African American male law enforcement executive perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males

by

Lamont Holloman

B.S., Coppin State University, 2006
M.S., Johns Hopkins University, 2009

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Adult Learning and Leadership
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Abstract

A significant gap exists in the literature concerning African American law enforcement executives (AALEEs). Additionally, there is no existing literature concerning AALEEs' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. When police officers use deadly force, it is often attributed to the victim's behavior, failure to comply with the police officer's commands, or the victim's criminal history(Peeples, 2020). However, at no point the use of lethal force by police officers are attributed to officers' behavior, departmental policies, or training until the incident reaches the court system. Lethal force by police officers brings about an incredible amount of questioning by the general public and politicians. Police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males receive the most significant attention, to the point of protests, demands for answers, and social distrust. The U.S. Justice Department's unsuccessful attempts to track police-involved shootings limited the researcher to seek other published sources for statistical data. The researcher used The Washington Post and the Society Crime & Law Enforcement sites to gather statistical data on the police-involved shootings of unarmed individuals.

This qualitative narrative inquiry explored the viewpoints of AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. The theoretical framework leaned on the critical race theory (CRT). The research sample included six AALEEs from five police departments. The common comparison was used to analyze the semi-structured interviews, two group discussions, observations, and coding for the findings. The researcher's use of triangulation assisted in ensuring the value of the study. The emergent themes and sub-themes aligned with the theoretical framework to answer the research questions. The findings of this study indicate that better recruitment and hiring processes, diversity training, departmental policy changes, and

working as correctional officers before working as police officers on the street could reduce the police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

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Dr. Jeffrey Zacharakis

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Mary Ellen Goodman-Holloman. God rest her soul. She always encouraged her children to reach for the stars. She would say, "Each generation should do better than the last. But the first generation must lay the foundation." I am sorry you are not here to share this accomplishment with me. I also dedicate this dissertation to my children Crystal, Tony, Marvin and Marcus who have inherited my love for learning. Please don't let anyone tell you that you can't achieve academic success. If I can achieve success with a learning disability, you can too. I pray I have laid the foundation for your future success. To God be the glory!

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Make It Home

Aye look I hope you catch a wave that doesn't subside.
This is for the nappy heads in heaven with a nappy head Christ by they side.
May your streets be paved with gold. Hope my whole hood make it home.
Cause the world can be toxic. Especially when your skin looks like chocolate.
At one point they sold us for profit, but we made it out of the gauntlet, we chosen.
On my mama the southside still holding go for broke for the ones that are broken.
Please don't make me no hashtag or slogan. My whole hood is golden that's why I pray you catch a wave.
Cause they are riding with choppers and might turn yo taper to pasta.
Don't hardly see daughters at alters probably cause there ain't no more fathers, they stole them put in cages by racists patrolling.
The hood is a lane to the pens like we are bowling.
Please don't make me no hashtag or slogan
Black people are golden that's why, I pray you catch a wave that doesn't subside.
Hope my whole hood make it home. May your streets be paved with gold
Hope my whole hood make it home.
I hope you make it home.
I hope you make it home
YouTube Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hlX07-Crgw&list=RD5hlX07-Crgw&start_radio=1 (Nwigwe, 2020).

The singer expresses his concerns, hope, and prayers that African American people make it home safely. However, unfortunately, the above lyrics represent a significant problem in the African American communities regarding African American males making it home alive.

In light of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males, do African American male law enforcement executives (AALEE) see a need for police reform? According to the media (mass and social media), there is a disproportionately higher rate of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males killed by European American police officers (Moore et al., 2016).

Crichlow and Fulcher (2017) write: “Police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males have become a hot topic in the national discourse on race and policing” (p. 171). After former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was charged for the murder of African American male George Floyd, both United States political parties called for police reform. On June 8, 2020, Rep. Bass of the 116th U.S. Congress introduced the H.R. 7120 – George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 for police reform (Appendix A). On June 25, 2020, the bill passed by 236 to181 votes (Rep. Bass, 2020). Research shows that police use force at a greater level on people of color than on other ethnic groups (Lee et al., 2014; Robinson, 2017; U.S. Department of Justice, 2001) and unarmed black men are being killed at a rate of three to six times more than unarmed European American men (Swaine et al. 2015).

Scholars call this phenomenon ethnocentrism (Vick, 2021). Kasomo (2011) defines ethnocentrism as a “concept that combines the belief that one’s own culture is superior to other cultures, with the practice of judging other cultures by the standards of one’s own culture” (p. 8). Therefore, a person’s cultural identity largely shapes their level of ethnocentrism and manifests itself in the mistreatment of the marginalized groups from the dominant majority groups (Vick, 2021). Throughout U.S. History and even today, this concept continues to challenge humanity differently. This chapter provides the background, statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology, the definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, the researcher’s role, and chapter summary.

Background

Police executives