	9	10
⊟ ◯ Family in the police	0	0
◯ Distant family	1	1
◯ Immediate Family	4	6
⊞ ◯ No family in the police	21	21
◯ None-Immediate family	1	1
⊟ ◯ Friends in the police	0	0
◯ Close friends in the police	5	6
◯ Friends in the police	16	45
◯ No friends in the police	10	10
◯ General Social Contact	2	2
◯ No family ties	1	1
⊟ ◯ Prior employee	0	0
◯ Not a prior employee	11	11
◯ Prior employee	13	20

Figure 5: Social Ties Coding Structure

These codes illustrate that within the 26 interviewees, 21 had no family in the police, 9 had no acquaintances, and 10 had no friends in the police. These are surface level indicators, as each person's social network will differ as according to their contact with multiple layers of social tie at any one time. This manifests itself as a network that is multi-faceted, with differing levels of social tie active at varying parts of the recruitment process. This results in timelines of social support that rise and fall as according to the particular challenges afforded by their knowledge and social support availability. These all become defining variables in the consideration of how 'strong', or through what lens, social support is realised. Although this Code is therefore a defining code in terms of underlying variable (via Granovetter (2017)), it simply provides a framework for a dynamic social system of social support that occurs and reoccurs as according to the stage through which the applicant is progressing.

Diagrams of each candidate were generated in NVIVO. These allowed me to visualise links of Social Ties when compared to other codes that were present. Interviewee 10 is detailed within the figure below:
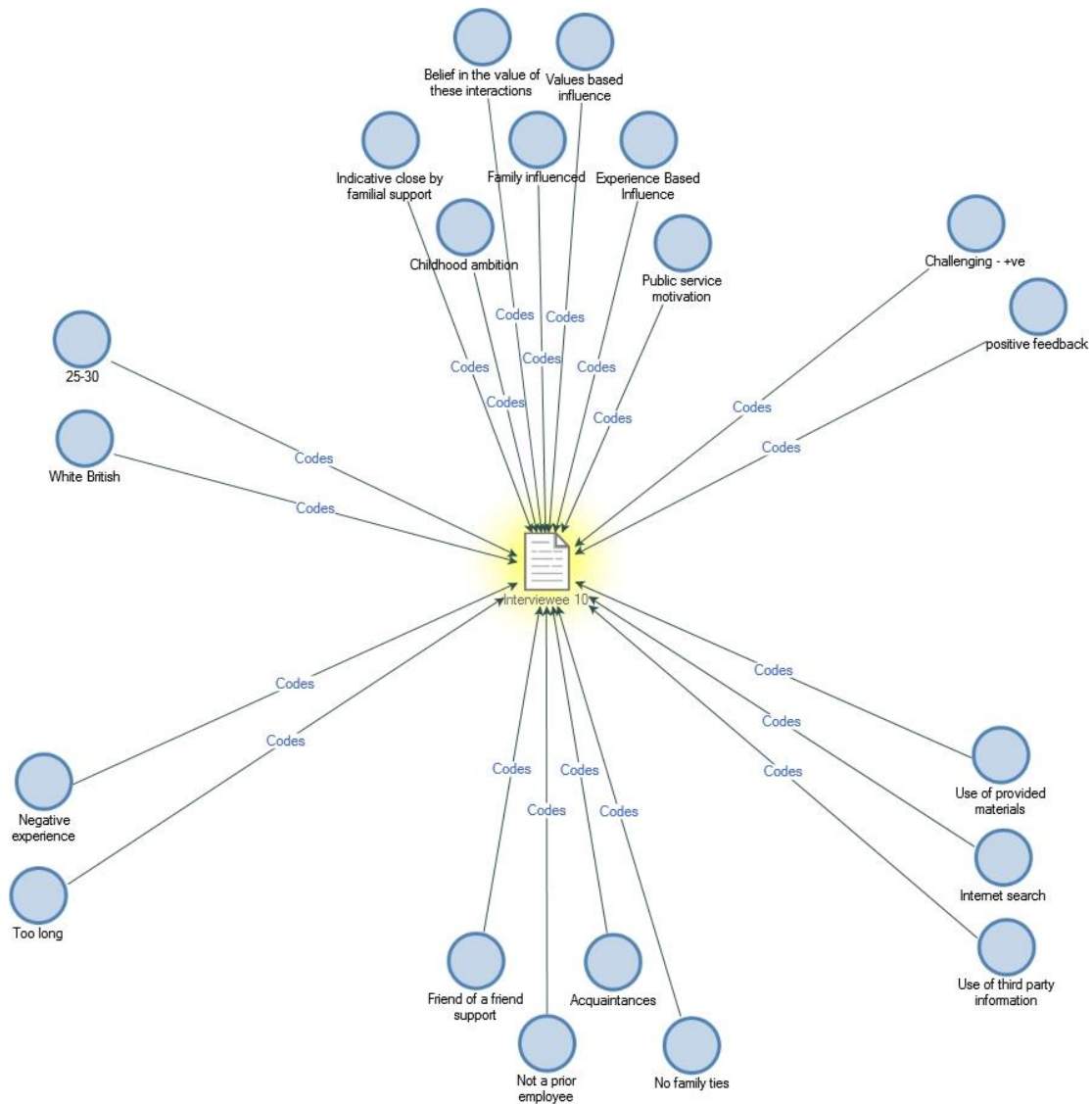
Figure 6: Candidate coding diagram

We can see from this diagram that Interviewee 10's social ties include 'friend of a friend' support, and some acquaintances. They were not a prior employee, and therefore are less likely to have stronger social ties present. It is also clear to see that with regards to the level of motivation for them joining, they have hit many of the codes. As a simple, visual representation of the coding, this diagram represents a candidate with variably weak ties, who had a number of motivational sources for becoming a police officer. These are a mix between social support in the form of close familial support, and some more wider support also garnered from family. This

representation is useful for the purposes of categorisation, but tells us little about the nature of the support itself, or about the passage of information from or through that tie as a resource. To summarise this surface exploration of this code as a definer, it is useful as a tool to parse the data for future analysis, but it does not provide any contextual information or data to understand how the resource exchange actually 'works.'

In broad terms, the social ties determiner informs us of the following:

Table 8: Social Tie Frequency Table

Category of social tie	Respondents	Percentage of cohort
Acquaintances	17	65.4%
No Acquaintances	9	34.6%
Family	5	19.2%
No Family	21	80.8%
Friends	16	61.5%
No Friends	10	38.5%
Prior employee	13	50%

Even with very small sample numbers the percentages of study participants who have acquaintances, friends and have been employees in the target constabulary seems significant. This could simply be down to some level of sampling bias however as it may have been a defining variable in their choice to partake in the research. It is not really possible to infer anything from this data with any level of reliability, generalisability or statistical validity. As mentioned in the methodology chapter however, this was not the aim of the method.

The gender and the ethnicity of the quotes discussed in the following section will be denoted via the following key. This is in order to allow the reader to classify some of the diversity based demographic definers dynamically as the results are discussed.

Table 9: Demography Coding Table

WM	White Male
WF	White Female
URM	Black, Asian, Minority ethnicity, or under represented group and Male
URF	Black, Asian, Minority ethnicity, or under represented group and Male

With the main definer of social ties established, the results that described the phenomenology of the recruitment process from the perspective of the successful candidates were examined.

5.3 The Recruitment Process

As described earlier, the process itself was split into six categories.

Steps	Activity	Gate or contribution
Step one	Initial application	Pass/Fail
Step two	Assessment Centre	Pass/Fail
Step three	Final Interview	Pass/Fail
Step four	Fitness Test	Pass/Fail
Step five	Medical	Pass/Fail
Step six	Vetting and references	Pass/Fail

Table 10: Police Recruitment Stages

When all of the data is utilised, all of the above stages are discussed, with comments from multiple candidates offering insight. I decided to be less prescriptive with my questions around each of these stages following the first few interviews, and instead let the interviewee guide me to the areas that they felt had the greatest impact on them. This was reflected in the interview guide in the questions that asked about the positive and negatives of the process as a whole. This was supported by the open question: "*How did you find the application process?*" This question was used to begin gathering the data, and allowed the candidate to simply narrate their experience of traversing the process as a whole.

5.4 The Application

The application form code of the data represented a strange code in comparison to others. Each area of the application appears to have created a separate structure of social support in terms of relevance. The application was linked to a number of social support codes, including closer level familial support, work based support for prior employees, and friend and acquaintance based support. The support was not discriminatory in terms of which of these social structures contributed resource, and remained largely consistent across most candidates who had access to some level of social support in terms of frequency.

The actions with regards to the type of support received at this stage shifted from discussions of possible examples that could be used to answer the questions themselves, through to how the questions were actually structured with multiple submissions and revisions. Direct examples of support that included 'light touch' consultation include:

"Probably my mum and dad. They helped me out a lot with my application. *probes* they read through the questions with me and helped to… because I used to work with my mum and dad as well, so they could like pick out scenarios to use to answer the questions. It was really helpful. And then, they helped me like structure them as well." **Interviewee 13 WF** (family based support)

"The application itself, doing the application, I had my wife with me. So I bounced ideas off her and she checked my spellings and that. I did get it in at the last minute though, I think I got it in on the actual final day." **Interviewee 14 WM** (family based support)

"The only people that knew I was doing it was my mum, my brother and my friend who was a character reference. That was it. *asks about speaking with her brother during the application process* Sort of my examples that I could use. If that makes sense. Would you use this one, or would use that one…" **Interviewee 14 WF** (family based support)

These are direct examples of resource exchange within the context of close familial support. The exchange takes place via general discussion, and the candidate is supported with value based judgement (picking out scenarios and examples) and physical structure and proof reading. They are present in other Interviewee's interviews, but the degree of resource exchange changes for each candidate and illustrates a spectrum of exchange between these quotes above, and the following:

5.4.1.1 *"I did a couple of the questions on the application, and yeah I asked (redacted) again, a couple of*

times, what he'd put for this. And obviously he didn't get the same question, so I read the question out

to him, saying – you know – when have you ever experienced this, this and this. So I did ask them,

what are they looking for. Because I hadn't experienced such scenarios, but it told me what type of

thing that they were looking for. To which he said, it's all around helping people and children and

things like that, so, yeah he did help. He did give me a lift with a few of the questions on the

application form." **Interviewee 14 WM** *(friend based support)*

"Basically I applied – the first time applying - and I got on the reserve list. And from that, it was quite

bizarre, because I gave it to three police officers, and they said I was really good, and that I hit all the

points and everything. And then to get that back and to say that I did get through was amazing."

Interviewee 17 URF *(Work based support)*

"My friend who is non-police staff, she'd never worked in the Constabulary before, she applied at the

same time. So we went through the questions together, because it's like your core competencies and

things. So she did hers, I did mine. And I got to a point where, I just found it really difficult and had to

ask for – not for pointers – but a bit of advice if I'd missed things off, from my colleagues."

Interviewee 18 WF (Work based support)

With regards to the research question on the amount severity of embeddedness within the stages of the police

recruitment process, this code therefore provides a good deal of evidence suggesting that some of these

processes involve and encourage a great deal of resource seeking by candidates. The first quotes detailed above

appear to be general requests to close friends and family, yet the quotes directly above illustrate a different story

of candidates actively pursuing detailed and involved feedback, in some cases even asking for and receiving

multiple submissions for assistance. These quotes don't just illustrate resource exchange, they actually detail the

strength of a support network to the individual. With regards to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1973), they

represent social interactions that build and begin to reinforce aspects of group membership. Symbolically,

existing work based support indicates that those that are already a part of the established identity to which you

are applying to join, are already offering the candidate physical and emotional support at the point of the first

stage of the application process. These act as signals of acceptance for the prospective candidate and would begin to build a level of comfort for them with regards to their possible forthcoming identity. This support was not present in candidates who could not access the social support offered by the organisation itself.

In comparison, close familial support in this area would strengthen the emotional and moral support for candidates with regards to the impending identity shift. This is a signal from familial in groups, that they are willing to accept a transition in work identity for those candidates. This will be discussed later in the results section as there is other evidence from other candidates that did not access and couldn't access this level of support.

With regards to the candidates who could not access familial or work based support, the additional offer of positive action on the behalf of the organisation at this point manifested itself at the point of application:

> *"Well obviously you've got the competencies, so I'd literally just look at them and see how my examples fell in line with them. I weren't really told what to put into them physically. [asks about whether there were explanations about how the competencies work] Yeah. Yeah. And the important things to put in about your examples, because you only had four hundred words per question. It was important to drill down into them, and not waffle. Because you like… it was only stuff like that. In terms of the examples, it was all me just like winging it basically."* **Interviewee 17 URF**

> *"…the Positive Action Team really gave us a clear outline around the types of questions that we were going to be asked so I was able to kind of go away and think, right okay if I was asked that, how would I answer it? And build myself, kind of a strategy or a bank of knowledge for myself to draw on."*
> **Interviewee 5 WF**

These two comments illustrate resources that were different to those that were accessing existing social support networks. Positive action in these cases helped the candidates understand the competencies themselves (the underpinning assessment framework that is used during the creating and marking of the questions), and the possible structure/content of the forthcoming questions. These are very practical interventions, and the resource exchanged in this area represents a differing dynamic in terms of the building of or creation of a new working identity. In the initial exchanges between family and close friends, the resource exchanges represent the building a real time social support. Candidates are accessing strong ties in terms of their family, friends and work

colleagues. This creates signals that indicate to the candidates that their current social connections are both endorsing their choice of profession change, and actively offering resource in order for them to shift into the new identity. The resource that is accessed through positive action however appears to be functional, and indicates that the corporate identity values their impending identity shift. There is no existing social tie in this area and therefore the reinforcing in-group identity shift may be reinforced in the area of candidate to organisation, and not candidate to current social tie.

Existing social support resource exchange diagram for those with existing social ties within their nested and current social networks:
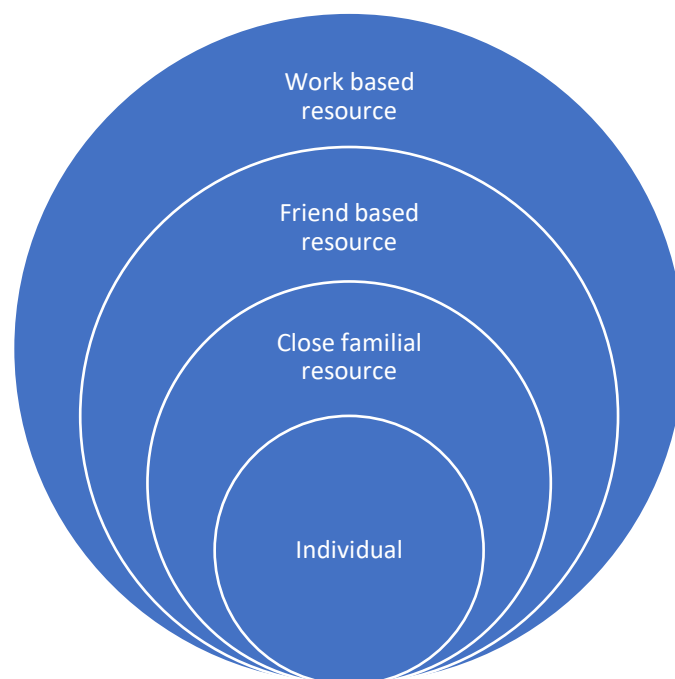
Figure 7: Social Ties Layering

Existing social support resource for those without existing social ties within their nested and current social networks:

Figure 8: Non Social Ties Layering

In terms of their relative value, the resource exchanged in these areas differ in their level of embeddedness. The application process for some is deeply rooted in their existing social networks, and the resource exchange can be very high, including the multiple sharing of drafts and ideas. All of these exchanges represent identity building interactions, that signal forthcoming acceptance into established identity pools. For those unable to access social resource, the exchange differs. Although the resource offered to them may be very valuable in terms of them gaining 'success' in the application process, the identity relationship that is being built is one that signals a willingness for them to be part of the organisation, and not already existing social groups. Even at this stage of the process, this begins to set a precedent for differing levels of developed identity at the point of recruitment.

Experientially, the application process wasn't discussed overwhelmingly by candidates. The main determiner with regards to the phenomenon of being recruited was the assessment centre, with code references being far higher in that area than the application itself. The results above discuss their socially informed experience of navigating the application form, with only two candidates (Interviewees 14 and 20) indicating that they received no social support for this particular stage whatsoever. Interviewee 14 was an ex-teacher with previous experience of working in a public sector environment that uses competency based interviewing, and Interviewee 20 was an anomalous candidate with very high personal drive following being subjected to domestic violence in her home life. The results here therefore indicate that the Application involves a relatively high area of embeddedness in terms of the accessing of social resource, but that this social resource access is layered in terms of the building of identity. Some candidates receive a significant amount of reinforcing social network based exchanges, others candidates receive positive action that begins to build a connection with a corporate policing

identity. From this stage, it is therefore clear to see that some will enter into the Assessment centre with differing identity based signals of acceptance. This raises interesting questions about the design of positive action. If positive action is there to simply progress people successfully into the organisation, then the feedback received is both positive and relevant. If it is there however to build social identity, acceptance and integration, then it may be failing. This result is in line with the outcomes of increased representation in Johnston (2006) when PCSO numbers increased in terms of under-represented officers recruited, but there were then integration problems within the force as they and the established demographics struggled to adjust.

The experience of the application form in this sense represents very differently therefore for candidates with existing social ties and those without social ties. With those who have access to social resources, the application form allows the constant identity based reassurance, as those contacts assist them with their forms, including the basics of spelling and grammar, through to complex conversations about applicability of examples within the known scenarios. Officers who are able to access positive action however face similar access to useful resource that physically helps them through the process, but they lack the encouragers that reinforce and develop acceptance and feelings of shared identity. The significance of this as a process is yet to be explored, but a possible hypothesis is that this then tangibly affects their ability to integrate. Once they are recruited, those that have had a lot of contact support with the organisation will be fairly confident that they are wanted by the organisation itself, but the social support that others may have drawn on will have strengthened feelings of belonging and acceptance. Those in receipt of positive action will have to seek and develop the social identity based acceptance once they have become an officer, rather than as part of their 'becoming' one.

5.5 The Assessment Centre

The application form represents a very strong code in the data. It was the most discussed stage of the application process as a whole, holding 97 references (over 10% of all coding). Rather than running the interviewees through the entire process stage by stage, interviewees were invited to discuss their experiences as they remembered them. This meant that salient experiences, easily recalled, populated the coding. This resulted in data that showed each person's preferences, illustrating that candidates experienced a wide range of challenges throughout the centre. This was gathered broadly into negative and positive experiences, a selection of which appear below.

5.5.1 Positive experiences

These were categorised into two main sub codes.

5.5.2 Measures of realism

Candidates discussed the assessment centre as providing challenges that reflected the content of the job of a police officer:

> *"So like, the assessment centre, I quite enjoyed it in a weird sort of way. I really sort of like, it woke me up to the fact that it was a job that sort of, I was like yeah. I wanna do [this]."* Interviewee 20 WFM

> *"It was good to get an idea of some of the problems that you might be dealing with."* Interviewee 13 WFM

> *"There's no room to think, or I suppose get anxious about anything, so in some respects it kinda works. Because you've just got to get on with it. I suppose that translates into the job day to day, so it's probably a good test."* Interviewee 24 WM

These comments illustrate a variably high level of validity in terms of the exercises undertaken. As discussed earlier in the Recruitment Process section, this is a fairly accurate perspective, as the challenges contained within the centre have been developed from the challenges faced by current officers. They have also constructed marking guides that are compiled from the current responses of serving police officers. This is in line with the guidelines from the BPS (2015) and represents an element of best practice for which the process has won design awards. In terms of psychological principles it works well and is even construed experientially as a test that is

representative of the job of a police officer. This approach is known as a 'work based sample test' and some of the data gathered supports this from the perspective of the candidate.

5.5.3 A sense of achievement

There were several candidates who discussed the Assessment Centre as being difficult, but also representing a challenge that they enjoyed.

"I really enjoyed it actually. I enjoyed the assessment centre, again I found it… there were people there who were in tears who were very upset… and I absolutely understand that, because I've joined the police a little later on in life, than some of the people who were joining – you know – at that time. I think my life experiences made me handle it a bit differently. So I enjoyed it, I found it a challenge. That's probably the best way of describing it." **Interviewee 20 WFM**

"Just because it [the assessment centre] did actually test you. Although it was a scary experience, it was in a way exciting. So, I did enjoy that." **Interviewee 26 WFM**

"I think the one that stands out is the Assessment Day, that's the one where you kind of think to yourself, you know, this is it, if I can get through this then you know, I've got half a chance. But in terms of a sense of satisfaction when you get through that day, you do feel very proud of yourself. It's a really testing day. I've been through similar types of day before when I was much younger, I was a rep, an overseas entertainment rep for a holiday company and we went through a similar kind of day believe it or not, I know it was a very different world but going through those kind of experiences, they are an experience in themselves so looking back on that, I really enjoyed that. Had I not got through because it was such an intense day and you know, exhilarating and the adrenaline is pumping etc etc, had I not got through, I'd have probably said to myself, I won't go through that again, cause it was a tough day but that's something that I personally, I enjoyed the challenge and certainly the sense of satisfaction afterwards." **Interviewee 7 WM**

These candidates' experience of the Assessment Centre was presented as a positive challenge for them on reflection. Words such as, 'exhilarating,' 'tough', 'exciting,' 'intense' and 'challenge', were co-located with words such as 'enjoyed,' and 'satisfaction.' With an overall approach to the building of the assessment centre that relied upon the current occupational environment within policing, the extra validity in terms of exercise may be conveying aspects of the 'masculine exploits' (Loftus, 2010) that has been discussed within the literature, making the experiences all the more 'real' for the candidates.

Both of these codes suggest that the positive experience attached to the Assessment centre was one of pragmatic and ultimately self-realising challenge. Their reflections of the day are that it represented a true test, and one

which they still look back on with a largely positive viewpoint. This may be severely affected by the fact that these candidates were successful; as Interviewee 7 mentions, had they not passed they may not have revisited applying again. This provides an idea of the perceived level of challenge for some candidates, who view the Assessment Centre as a trial, rather than as another additional administrative stage in an already lengthy application process.

5.5.4 Negative Experiences

In contrast to the code discussing positive experiences, several candidates found the process itself overly contrived and produced. This resulted in comments related to 'falseness' or feelings of game playing:

> *"It's more like, not game-playing but you feel like you're trying to score points as oppose to bring across who you are. Does that make sense..? ... I felt like if you said what sort of person you (were) you wouldn't hit the criteria, hit the points."* Interviewee 6 WM

> *"I think it was more because it was a role play, if you get me. The whole falseness of it, if that makes sense. If it was real life I'd be far happier with it."* Interviewee 9 WM

These comments were probed in these and other candidates, resulting in some more detail about where the feelings of 'falseness' were being generated. The 'unreal' feeling is actually linked to the guidelines espoused within the BPS guidelines (2015), as the College of Policing utilise the guidelines to ensure equality of testing, and this means enforcing some 'laboratory' conditions. Practically this results in a very 'strict' environment where human contact outside of the scored exercises is kept to an absolute minimum and time limits are standardised. These were certainly noticed by candidates and discussed in the interviews:

"I think it was more because it was a role play, if you get me. The whole falseness of it, if that makes sense. If it was real life I'd be far happier with it. It was just the fact that it was a roleplay. I know I haven't explained it very well, but… I wouldn't say it was unpleasant, just very challenging."
Interviewee 10 WM

"It was the assessment centre. It was very like… regimented. You couldn't speak to anybody that was there, you weren't allowed to talk to yourself. And when you did the roleplays it was like the whole people who blew whistles, like each time, which I found a bit strange. Obviously it's a really serious thing, but it just felt like… oh it was such a relief to be out of there at the end of the day… Erm, just how strict it seemed. I know, like I say, it has to be strict, but you are meeting people that you could be working with in the future and you weren't really allowed to talk to people in between. And I know, that might be a thing that you don't want them to discuss how you were going to answer questions, and this that and the other, but… They are potential people that you could be working with, so it would be nice if you could sort of speak to them in between things and get to know people. It felt very under pressure." **Interviewee 13 WF**

"…especially the role plays, because even though I had a little bit of practice I still wasn't quite sure what they wanted from you, because they're not really welcoming – what's the word – quite a sterile environment… So no handshake, etc., it was very… apart from that, it was OK." **Interviewee 17 URF**

The conditions of 'falseness' discussed above by these two candidates are actually implemented as strictly as possible in order to increase the exercise's validity. As a practical example, if candidates were able to talk after each exercise, there is a high chance that details about the exercises that they have already done would be shared. This sharing of resource at the point of the assessment centre invalidates the results, as those who are able to gather resource during the centre itself, will utilise those resources in their exercises and artificially skew the results. This level of 'strict' control is necessary to ensure a level of similar access to each exercise, but it also presents an experience that is certainly 'false' in terms of 'normal life.' These feelings of 'falseness' are prominent enough to be recalled in the above interviews and this offers rebuttal to the validity discussed in the

positive experience code. One of the most common words in terms of frequency in this code was 'sterile'; ironically this is exactly what the design of the centre as is, aims to achieve.

In addition to this commentary on the methods involved in designing and running the assessment centre, there is a strong feeling amongst some candidates that the centre was very unpleasant:

> *"The assessment centre, I've never, ever had day like it. It was unbelievably intense. I know it's run from outside agencies, not from the police, but I would have thought that if you run it from the police side of view, it might have been a bit better. It might have been a bit more comforting, a bit more welcoming. But, it just felt like a prison camp. It was absolutely horrendous."* **Interviewee 14 WM**

> *"It's just the assessment centre was the worst part."* **Interviewee 23 WF**

> *"I absolutely hated the assessment centre. It was the most stressful day of my life I think."* **Interviewee 12 WF**

'Most stressful,' 'worst part,' 'horrendous' and 'prison camp,' are very strong indicators that some candidates recall their experience of this part of the assessment in a very negative way. These are not always correlated with the descriptor of sterility, so the negative experiences in this area may be attributed to the pressure candidates are under, and the pace at which the centre works. Six to eight marked exercises in a single day ensures rapid progress from one challenge to another, so much so that even successful candidates look back at the centre with strong negative feelings.

The ability of the assessment centre to build on feelings of connection with the policing identity is not in evidence in the data. There is no 'human' attempt to create relationships with the candidates, and this raises the question about the 'starting blocks' for the candidates in terms of social support. Although the centre measures the results in terms of candidate success, the definition of success is determined within the context of the labour market. This essentially creates a measurement system that examines how the candidates performed at each stage and whether there was any disproportionate success in terms of under-represented candidates. The process may therefore be more valid and measured carefully from a psychology perspective (BPS guidelines applied etc.), but it doesn't measure what lasting effect going through the centre does for the reputation of policing. This study is unable to explore this properly, but some of the data above implies that candidates enter into a strictly

regulated environment with a distinct lack of social contact throughout the centre. If some candidates are already struggling with developing a level of connection with the profession, does this particular stage help or hinder this process?

5.5.5 Use of 3rd party materials

This code was highly prominent in the assessment centre stage, resulting in 44 references from 19 of the 26 candidates. The code itself related to the use of practical aids that assist with greater understanding of the process of the assessment centre. This was also a socially influenced code, with some referrals towards the aids coming from differing areas of social ties. Candidates became very pro-active at this stage, and used the materials provided by the College of Policing in conjunction with assets that they often found through the internet. Example of self-discovered 3rd party materials include:

> *"So I probably didn't have as much of an internal support. Because I'd kind of done it on my own. I'd looked at the youtube videos and things, it was research outside of work."* Interviewee 19 WF

> *"Yeah, I did quite a lot of prep. I found a guy online and he does courses. I didn't use one of the courses, but he had some videos of how to answer questions and some help. So, I used his videos, and he had like a facebook support group which I joined as well."* Interviewee 13 WF

> *"In terms of the maths and English skills, I signed up to a website online, that prepped you for it. It dealt with maths and English exams for the police. I think it's called, 'How to Become.' I might be wrong in that, but if I remember rightly, that's what it was. They just give you maths and English questions that are similar to the ones that will be on the police exam. *probes how he found it* Research. I just googled it. Mock maths and English questions for police recruitment."* Interviewee 10 WM

There are numerous guides and assistance available online, ranging from interactive online support groups, through to books and videos. As part of an experience there is an indicator here that candidates have a higher level of worry about this particular stage, as they pro-actively seek help from other sources. Materials from the College are descriptive, in that they describe the make-up of the centre, the stages that a candidate will encounter, and they also address the potential 'falseness' found within the previous code. These however are not judged to do enough by the candidates, who actively seek additional information. Examples of socially sourced support include:

> *"So I went away and borrowed some workbooks because my friend's mum and step dad are in the police, and their daughter has just recently got in as well. She had the workbooks so she was kind enough to lend them to me. I got some advice from her as well, about the process. *probes books* 'How to pass the initial police recruitment test' by Tolley and Thomas, and it was the verbal one as well. *probes the fact that they were provided by her friend* Yeah that's right. It was my friend's step sister [for clarification the daughter of the serving officers]. She's out in division now so she's quite ahead of me. But, erm, so she went with them and she said [unintelligible]. I found them really useful."*
> **Interviewee 17 URF**

> *"I spoke to my best man XXXX, he came round a few times. He had a quite helpful book, well he thought it were quite helpful, but he did join quite a few years before me. We read this book and the book had tests that you could use, pencil them in and rub them out, and go over it again and again and again. Really hammer it, and try to do the maths questions, and the 'who has broke the law' questions, is it who was at fault? Or…there's certain questions. And then, interviewing questions and what they would ask you at interview and things like that. When I got there, they were totally different, nothing like the book. *asks about the book* How to pass the new police selection system – Harry Tooley, Billy Hodge and Katherine Tooley. Practice for Psychometric Tests, and succeed at the assessment centre. He give it me, said it helped him massively get through. I went through some of the stuff with him."* **Interviewee 14 WM**

These code references are interesting because they indicate that the access to social support is very different to the provided help from the College of Policing. The information from the College is removed from social

context and influence, and it will therefore provide assistance in a way that does not directly assist the development of group identity; this includes feelings of belonging. The difference in social support therefore is not the finding or provision of 3rd party materials - they can be found with a single internet search engine query – it is in the opportunity to further reinforce their impending policing identity. The discussions with current officers about what to expect passes time critical information. In both of the above instances the person providing the help has only recently been successful in the process, they can relax nerves, discuss the sterility of the process, describe behaviours, and explore possible options with the candidate. These act as a conscious exchange of resource, but also an unconscious exploration of meaning and identity. It could be construed as a strong indicator of future acceptance and social safety, if those already within the culture are actively helping the candidate through the process. This would raise the salience of the policing social identity, as those from within the established identity are offering support and assistance to those that wish to 'become' one of them.

Candidates are able to access some assistance through the positive action program in this area. The description of this again differs in terms of the transference of meaning and belonging:

> *"[probes any assistance with the assessment centre through positive action] Just how the day would be set out. And obviously they talked about doing each stage. So they talked about examples for the numerical and verbal reasoning."* **Interviewee 17 URF**

> *"Because it was all the HR – it was HR that organised it – they gave you kind of pointers on what kinds of things they would ask in the numeracy test, or to look at statistics and fractions. They kind of went through little bits of the process and the assessment centre. So if you'd spotted anything that you thought that you need some revision on that, then you could have gone and revised."* **Interviewee 18 WF**

> *"...the mock Assessment Centre evening where we just you know we had an insight into what the day was going to be like and that, was just fabulous."* **Interviewee 5 WF**

The assistance is described here in a positive light, but it is described as an exchange of knowledge by Interviewee 17 and 18. This is a corporate intervention and therefore may be building the perception of

organisational support for the candidate, but it does not equate to social support. The effect of the information gained was detailed by Interviewee 18 later in the interview:

> *"It was more the addressing the unknown… because I'd never done it before… it was like, right, well I know that that's what they are gonna ask now, or I know how that's going to behave. Particularly because they are not going to give you any kind of response when you are in those scenarios. Had I had not known that they were not going to give me any response, it would have put me off. I was talking to them and they just kept saying the same five or six words, it would have really thrown me. Because I'd watched the videos, and the tutorials around it I knew to expect that they weren't going to give me any kind of answer or feedback. It put me at ease a little bit."* **Interviewee 18 WF**

They stated that some of the interventions addressed the issues with the perceived 'falseness,' such as the scripted replies during the scenarios and the interviews. They are standardised to prevent the conveying of unconscious support towards some candidates and not others. Examples of this include the suppression of minimal encouragers, which are verbal cues that encourage the interview candidate to provide further information, or convey that useful information has been provided. Minimal encouragers are present in almost all daily communication. During the assessment centre they are supressed via specific training, as they may result in unconscious support for some candidates and not others. In the above example the candidate discusses how positive action prepared them for these changes in 'normal' communication, therefore preparing them for the altered social conditions of the assessments themselves.

The altered conditions of the assessment centre offer a challenge for those that are unable to access any positive action or social support. The data from these interviews that the altered conditions within this particular stage offer an environment that is as scientifically sterile as possible, where current cultural problems are presented for the candidates to navigate. They are then expected to perform solutions that represent the current culture's solutions (as per the discussed exercise design methods section). As the results begin to link the social support to the altered conditions of the exercises in this area, it is possible to see how candidates without any access to support in this area would be seriously disadvantaged, as the social support necessary to navigate this area without disadvantage appears to be considerably embedded. Not only are 3rd party materials provided and shared between existing social networks, but they are also explored and discussed together, personally. This represents not just the sharing of physical resource, but the sharing of perceptions, meaning and experience.

5.6 Fitness test, Medical and Vetting

These codes were relatively low in terms of both frequency, and interaction with social support. In total they represented 31 coding references, with a distinctive skew towards Medical and Vetting offering a significantly negative experience. This area contained many references to BMI and weight. Several candidates had been refused on the grounds of their BMI being too high, and several were asked to reduce it over a set period of time.

> *"I got in probably around two years back and I failed on my medical and because I was on the [police foundation] degree, I was supposed to be on the intake before but they had got confused and didn't know I was a [foundation degree] student so I got put on a later one and then I had to lose some weight - but everyone that was on my original intake they basically just got put on like a plan to lose the weight."* **Interviewee 1 WF**

> *"Yeah, that was really bad how bad, obviously this is the last time not this time with the medical and how they were very much patronising or like I was devasted when I had not got through. I was really upset in the doctors bit and she was like there, there just go and be a better special and try again next time. And it was like the third, fourth, fifth time that I had applied. You know what I mean, it was a massive thing and as far as they were concerned I was just another, a tick, another thing, and there was quite a few people in the waiting room and I was all upset and she was like, "no, yep, next one," and she was shooing me out the door even before I had managed to compose myself so I end up going into the waiting room still sobbing my eyes out and she just wants me out the door to get the next appointment in. I was horrendous, I don't even know, after that, I think that was about my fifth time I applied and after that I was like, I'm not going to apply again, I can't do this, I can't cope…"* **Interviewee 2 WF**

These discussions were collocated with a lack of communication on the part of the hosting constabulary, as the requirements to pass the medical are set by Occupational Health in line with national guidelines. These

standards are not shared with candidates, causing a significant amount of anxiety. Interviewee 2 discusses her experience in previous recruitments when she has been failed at the medical stage. This related to her not meeting the required BMI, but not being able to rectify this as the threshold was a 'tick box' that was either met or unmet. It is clear that this experience was formative, but she then accessed social support in order to get through this disappointment and reapply, eventually becoming successful.

When examining this code in comparison to others, it became clear that there was very little in the way of social support contained within the whole set of references that alluded to navigating this part of the process. There were however some references that involved recovering and reapplying following rejection. An example of this was the following:

> *"There was one moment where I just thought, oh well I'm screwed here, it's just not gonna happen. That was when I went for that original medical and got knocked back because of my weight. I came home, and it was just like, I'm not going to be a copper. And it was just like, this is horrendous. What am I going to do? And they were just like, don't be so stupid, what do you mean? You know how to lose weight, you're not stupid. You're a gym goer, you play sports, you just need to lose a bit of weight. It's not horrendous."* **Interviewee 12 WF**

'They' in the above case are her close family, and this quote is with regards to a failure at the medical stage. In her case as a candidate, her close familial support assisted with her meeting the weight loss action plan set out by the constabulary.

Apart from these two instances of social support in this area, there is little discussion of social influence in relation to passing these stages. There is some explanation for this, as the processes of vetting and medical checks themselves are to a large extent, unknown and unlearnable. It would be very difficult for someone to receive information socially that helps them address their blood pressure, or that changes or influences the proposed target of 5.4 on the bleep test. This relatively recent (Winsor, 2011) change to the fitness test may have reduced the amount of social support required to pass this stage, and the change was influenced by its disproportionate impact on both gender and under represented candidates. It could be hypothesised that the social influence in the area may have been more prevalent during previous levels of fitness requirements which were over double this level. Candidates did not discuss the fitness test with regards to high levels of difficulty:

"...one of the things I thought might be a bit more stringent was the fitness aspect of it. I didn't think 5.4 was particularly challenging, and they didn't even do the sort-of, er, is it the arm pull? They had sort of got rid of that." **Interviewee 21 WF**

"I do think though that the fitness test should be harder. I don't know if that's an answer that you want to know, but I think it should definitely be a lot harder. I think it's too easy for the job that we are doing, especially if we are chasing after people. I just think 5.4 is a bit too easy." **Interviewee 22 WM**

"And the fitness, again I'm quite fit, so that wasn't an issue." **Interviewee 20 WF**

This indicates that the experience of the fitness test was either not important enough for them to mention when narrating their application process experience (only n=5 even mentioned this stage), or as evidenced above, it was a low anxiety stage that did not leave a lasting impact on them emotionally. With regards to the theoretical framework, the importance of Social Ties in the area of the fitness test appears to be relatively weak when compared to other much more socially influenced codes such as the application stage and the assessment centre.

Vetting as a process was discussed slightly more highly in terms of frequency (n=6). Candidates discussed this part of the process negatively, but the lack of social support for this area becomes evident when they discuss their experiences:

"The dislike bit. Because I called in for a Vetting interview. I think, that was, for me I felt left in the open because I got told on the last stage that my vetting had not cleared so I was going to be just called in for an interview because they wanted a bit more information and I was kind of just left in limbo for seven, eight weeks before I got called in. So that for me was a bit, I didn't really know and I felt as though I was pestering by calling in and just chasing it up but HR didn't really have an answer for me and just said it's with the vetting team. So it just took a while or my interview and after I'd been interviewed, I just wasn't really informed up until the last day up until the four weeks' notice at work so that probably could have been slightly better for myself." **Interviewee 8 URM**

"I got vetted again, the only thing I had to do is that I had to, I had to declare, I had to show evidence that I'd paid everything each month and on date so that's all they asked for. And they asked about people that I knew and stuff. *probes* Yeah they were basically talking about my, me and my sister don't share the same Dad so it was her Dad's (side of) the family but I've got no connections to them whatsoever. So they were just asking about them." **Interviewee 4 URM**

The above quotes discuss very private areas of an applicant's recruitment journey. The contact with social support was actually through the organisation itself as per Interviewee 8, as there is no social resource available for a process that no one understands or is able to research. The power in this particular stage resides solely with the organisation as they set standards which are not publicly available. This limits the power of social network's assistance to emotional support only, and therefore any transference of resource in the form of usable knowledge or anxiety reduction is severely limited. This is illustrated by the following quote from Interviewee 8 who sought to get an update after the aforementioned quote above:

"Oh yeah it was, it was a while. Like I said, god bless [name redacted], I kept ringing her up saying, "is there any news?" And she'd say, "no, I'll chase them up for you." And she was literally Emailing them whilst I was on the phone. But they just didn't have an answer. The interview and everything had taken place weeks prior to that." **URM**

It is notable that the interviewee was seeking support from the organisation, rather than seeking their support from their existing social network, which in this case included family friends who were recent recruits. The

candidate in this case was a under-represented officer. Seeking help in this area may not just be constrained by the unavailability of information about the process. Vetting checks include social contacts within family and friends, social media checks, financial checks, and personal interactions with the justice system throughout a candidate's life. The willingness to divulge all this information within their social network may be curtailed by the preference for keeping these details private.

5.7 Final Interview

This stage was discussed in a very positive light by candidates. It is of note that the influence of occupational psychologists at this stage is absent, as the local Constabulary have full control of this stage. At this point the candidate has already navigated the Application Form, the Assessment Centre, the Medical, the Fitness Test, and Vetting. The timescale of these stages were at approximately twelve months for almost all candidates, with several candidates suffering longer processes through delays in vetting. The length of the process overall is something discussed at length in the next code as it can be very disruptive for the candidates, who struggle to plan as the process progresses. The candidates in receipt of positive action, and those who utilised social support, have already used both sets of resources comprehensively. The highly social codes of the application form and assessment centre have prepared the candidates well, furnishing them with scenarios, context and also begun to build the police identity. Some candidates have received constant support from recently recruited constables throughout the process, and they have already prepared for and passed a competency based interview at the Assessment Centre. They have some 'banked' resource upon which to draw upon.

"Actually, I'll tell you what I did like… although I felt really weird at the time. The final interview… It was the most bizarre thing. Because it was so… relaxed. And it was literally like you were sat having a chat with two people. Whereas I'd been used to being in the boardroom setting. You're on one side of the desk and you've three people sat there, like really sort of grilling you. So from the fact that it was so relaxed, and chatty and I really felt at ease, it was weird. It felt really bizarre. I would say that I did like that." **Interviewee 11 WF**

"The final interview, that was fine. I'd been worried about it but it was quite relaxed when I actually did it. It was just the assessment centre that was horrible." **Interviewee 13 WF**

"I thought that was because it was done from a policing point of view, it was higher ranking officers who interview you. And they both jumped out of their seat as I walked through the door, and offered me a drink, calmed my nerves, and said everything is going to be fine. There to help you through it, if you will, and yeah, that were brilliant. I was a little nervous as any interview would be, but it was a lot more laid back and comforting than the assessment centre." **Interviewee 14 WM**

The candidates each relate their final interview experience to that of the assessment centre, rendering their experience relative. This interview represents the final hurdle of the process, and although they may be very well prepared, they are still not fully '*accepted.*' These interviews represent a stage without the structured influence or sterility of the assessment centre, and it is described above as a much more natural process. The senior officers in this case who conducted these interviews would have undergone recruitment and selection training, and may have had a hand in question design. There is an element of the unexpected from candidates at this stage, who expected more sterility and formality, and were instead greeted with warmth by the interviewers. Experientially this is described as 'bizarre' by Interviewee 11, connoting surprise, and Interviewee 13 and 14 both state that they held nerves prior to the interview that were met with a '*laid back*' and '*comforting*' atmosphere.

Interviewee 2 captures this experience:

> *"The things that I liked out of all them, obviously I've done quite a few. Every single time I've got the interview stage, the final interview which has been a few times, I've always found that stage really good because (it's the) the most natural stage of the whole lot having a conversation with real people that are in and it's not fake."* **Interviewee 2 WF**

The discussion of the rest of the experience as 'fake' supports the earlier 'falseness' code that was prominent at the assessment centre stage.

Socially at this stage, the support does not appear at the frequency of earlier stages. When it does, it is with regards to general support, rather than with regards to technical aid:

> *"Because the best stage I found was the interview so lots of people said, "just …" In relation to the other stages just learn what you need to learn to pass but if you don't it doesn't matter and just get to that stage cause that's the stage they get to meet you and not some, just a name on a piece of paper or whatever if that makes sense."* **Interviewee 2 WF**

This quote illustrates that the social support in this case – which was mainly work colleagues as she was a PCSO – believe that the other stages in the process are stages that represent task based challenges, and the final interview is the 'real' stage. This is where '*they*' who represent senior officers from the force to which you are applying, get to meet '*you*', and there is the conscious addition of them referencing being a '*name on a piece of paper*' during the other stages.

As the results of these interviews are analysed, a theme emerges of disembodied or non-force connected processes and falseness, and the reality of the interview in force. Utilising the theory of social identity, the final interview may be remembered by candidates as a strong identity builder as it signifies a symbol of in force acceptance. Symbolic embodiments of the identity in the form of senior officers, effectively represent the final gate at which you must stop and perform, the final stage in the ritual of acceptance.

There were no negative codes at this stage of the application process, but there is an absence of science and a reinforcement of police culture. This is the stage where the 'culture' takes over, and in the words of Goffman, the neophyte becomes the initiate (1961).

5.8 Timeliness

There was a well-represented code (n=10) with 19 sub code references that discussed the length of the process as a whole. In terms of how the process interacted with time, the candidates believed that the process was too long, and in places, seriously disrupted their lives.

> *"Long. Very long. From application to starting the job for me was near on 18 months.. There was just so many long periods in between where I didn't hear anything. And of course, you just assume the worst. I haven't done well, or whatever. The last, few bits were so really close together, but from applying to go into the national assessment center was a long time, and then from assessment centre to interview was a long time."* Interviewee 12 WF

> *"Very long. There were so many stages!"* Interviewee 17 URF

> *"If I had to pick fault, it would be timescales. I mean we were given a timescale to begin with, I understand that can't always be met. But, it wasn't anything like it to be honest. So, if anything, it was the waiting around and not knowing in between the waiting."* Interviewee 20 WFM

These perceptions of length are justified, as the process approaches 18 months from start to finish. If there are problems at vetting, medical or fitness, this can last a further 3 months. Intertwined with this theme are links with informational justice:

"That was because of my personal situation because obviously I've got a business so you know communication is king, not only with you know with my staff but with my customers, I wanted to make sure that everything I was doing was transparent and all my customers were being kept up to date with what I were doing and I felt I wasn't able to do that." **Interviewee 7 WM**

"I think that once I'd passed the interview.... [unintelligible] yeah you've passed it, but then the starting date is in limbo. So it could be any day from like the next few weeks, to like a year's time. So you couldn't really prepare your day job to say, look, this is happening, because you didn't know yourself. You randomly got an email at some point saying, 'Yep, you start on this date.' Thankfully, it worked out for me, but for some people it's quite a tight turnaround. So I think that could be a bit of a better managed exercise." **Interview 16 WM**

"And obviously, when it comes to HR communicating things, they'll send a letter, and an email, which is fine because it gives you all the information. But then, you won't hear anything for two or three weeks. So, you know, people are always kind of asking how's it going, or what you are going to do in the training once you've passed everything, and you have got to say you don't know. Because, obviously they [HR] don't know, because it's not been planned or structured, your lessons or anything like that. You hit one point, and then you kind of don't know what's going on for the rest of it. You know, it's not... not not communicated, because there's not really much that they can communicate. But it's just... it's just kind of an email every month." **Interview 18 WF**

Walker *et al.* (2013), discusses how managing regular communications with potential candidates throughout the recruitment process is important for developing trusting future relationships with employees. Drawing on informational justice metrics, the study shows how recruitment communication is causal in affecting these metrics. This code is interesting from the perspective of the candidate-organisation relationship. The power is in the hands of the organisation, and this is a further aspect of the process that will in some way contribute to the creation of social identity. The relationship here is between the individual and the abstract notion of the organisation, mediated through Human Resources. There isn't a single coded reference to social support

throughout the recruitment process with regards to this communication. The data therefore does not support that the lack of organisational communication is being mediated through social resource.

It is possible to suspect that this lack of information is considerably lower in terms of impact with regards to existing employees. Using a simple cross-tabulation, the codes coincide for two employees of the organisation, so the lack of communication as part of the experience of being recruited is not isolated to those coming 'in' from outside the organisation, it also includes people that already work for the organisation. It is possible that as the power to release any information on the process can not be influenced by the gathering of social resource, that this code is similar with regards to social influence to the Vetting, Medical and Fitness codes. This suggests again that the 'usefulness' of the resource that can be passed through the social ties is dependent upon the content, and '*learnability*' of the stage in question. If the content of the stage is susceptible to influence from the candidate in terms of content and delivery, then there is a more salient link with social resource codes in the data. This illustrates a graduated relationship with the value of social resource when compared with the particular stage or aspect of the recruitment process. In this case, whilst Timeliness is a fairly prominent code, there are no supporting sub-codes that illustrate any social influence with regards to its mitigation.

5.9 Social Support and Social Ties

This code was evidenced strongly, with n=75 main code references and n=192 sub code references. This is expected as the theoretical framework used to create the interview guide was rooted in social ties theory. The data for this area was visualised to provide a map against the demographic data:

Candidate	Male	Female	BME/MR	White British	Acquaintances	Friends	Close friends	Family	Close family	Prior employ	Ties used
1		X		X	X	X	X			X	X
2		X		X	X	X	X			X	X
3		X		X				X			X
4	X		X		X	X		X		X	X
5		X		X	X						X
6	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X
7	X			X	X	X				X	X
8	X		X		X	X					X
9	X			X	X	X					X
10	X			X	X						X
11		X		X	X			X		X	X
12		X		X				X			X
13		X		X	X						X
14	X			X	X	X					X
15		X		X	X			X		X	X
16	X			X	X	X				X	X
17		X	X			X					X

18		X		X		X				X	X
19		X		X	X	X				X	X
20		X		X	X						X
21		X		X		X				X	X
22	X			X	X						X
23		X		X		X					X
24	X			X	X	X				X	X
25	X		X		X	X				X	X
26		X		X	X	X				X	X

Table 11: Coding frequency of Social Ties per Interviewee

Initial results at a surface level indicate that the theory of weak ties is indicated in the data above. There are a much larger proportion of acquaintances, friends, and the candidates being prior employees, than there are those candidates with family connections. There does not appear to be a marked difference in those candidates from a under-represented background in terms of the frequency of tie. The most salient finding from the above table, is that there is not one candidate who did not access some form of social tie based support, and that everyone had some sort of tie in place. These ranged from very close family, through to friends of friends. Mathematically (Rapaport, 1953) it has been proven that social networks almost always carry higher number of connections at the level of friends and acquaintances. This makes sense as acquaintances represent a lower level of social contact, and therefore living a normal life will automatically create greater numbers of them. Close family will almost always represent a smaller group of people than that of friends (Granovetter, 1973), therefore the level of contact may be more intense, but it may also convey lower amounts of useful information. The family and close family tie codes are low in frequency when compared with the friends and acquaintances, and this is reflected in the qualitative data that was recovered from the interviews. Close family offer a great deal of emotional and pastoral support, but their input into developing the application process often centres upon proof reading, or general fielding of ideas for possible scenarios. The utility of this assistance will be discussed in the analysis.

The following graph illustrates where the frequency of the level of support from social contacts (not ties) manifests itself in terms of the process. The ties are categorised using the theoretical framework from Granovetter, but there has been the addition of 'pastoral support' as a variable in addition to the stages of the recruitment process. This ensures that the support outside of the process is acknowledged and can be examined.

	Application process	Assessment centre	Medical	Vetting	Fitness test	Final Interview	Pastoral
Acquaintances	xxx	xx				x	x
Friends	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxxx x			x	xxx	xxxxxxx xxxxx
Close friends	x						
Family	x						xx
Close Family	xxxxxxx xxxx	xxxxx	x	x	x	xx	xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xx
Work related support	xxxxxxx	xxx			x	x	xxxxxx
Total	30	19	1	1	3	7	51

Table 12: Frequency of Social Support per Recruitment Stage

From a frequency of coding perspective, the social support is concentrated at the application form process, the assessment centre, to some extent the final interview, and finally with regards to comforting pastoral support. The 'friends' contact code appears to offer the most in terms of a non-family tie, with close family offering a great deal of support, especially in the area of pastoral support.

From the perspective of social identity, reinforcing social contact appears to take place in the initial stages of the process. The content of the social tie based support has already been discussed in previous results chapters, and each stage receives particular types of support. Interestingly, the close family ties appear over represented in the table above in terms of frequency, especially as there is only 1 of the 26 candidates with close family ties present that have connections with policing. The data however explains this contact well, as the exchange of

resource in the areas counted above facilitated through close family does not contain advice or assistance that is context specific.

> *"My examples that I could use if that makes sense? Would you use this one, or that one, or…because they were the sort of examples that you sort of store up and think, even in the future if I ever need to do an interview or whatever this is a really good example for that. And it's sort of storing those ideas, and then, like 'what's the better one now?' Because after 13 years teaching, that one example is like, well old, is this one better? It was that sort of conversation."* **Interviewee 11 WF**

> *"Up north, family wise, it's just me and my mum. And then I've got my partner […] and my step daughter. They were very like… involved with all the aspects. You know, every single time I did anything, I was on the phone to them on the way home kind of thing – handsfree – just throw that one in *laughs* I was constantly speaking to them about it, you know saying how I thought things went. And then, if I had any kind of down feelings about it, like if I didn't think something had gone well, they would be like, don't be so daft. It went fine, you're just panicking. Family were just, spot on."* **Interviewee 12 WF**

> *"The application itself, doing the application, I had my wife with me. So I bounced ideas off her and she checked my spellings and that. I did get it in at the last minute though, I think I got it in on the actual final day."* **Interviewee 14 WM**

The above examples differ in context from those discussed previously in the results section. It is notable that these examples are all concerned with emotional support and wellbeing, and physical assistance. Conti (2006) discusses how there are well established social norms that may be passed down from within public service selection procedures that assist across multiple labour markets, and the quote from Interviewee 11 does indicate that some of this is present in the police application process – the resource being passed into the domain from the education sector. Interviewee 12 discusses the emotional support that they have received from close family throughout the entire process, symbolically reinforcing their quest to develop their new identity. Interviewee 14 discusses direct assistance, yet that assistance is simply transactional and not specific to the policing context.

This doesn't mean that this support is absent of meaning, as the non-contextual informed support is also a positive signal that the forthcoming identity shift is supported by close family; a powerful encouraging factor.

Whilst reviewing this code, it became clear that although the above frequency tables offer a surface level of insight into how Social Ties have become intertwined with the application process, but the data is not displayed in a way that allows for deep interpretation. The depth of analysis needed requires contextual understanding of the data as the ties and their interactions are traversed by the candidate. The process's social embeddedness is displayed on the surface above, but underneath this surface will be numerous interactions that may build identity strongly, weakly or not all. Further investigation is therefore detailed in the 'Candidate's journeys' section below.

5.10 Negative Social Influence

This code is not heavily represented. There are n=6 participants and 13 sub coded references. 9 of these 13 references are ascribed to n=2 under-represented candidates. The other 4 references are single references by other candidates evenly split by gender (n=2, and n=2). There is a clear difference in terms of content. The following 4 quotes are from two white, male candidates, and two white, female candidates.

*"He was just a bit negative about the role. Just how you deal with the same old jobs, you don't really make a difference, and he more, made me more nervous about it really, than he did positive really. I came out of it less confident than I did when I started it. *probes effect* It didn't change my mind at all. It just made me a bit nervous about the role in the back of my mind maybe. That was all. *probe* I think it was just a few days after I'd done my assessment center."* Interviewee 10 WM

"No probably the opposite. Yeah my family have been a bit naughty in the past. My Dad's been in prison and whatnot." Interviewee 2 WF

"My Mum was quite anxious if anything about me joining cause obviously, potentially it's a high-risk job that you are going into but also knowing me and knowing that I'm quite a driven person, she was equally supportive so then, yeah." Interviewee 5 WF

"I went out to talk to (Local police station) worked in (names policing area) so if I'm going to be completely honest I think probably a lot of the bobbies over there, kind of towards the back end of their careers. You know kind of just, not put out to pasture, let's not put it that way but certainly counting down the days or the years till their retirement so I came across quite a lot of cynical police officers that didn't really appreciate or enjoy their jobs too much I think. So that put me off a little bit, I've got to say." Interviewee 7 WM

Interviewee 10 and Interviewee 7 both detail contact with current police officers which were negative. The officers spoke negatively about their roles in the police, and this affected the candidate's confidence in their forthcoming identity shift. Interviewee 2 details previous family issues that meant their support was less than forthcoming. When explored, this family contact was remote and removed and did not present any tangible difficulty during the application process. Interviewee 5 states that her mother had worries about the nature of policing, but at the same time this was balanced by her support whilst she applied. Neither of these family based negative influences appear to have played a substantial or sustained role in the candidate's development of identity.

In contrast, the details provided by 2 of the under-represented candidates provide very different familial and social negative support experiential narratives:

> *"I live with my mum, so one parent. She's quite apprehensive. She weren't the best, She weren't bowled over that I was joining the police, because of the things she sees and hears on the news. She didn't think it was really a job that her daughter should go into, because I think she's quite worried about getting assaulted and getting abuse from the public. Especially because growing up I got quite a lot of abuse racially. I got called quite a few things, so… I think just, that naturally as a parent she's quite worried about whether I'm going to be safe… As a kid growing up, [I experienced] racist comments. Because she's white, so she's had to go through explaining to people why I'm not the same colour as her. Going to school to sort out, you know, people calling me this, that and the other. I think she's just worried about that being on top of being a copper, the effect it's going to have on me. But, she's like, she's very supportive. My parents are divorced but I do speak to my dad quite regularly, a few times a week. But at first he weren't that keen. But, as I told him more about what's involved, and the clear progression, and the fact that I am going to be helping people, he's like warmed to it now."*
> **Interviewee 17 URF**

Interviewee 17 discusses how her race interfered with the social support that she received from close family, she narrates how experiences of racism as a child influenced how her mother reacted to her career choice. She does state that ultimately there is support evident from both parents, but there is nothing comparable in any of the other interviews from the white candidates. This illustrates that there is an experiential barrier in place that is not transferable for other non-under-represented candidates.

Interviewee 8 presents a complex, interconnected, negative social influence experience:

> *"…it was a bit of a culture, I mean, clash, I mean some family were saying, "You're not going to get anywhere in the police…" […] you come across a lot of family who are really trying to put you off joining the police."* **Interviewee 8 URM**

This was elaborated upon later in the interview:

"It's difficult because it's something I mean, it's just like, if someone wants to do something and they've got a passion for it then you should support that person and the choice that they've made but I was coming across some family members that kind of just said, put you down before you've even set off kind of thing. So this was you know, even when I was doing my Degree it as they was like, "it's pointless joining the police." It was all going back to, "well who do you know that's Asian that's made it in the police?" And I didn't have anyone that I could say, "well this person's done it." You know whereas they could say well, you know, "why don't you follow like a legal background?" And look, "such a person, he's a doctor, such a person's a lawyer." But they could give me examples of people who'd done it in the legal sector or in the medical sector or other professions but when I was trying to push for the police, that's one of the questions I was coming across, well, "who do you know that's done it in the police?!" And that's when I didn't really have an answer because I didn't know anyone. My family didn't know anyone. You know even if there was somebody in the community in the local area, I could say, "well such a person, they've done it, you know they've gone up the ranks and they've made something of themselves." But I didn't have anyone. I didn't even know anyone who was in the police. So no success stories to follow it through. So that was one big one but luckily for me, my parents were quite supportive of the idea and you know that's all that matters to me. As long as your Mum and Dad and immediate family are happy with you then, yeah, it was all good for me but I was lucky enough to have that." Interviewee 8 URM

The above quote details how an established cultural identity represents in conflict with the developing social identity of policing. These 2 social identities offer differing levels of salience for the developing policing identity. The candidate will be attempting to develop feelings of belonging with the policing identity, hopefully reinforced through existing social identities (as evidenced through the varying stages of social support detailed above). In this case, his cultural and familial social identities are vying for salience. It is through the interventional support of close family that he sustains his presence in the application process. An interesting perspective to the above is the existence of a role model within the cultural and familial social identity as a 'proof' of the possible. This leads to the insight that every time someone from within your existing social identities encourages and develops a candidate's wish to become a police, they not only develop the salience of that identity, they lift barriers of possible exclusion from them once the identity is reached. In the above passage,

Interviewee 8 is clearly running the risk of lowering his identity salience within his family and culture. This risk is not present for the white candidates. The familial social identity risk of Interviewee 2, whose father was involved in crime, was not present at the time of applying for the role. They had already significantly distanced themselves from their father and did not consider there to be any relationship to affect. Interviewee 8 is involved in an active negotiation process with multiple social identities whilst he navigates the selection process.

Both Interviewee 8 and Interviewee 17 offer an account that identifies socially constructed challenges for them. Each of these challenges will create identity negotiation whilst navigating the recruitment processes, and will also require emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). This essentially illustrates a different experience to that of the white candidates. It is however not uniformly found within the under-represented candidates within the study. This suggests that the level negotiation may be linked to cultural norms and perceptions. The organisation does acknowledge this difficulty, and as part of their approach to dealing with it they have offered assistance for all applying under-represented candidates through the system of positive action.

5.11 Experience of Positive Action

The code of experience of positive action contained n=5 candidates. 4 of these candidates were under-represented in terms of ethnicity, and the other candidate identified as gay. It was required that these initial demographic boundaries be disclosed, or have been previously disclosed. This essentially means that the initial applicant has to pro-actively disclose their 'difference' and register for positive action in advance of their application, have previously applied and disclosed that difference, or been referred in as a potential recruit by an existing member of staff. Essentially, a candidate must be 'on the list' in order to access the assistance present in the positive action program. In total, the code contained 32 references and reflected a positive experience by all candidates involved.

Interviewee 17 had had previous access to a program called 'Leadership in Policing.' It was run by a local Sgt. who worked in the Learning and Development department. She taught lessons in the evening and offered pro-active support to under-represented candidates within a particularly diverse area of the Constabulary. These were the relevant codes from Interviewee 17, detailing some of the support they received. It is of note that this

support differed from the 'normal' positive action program in several ways, which will be explored in the next excerpts from other candidates.

> *"But I do feel like I had an advantage because I qualified for the positive action scheme they were doing. So after each process I was invited to headquarters, and we got a presentation about it and what was going to be expected of you. So I had the opportunity to have a practice interview, and assessment center. And also practice doing the incident statement. So I feel like I've had quite a lot of help in that respect, because otherwise I can imagine it's really, really hard to pass each stage. Because I've been talking to the people on my intake and a few of them have taken like six attempts to get in and they've had to go through the process of being in the PCSO's or the Specials, and Police Staff, just to get that experience. I feel like I've been really lucky for my first time, and having no previous police experience."* **Interviewee 17 URF**

The candidate in this particular comment details feelings of 'luck' having been able to access positive action support. This support is in place to address inequality of outcome for those from under-represented backgrounds, and this is acknowledged publicly across the police service in England and Wales. The experiences of colleagues who have struggled to gain a successful outcome are held relative to their own feelings of support received during recruitment. There is a difference however in how the support is received socially. For the non-under-represented candidates, their support appears to come through mainly friends, and is most heavily represented at the stages of the assessment centre and application form. This support is not – in the main – construed as the 'most important' support (as detailed later in this chapter), it is often the support of close family including partners that holds the highest level of importance. This is not true of the under-represented candidates, who state that positive action was the best form of support during their application. This is an important distinction, as it spears that support form family and friends is seen as more important from those who received it, than a simple transfer of resource based support that assists them through a part of the process. Under-represented candidates however, place great importance on this code, indicating that the hierarchy of perceived support is different with regards to the race of the candidate.

Interviewee 17 was the only candidate who was able to access support through a 'Leadership in Policing' course at a local higher education college. This course was an 'extra' run by a Sergeant (Sgt.) in force. They held evening classes for potential recruits from a under-represented background, offering a program of assistance and

education with regards to entering and sustaining a career within the profession. In this particular case, the level of support differs from that of the 'pure' positive action experience, as detailed in the following excerpts:

"The Policing Leadership program with [xxxxxxx] because I could always email, or give her a message, and ask for any advice. And throughout the whole thing at each stage she did a workshop or what have you, going into detail of what to expect. And she was there for a shoulder to cry on basically, so I would ask what does she think would be the best example, or… and she would just give me gentle guidance. I think, doing the bleep test – like she took her own morning to attend that just to help me. Just having that person for reassurance really helped. Because I'd imagine if you were new to the course that for anyone would be quite hard. So that's why I do feel that that's been an advantage. It is a hard course. If I didn't have all that support network I wouldn't have done it first time." **Interviewee 17 URF**

"I always spoke with that person that ran the Leadership in policing program… A few of us went to headquarters for half a day and she pointed us towards the main examples that we found online. And there was just a sort of how you would deal with a pressurised situation. She just gave us pointers like what sort of questions to ask." **Interviewee 17 URF**

The support offered by the Sgt running this program was different to the established positive action programs. The main difference is detailed in the first quote above where the candidate references her being a '*shoulder to cry on*', offering '*gentle guidance*,' and being a '*person for reassurance*.' These are not available in regular positive action programs, which offer technical support related to separate stages of the recruitment process, without the added social identity development relationship that is detailed above. The difference in this positive action relationship appears to be the human nature of the contact, offering personalised support that the candidate could request if necessary, and this included emotional support. The relationship offered during this form of positive action was distinct in terms of the experience for the candidate, and it is important to note that it mirrors the experiences of support by non-under-represented candidates. There is an element of personalised contact that doesn't just develop the technical skills to pass the various stages of the recruitment process, it gives them a real person who already holds the social identity to which they aspire to become initiated, and that

person is assisting with developing emotional feelings of support from 'inside'. This develops social identity salience, and doesn't just develop technical competence.

Interviewee 17 then discusses the experiences with the established positive action program. These differ distinctly from the Leadership in Policing program:

> "Well obviously you've got the competencies, so I'd literally just look at them and see how my examples fell in line with them. I weren't really told what to put into them physically *asks about whether there were explanations about how the competencies work* Yeah. Yeah. And the important things to put in about your examples, because you only had four hundred words per question. It was important to drill down into them, and not waffle. Because you like… it was only stuff like that. In terms of the examples, it was all me just like winging it basically." Interviewee 17 URF

> "Just how the day would be set out. And obviously they talked about doing each stage. So they talked about examples for the numerical and verbal reasoning." Interviewee 17 URF

Here they discuss the inputs, where they learn about the competencies and how to answer the competency related questions. They don't offer any service to navigate these personally, and this leaves the candidates then 'winging it, basically.' This is in contrast to the social support detailed in the application code, where friends offered a full 'service' of submitting the application to them, for them to read and offer tips on improving it, and in some cases this happened several times. Notably, this was the area that the Leadership in Policing program stepped in, and the Sgt running the course offered 'gentle guidance' in this area, essentially becoming a 'substitute' friend.

Candidate 25 experienced a different journey through early exposure to the Black Police Association (BPA) in the researched constabulary.

The main help for me was the BPA [Black Police Association] because it was them who pointed me in the direction of recruitment. Because when I applied to be a reg [regular police officer] – I originally applied for some experience – but because I failed that, I got past the application but I failed the assessment. They pointed me in the direction of the next recruitment, which was coming in the next few months or something. They had like practice assessment centers, and just like a brief talk to you about what the application consists of and stuff. That kind of pointed me in the direction of where the recruitment was, and when it was. They helped me quite a bit, and then they helped me with practice assessment centers. Maybe not so much the application, mainly the assessment center. About what to expect." **Interviewee 25 URM**

This is a similar form of social identity development to that of the Leadership in Policing Program. The BPA is an internal group of under-represented officers and staff that represents the interests of under-represented officers and staff as a whole. Therefore they are accepted members of the policing social identity, and in this case they are assisting candidate 25 with technical support, from identified social contacts within the force. This was reinforced by work based contacts of the prior employee:

"So it was the BPA, and also people that I worked with, you know, like sergeants and the CBM's helped me quite a lot with the application. Just checking it through, and helped me write it all out. I use past applications, and I've just kind of re-done it, incorporating what I've learnt, the jobs as a PCSO, that sort of thing. And then, showed it either my sergeants, or like I say, my [community beat managers]'s." **Interviewee 25 URM**

This is a developed system of support, as not only has candidate 25 received validation and support from other under-represented officers within the organisation, they have also received support from their colleagues as they are currently within the organisation as a starting point. It is of note that this BPA support was limited in this case to existing employees, and therefore, positive action support was different in this individual case.

This code begins to provide an insight into the differing experience of those candidates who receive positive action as a support, and those candidates who received social support. The main difference lies in the reinforcing pastoral support and availability of the resource. Where support is informal and easily accessible, it allows the candidate to access it as if it were a social resource. The data illustrates a very particular gap in the provision of

positive action as an initiative, offering technical and exercise specific support, without the comfort, accessibility and reinforcing support of a social resource. Theoretically, this offers particular challenges at the point of 'becoming' of a police officer. This will be explored in the Discussion chapter.

5.12 Meaningful help and the 'Most' supportive factors

This code was centred upon the hermeneutic aspects of social support. It aimed to explore how the candidates felt about the social support received and whether they thought that the help was meaningful. The data in this code also assisted with understanding how that social support was interpreted and placed in a hierarchy of perceived 'usefulness.' This informs on how the candidates value the support they receive, irrespective of whether it was materially useful in terms of getting through the process successfully. There are some quite clear definitive statements within this code:

> *"I'd say probably my family and my boyfriend got me through. Because it was one of them where you are like getting close to giving up because it's hard work, and you are going through that, Oh God, am I going to get through? What if I don't get through? They were sort of saying, 'Don't worry, whatever happens will happen. We will deal with it.' It was their support that sort of got me through."*
> **Interviewee 13 WF**

> *"Definitely my husband."* **Interviewee 20 WF**

> *"I think it's always valuable to know that the people around you support you."* **Interviewee 22 WM**

> *"I'd say they [candidate's close family] just kept me going. Do you know when I was having conversations with them, they were like 'you've just got to be patient' type thing. Because from the minute I'd passed the assessment center I was just impatient."* **Interviewee 9 WM**

These candidates were all non-under-represented candidates, and were in receipt of *Acquaintance* or *Friend based* existing social ties with police officers. All of these candidates accessed social support during their

recruitment process, yet all cited that *Close Family* were the most important tie to them. This places their values hierarchy in terms of social support in the realm of meaningful pastoral support, and not hard, technical support – even if it was sourced through social ties.

There is further data in this area that discusses the importance of hard, technical support:

> *"Most valuable? I think it would be… I'd probably say the one that honed me into how I was answering the questions, the situational questions. I think that's bit that helped me the most in terms of not speaking general and that would have probably scored me very low marks as opposed to when she sort of taught me how to answer it specifically and what they actually wanted, "I did this, I said this, I said this because," as opposed to "as a group we did this and we achieved that." I think that was the most help."* Interviewee 6 WM

This codes came from a heavily socially supported white female. They believed that the greatest support they received came in the form of technical support; interestingly this came from her mother. In essence, it is also from a heavily supportive member of close family. There is therefore a meaningful tendency towards valuing the input and support from close family ties. This is further reinforced by coding related to partner support specifically:

My husband has been, is so supportive. He's been really encouraging and he's said 'you will walk the next part etc.' so he's been, very for it all the way through. Er, and my brother as well, he was very supportive. He said 'I think you've got a really good chance. I think you'll be really good, I can really see you doing it.' So they were really supportive of it. **Interviewee 20 WF**

The biggest support would have been my husband. (It) would have been nothing to do with the police. **Interviewee 2 WF**

I may have asked my wife to read through it. I've got my wife who has been encouraging me all the way through it. **Interviewee 24 WM**

My husband, really… Invaluable really, I don't think I would have, I wouldn't be sat having got through it all I don't think if I'd not had his support. Wouldn't be in the uniform. **Interviewee 3 WF**

Interviewee 20, 2 and 3 are all white female candidates with active social ties, and interview 24 is a white male with active social ties. They did receive other informative, technical support, but have instead discussed their partners as their most valuable, meaningful support mechanisms.

"God, it [most valuable support] feels like so long ago now. Emotional support, obviously. And encouragement and I guess from my wife's point of view, just the time I needed. I mean for example, today's been scheduled. I knew I wanted to do some diploma work so she's taken my little girl out, she's gone to her friend's, gone out with her friend whose also got a little one so just giving me that time on a Saturday afternoon, you know three or four hours, whatever it may be. Just to do my interview prep, just to do my, you go out running, practice my bleep test, that kind of thing. So she's that little bit of support. **Interviewee 7 WM**

These interactions detailed by Interviewee 7 appear to be pastorally supportive, but they are also enabling and encouraging. They provide signals to the recipient that the building of the new identity is positive and that the impending transition is a team affair. This indicates that close, familial support mechanisms for the researched

white candidates, hold the most perceived value, whilst social tie provided technical support in general is under-represented in comparison.

For under-represented candidates, the results were slightly different. Interviewee 17 reiterated the support that they received from the Leadership in Policing program as the most important – simply stating, '*The Program.*' As discussed in the previous chapter, this represented a mix of pastoral and technical support. The theme of mixed support was also present in other under-represented candidates:

> *"[biggest support] It was my family, support from my family the main push for me to go for it. I mean, like I said, wider family, in the community, I've had that in the past where it's you're wasting your time, you're not going to get anywhere, and like I said earlier, tell me who's made it kind of thing and that's where I was kind of stuck to answer but my parents have pushed for to say, "look you'll be brilliant at it, go for it. You know, you be that name that people are looking for, you be that person that people can turn round and say, you know what, he's done it." They've pushed me so if it wasn't for my family I don't think, you know I'd have probably, applied."* **Interviewee 8 URM**

And this was co-located with a discussion about positive action experience:

> *"I treated it [Positive Action] as the real thing and I got some really good feedback from my Positive Action. And I liked that fact that they E-mailed you the feedback the very next day and that's throughout the whole process: Every time you went in, you sat a test or you had a mock interview, you got a breakdown of the feedback E-mailed to you the next day and there wasn't any delay in that throughout the whole process. Everything Positive Action said, they did and I was quite shocked that on one or two occasions when we'd gone over there was quite a lot of people in that class and to have them, we were there in the evening and to have the results with you next day like feedback to say what you did good in, what you could improve on, I found that a really, really good service.*
> **Interviewee 8 URM**

This details a solid technical resource based relationship with the organisation. The organisation was providing targeted support with mock exercises and direct, timely feedback on their preparations. In terms of assistance, it would be difficult to create a more improved support function for the purposes of solely developing candidates

through the recruitment process. This high level of technical support was again placed at a lower value than the existence of close family support, and this was within the context of negative social influence from the wider community. This was reinforced by a minor sub-code where some candidates discussed the importance of this help during their recruitment process:

> *"I think my friend's advice, that was more kind of like, she wasn't telling me what to put in or anything like that. So, I mean, it was good tips, but I probably could have survived without it, if that makes sense."* Interviewee 23 WF

> *"Erm, I'm not saying this in a big headed way, I do think it wouldn't have changed the way that I performed, on the day."* Interviewee 20 WF

> *"I wouldn't say they were crucial to me obviously getting through."* Interviewee 24 WM

These findings pose an interesting question about hierarchy of perceived value for the candidates. They appear to value pastoral support from close family and friends at a higher level than any kind of technical support, yet many also acknowledge that the technical, hard support played an important role too. These results may inform on the design of future positive action initiatives, as previously forces do concentrate on the technical aspects of the process. The Linos *et al.* study (2017) also found that changing perceptions of under-represented candidates on what the exercises were asking for through nudge techniques also had a 'technical' impact on their performance within the processes.

Finally, drawing conclusions from these isolated perceptions of valued support post process may not represent the true usefulness of each intervention, they may simply represent what the candidate feels was their greatest support once they had become successful. This is a limitation of this methodology. In the area of candidate's perceived value and meaning of social support within the process, the data as a whole is interconnected and should be taken within the context of the candidate's complete journey. There is a mix of support in different places, in different times, and within the context of wider social identity. This will be examined in the forthcoming 'Analysis: A *Candidate's journey*' chapter.

5.13 Locating the application

This code was created as a result of examining the social influence involved in the dissemination of information relating to availability within the labour market. If the social resource pointed the candidate towards the opportunity to become an officer, then a further aspect of value transfer is realised. This was a well-represented code with n=42 coded entries, sub coded into n=59 references. Social referrals accounted for n=14 out of the 26 candidates. Examples of close family social referral include:

> *"I believe it was my mum who saw it on Facebook, and just shared it onto my Facebook wall. And then she rang me and said that she'd shared the link, the application's open. You said you wanted to apply, if you want to apply there's the link. I think I finished the application the following day and got it sent off."* Interviewee 12 WF

> *"I was actually applying for [other local force], and as I was filling in my application, that was actually a paper application. As I was filling it in, I think my mum sent me a link on facebook to the [researched constabulary] one. And I thought, oh, that would work out a lot better for me because I live in [force area]. So I decided to apply for [Westford)] instead."* Interviewee 13 WF

> *"Another family member had told me saying, "[Westford} is going to be taking on." And then my brother checked up online, he was like, yeah, sent me the link."* Interviewee 8 URM

> *"...my brother might have said something..."* Interview 11 WF

These are a split in terms of ethnicity and gender, but reinforce the power of social ties and social support. The close family code is therefore important for some candidates when it comes to the recruitment window opening up.

Close friends and friends in this area are also active:

"…and then, my best man [XXXXX], he said that they were recruiting again." **Interviewee 14 WM**

"Yeah, sort of general chat with people on facebook, I got sort of messaged at the time to ask if I was applying for it and vice versa. So I'd sort of ask them as well." **Interviewee 16 WM**

"My friend actually shared it, her dad is a police officer. So she'd been following the page and things and then she shared it and I looked at her page. [confirms candidate had no direct contact with her dad]" **Interviewee 18 WF**

"…it was my friend. She followed [local] police and [Westford] Constabulary and everything. She shared the vacancy, and I went through there." **Interviewee 21 WF**

Three of the above code references relate to the use of digital social networks. These are an addition to the labour market landscape since the introduction of Granovetters' research on embeddedness (1985), but they are in evidence in both the 3rd party support code, and in the sharing of the application window. It is unclear if the frequency or instance of this sharing is executed differently because of the internet, or if the internet is simply a substitute for actions that would have happened anyway, but through different mediums.

The final part of this code that is worthy of note is the level of prior employee and work related contact that facilitated the sharing of the application window:

*"I had an idea of when it was gonna come. Obviously working in the police, you hear rumours. Like 'Oh they are opening a recruitment in a few weeks more.' So I'd just be constantly checking. *asks if conversations about when/how took place in comms* I think yeah, the social side of comms, and… I knew when they were roughly going to open it."* **Interviewee 26 WF**

"I think it was someone at work that told me about the recruitment drive if I remember rightly."
Interviewee 3 WF

"But the police officer one, was something that was obviously all over [internal comms. board], and I'd discussed it with my inspector and obviously my Sgt, and they were like, "yeah, if you think you can do it" – which is obviously where this application has come from." **Interviewee 18 WF**

Previous social interactions with colleagues would have led to this sharing of the application window. Colleagues would have been aware of the candidate's desire to become a police officer, and as the information seeps into the Constabulary as the window opens, social networks seek to disseminate that information to 'worthy' candidates. These candidates, through exposure to police officer colleagues and practices, will ready have a semi-developed social identity with regards to policing. They will already be accepted by colleagues, with these social nudges simply reinforcing the impending transition. Their salience with regards to the policing identity will already be developed as prior or current employees of the organisation.

5.14 Presocialisation and Motivation

In total this code contains 75 references, and 99 sub code references. The following figure details the structure of this code and its sub codes:

Motivation for joining	0	0
Appeal to authority	3	4
Childhood ambition	12	17
Established career path	3	3
Excitement-Variability	6	7
Experience Based Influe	14	29
Loss of alternative	3	4
Media influence	8	10
Public service motivatio	13	17
Social Motivation	0	0
Family influenced	6	9
Friends influence	2	2
Values based influence	5	7

Figure 9: Motivation for Joining the police

The discussions of presocialisation within Charman's research (2017) indicate that it is an established concept within the realm of policing research. There are discussions in early policing research from Van Maanen (1973) about what this concept may encompass, and in his observatory research he proposes a structure for the development of identity. He discusses how potential officers begin to develop their identity, in some cases from childhood. Fielding (1988) also discusses this stage in his ethnographic study of officers inside training school. This phenomena is discussed in the literature review, and Charman (2017) also discusses the possibility of 'importing' character traits that suit the profession, and this is discussed in the 'Police Personality' section of the literature review. These discussions and concepts assisted with the coding structure in this area, and it is clear that there is a well-represented proportion that are socially influenced:

"…my uncle, obviously being a police officer in [home country] didn't have loads of influence. But, I just remember, every time I spoke to him, about his job, he never had anything negative to say about it. I'm sure that he does have negative things to say about it, because since I've joined the police he's opened up more about it. But, it came across as a great career path. He'd done so many different roles, throughout his career in the police. And I was just like, wow, that's amazing. I just want to, you know, I'd love to be able to have a career that can be so diverse." Interviewee 12 WF

"The police, I mean, for me I've had a lot of family in the police. Not in this country. My Grandad was in the police, my uncle, everyone but they were in the police in [Southern Asia]. So you've always heard about you know the stories and everything and it's always made me think, you know, I'd like to go in to that. But it was difficult in a sense because personally, I didn't really know anyone in the police." Interviewee 8 URM

These were the two direct references that detailed family influence from the police profession itself. Interestingly however, family influence did not have to encompass direct experience of the police for it to be represented as an inspiration for becoming a police officer:

"I think my mum's always been interested in it. My mum's no prior policing background at all, but she kind of had an interest in it, and it passed on to me. And I was like, oh that does seem interesting I might look into that. And that's around when I decided. College time. *probes influence of mum* I think if she could just go back and do her career again, then she would probably look at that. And she would say, 'Why don't you may be look at stuff like that?' And I just decided to see what the different degrees offered, and thought I'd give it a go because forensic science seemed quite interesting as well." **Interviewee 26 WF**

"Just helping people, and vulnerable in particular. *probes vulnerability* Er, it's always been something that I've been interested in, but I've got a brother that's ten years younger than me that's autistic. I think that probably swayed me a bit more. *probes* It was his challenging behaviour, and the challenge of say, building a rapport with him. And the reward that you get from it once you have built that rapport, and seeing him develop as well." **Interviewee 10 WM**

"My dad very much wanted to be a police officer, but unfortunately due to a disability he couldn't be. He got very involved in the local community – neighbourhood watch when it was in its infancy (when it first started). And... it kind of came from there. As time has gone on, I've thought, it's not a bad idea..." **Interviewee 21 WFM**

Interviewee 26 states her mother's interests in policing passed to her, Interviewee 10 states that his challenging and rewarding experience with his autistic brother led him to apply, and Interviewee 21 states that her father became involved in neighbourhood activism but was unable to become an officer through disability. These are intimate builders of motivation because they are rooted in strong social ties, and reinforced over many years of time. They are very strong indicators to the candidate that should they succeed in becoming a police officer, their shift into the other working identity would elevate their status in the eyes of their close ties, but also that any change in identity salience in this area and away from other existing identities would also not result in any conflict. This data indicates that influence from within close ties influences the choice to become an officer, and this comes together with a feeling of accomplishment and support once that ideal is realised.

Another well represented code in this area was 'experience based influence.' This was another socially influenced code, as it detailed contact with officers through occupation, social contact such as clubs or leisure activities, or friend networks. That these were recalled as a contributory part of their phenomenological experience indicates that the candidates placed some importance on these interactions, over and above other social influences.

"I think it was the exposure from the SOMU [Sexual Offenders Management Unit] job, that has pushed me to do it really. I probably wouldn't have done it if I was external, completely external." **Interviewee 18 WF**

"I was a magistrate as well, so between being a magistrate, working for [the youth offending team] and doing a degree in criminology and criminal justice… it kind of all just started to fall into place." **Interviewee 19 WF**

"[Describe the nature of your contact with police] Really positive. In fact to be honest, one of the main reasons that got me thinking about the police as a career was I can't remember how long ago, probably 8/9 years ago, there was a lady (names CID officer) who was one of the public protection unit officers who came in to school to deal with a particularly difficult disclosure that a young person had made about her Father having abused her. And just her, the way that she managed it, added that reassurance, kept us informed throughout the whole time. She almost, I just felt she went above and beyond and she's somebody I've always remembered particularly fondly and just yeah, kind of, you know you look up to people and she was just somebody I really, really looked up to and that got me thinking about my career path." **Interviewee 5 WF**

These were a selection of six entries from candidates who have had contact with police officers as part of their day role, and this close social influence led them to applying to become an officer. One of the candidates directly discussed her experiences as a victim of domestic violence as her main motivation for becoming a police officer:

"To be honest, it was previous experience of the police as a victim, not anything else. And I just thought it's the kind of job, that you can really, really make a difference. Massive amounts of job satisfaction, I should imagine, if you do make – you know – that connection with people that need your help. So, that was the reason." **Interviewee 20 WF**

Following probes for clarification:

"Yeah, it was DV. And basically, if it wasn't for the police, I don't know think that I would have gotten out of the situation. Just a lot of support, and it was the right level, the right level of understanding, it was just… it just changed my life to be honest with you. So, that was the reason for it. If I could offer that to someone else, and I know that there's lots of other areas within police work that you can make a difference. But, that was my trigger point. That was the thing that changed my life, so that's what I would like to do. I want to give back." **Interviewee 20 WF**

This candidate presented as an anomaly, as she received the least social support within the entire cohort. She accessed social support from a Facebook group that was found through pro-active search, and although she had acquaintances that she knew inside the police, she did not access these ties during her application. She was the only candidate therefore who accessed a social resource that she located after actually applying, when compared to all the other candidates who sought and developed social support prior to any intended identity shift. Her testimony throughout the interview was impassioned and she expressed a desire to help those who had experienced what she had experienced; her motivation was rooted deep in her intrinsic lived experience.

There were other codes in this area that seemed to indicate that Charman's 'importation' was also present (2017). These included an appeal to authority, and excitement/variability. Candidates expressed a desire to become a police officer in order to have different working experiences to others, or to realise respect within the community:

"Erm… because there's not that much respect from children towards the police, but when I was a kid, it was always like you didn't fear the police, they were in awe when you saw them in the street. I mean their dress has changed now, but the uniform and looking all authoritative. So, it looked quite cool if you will. Obviously, now it's changed, they just give you a load of grief, but back then it was something to look up to. So maybe it came from that." **Interviewee 14 WM**

"I think people will want to join to help people and whatnot, but I think it's respect almost. Because I respect police officers, so I hope that people will respect me as a police officer." **Interviewee 16 WM**

"…the more you find out, the more you look, the more you see them you think, "ah-ha, I want to do that, I want to drive that car, I want to be that person, wear that nice uniform." **Interviewee 6 WM**

This was supported by accompanied evidence in the area of excitement and variability:

"The amount of people who ask why, well why not? It's the variety. It's the freedom to make your own decisions to some extent." **Interviewee 15 WF**

"Before I worked, yeah, I was a teacher. Erm, and it was very much the same. I like that it's kind of different every day, and you don't really know what you are going to go into." **Interviewee 23 WF**

Interestingly, this area was gendered, unlike the social ties influence. Male recruits erred towards the uniform, authority and respect, whereas the female candidates discussed variability. It is not possible to speculate on generalisability, but differences in genders have been shown to exist at the level of personality as discussed in the police personality section. The quotes in this area from these interviews do indicate that there is some 'importation' in some areas, with those predisposed to authority and order may view the profession as a '*good fit*,' or a '*value fit*' as per Conti (2006).

Media influence also presented in this code, with n=8 candidates discussing this area as being influential in their decision to become an officer, with 10 sub code references. There was some evidence of masculine exploits (as per Loftus (2010) and Bowling *et al*. (2020):

"From watching tele. I mean, I know it's blown out of proportion, but doing all the cool stuff of chasing criminals, catching criminals, and then righting people's wrongs, if you will." **Interviewee 14 WM**

Interviewee 14 also discussed the respect for authority and the uniform. There is some 'hero' narrative above, with the candidate representing some of the cultural tropes discussed in the literature. Others discussed the more 'exciting' police programs too, alluding to the draw of these activities.

"To be honest, it's just like what I see on TV, you know like Police interceptors and police programs, and films and that sort of thing. It just kind of interests me really." **Interviewee 25 WM**

Some of the candidates discussed well know shows in the media as influencing their choice, such as 'The Bill.'

"Probably watching "The Bill" as well was a big part of it... I mean once I got into the cops I realised it wasn't like "The Bill"." **Interviewee 4 URM**

"I suppose it probably is a childhood thing. I can think about watching the Bill on TV as a kid and things like that. TV, drama, all that sort of thing, it – I suppose it sparks the interest to begin with – and then I suppose as you get older, and develop your values and things... It's important to you. It sort of comes up as one of those careers that erm, makes sense really." **Interviewee 24 WF**

Finally, aside from experience of working with police officers, the most referenced code in this area was that of 'childhood' ambition. This code being well evidenced indicates that presocialisation begins very early with regards to becoming a police officer. This isn't something that happens with other occupations, largely because of their relative visibility. Young children do become exposed to media portrayals of policing from a young age, and are introduced to police officer characters in children's literature and television shows. This heightened awareness may lead to early levels of pre-socialisation and influence, but it would be very difficult to empirically view and measure. In this case, the candidates represented n=12 in the parent code, and n=19 in the sub code.

"I've obviously been trying for a very long time. I did the policing degree so I had that. It's just been something I've always wanted to do since I was about five. But I kept on failing." **Interviewee 1 WF**

"I'd say it was probably more, yeah, I'd say it probably was a childhood thing. And, in terms of influencing it, er, I don't really know really. It was just something I've wanted to do from a young age. I don't think really anything influenced it, it was just like a job that I'd really like to do when I was older." **Interviewee 10 WM**

"Well, I've always had jobs that have been around helping people. And the police has been something that I've always liked since being a kid." **Interviewee 12 WF**

"Erm, I don't really know really. It was just at 5 I was like, I'm going to be a police officer and I'm going to help people and it kind of, that was it, I was on the path and I wasn't changing my mind."
Interviewee 2 WF

These references detail a very early decision to travel into policing, with the candidates being unable to explain the origin of that decision. It is of note that a large proportion (46%) of the candidates discuss this preference as pertaining to their childhood. This would imply that their choices were socially influenced, as they can not be innate, but the candidates can't recall the reasons for this choice. This may suggest that the decision to become a police officer may be rooted far more deeply than within social ties when candidates become old enough to apply, and that social influence begins in infancy as children are introduced to the 'goodies and the baddies' in their socialised games and exposure to children's media.

5.15 Summary

The findings previously discussed can be grouped into three separate areas: the nature of embeddedness in police recruitment, the relative frequency of embeddedness in police recruitment, and the differences between candidates who are able to access social support, and those who are not. These will be discussed in order.

5.15.1 Embeddedness – Nature

The nature of embeddedness within the investigated police recruitment process becomes clear as the themes are explored. Social settings comprise the back-drop for most embeddedness related interactions, with high frequencies of these interactions taking place in family or friend based settings. This is supported strongly by Table 11. The social support is also clearly split by type, with developed differences in instructional embeddedness and pastoral embeddedness. These two types of embeddedness are viewed by the candidates very differently, with greater importance placed upon the pastoral support than upon the instructional. It is unclear at this time which of these types is most *effective* when it comes to navigating the recruitment process, but the phenomenological and hermeneutic enquiry clearly places pastoral support at the highest level of significance for candidates. This has a high level of significance for those for whom policing represents a culturally lower status profession (Holdaway, 1991b; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006; Barron, Anne-Marie; Holdaway, 2016; Hong, 2017), as they are much more unlikely to be able to receive persistently high levels of pastoral support from within their family and friend based social circles. The pastoral support is also illustrated to be strongly linked with close partner support. This may represent a method of receiving pastoral support despite family and friendship social circles offering little support in this area.

These results offer an understanding of a typology of social support within the setting of police recruitment. This is simply absent in existing presocialisation based literature. The typology represented is a mix between strong pastoral support, and interspersed periods of instructional support. The former is highly regarded by the candidates, the latter is often seen as insignificant by them. This discovered 'mixture' could form a solid base for the design of positive action initiatives, whose nature is described very differently by candidates unable to access socially embedded resource.

5.15.2   Embeddedness – Weighting

This was an unexpected finding, but also offers significant insight. The relative weighting of social embeddedness differs across the separate stages of the recruitment process. This is illustrated well in Table 12. The initial application form and the assessment centre are highly socially embedded in comparison to the lesser represented stages of vetting: the medical and the fitness test. The final interview is represented at a level which is in the middle of both, indicating that it is socially embedded, but not heavily. It is of immediate note that this makes the first two stages of the police application process heavily influenced by embeddedness, making them a real priority for positive action initiatives that seek to deal with unseen advantages across racial demographics.

This finding is important not simply because it illustrates where to 'aim' initiatives that seek to deal with racial disparity, but because it also begins to illuminate some of the 'why' such initiatives are necessary. For example, why is the application form socially embedded, but vetting is not? The answers could lie in the fact that so much is known about the application processes within existing society, that social connections represent a rich source of highly relevant information. The vetting process is by comparison highly inaccessible, rendering social connections ineffective. This suggests that the legacy information that is available within society around any particular process, may have a direct impact upon the effectiveness of embeddedness. This suggests that a regularly changed or revised process will blunt the effectiveness of social resource. This is a very important insight as it begins to illuminate why disparity may exist for demographics that are currently under-represented in the policing workforce. Whilst embeddedness remains effective through the use of legacy recruitment systems, the additive positive action schemes must be used to level the playing field for candidates unable to access social resource. Real effectiveness in this area will clearly represent the removal of legacy systems; something that requires a great deal of change across multiple inter-connected stages and systems. Whilst old systems remain, the social resource attached to them maintains efficacy.

5.15.3 The difference between the 'have and have-nots' of Social Embeddedness

Previously, this area has been unclear. The posited solution of positive action has been implemented to address disparity in police recruitment, without any sophisticated understanding of why it was needed or for which particular stages. Figure 7 and Figure 8 deal with the clear differences illustrated in the interviews, with a lack of social layers being the salient differences between the two groups. When relating this to the social identity literature discussed in the literature review, this makes grim reading. It suggests that candidates with access to embedded social resource enter the occupation not just with the advantage of a better understanding of the recruitment process, but also with an established form of social resource that is not bounded by any time constraint. This typology is discussed in depth in the next chapter during the Discussion, and is supported by several chosen case studies that are examined chronologically.

This area is very important as it directly represents the 'why' behind why positive action is necessary. It begins to establish a potential evidence base for the formulation of a more complete system of positive action. Positive action therefore can not just be about getting prospective recruits through the recruitment process, it must also represent the establishment of social support, resource and reference. These are important not just for the existence of different demographics amongst the recruits, but for them to thrive amongst the other recruits who have navigated the process utilising an embedded social system.

Chapter 6 – Discussion and Implications

Whilst exploring the various codes within the results, it became clear that the results for each code were often inter-connected and influenced by context. As an example, one of the recruits had been subject to crime, and thus her decision to become a police officer was rooted in a social experience of the worst kind. She was unable to draw meaningfully upon any existing social ties, and instead sought to develop her own pro-actively, seeking support in pre-existing Facebook groups set up for the purposes of assisting candidates in becoming an officer. This meant that her social ties were absent at the point where she made a decision to become an officer, the drive to do so coming from a positive experience with existing officers who she believed changed her life. This is contrasted with a candidate who has 5 of 6 available social ties at the point of application, has experienced multiple levels of pre-socialisation, and evidences several sources of social resource at differing levels within the recruitment process.

The difference in levels of embeddedness within the process is therefore dependent on the candidate's social resource availability and in some cases their motivation. The decision to join the police may also be affected by when the decision is taken to join, as some candidates appear to have been working very steadily towards becoming an officer over the period of their lives since childhood, and their knowledge and comfort with regards to becoming an officer is slowly, but persistently developed over many years. In terms of how this evidences accumulates, it could be suggested that high socially resourced candidates with early presocialisation are simply making very regular deposits into their recruitment process bank account. The build-up of this resource eventually results in them becoming an initiate, but the cost in terms of time expended is considerable. In order to visualise this process and enable comparison, it was necessary for me to create timelines of social support and influence for the candidates, resulting in a narrative based visual aid that captures all of the influential information in a diagram.

The candidates have been shown to illustrate the themes that appeared across codes. Three candidates represent pronounced themes throughout the data. They are good representations of the interactions between presocialisation and social contact and influence. The second and anomaly candidate discussed is disconfirming evidence of most of these themes, enhancing the view that these experiences are socially constructed and played out across the candidates as a cohort. The inclusion of this candidate enhances the validity of the method, illustrating that it did not just extrapolate underlying themes located and exacerbated by the researcher. Long

form interview in this case was a broad enough, but also deep enough approach to illustrate themes that describe the phenomenon of embeddedness in policing recruitment.

The following four interviewee's have been discussed in depth in order to properly illustrate the findings discussed in the previous chapter. The directly explore the nature, weighting and existence of social embeddedness across a number of candidates, and illustrate how the journey is profoundly different for someone who experiences embeddedness, when compared to those who do not. With regards to the literature review, not only do they represent an exploration of the nature of embeddedness, each interaction also represents a gradual building of the policing identity. Embeddedness therefore not only exists at varying levels, but its effectiveness in creating *belonging* differs in nature amongst each candidate. The forthcoming discussion better explores this concept and provides a more solid underpinning for the forthcoming implications.

6.1.1 Interviewee 6

The following Figure details the socially influenced journey of interviewee 6. He initially discusses his childhood ambition to become a police officer, and then discusses his varying levels of social support as his journey progresses. Social support in this case is heavily embedded.
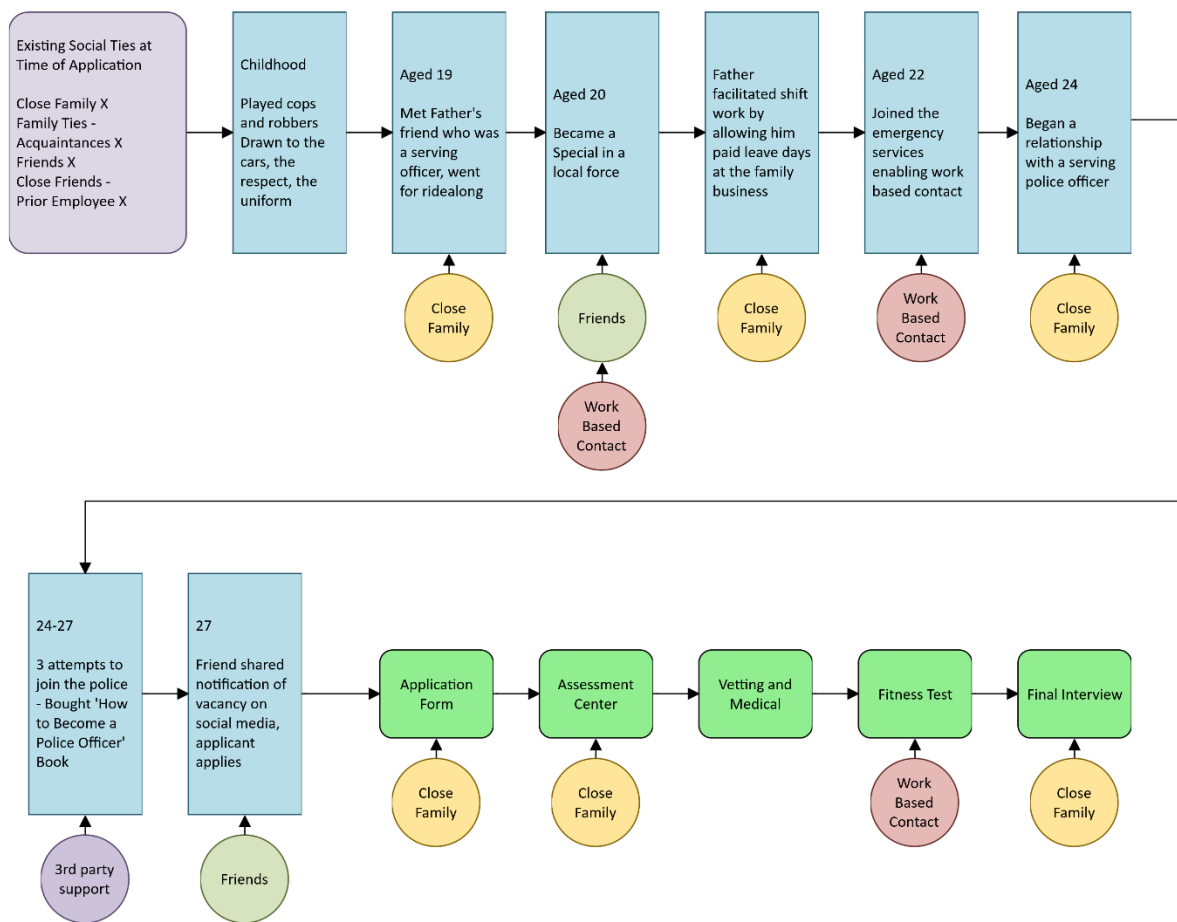
Figure 10: Interviewee 6 Social Influence

Interviewee 6 already begins with a developed support network, and this network is involved nine years prior to him becoming a police officer. His father facilitates his becoming a Special, and his father also wished that he had become a police officer when he was younger. His father then supports him becoming a Special in a local force, whilst the candidate is working for him, and still pays him his wage whilst he conducts his shifts. This is a very strong form of pre-socialisation, and it would not be possible in the volume at which the candidate conducted his Special shifts (religiously, once per week on a working day) without the highly facilitative social support. This is an example of a non-police social tie creating the space for formative presocialisation.

In terms of presocialisation, Interviewee 6 presents as a combination of both 'importation' and 'socialisation' (Charman, 2017). He discusses how, at a very young age, he played 'cops and robbers' in the playground, and had within him a natural drive to pilot fast cars and wear the uniform. His comments on the want to become a

person in authority, and command respect are indicative of some of the traits discussed as prevalent within policing in the policing personality section. This is combined with a gentle and persistent 'apprenticeship' in the emergency services that lasts for 8 years. In this space he cultivates exposure and social support, which he then utilises heavily through his partner, who is a serving police officer. Even when displayed in graphical form above, it is clear that this candidate presents with a very high level of embeddedness. The recruitment process for him is intrinsically linked to his existing social networks, and there are highly evidenced amounts of resource exchange throughout the recruitment process.

6.1.2 Interviewee 20

In contrast, Interviewee 20 presents the following social tie diagram:
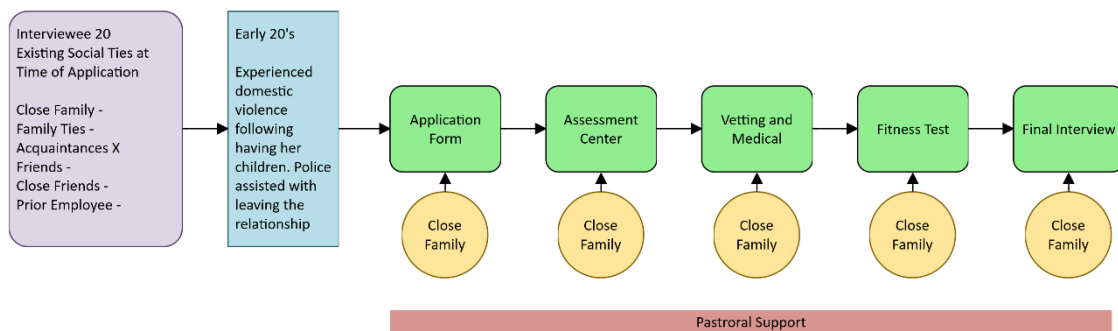
Figure 11: Interviewee 20 Social Influence

Interviewee 20 knew acquaintances that were in the police, but these were not causal or supportive in her application process or in her choice to become an officer. She didn't contact them about her application, and had never applied previously. As a young mother, she became subject to domestic abuse, and the police became involved. The police worked with her over a number of months, eventually assisting her with leaving her abusive partner and starting a new life. She states categorically that her interactions with the police at this point were transformative, and had she been able to once settled, she would have applied to become an officer there and then. The needs of her young children were a priority for her at this point, and the option of 24 hour shift work was simply unavailable. She waited until her children were old enough, and then applied to one of the processes that became subject to this research. She states that she joined a Facebook group for 3rd party support

materials, but did not become friends or even acquaintances with those involved. She simply watched the Youtube videos and absorbed the information within them. This is open source and available to every candidate. She also cites the most important factor in terms of her social support as being her current partner. He operated as both an emotional support, and a practical one.

In terms of Granovetter's theory (1973), Interviewee 20 did not access any of the 'usual' social ties, yet she was able to successfully navigate the recruitment process. She is an anomaly within the data and presents as the lowest in terms of the use of existing social ties with the service during the process. There are however, several elements of note. The first is that she has a very strong and supportive Close Ties support network, and the passing of emotional resource during the recruitment process was considerable. She describes this interaction as crucial in her becoming a police officer. She also has a prolonged, and highly salient interaction with policing that essentially defines the rest of her life. During this interaction she will have been exposed to the workings of the force, what kind of people they recruit, how they utilise empathy and support, and ultimately change other people's lives – as they had quite simply, changed hers. Although not technically a 'Social Tie' in the strictest sense, this was clearly a socially based interaction that exchanged a great deal of emotional and technical resource with her, ultimately becoming her motivation to become a police officer. As an experience, it will have elevated the status of the profession's social identity into one that changes lives. Her account is powerful and the candidate is in no doubt that she made her decision following leaving the domestic abuse relationship.

6.1.3 Interviewee 25

Under-represented candidates offer very different journeys once mapped. Interviewee 25's experience involves the Black Police Association (BPA) as a strong social tie, but the candidate discusses the Association in the abstract, rather than being rooted in their social ties of friends and acquaintances. The diagram of their social support is below:
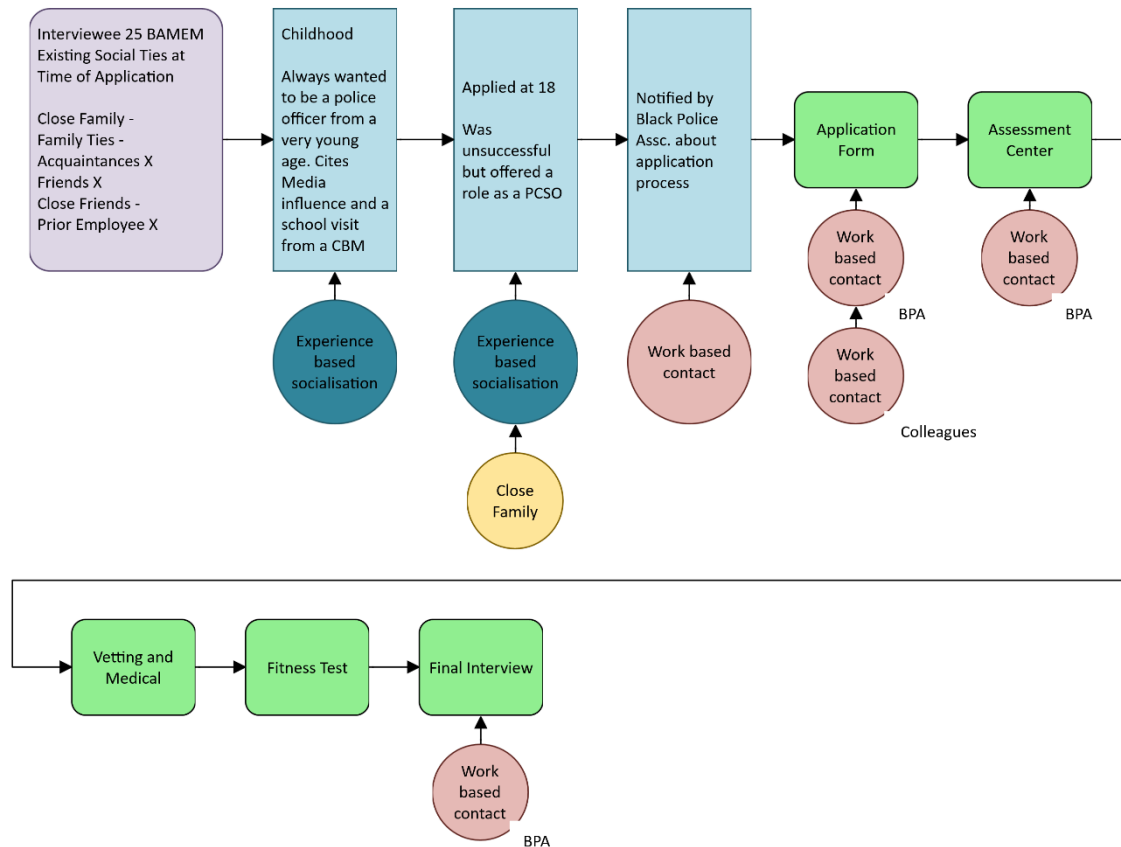
Figure 12: Interviewee 25 Social Influence

Following discussing a childhood ambition and the influence of the media in his career choice (possible importation (Charman, 2017)) he describes applying very early in his life (18 years). At this time there is a single family based close tie, and this represents his parents and a close Uncle helping him with his initial application form. It is of note that the types of social resource accessed are rooted in the abstract. The BPA is not a social tie in terms of it being a person i.e. A friend or acquaintance. It does not create strong social ties, as the help is delivered in sessions of over 20 (detailed in the interview). This means that the relationship is distinctly functional. The purpose of the work based contact at each stage is essentially to facilitate the candidate's success in the process. Any pastoral support inherent within these transactions is transient, as it is not the aim at this point in the candidate's journey to develop lasting support relationships. It is of note that the candidate in this case is a current employee, and could therefore access possible friends and acquaintances as per other candidates who already work in the constabulary. There is a conscious choice to only do this at the point of application, which is shared only with his current line managers despite having almost 4 years' experience as a Police Community Support Officer.

224

In terms of the building of social identity over time, there are important reinforcing interactions that build salience of the candidate's identification with the organisation. The BPA is an organisational association made up of constituent members that may or may not become social ties. That this constituent association is actively developing the candidate to become a police officer builds trust in the capability of the organisation to support under-represented candidates, and in particular Interviewee 25 in this case. Theoretically, social identity theory rests upon the interaction between social groups however, and not organisational entities. The candidate in this case may be able to turn to them for help once they have become an officer, but the level of personal reinforcement and acceptance developed with an abstract group may not be as effective as a strong tie personal relationship, as seen in the first two discussed candidates. This raises significant questions around social resilience, as the mapped socially supportive ties over the course of the process for the first two candidates details a very supportive strong tie relationship network that offers constant support and will not dissipate at the point of recruitment. Although the BPA may be there to access if an issue does arise, the reinforcement of acceptance through daily interaction is not present, which may in turn make developing meaningful feelings of belonging very difficult.

6.1.4 Interviewee 8

Interviewee 8 is a British born male of South Asian descent. He does have family in the police back in [South Asia] but has had little contact with them as he grew up in the UK. The influence here was limited, but he has wanted to become a police officer since he was a child. He describes the job as one embedded within the community rooted in the prospect of helping others, which he calls his major drive. He evidences a lot negative social influence as he discusses this early choice to become an officer, discussing how wider family would often decry his choice of profession as lower in status than other professions such as law and medicine. As he turned to study policing at university, he was criticised for this choice and reminded that no one of prominence within his community were police officers. This presents clearly as a difficult social identity landscape to navigate, as he essentially navigates conflict over his intended choice of group membership, and also has to accept that his choice will provide him with a lower salience of identity at the community level.

He does discuss however, how his immediate family supported his career choice, including both parents and his brother. It is his brother who hears the advertisement for the recruitment window on Asian radio and tells him to

check the website for the job advert. His parents directly support his career choice, and he cites this as the major source of support during his entire application. Despite this, it is of note that the recruitment process again does not build resilience in terms of his social resources. He accesses the positive action scheme, which he cites as very helpful, and gets in touch with a previous university tutor for help with his application. That tutor was an ex-officer and met him to discuss his examples and assist with the writing of his application form. His social influence diagram is below:
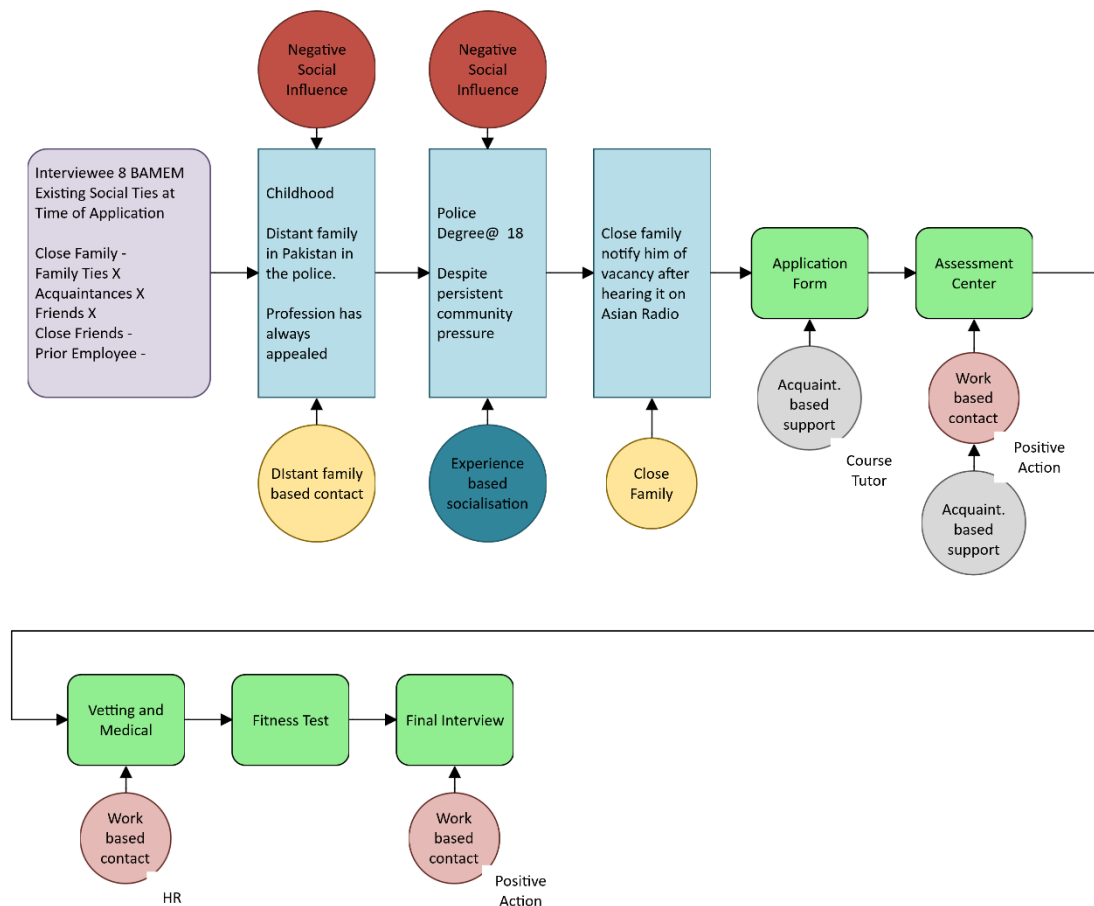
This candidate again has the option to draw on friends within the service, yet turns to an acquaintance and a disembodied area of support from positive action. Neither of these social support resources strengthen feelings of acceptance or develops his social resilience for when he joins the force. It is possible that the accessing of friends exposes his attempt to join the police, therefore increasing the probability of conflict within his wider family and the community. The negative social influence in this diagram was persistent and directed specifically at the choice of profession. In terms of the development of the police social identity, the choice to turn to a

disembodied support mechanism such as Positive Action or a distant acquaintance offers no risk to Interviewee 8. If unsuccessful, they leave no temporal legacy upon which to attach further identity conflict.

6.1.5 Thematic Analysis

The case studies above illustrate that the level of embeddedness has high variability in each candidate. It is dependent upon many variables including family, social circles, levels of presocialisation, and even what appears to be tendencies that reveal themselves in very early childhood. The complexity here is no surprise, as social life is complex, and there are many influences which can be encountered in many different ways, at different times.

The frequency of social tie influence at varying levels of the recruitment process is clearly weighted in the Application Form, the Assessment Centre, and to some extent, the Final Interview. The other stages are poorly represented and it appears therefore that there is a hierarchy of 'social usefulness' within the current police recruitment processes. This manifests itself in established processes where there is enough known about the process to enable effective resource exchange. Practically, for the application this is the use of competency based questions with an expected STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result and Review) answer format. This is rooted in policing culture, and is also used across the public services (Conti, 2006). There is data in the interviews that teachers and civil servants assist applicants with the writing of these application forms, and this is present within the white candidates of both genders. In the Assessment Centre stage, this takes the form of discussions about the format of the centre itself, the expected sterility of the exercises, and the likely content of the challenges they will face. This includes assistance with the maths and English based stages. 3rd party materials are shared between new recruits and prospective recruits, enabling a 'social chain' of candidates that resembles an 'internal, external labour market.'

There are also a number of themes that present across the candidates. The first theme is that under-represented candidates choices of social support and resource throughout the recruitment process is almost wholly based in abstract social ties. They have not sought to access embedded social resources, and instead choose to take advantage of Positive Action or the BPA as sources of that resource. These resources provide 'hard, technical' assistance; discussing each stage in detail, and provide feedback on choices of answers and approaches. These aim to facilitate success in the process, and in the cases of the 4 candidates within this sample, they were highly

valued and well regarded following their recruitment. Without application of the theoretical framework and the consideration of social identity this looks like a legitimate and supportive method from within the organisation to address the 'counting domain' (Pincus, 2011) of diversity. It acknowledges that people from under-represented backgrounds may not be able to draw on social resources in order to become police officers, and therefore substitutes in a program of technical knowledge in what appears to be an effective intervention from a candidate's perspective.

When the building of social identity and its salience is used as a point of reference within which to examine the social tie interactions, it becomes clear that there is an unequal development of social resource in this period. Generally speaking, white male and female candidates in the sample draw upon their existing social ties for both pastoral and technical support. It is of note that every single candidate knows someone in policing, and in the majority of cases this person is contacted and resource is exchanged. Social Identity Salience Theory (Stryker and Serpe, 1994) would suggest that each of these positive interactions is a conscious attempt to '*enhance the wellbeing of the group*' and seek to develop the salience of the policing identity within the prospective candidate. This exchange therefore not only builds a resource that can be utilised at the relevant point of the recruitment process, it also builds a relied upon resource that can be contacted and utilised at a later time and date socially. This enhances feelings of belonging and acceptance within the candidate, enhancing their shared social identity with policing.

Theoretically, identity salience is very important for prospective officers. As they reach the level of initiate and are accepted into the culture, the development of their policing identity will have an effect upon the degree to which they receive wellbeing support from others within that social identity, and determine the depth of their well of social resource. If under-represented candidates are not developing their social policing identity relationship with other candidates and officers, the data would suggest that they are instead building improved identification with the organisation and aspects of it. This is identity building not with people, but with the abstract; essentially building feelings of trust and belonging with the entity, instead of with the people that make up that entity. It would be reasonable to speculate that when the under-represented candidates in this study sit in a horseshoe on their first day of training school as a fully-fledged initiate, their social identity and resource will be under-developed in comparison to the white candidates.

This is supported by the research discussed in the literature review (Johnston, 2006), that suggests that larger numbers of under-represented candidates struggled to assimilate into the organisation and their roles, resulting

in higher than normal disciplinary interventions and conflicts with regards to approaches to their work. The more recent research from Marvasti *et al.* (2011) in America suggests that under-represented candidates who reach supervision levels in the force often face conflict over their decision making, which is sometimes perceived to have been made using a different world view to the norm. Scholars would argue that this is the entire point of diversifying the workforce, but this research may suggest that unassimilated world views of under-represented candidates in policing may be due to very different presocialisation and social resource development. Essentially, this data suggests that organisational intervention set to 'level the playing field' in this area may be addressing the inherent disparity in the policing recruitment process by lifting the knowledge of under-represented candidates to the level of white candidates with rich social resource. What it fails to address however, is the development of social identity and social resource of under-represented candidates, who may enter police training with under-developed policing related social identity salience. This may then, theoretically, result in lack of support from existing colleagues and much lower feelings of social value and belonging. The social support and interactions for those candidates with rich social ties carry meaning; they develop feelings of belonging and acceptance, and as a result the candidate is some way along their journey into adopting the occupational identity at the point of initiate. Those without social ties enter their training with under-developed identity and social resource, they are on different social 'starting blocks.'

6.2 Police Recruitment as an Embedded Process

Having established in the literature review that diversity is a layered and multi-faceted term in policing, it is now possible to explore how the experience of police recruitment contributes to its formation. Recruitment is a key process in presocialisation (Charman, 2017; van Maanen, 1973, Conti, 2006), as it enables candidates to interact with both the employees of the organisation, and the processes that contribute to the organisation. These interactions carry meaning, and as building a new social identity is a dynamic and negotiable process (Deaux and Ethier, 1998; Saayman and Crafford, 2011; Scott, 2016), this meaning can help shape and construct a candidate's feeling of belonging and receipt of social support.

The importance of police recruitment as a topic of study is evidenced in the literature, with several key ethnographies (Conti, 2006; Fielding, 1988; van Maanen, 1973) describing a transformation of identity that is severe during the first period of training once candidates physically 'become' police, but acknowledging that the shift into the police identity can begin long before any 'official' level of acceptance. This concept of presocialisation is evidenced in the accounts of some neophytes within these ethnographies, but empirical study into the nature of this presocialisation is under-represented and often without solid theoretical underpinnings. This is evidenced by the lack of labour market theory in the area of policing recruitment research.

Some literature has aimed to explore this gap using some established methodology, with the concept of presocialisation being explored at the level of the self through psychological personality based study. These studies do show that there are some differences at the level of personality in very specific areas, and that these tend to contribute to some of the pillars of policing culture. This suggests that there may be an element of 'importation' (Charman, 2017), and that presocialisation will be mediated at the level of social group and network by stable, innate tendencies in some candidates that suit the characteristics of 'the job.' It is not possible to judge properly the amount of mediation, or even its mechanisms as the psychological literature is not developed enough in terms of consistent methodologies or comparison groups.

This chapter will discuss and summarise the findings of this study, in relation to this existing literature and contemporary understandings of diversity in policing. In the first part of the chapter, it considers how the research has contributed to current understandings of presocialisation in policing. It also discusses the contribution to knowledge in terms of the application of labour market theory to policing recruitment. The

second part of this chapter discusses the implications of this research in terms of Policy, Academia and Practice. The limitations of this study are then discussed and outlines for future research established.

6.3 Research Context

This thesis is situated in an area of research dominated by the development of the professional identity. Van Maanen's (1973) ethnography discusses a process for the development of the policing occupational identity which is reminiscent of the described process in Goffman's *Asylum* (1961). This period of socialisation has then become subject to further study via Fielding (1988), Skolnick (2010), Chan (2001), and more recently, Charman (2017). There is empirical evidence within these studies of presocialisation, as candidates discuss during their encounters and interviews their desires to become an officer and their prior experiences of police contact in both their social and professional lives. This evidence is presented in several of these studies utilising social constructionism, where these interactions become part of the candidate's *telos* through complex negotiation with everyday life. It is useful at this point to separate out the goal of becoming an officer (the *telos*), and the *techne*, which is the structured method of 'becoming one'. This structure enables a richer discussion of the concept of presocialisation, as this study evidences that the development of the goal to become an officer is a complex one that carries an element of social influence, along with the physical, technical, informational development needed to navigate the process itself.

This study aims to contribute to these rich ethnographies through applying labour market theory. Embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985) provides a theoretical framework through which to interpret and understand some of the mechanisms of presocialisation. These mechanisms contribute to both the telos and the techne, ultimately shedding some light on how a candidates choice to become an officer is negotiated with regards to social influence, and subsequently how the physical process of application through to selection is assisted by it. The research paints a complex picture of difference amongst the candidates, but there are important themes that both contribute in this area of the literature, and complicate it. The following area of discussion on police presocialisation therefore explores this complexity, and discusses how the findings contribute within the existing field of police literature.

6.4 Presocialisation – The Telos and the Techne

"If then what comes from art is for the sake of something, it is clear that what come from

nature is too […] it is absurd to think that a thing does not happen for the sake of

something if we do not see what sets it in motion deliberating." (Aristotle, Physics Book II)

It became clear when collecting and analysing the results that there was a profound disconnect between the actions that were being taken in order to address the requirements of Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012) and the other connected but equally (if not more) important purpose of police legitimacy (Tyler, 2003). The social embeddedness that had been discovered during the research was operating in a way that was not akin to positive action. This finding was perhaps the most salient on reflection, as it not only illustrated the nature of police recruitment embeddedness, but also illuminated how positive action was no direct substitute. To examine this properly, it is important to consider how the overall purpose of police recruitment – layered as it is – meshes with the technical application of the recruitment process and the tools that are applied to address issues with representation in police recruitment.

Presocialisation as a concept is ascribed to the profession of policing in several major studies. The axiom behind this concept is that the neophyte wishing to become an initiate engages in the process of 'becoming' *a priori*. Before the process of conscious becoming, the choice to become must be made; the ascription of the end goal. This goal, shared amongst all the candidates in this study, represents a teleological decision (Mayr, 1992), where the end point (the *telos*) is established and effort is expended into reaching it. This effort represents a gathering of the required knowledge and skill required to navigate the policing recruitment process, also referred to as the *techne* (Byrum, 1984). This decision which is 'made' (as in made conscious) at some point by the candidate before embarking upon the police recruitment journey, includes a complicated gathering together of *techne* based information – the information that aids directly in the pursuit of the *telos*. A candidate establishes the formalised goal of becoming a police officer at some point in their lives, and sets in place a cascade of actions that enable this goal to become a reality.

Before exploring this journey, it is of note that there will exist a complex series of social interventions that both develop and support this decision to *become*. Some of these interactions have been described by candidates

throughout and include their exposure to media influence, but there will be others that remain unrecalled during their interviews. These experiences assist with constructing the choice to *become,* but remain difficult to quantify or evaluate. It is possible that experiences hidden during the interview process were indeed causal, but the candidate does not believe it to be so or that those particular social interactions were 'unimportant' when they were asked to recall their experiences. This point of unconscious development of the *telos*, and indeed the *techne* as the choice is formally made, represents an area of research outside of the bounds of this study. It is however important to note specifically the term used in most existing literature – *anticipatory socialisation* (Scholarios and Lockyer, no date; Sang *et al.*, 2009) – takes place in *anticipation* of becoming. This is detailed in several studies (Van Maanen, 1973, 1975; Conti, 2006b), and although the process of becoming becomes far more salient for the candidate once the decision to become has been made, it would be premature to simply discard experiences that contributed to socialisation before the formal choice to become has been made. Although this is only a slight linguistic change, it creates an important distinction that must be acknowledged. A young seven year old who is being regaled with tales of derring do by their policeman uncle may be totally unaware of the significance of those events until much later in life – something that has been discussed by several candidates in the results.

In the previously discussed policing literature, the stages of socialisation encompass presocialisation as a stage in and of itself. Van Maanen (1976) provides the term 'Anticipatory Socialisation', and Conti (2006) expands upon this term to develop a typology of progression from non-police to police. He describes these stages as *civilian*, *contestant*, and *anticipatory recruit*, and utilises Goffman's Mortification of the Self (1961) as a framework of analysis. In this study, the candidate remains a civilian until becoming a contestant at the point of the decision to embrace the *telos* of 'becoming'. When the decision to become police is made, they may immediately begin to access social mechanisms that aid the realising of this *telos*, gathering information that denotes *techne* development, sometimes over very long periods of time. Bennett (1984, p. 48) suggests that there are two sources of *techne,* separated into the media, friends and relatives who express opinions and transmit impressions of the occupation, and actual police groups that contain police officers or staff that work within the organisation. He describes the gathering of this *techne* from both groups as an opportunity to:

> *"...transmit information to the applicant such as perceived status, future role*
>
> *expectations, and self-conceptions as well as attitudes and values which enhance*
>
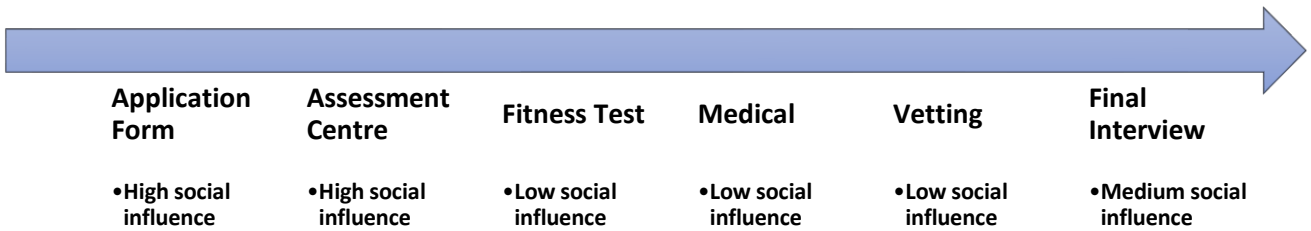> *acceptance of policing as an occupation." (p.48)*

The transmission of the *techne* based information therefore, does not simply constitute itself of hard and technical support, such as how to pass a section of the assessment centre, it encompasses the situation of social status, future expectations of development and progression, development of self-conceptions, and attitudes and values. It is a conscious attempt by the candidate not just to achieve the *telos*, but to establish socially constructed boundaries and goals that constitute the organisational identity within themselves. This acknowledgement is important, as it frames the discussion as one that doesn't just focus upon the relative success of candidates within the police recruitment process, but also how the gathering of *techne* represents a much wider socially informed process of '*becoming.*'

This research aimed to understand the social influences on candidates before and throughout the police recruitment process. The social interactions as phenomenologically experienced are described by candidates in long form interviews that seek to 'unpack' how presocialisation physically functions at the level of micro interaction between relevant actors. This is to provide a limited empirical framework that informs on the existence of possible micro social processes, that feed into and aid in constructing much wider macro-based processes. In the context of this study, these levels of process represent the physical interactions between social support networks of successful police recruits, and the abstracted, economic, policing labour market.

In order to explore these processes, the interviewees were asked to discuss their social influences as they adopted their *telos*, and through the gathering of the *techne*, both before and during the recruitment process. The findings illustrate that the development of *techne* is not equal in its distribution or its content, and that profoundly different approaches to the navigation of the recruitment process exist between candidates. In order to provide a framework for understanding the differing nature of *techne* development between actors, a theoretical framework from labour market theory was utilised. This framework from Granovetter (1985) enabled an empirically informed, structured coding system to be utilised to gather, understand and interpret the data. Ultimately informing on the relative level of social influence that each candidate was able to access and utilise during the recruitment process in question.

The first major finding referred to the experiential support gathered for varying stages of the recruitment process. The more structured and disembodied processes at the application and assessment centre stages are highly socially supported and contain many references of *techne* development from varying levels of social tie. The process itself can be represented in terms of social influence frequency by the following diagram:

Figure 14: Social Influence in the Recruitment Process

Application Form	Assessment Centre	Fitness Test	Medical	Vetting	Final Interview
•High social influence	•High social influence	•Low social influence	•Low social influence	•Low social influence	•Medium social influence

The *telos* is realised following successful navigation of the final interview, making this process instrumental in the nature of fully 'becoming.' It is therefore here that *techne* that is process specific has its highest value. Every candidate interviewed evidenced an existing social tie with serving police officers, and all of the candidates utilised social support in order to navigate the recruitment process successfully. When examined experientially however, there is a distinct difference in the *techne* obtained by some candidates, when compared to others within the sample.

Bennett (1984) defines differences in types of presocialisation support, and these are evident within candidates from different ethnic backgrounds and minority groups. Positive Action as a process undertaken by the researched constabulary is highly valued and referenced by the under-represented and minority group members as being a developed source of *techne* that related directly to the stages detailed above in the diagram. Candidates would access and utilise the offered support by the abstracted 'organisation,' but would not in general access their existing social ties that are already police officers. This is in contrast to the non-minority groups, who seem to rely heavily upon social ties throughout the process, for both pastoral and technical support.

In diagram form, the themes are represented by the following:

Able to Access Social Ties

- Childhood ambition
- Media influence
- Long form experiential socialisation

Motivation for becoming

Techne development

- Access of existing social ties to presocialise and understand
- Accepting close tie support

- Utilise existing social ties for technical support
- Repeated use
- Close tie support

Navigating the process
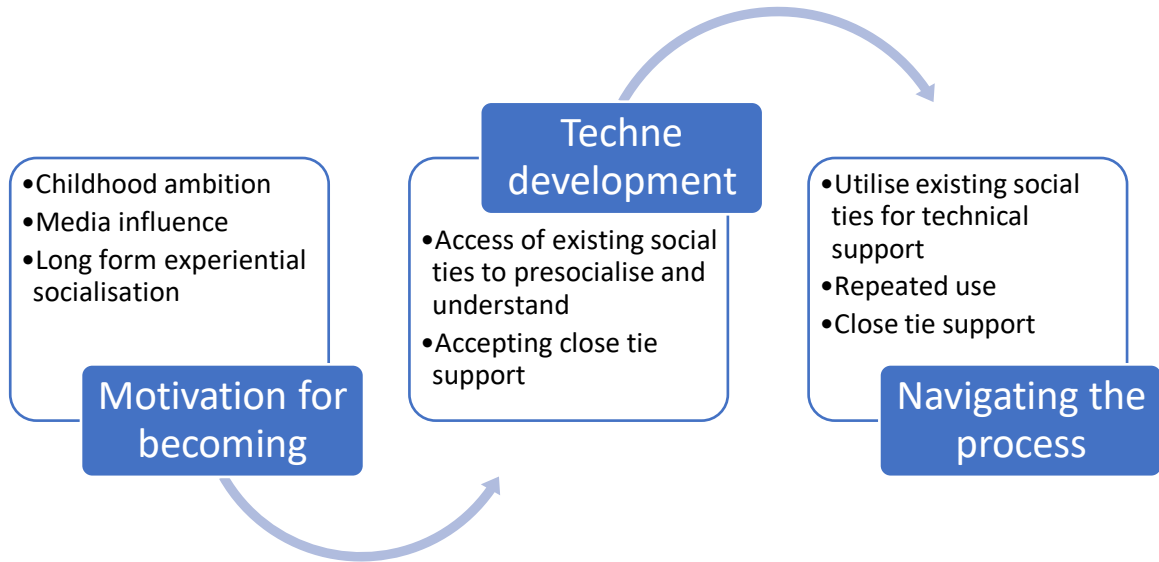
Figure 15: Able to access Social Ties

Unable to Access Social Ties

- Childhood ambition
- Media influence
- Experiential socialisation

Motivation for becoming

Techne development

- Wider family and community negative support
- Accepting close tie support

- Utilise abstract provision without social tie for technical support

Navigating the process
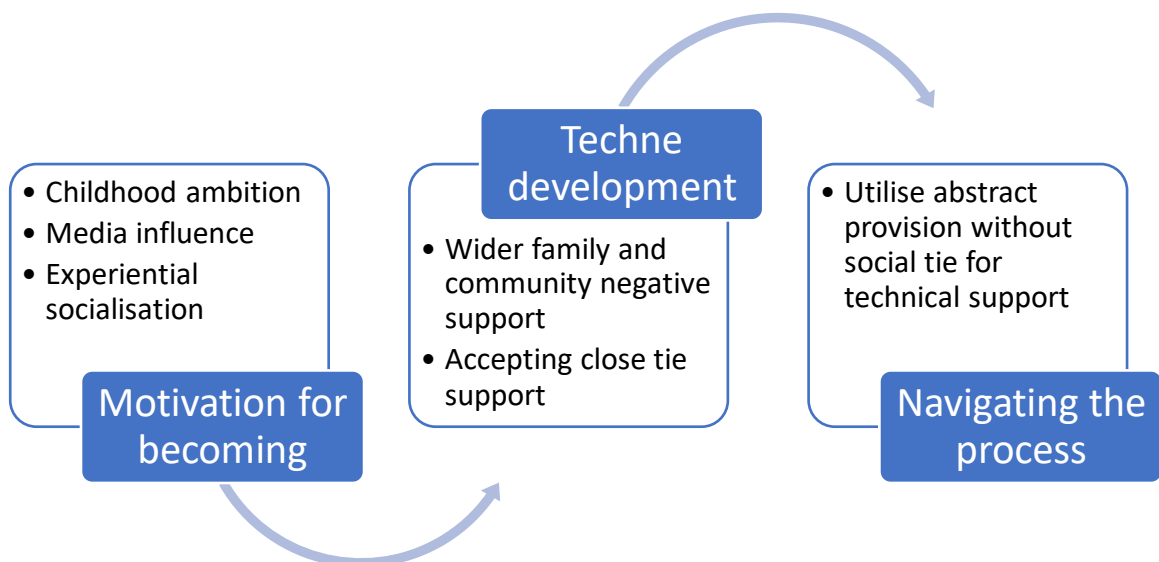
Figure 16: Unable to Access Social Ties

Close social ties in the forms of close family and friends were present in all interviewees in terms of pastoral support. They are also cited with high frequency as the most important form of social support throughout the interviews. This is an important finding as it indicates that the experience of police recruitment within this sample was heavily embedded with supportive close family ties. Within this context, presocialisation as a process relied upon the existence of close, supportive family ties, and those ties' efficacy in supporting a very distinctive type of *techne* – acceptance of the forthcoming identity in terms of social status and nature. Interviewee 8 discusses specifically how the support of his parents was causal in the overriding of negative social influence from the wider family and community:

6.4.1.1 *"[close family] definitely pushed me along because, I don't think if I didn't have that at home then I'd have probably have doubted it myself in the sense that, you know what, everyone is saying this. I haven't really got anyone to look up to and say they've done it so it kind of starts making you think, am I making the right choice here? But having my parents and immediate family back me on that, it kind of inspired me to do it. It kept me going."* **Interviewee 8 URM**

Even in the case of interviewee 2, whose father had been in jail and heavily involved in crime, they describe the causal nature of a close social tie in their success:

"The biggest support would have been my husband. (It) would have been nothing to do with the police… I wouldn't of, I don't think I would have got through without it." **Interviewee 2 WF**

The development of this *techne* appears universal across all candidates. They all evidence some form of strong close tie support, and this has a high value in terms of meaning to the recruits.

Less strongly represented however, is the presence of friends and acquaintances in the development of *techne* across all candidates. Those candidates who were prior employees or who already had a strong police representation within their social circles, gradually use these ties to presocialise over long periods of time. They access 'ridealongs' through family friends, meet in pubs and talk over the phone about the challenges that they will face as a police officer. These discussions often take the form of more general encounters, and do not specifically get into the detail of what to expect at very particular stages:

"To be honest I was in the pub, with my friend and he was there. And he spoke to me about the

process. His was years ago, he was quite long in service, but yeah he spoke to me about it and the job.

And then, my grandad, his friend had a son, who has literally just started [in another local police

force]. He'd just got in about two months prior, so he was telling me a bit about what happens in the

assessment center, and what happens when you start. And things like that, and the training

basically." Interviewee 9 WM

These develop a specific type of *techne* that grows and shapes identity. The candidates are not stepping outside of their existing social circles in order to access and develop information that will help in their pursuit of *telos*. They are instead utilising contacts that they have and are comfortable with, in order to develop and cultivate their forthcoming identity shift. These encounters are reinforcements of their choice to *become;* they validate both their existing identity, and its compatibility with their developing one.

The defining variable in differentiation of the access of this social support, is simply the existence of prevalent and accessible social ties. If candidates have an established and developed social ties network that provide them with access to social support, then they discuss accessing those ties in the development of *'techne'*. Other candidates in the sample who do not have these networks however, tend to be those who are in minority groups, or who differ greatly in the establishment of the *telos.*

Interviewee 20 discusses how the experience of being a domestic violence victim enabled the development of her *telos:*

"Yeah, it was DV. [domestic violence] And basically, if it wasn't for the police, I don't know think that I would have gotten out of the situation. Just a lot of support, and it was the right level, the right level of understanding, it was just… it just changed my life to be honest with you. So, that was the reason for it. If I could offer that to someone else, and I know that there's lots of other areas within police work that you can make a difference. But, that was my trigger point. That was the thing that changed my life, so that's what I would like to do. I want to give back." **Interviewee 20 WF**

In Interviewee 20's case, her home circumstances held back her development of *techne* until she was able to apply, but at no point did she develop any technical social support networks or receive any identity transition validation from anyone other than her close family ties – this came in the form of a very supportive partner. She accessed 3rd party materials to assist in her application, but found them proactively, without any social support or influence. She is the only candidate in the sample who had no contact with police related social ties, and the major difference in her narrative is her method of *telos* development. It came to her later in life, and through the transformative socialised experience of rescue from domestic violence.

Those within under-represented groups clearly attempt to navigate their choice of *telos* socially, yet negative social influence from wider family and from within their community may hamper the gathering of identity validation from existing social ties. The data suggests that supportive close ties are causal in addressing this lack of wider social support. This does however require minority candidates who experience negative social influence to actually be able to access supportive close family ties, and this may not always be present.

In addition to the differing approaches to gathering and developing their professional identity through social ties, the nature of *techne* gathered is different for those who cannot or do not access social ties throughout their recruitment.

Social Tie Based techne development	Non-Social Tie based techne development
Identity choice validation	validation through an asbtract relationship
enhances identity salience	may enhance identity salience
enhances wellbeing support	does not enhance wellbeing support
enhances social resilience	does not enhance social resilience
enhances technical skill and proficiency	enhances technical skill and proficiency
Support is ongoing and established	Support is temporal

Figure 17: Differing Techne Development

Social Tie support as explained by the interviewees provides an experiential validation of their choice to become a police officer. They are accessing existing social ties that are present within their 'normal life', indicating that the distance required to *become* is not only a distance that has been covered by people 'like them,' but that they will assist with their forthcoming journey too. This is a strong identity reinforcing action and one which assists to develop stronger feelings of belonging. Those contacts also do not leave them; they are not transient and inaccessible once they have reached their *telos*. Interviewees also drew upon their social contacts for technical skill and proficiency in navigating the recruitment process. That support featured in the form of physical assistance with application forms, the discussion and development of scenarios and their behaviours within them, and also in the understanding of social settings such as the sterility and 'falseness' of the assessment centre.

In contrast, interactions with positive action initiatives and the BPA offered 'sessions' to prospective officers that sought to directly develop technical skill and proficiency. They are not designed to form social support groups and candidates are not encouraged to meet each other socially. The sessions are timed and formal, they

do not take place in neutral settings, and instead take place in meeting rooms or lecture halls. Candidates are offered efficient feedback on their performances, and they can adapt and develop their process related skills with direction and tangible assistance. The candidates value this highly, yet still often cite close family ties as the most meaningful support in their journeys. The main difference with this type of support, is that it represents a temporal and abstract form of support; one which becomes absent and inaccessible when the recruitment comes to an end. The candidate is left without ongoing social ties upon which to draw support and validation, and essentially begins training with an organisational endorsement, and not a social one. This distinction is important, as the *techne* developed in this area is purely related to the passage through a process, and not the building of socialised, occupational identity.

At this point a discussion could reasonably be conducted around the relative 'effectiveness' of both informal socialisation and the accessing of positive action initiatives. This discussion is perhaps the most important discovery of this research, and the answer to both of these questions relies upon what could be considered as success for the candidate; the *telos*. If the purpose for the candidate is simply to gain entry to the profession (Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012)), then researched and developed schemes of positive action may offer the candidate the best chance of entry into the profession. If the purpose instead is a level of socialisation that begins to build social support networks, greater social resilience, and long term points of social reference for the candidate, then positive action woefully under-performs. In an ironic twist, those under-represented in the current demographics are those that may need the latter in a way that others representing the majority will not, and they are perhaps the least able to access it. Positive action design must therefore begin to consider a separate purpose to that of simple recruitment of the candidate; it must also be a social starting block that seeks to build all of the things that informal socialisation does for the candidates who are able to access it.

6.5 Contribution to knowledge

To understand this area properly, it is necessary to return to the research questions:

1) **How socially embedded is the police recruitment process?**

2) **How do these social processes then inform on the development on the policing identity in police recruits?**

With regards to the first question, the research illustrates a rich and complex, interdependent system of social tie reliance and development during police recruitment. Current research that centres upon presocialisation, often rooted in ethnography, has provided some understanding of anticipatory socialisation as a stage of development of the policing identity (Charman, 2017). The empirical research in the area of anticipatory socialisation is however largely speculative, and often rooted in psychological methods that rely upon the axiom of 'importation' over socialisation (Charman, *ibid*). The micro processes that build and encourage police identity development over time before becoming an officer are therefore weakly represented in the literature.

The use of labour market theory in this area (Granovetter, 1985) has enabled a different lens through which to view the development of the policing identity, both prior to and during the application process. The sample provided data that enabled further understanding in how existing social ties are utilised during the process, describing empirically the experiences of candidates and their micro transactions with other social actors. When these interactions are viewed over the course of the recruitment process as a whole, the data begins to illustrate how social ties are used by candidates, and what perceived and unperceived benefits they bring to the prospective police officer.

Importantly, although there was illumination of some of the issues faced by under-represented groups, the defining variable in terms of how social ties were used by candidates appeared to be that of whether they were able to access them through their existing social networks. If a candidate was able to access police related acquaintances, friends and family reliably, they did so, drawing support and identity validation from those ties. Those with weakly formed or developed ties tended to rely heavily on close familial support, and if able to do so, would access positive action or 3rd party support. The accessing of positive action was well received by those who could access it, but there is an acknowledgement that the support accessed here was situated in the

'technical' domain and did not serve to build up lasting social identity links with any real or persisting social ties.

There is therefore a difference in the construction of social identity of candidates who are able to access and utilise police related social ties. This difference is summarised in Figure 15 and Figure 16, but essentially relates to a binary development of social support and resilience over time. If social ties have been accessed, a candidate is developing a social resource that may be re-accessed at a later date. There is also evidence of identity familiarisation through social ties and a 'testing of the water' with social conversations with existing social groups. These enable the candidate to reduce anxiety, cultivate feelings of belonging, and develop their police identity salience. A developed identity salience will theoretically result in improved social resilience within that identity, and wellbeing support from other in group members. As the process presents as socially embedded, this indicates that the interviewed police officers entered the profession with a semi-developed social identity already, having accessed work based ties, alongside social ties that actively assisted in the recruitment process. These interactions are not just for the purpose of technical skill development, but also develop feelings of acceptance and belonging, in other words: they matter.

It is not possible to draw conclusions at the scale of other social network scholars such as Grieco (1982). She was able to immerse herself in the captive environment of the Welsh fishmarket, and gather data on how social connections physically worked to extend the internal labour market. The data in this study however does suggest that various stages of the recruitment process rely heavily upon information provided to candidates around very particular stages. Although discussed earlier in depth in this paper, the 'learnability' of these processes heavily enable the influence of social ties. This illuminates the 'need' for positive action for candidates without those active social networks – it essentially provides an evidence base for the reasoning behind the development and implementation of positive action initiatives. Some candidates do have access to social ties that pass meaningful, identity developing information. This information does assist candidates, and without it, candidates will be disadvantaged to some extent. Positive action in its current form can address this deficit, but only to an extent. Its contribution is valuable and informative, but it is also abstract and temporal. Candidates who access this support do so in order to pass particular parts of the recruitment process; it does not build or sustain meaningful relationships with the organisation or its employees. The content of both of these areas of *techne* differ distinctly.

With regards to the study's contribution to existing literature on culture, the presence of developed embeddedness presents interesting questions about what police recruitment's *telos* represents. This is a separate and abstracted *telos,* and very different to the personally defined, embodied *telos* of the candidates. The primary goal of a police recruitment process is to locate and hire suitable police officers, yet this becomes more complicated when examined more carefully. The use of the word 'suitable' implies the ascription of value to candidates, indicating that some candidates are judged to be acceptable by the process, and others rejected from it. To understand this more, the findings illustrate that prospective officers are essentially judged as to their suitability using standards from the current culture, by people from within that current culture.

> *"At police schools, policemen learn from policemen what policemen have learned from policemen."*(Reitz, 1988:33 translated and cited in Jaschke and Neidhardt, 2007: 314)

With regards to the studied recruitment process, people become police officers by writing and behaving like police officers, whilst being judged against the standards of current police officers, by current police officers. This results in cultural reproduction, and will make cultural rejuvenation or development difficult. Presocialisation is especially important in this regard, as if there is social access to existing police officers, the right and proper comprehension of what it takes to truly *become* is eased. Presocialised officers take some social lessons in what to become, before and during the development of their *techne*. The implications for this finding are discussed within the next chapter.

Another important contribution within this context is the understanding of the police recruitment process from a phenomenological viewpoint. Candidates discuss its unwieldy timescales, an inability to manage their lives around its expectations, and long periods of delay without any communication from the organisation. These are evidenced strongly within the data, indicating that these experiences are almost universal. It is of note that the candidates within this study are successful candidates, so there is an absence of voice for those candidates who failed the process. In this research, the candidates have reached their *telos*, and therefore this code is offset by that of the 'justifiably lengthy' or that the process was seen as a 'worthy challenge.' It is reasonable to expect that this perception may be altered by an unsuccessful result, and therefore this remains an area of possible future research.

6.6 Implications

The following sections attempt to outline how the findings from this research may influence a number of connected areas.

6.7 Policy & Practice

As noted earlier in the literature review, the understanding of diversity at the policy makers' level centres upon the development of the police organisation's ability to influence representation in the domain of 'counting' (Pincus, 2011). Recent Home Office reports (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016; Home Office, 2017; House of Commons, 2017) continue to illustrate that Forces are not recruiting in a way that represents their communities, and there has been no national 'step change' in police approaches to recruitment for many years. Although this is a reductive method of understanding diversity, the principle of proportionate representation is well understood and supported, and policing in England and Wales has been unable to make large scale changes in this area. Both the Scarman report (1981) and the Macpherson Report (1999) state that a lack of diversity within the force nationally affects its ability to properly understand the communities that it polices. They both aspire to improve race related diversity levels, and the recent Home Office report on Diversity in Policing (2016) indicates that this aspiration is not being met. Souhami (2014a) notes that forces have concentrated in this area, and in other 'easier to define' areas such as the provision of training in order to attempt to change behaviours and practices with regards to policing diverse communities. The implications for this area of diversity in policing are highly relevant.

The research in this constabulary has evidenced a high level of embeddedness in the police recruitment process. Social Ties in terms of close family support, and the passage of supportive and developmental information to potential candidates through ties involving friends, friends of friends, and work based experience is abundantly evidenced. Utilising Granovetter's (1985) theory of embeddedness allows us to speculate that particular stages of recruitment have far higher levels of embeddedness than others. Two of these are the initial application form, and the subsequent assessment centre. These are the main gateways to the police recruitment process. There are two main challenges presented by these findings:

1. In this recruitment process, candidates with social ties routinely share their application forms with current or recently recruited police officers. Those officers will assist in both the selection and development of content. The STAR format is widely used across public services to structure answers, and this is also shared with candidates during their completion of the form. This is an 'insider' technique (Conti, 2006) and it occurs across other established public services. Human Resource professionals in policing have been exposed to marking internal forms using the STAR format for many years, and familiarity with the system is embedded within policing processes. These processes and techniques are learnable, and they are evidenced within the data as being shared and explored though social ties.

2. Following the application, candidates are able to access and utilise information regarding the assessment centre. It utilises established BPS (2015) guidelines and is designed for sterility and validity. This process is described by candidates as 'bizarre,' and it is therefore a topic of heavy discussion through existing social ties. Ties will be used to discuss and develop strategies, and for candidates to explore the relative bizarreness of its setting. Candidates with ties are able to adjust in advance following discussions with social ties, and this will put them at an advantage in terms of their performance as they will not be required to actively decipher the difficult conditions as they perform; the conditions will have been pre-socialised in candidates with accessible social ties.

As these challenges emerged through the analysis of the data, the legacy of the process began to become evident to the researcher. By legacy, the temporal nature of the application form and the assessment centre is enduring. The process repeats itself nationally, and they both to some extent have become artefacts of police recruitment. The description in terms of structure and content and the subsequent learnability of these artefacts directly contributes to their susceptibility to social deconstruction. In this context, the deconstruction is not deconstruction in a philosophical sense, but instead in a negotiated, dialectical, practical sense. These stages are subject to conversations between social actors, where each stage is wrestled with and broken down. Recruits discuss their feelings and their findings, their grades and their examples. This information carries value and certainly represents a resource through which candidates learn and develop, prior to them attempting the same ritualistic challenges. Legacy has made these stages ritualistic, and ritual is by its very nature, learnable and teachable.

Whilst this learning and teaching resides in the social sphere, policy to address changes in police recruitment may be frustrated by the reproducing products of this established ritual. Whilst the overwhelmingly white police

officers help others within their social groups by discussing the stages in depth, they automatically create a disparity for those who cannot access such information. This research shows that whilst this inequality is mediated through the use of positive action, the positive action approaches utilise a different method to social dissemination, and do not build social resilience or access to greater wellbeing for the recruit from established in-group members.

Radical policies to reforming police recruitment are possible answers to this problem. Application forms as a tool for selection are very poor in terms of assessing validity, and do not even appear in contemporary guidelines for assessment (British Psychological Society, 2015), yet they remain the first barrier for all policing candidates within England and Wales. The legacy of these stages are decades in the making, and despite recent changes to the Assessment Centre, its exercises and scenarios remain roughly the same. They remain the same due to the guidelines established through the BPS (2015), and as this is best practice for occupational psychologists the exercises represent the highest level of validity. This is a difficult trade-off for the College of Policing, as there must be either a way to adjust for the social embeddedness of the policing recruitment process, or the establishment of new methods. The College in this respect are following the latest research in assessment centre methodology, and reproducing work sample tests rooted in the job of being a police officer. The established pattern of the centre and its predictable nature, allow existing social networks to prepare candidates from within thoroughly. This is the gap which should be addressed by positive action, with the alternative being a redesign which limits the power of this socially disseminated information.

There are risks with a full redesign of the assessment centre, such as the avoidance of occupational selection and assessment best practice. There is established and replicated science in psychology with regards to selection methodology, and this is a well-researched area over decades. Stepping away from this science may offer a platform for legitimate criticism. It may be possible however, to mathematically adjust for the variables of social support during the process. This would require further research to understand the impact of social support on a candidate's relative success using large sample sizes in multiple settings. This could, over time, allow for adjustable dispensation in candidates without significant social support mechanisms.

With regards to the application form as the initial barrier for police selection, questions should be asked about its validity. It is not supported by science, yet it remains a legacy stage that can be managed by relatively few people inside forces. Small human resource teams can sift large numbers of candidates efficiently, and defensibly. It is understandable that forces have retained this method for simple ease of use. It represents a

pragmatic and cost effective way to reduce the number of candidates for reach recruitment window. However, the learned methods and the sharing of the application form with police contacts is evidenced strongly within this data. The advantage gained from knowing how to navigate this stage utilising established models will provide socially connected candidates with an advantage. Returning to the results of the Masters in Research (Stubbs, 2016) that became the starting point for this project, those differences are measurable and do exist. It is again possible to adjust for this difference if it measured properly; this study does not seek to do this. There are ethical questions about this approach, but the advantage for candidates in this constabulary is evidenced and the weight of this advantage is currently unknown nationally.

When examining the processes endorsed by the BPS (British Psychological Society, 2015), the methodology used in this area is well-researched and has been subject to previous meta analyses. It relies fundamentally on the use of work sample based assessment, a method which has been shown to improve the validity and reliability of the results of such approaches. Assessment Centres rely upon the compounding of various work sample tests, and are complimented via the use of basic English and Maths that are utilised to maintain standards within police paperwork. The connection between the reliable work sample test, rooted in the policing profession and the 'way that police do things' serves as a reinforcement of the validity of the resource that can be disseminated via social network however, thus the relationship between the work sample test, and the relative power of social tie based influence is directly evidenced within this study.

Figure 18: Graphical Representation of the Assessment Centre Design Process

248
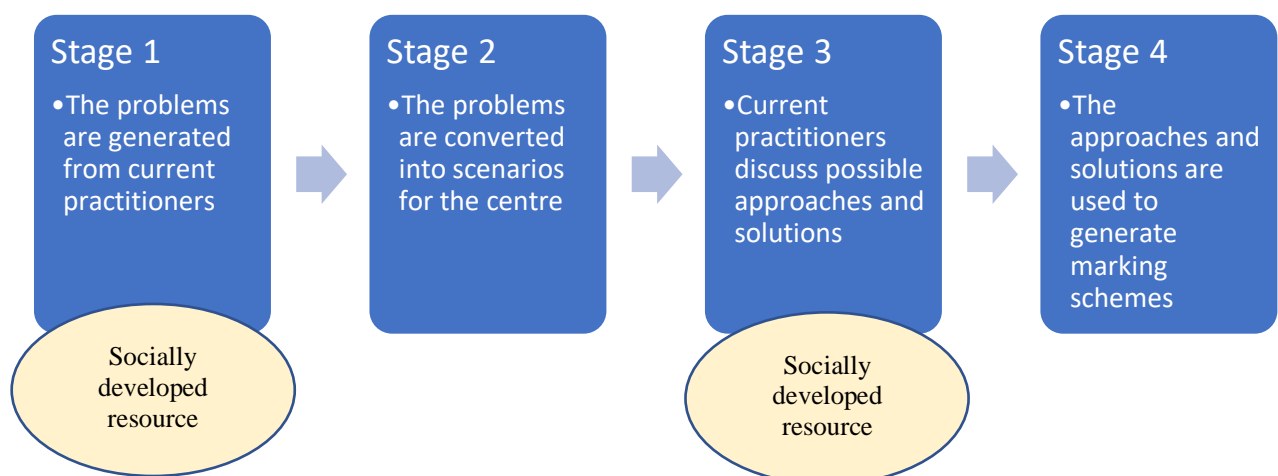
Logically, if the content of the assessment centre is designed utilising existing police resources, the relevance of possible solutions and expressions of particular behaviours are therefore available through accessing this resource socially. It is therefore possible that if a candidate can access existing social ties to navigate the assessment centre, there is a significant chance of gathering highly valuable resource. In a peculiar way, the scientifically valid approaches to developing the exercises for the police assessment centre actually reinforce the effectiveness of existing police related social ties. This is also supported in the data, which suggests that this process is the most highly accessed subject area for accessing police related social ties based resource.

From a policy perspective, there is the opportunity for this social advantage to be measured and acknowledged. The method used may be scientifically valid in terms of the developing of a relevant work sample, but the validity is judged through a current examination of the occupational culture. This protects new recruits, as when they are measured against current cultural approaches, they are recruited with behaviours and methods that are currently culturally valid. This prevents identity rejection, and could be said to build identity, as recruits are then presocialised via the methods of recruitment. However, in relation to policing, it is possible to question what makes a 'work sample' valid? Using current approaches, the validity is assessed using existing police cultural based practice. The problems identified in Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1999) within diverse communities were actually rooted in current policing behaviours and approaches, the very same behaviours and approaches that are used as the relative 'yardstick' to measure the potentiality of possible new recruits. Taking this criticism to its extreme, the exercises used to measure the validity of problem solving approaches in the policing recruitment process, may therefore represent as having poor validity with the communities that are being served by those behaviours. It is possible to suggest that members of these communities may represent rich resources for exploring the validity of current police approaches, and therefore they may also posit interesting solutions to problems that do not represent the current approaches of existing police officers.

A hybrid model therefore may be explored in this area, where work sampling is coupled with 'community sampling'. Current approaches may be culturally removed from the communities that now require particular approaches from police officers, and it is these differences that may be reflected in the disproportionality of this particular recruitment stage. This is a change that should be directed from governance levels within the service as it may represent a paradigmatic shift for exercise design in policing and disrupt the influence of existing social networks in terms of the passing of relevant social resource.

With regards to practice specifically, the main implication for this research lies in the design and implementation of positive action initiatives. Under-represented candidates in this study all accessed positive action in its varying forms. There were three types of positive action evidenced, in the form of Human Resource delivered positive action, Black Police Association positive action workshops and sessions, and finally the Leadership in Policing Program. All candidates discussed their interaction with these initiatives and how they felt about the support received. From analysing this support, it is clear that these differing types of positive action represented different *techne,* with only the Leadership in Policing program developing social resource that was accessible outside of formal input sessions. The one candidate that experienced this support discussed the accessibility of the Sgt. involved in the program, and essentially described interactions that more closely relate to the *techne* of the candidates involved in accessing purely socially based recruitment resource information. The socially based resource exchanges took place with serving police officers with established social identities, and the assistance of those within the identity - who are essentially assisting candidates to *'become'* - develops feelings of acceptance. Existing empirical literature in social identity suggests that those with high identity salience and a developed social identity will receive improved wellbeing support from within that identity and greater feeling of belonging. It is clear from this research that the socially developed *techne* develops a stronger social identity over time, whilst the technical and instructional *techne* develops a functional relationship with the abstract organisation. Candidates with a developed social identity will be able to draw upon existing social support mechanisms once they are recruited, and those with established relationships with the abstract will simply not be able to draw on this resource.

This system is a two tiered system that puts candidates that 'have and have not' upon quite different '*starting blocks*.' Theoretically, an under-developed social identity leaves recruits receiving lower social support, essentially creating a more difficult journey for candidates without social ties once recruited. The data also illustrated that white candidates who received extensive social support still cited close family support as the most important type of support experientially, indicating a hierarchy of perceived support, where instrumental social support that they did receive has a lower value than the pastoral support from close ties. The data suggests that technical based *techne*, was only rated highly by those who accessed positive action, whereas other candidates did not see technical based input as important. This could lead to perceptions of unfairness, as the visibility of social support, which goes almost unnoticed until probed for by the researcher, is exactly what positive action seeks to address. Candidates who did not access positive action, yet can visibly see other candidates accessing it, may perceive unfairness, as they have a lower level of importance ascribed to the receipt

of their established social support. This hierarchy of perceived support is something that must be addressed organisationally, as it is a further identifier of identity difference in candidates who access positive action, and those who do not. From a procedural justice perspective (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001) this will result in perceived injustice for those that do not receive it, and the justification for this difference is not a part of the recruitment process, or a part of police training. A person receiving positive action may not have a developed social tie system, and thus not have had access to identity reinforcement and acceptance that other candidates may have received. In addition to this, they then have the perceived injustice of receiving positive action interventions. This could be described as a significant disadvantage for the purposes of developing established social identity.

In order to address these issues, the constabulary could take the responsibility of building social identity as part of positive action as a priority. It is as important - if not more important – as the development of technically based information that is used to navigate the recruitment process. This may involve:

- The allocation of an existing volunteer officer to each candidate as a social resource.

- The organisation of 'ridealongs' or station visits

- A 'person to call' when they have worries or become anxious

- Familiarity chats with serving officers

- Permission sought between under-represented candidates to connect as a group socially

- The organising of resilience groups, headed by serving advocates within forces for candidates receiving positive action.

In addition to these, existing *techne* development with regards to the recruitment process should be retained. These recommendations are in line with the data gathered about the activities undertaken by those with existing social ties, and may go some way to develop parity for those groups unable to access this resource. It should be noted that these recommendations are grounded in social identity theory and will also serve to build relationships that are not abstract in their nature. They directly address the deficit exposed as a result of this study.

6.8 Academia

This study has illustrated the value of utilising an established theoretical framework to examine the social processes that maintain and develop the labour market of policing within the researched constabulary. Previous studies have concentrated upon socialisation as it takes place at the point of training (van Maanen, 1973; Bennett, 1984; Fielding, 1988; Charman, 2017), yet they have discussed presocialisation or anticipatory socialisation as some evidence has suggested that it may be prevalent within policing recruits. This study shows that within the limited sample, policing recruitment is heavily embedded (Granovetter, 2002), and candidates rely upon the resources often provided through their current social structure. Within the data, there exists support for the theory of '*importation*,' (Charman, 2017) developed predominantly through police personality literature (Balch, 1972; Adlam, 1982; Evans, Coman and Stanley, 1992b; Twersky-Glasner, 2005; J. Skolnick, 2010). The data evidences that joining the police for many of the candidates is a long held ambition related to socialised games during childhood, or through exposure to the police related media available. The data also provides some support for presocialisation in the form of performative and non-performative interactions with existing social network contacts. Candidates access their social ties for individualised feedback and support for the recruitment process, and there is also data to suggest that this resource transfer involves 'insider' information. The candidates also all evidence strong, close tie based social support throughout the process, and most candidates evidence existing and utilised social ties inside the profession of policing.

Empirically, there is evidence that could be situated between that of the Welsh fishmarket (Grieco, 1987), and that of lower/middle professional managers in the US (Granovetter, 1973a). There is evidence of the passing of resource between weak ties, such as the 'friend of a friend', and there is equal evidence of assistance coming from siblings and parents. The differentiation is therefore possibly not the 'closeness' of the tie in terms of time spent with or access to that tie socially, but perhaps more relevantly the tie's access to the relevant resource. Policing in England and Wales is a relatively static profession, with turnover being restricted by Police Regulations (Police Federation, 2017). The resource gathered from within the profession is therefore unlikely to 'travel' into other industries and professions as quickly as it does in other areas of work. Access to the current approaches to solving problems within the culture is therefore often limited to very recent retirees, or existing officers. With regards to the data analysed in this study, the access to the ties were often temporal; with

candidates drawing upon recent recruits' resource if possible, as they were the ones with the most recent experience of the stages of recruitment.

The above discussion would lead to the proposal therefore, that the relative embeddedness of social ties within the recruitment process in the chosen constabulary would be contingent upon the timeliness of the exposure to current police recruitment and approaches for those ties. The social dissemination of useful, instructive and practical resource is to some extent contingent upon recent experience of it. This has implications theoretically, as the labour market will be artificially challenged by the passing of social resource that is temporally relevant, to social contacts that already exist within a candidate's social network. In other words, the social networks of your most recent recruits represent fertile ground for potential recruits to access social resource. The theory of Homophily (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001; Lawrence and Shah, 2020) if applied to this temporality would suggest that those recruits are more likely to be friends and associates with those demographics which they are personally represented within. To be succinct, the most useful social information with regards to a constabulary's recruitment processes is likely to be found in the most recent recruits, and they are thus more likely to share this information within their existing social contacts. Following the theory, the next recruitment in terms of demography, will possibly represent your last, as the most useful social information will be passed to recent candidates' friends and acquaintances. This could explain the reason why there has been no significant step change in under-represented recruitment in recent years in England and Wales. The salience of temporality is contingent upon the relative ossification of the process to which it refers; the more recently the candidate has passed through the process, and the more static the process itself, the more valuable the social resource to potential candidates.

Another implication for study with regards to social ties and embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985), is that some areas of the process are more socially informed and supported than others. This study has speculated upon the reasons for this uneven distribution of social resource, utilising the principle of 'learnability.' If aspects of the recruitment process are ritualistic and repeatable, the potential for social dissemination and support around those processes could be said to be higher. The data in this study suggests that this is the case, yet further research is necessary to explore this in more depth. Some of the 3rd party resources accessed by candidates and passed between social resources rely on the relative stability of the processes involved. These resources hold value, because the process retain their fundamental characteristics. This again links with the temporal nature of recruitment based information, as disestablishing ritualistic approaches to recruitment may disrupt established social norms of resource dissemination. If the application form processes and the assessment centre stages are

more embedded than other areas of the process because of their ritualistic approach, a tangible move away from these may disrupt the usefulness of current social contacts for potential candidates. The literature with regards to the relationship between social ties in recruitment processes and particular stages of those processes is not developed. This is a fertile area for future research, as the implications of changes in more ritualistic stages may disrupt heavily established and useful areas of socially accessible resource for future candidates.

Finally, the data in this study suggests that anticipatory or pre-socialisation (Bennett, 1984; Conti, 2006a; Charman, 2017) as an area of study, is worthy of further investigation. The structural social support of some candidates established differing levels of presocialisation, and other evidence suggested that decisions to embark upon a police career began in childhood. As defining variables, childhood ambition and socialised realisation (be it through significant trauma, victimisation or work related experience) represent differing starting blocks for candidates. These may represent distinct groups, and inform upon the '*importation vs socialisation*' (Charman, 2017) argument. It is possible that this has been explored to some extent in the police personality based literature (Hogan, 1971; Balch, 1972; Vastola, 1978; Adlam, 1982; J. Skolnick, 2010), but without the other defined variable of socialisation as a comparator. In designing further research it may be possible to work with new recruits to understand whether the choice of joining the police has always been a deeply held and persistently sustained choice, or if the decision has come as a result of experiential exposure. That exposure could be subject to a typology, and the two groups could become subject to comparison in terms of relative success in recruitment, or beyond into the workplace itself. The relationship between these two groups and their social ties could also be examined, as a long journey to *becoming* police may yield more access to social resource over time. This has been evidenced at a smaller scale in this study, in the 'Candidate's Journey' section, as the beginning of a typology began to emerge amongst the extremes. One candidate offered a 22 year journey of police socialisation, drawing heavily on social resource, whilst another evidenced no existing social ties, but a formative experience as a victim. At two ends of the social resource spectrum, they may represent the beginning of a presocialisation typology, that could inform on access to social resource, and relative success within the police recruitment process.

6.9 Conclusion

This research has made key contributions to the understanding of police recruitment within the researched constabulary, in terms of both the experience of the process, and the interaction of that process with social ties. Social ties have been shown to be involved in the large majority of recruits' experiences of presocialisation, and the interactions involved are identity reinforcing encounters. The research evidences high levels of embeddedness at the initial stages of application form and assessment centre. These stages represent elements of ritual within the recruitment process, and are therefore socially learnable. This 'learnability' contributes to the effectiveness of social resource during the process. This is an important finding as to the frequency of embeddedness within the policing recruitment process.

Secondly, this research illustrates tangible differences in the 'typology' of police recruitment assistance. Social assistance develops identity along with providing technical support; it establishes relationships that do not end with recruitment. Positive action based support offers predominantly technical support that is valued by those that receive it. It does not contain any processes or supports that build social identity, and this may put recruits who receive it at a social disadvantage. This is an important finding as to the nature of embeddedness within the policing recruitment process.

Thirdly, this research contributes to the theory of embeddedness by illustrating that recruitment stages can be influenced in different ways by different levels of social resource. This suggests that embeddedness is a not a single measure that can be investigated across an entire process, but a layered and socially informed set of interactions that are dependent upon the characteristics of the processes involved. Granovetter (2002) discusses the problem of the micro social interactions forming the abstracted models of the labour market, but embeddedness is particular to context, as illustrated by research over several decades. This research has illuminated the social interaction inherent within the police recruitment process of the researched constabulary, contributing process specific, socially based detail to understand the concept of embeddedness within the police context.

There are some limitations within this study. It is a limited sample, qualitative study that focuses upon developing understanding within the researched context. The findings are not to be considered highly generalisable, but do offer several opportunities for further research in wider contexts and offer some generalisability with regards to similar recruitment processes in England and Wales. The process it studies is

largely representative of many recruitment processes being used in constabularies in England and Wales, therefore providing a foundation for further study.

When these findings are observed in the whole, the common factor amongst the candidates was a shared *telos;* that of becoming a police officer. The social interactions that informed upon the recruitment process have exposed a well-developed, socially informed approach to navigating the process within the researched constabulary. The process itself operates with an obtainable level of learnability; there is an ossification of the process at established places, enhancing the value of social networks in these areas. These areas are those stages where psychological best practice is observed, or in the case of the initial application form, tradition and convenience overshadow validity. This is a peculiar type of embeddedness, as it is present at particular stages of the recruitment process, and not within others.

In order for the development of positive action approaches to address this embeddedness, constabularies should concentrate not only upon the disproportionality in the relative success of candidates throughout the process, but also upon their development of identity. The ossified areas of the process allow prospective candidates to experience and benefit from *social coaching*, a process which is not only instructional, but also pastoral. Each interaction where knowledge is shared between social actors develops not only functional understanding of the stages of the process, but also reinforces the identity salience of the prospective officer. This leads to established layers of social support when the recruitment process is finally realised. Social identity theory would suggest that increased wellbeing and social support will result from this raised salience. In contrast, if the candidate has no access to social support, if able, they will turn to positive action initiatives. These initiatives develop instructional knowledge, but the social support is support developed through the organisation, and not an existing series of social ties. A developed relationship for these candidates with the organisation does not develop increased wellbeing or social support, indicating that those in receipt of positive action assistance throughout these processes begin at a different level in terms of identity development. Although an area for future study, this could explain why candidates unable to access social ties may struggle to integrate and assimilate with police culture.

Finally, although the *telos* of the candidate has been the subject of much discussion in this thesis, the *telos* of the organisation has not been properly explored. The literature review in the context chapter of the term diversity illustrates that it is a layered term, with differing definitions at differing levels of the organisation. The

government publications and diversity based reports indicate that one of the main goals of police recruitment is to increase race related diversity within policing in England and Wales as per the theory of Representative Bureaucracy (Krislov, 2012). If this is the case, the current structure of the police recruitment process should be reviewed with regards to the social learnability of the stages that are currently in place, as statistical approaches indicate that people tend to associate with those that share the same values and demographic determiners as them (Rapoport, 1963, 1979). In a police force that is mostly white, it is possible to assume with a reasonable degree of accuracy, that social embeddedness will be present mainly within white candidates. Positive action as a process does not equally offset this benefit, as it focuses solely upon exchange of instructional information and not pastoral, identity building support with social actors. This study has illuminated a profound difference in the building of social identity in police recruits. Those recruits who are able to access social resource build social resilience, support and reference systems incrementally over the recruitment process. These are very valuable to any recruit, and are not addressed through the utilisation of current positive action approaches. This may have severe implications for retention and belonging of those without embedded social resources and may explain longitudinal issues with morale and feelings of belonging in under-represented recruits (Barron, Anne-Marie; Holdaway, 2016).

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Appendix 1 Interview Guide

Section 1: Social contacts and influence

Candidate number:

Date:

Age:

Gender:

Ethnicity:

Family in the police before joining:

Friends in the police before joining:

Acquaintances in the police before joining: Yeah, I just knew a lot of people

Prior employee of the police before joining:

Why the police? (probe and explore for social network influence)

Could you describe the application process?

What did you like about the process?

What did you dislike about the process?

What social connections did you have with the police, before you became a police officer? (explain if necessary)

- **If present - How often did you see these connections? (probe/explore)**

- **Did you speak to these connections before you joined?**

- **If present – Could you describe these conversations?**

- **How important were these conversations to you?**

What was the biggest support/help to you whilst applying to the police?

- **If present – Probe and explore?**

- **Who provided that support/help?**

- **What was the value of that support to you?**

How did you find out about the vacancy at Lancashire Constabulary? (probe and explore for social network influence)

Appendix 2: Ethics Approval

![Canterbury Christ Church University logo]

6th December 2017   Ref: 17/SAS/23C

XXXXXXX

c/o School of Law, Criminal Justice and Computing

Faculty of Social & Applied Sciences

Dear XXXXXXX

Confirmation of ethics compliance for your study *"An investigation into the social identity and social network changes of new police recruits"*

I have received your Ethics Review Checklist and appropriate supporting documentation for proportionate review of the above project. Your application complies fully with the requirements for proportionate ethical review as set out in this University's Research Ethics and Governance Procedures.

In confirming compliance for your study, I must remind you that it is your responsibility to follow, as appropriate, the policies and procedures set out in the *Research Governance Framework* (http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/research-and-consultancy/governance-and-ethics/governance-and-ethics.aspx) and any relevant academic or professional guidelines. This includes providing, if appropriate, information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over its course should be notified via email to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk and may require a new application for ethics approval. It is a condition of compliance that you **must** inform me once your research has been completed.

Wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

RKE Co-Ordinator

Emal

cc: Prof. Steve Tong

Appendix 3 – Code Structure

Nodes — Search Project

Name	Files	References	Created By	Created On	Modified By	Modified On
Application process	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:41	GLS	18/07/2018 13:41
Challenging - +ve	10	15	GLS	18/07/2018 13:42	GLS	05/11/2021 10:03
Challenging - -ve	4	5	GLS	18/07/2018 13:42	GLS	31/10/2021 15:53
Feedback for change	2	2	GLS	29/10/2021 16:20	GLS	30/10/2021 09:30
Justifiably lengthy	5	5	GLS	18/07/2018 13:42	GLS	31/10/2021 10:23
Negative feedback	15	28	GLS	29/10/2021 15:33	GLS	05/11/2021 10:03
Negative in force help	2	2	GLS	29/10/2021 16:19	GLS	30/10/2021 09:20
No help with application	7	8	GLS	18/07/2018 14:10	GLS	29/10/2021 19:41
Positive action experience	5	32	GLS	29/10/2021 20:06	GLS	31/10/2021 16:02
positive feedback	18	41	GLS	18/07/2018 14:38	GLS	05/11/2021 10:05
Questions about the process	2	3	GLS	18/07/2018 13:46	GLS	29/10/2021 18:49
Too long	10	19	GLS	18/07/2018 13:41	GLS	31/10/2021 14:21
Assessment Center	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:47	GLS	18/07/2018 13:47
Enjoyable experience	10	15	GLS	18/07/2018 13:47	GLS	05/11/2021 10:05
Negative experience	13	25	GLS	18/07/2018 14:40	GLS	31/10/2021 15:47
Social support for the assessment center	4	6	GLS	18/07/2018 14:36	GLS	31/10/2021 14:27
Use of family support as resource	2	3	GLS	29/10/2021 15:38	GLS	30/10/2021 09:02
Use of provided materials	3	4	GLS	18/09/2021 15:58	GLS	31/10/2021 15:50
Use of third party information	19	44	GLS	18/07/2018 14:11	GLS	05/11/2021 10:09
Demographics	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:30	GLS	18/07/2018 13:30
Age	1	1	GLS	18/07/2018 13:12	GLS	18/07/2018 13:12
Ethnicity	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:15	GLS	18/07/2018 13:15
Gender	0	0	GLS	17/11/2021 14:33	GLS	17/11/2021 14:33
Fitness Test	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:50	GLS	18/07/2018 13:50
negative experience	5	5	GLS	18/07/2018 13:51	GLS	31/10/2021 10:23
positive experience	4	4	GLS	18/07/2018 13:50	GLS	05/11/2021 10:06
Interview	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:51	GLS	18/07/2018 13:51
negative experience	1	1	GLS	18/07/2018 13:51	GLS	29/10/2021 16:44
Positive experience - friendly approach etc	3	3	GLS	18/07/2018 13:51	GLS	16/08/2018 23:54
Social ties influence	1	1	GLS	17/08/2018 00:14	GLS	17/08/2018 00:14
Locating the application	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:44	GLS	18/07/2018 13:44
Advertisement (physical)	3	4	GLS	30/10/2021 09:29	GLS	30/10/2021 20:21
Direct notification	2	3	GLS	29/10/2021 16:47	GLS	29/10/2021 20:25
Facebook	10	13	GLS	18/07/2018 13:44	GLS	31/10/2021 10:41
Instagram	1	1	GLS	17/08/2018 00:06	GLS	17/08/2018 00:06
Internal comms	3	3	GLS	17/08/2018 00:43	GLS	05/11/2021 09:56
Internet search	7	7	GLS	16/08/2018 23:47	GLS	30/10/2021 20:53
Pro-active enquiry	2	3	GLS	29/10/2021 16:43	GLS	29/10/2021 20:25
Social referral	14	25	GLS	17/08/2018 00:43	GLS	05/11/2021 10:14
Meaning - Belief	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:59	GLS	01/10/2021 13:42
Belief in the value of these interactions	16	37	GLS	18/07/2018 14:04	GLS	05/11/2021 09:51
Disbelief in the value of these conversations	5	6	GLS	18/07/2018 14:05	GLS	29/10/2021 20:24
Indicative close by familial support	10	18	GLS	18/07/2018 14:04	GLS	30/10/2021 09:28
Physical, meaningful help	9	18	GLS	18/07/2018 14:45	GLS	05/11/2021 09:51
Protective - discouraging	2	2	GLS	18/07/2018 14:00	GLS	30/10/2021 09:01
Reduced anxiety through increased familiarit	3	6	GLS	18/07/2018 14:13	GLS	29/10/2021 20:08
Medical and Vetting	0	0	GLS	29/10/2021 15:59	GLS	29/10/2021 15:59
negative experience	6	18	GLS	29/10/2021 15:59	GLS	30/10/2021 19:48
positive experience	4	4	GLS	29/10/2021 15:59	GLS	05/11/2021 10:06
Motivation for joining	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:31	GLS	18/07/2018 13:31
Appeal to authority	3	4	GLS	29/10/2021 17:31	GLS	31/10/2021 10:35
Childhood ambition	12	17	GLS	18/09/2021 12:58	GLS	31/10/2021 16:10
Established career path	3	3	GLS	30/10/2021 08:34	GLS	30/10/2021 20:02
Excitement-Variability	6	7	GLS	18/07/2018 14:20	GLS	30/10/2021 20:32
Experience Based Influence	14	29	GLS	18/07/2018 13:36	GLS	05/11/2021 10:02
Loss of alternative	3	4	GLS	29/10/2021 15:30	GLS	31/10/2021 09:58
Media influence	8	10	GLS	18/07/2018 13:34	GLS	31/10/2021 14:21
Public service motivation	13	17	GLS	18/07/2018 13:35	GLS	05/11/2021 10:00
Social Motivation	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:32	GLS	18/07/2018 13:32
Values based influence	5	7	GLS	18/07/2018 13:34	GLS	31/10/2021 16:10
Social Support	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 14:05	GLS	18/07/2018 14:05
BPA Access and Support	1	7	GLS	29/10/2021 16:29	GLS	29/10/2021 16:49
Close family support	24	62	GLS	18/07/2018 14:08	GLS	05/11/2021 10:14
Friend Based Support	11	41	GLS	29/10/2021 17:37	GLS	17/11/2021 15:46
Friend of a friend support	5	15	GLS	18/09/2021 16:06	GLS	17/11/2021 15:46
Friends that have recently got in	2	2	GLS	17/08/2018 00:41	GLS	30/10/2021 08:40
Most supportive factor	7	8	GLS	18/07/2018 14:07	GLS	31/10/2021 15:30
Negative social support	6	13	GLS	29/10/2021 19:00	GLS	17/11/2021 15:46
No support at all	1	3	GLS	29/10/2021 17:11	GLS	30/10/2021 09:25
Partner support	12	27	GLS	29/10/2021 15:42	GLS	05/11/2021 10:09
Work based support (PC-PCSO)	8	16	GLS	29/10/2021 16:39	GLS	05/11/2021 10:14
Social Ties	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:29	GLS	18/07/2018 13:29
Acquaintances	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:28	GLS	18/07/2018 13:28
Family in the police	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:16	GLS	18/07/2018 13:16
Friends in the police	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 13:23	GLS	18/07/2018 13:23
General Social Contact	2	2	GLS	18/07/2018 14:28	GLS	30/10/2021 20:35
No family ties	1	1	GLS	18/09/2021 12:53	GLS	18/09/2021 12:53
Prior employee	0	0	GLS	18/07/2018 14:18	GLS	18/07/2018 14:18

Coding Structure

Appendix 4 – Candidate Information Sheet

An investigation into the influence of existing social networks on police recruitment in

XXXXXXXXXXXX Constabulary.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

A research study is being conducted at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) by XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Background

The study aims to gather information about how successful police recruits interact with their social networks during the process of police recruitment in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

What will you be required to do?

Participants in this study will be required to take part in a single semi-structured interview lasting approximately 1-2 hours.

To participate in this research you must:

- Be a participant in the police officer recruitment intakes between December 2017 or January 2018

Procedures

You will be asked to take part in a single semi structured interview that will be recorded via dictaphone. The researcher will travel to your place of work or make arrangements to speak with you at a time that it convenient to you. The interview questions will be explained and any questions that you may have about the process will be addressed throughout the period of the research.

Feedback

The study findings will be delivered in a CPD event in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. The event will be open to attend and participants will be notified in advance of times and dates for presentation.

Confidentiality

All data and personal information will be stored securely in accordance with GDPR, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's own data protection requirements. Data can only be accessed by XXXXXXXXXX and CCCU supervisors. After completion of the study, all data will be made anonymous (i.e. all personal information associated with the data will be removed). There will be no online storage of data.

Any transcription data will be held on a personal computer owned by the researcher. This computer is subject to regular Malware and Virus checking systems and the personal aspects of the data will again be destroyed once the analysis has been completed. Hard copies will remain in CCCU to be accessed by request.

Should sensitive information be divulged by the participant this will remain anonymous, unless the data indicates that the participant is at risk of immediate harm. At this point, the researcher maintains the right to offer personal support and in extreme circumstances intervene to provide support. This is due to the professional, ethical obligation to protect life.

Dissemination of results

The results of the study will be published in a doctoral thesis which can be accessed via contact with the researcher or the university. The researcher will also seek publication in various academic journals when the doctorate has been finalised.

Deciding whether to participate

The choice to participate lies solely with the participant. There is no obligation on the behalf of the participant to remain a part of the study. You are not induced by the researcher's rank, and nor can you be 'ordered' to take part. If you volunteer, you remain a volunteer until you choose not to be.

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Should you decide to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.

Any questions?

Please contact XXXXXXXXXXXXXX on **[xxx]** or email **XXXXXXXXX@canterbury.ac.uk**. If you have questions about the study that you wish to address with the school itself, please contact the supervisor Dr Stephen Tong via email steve.tong@canterbury.ac.uk

Canterbury Christ Church University, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, Kent

CT1 1QU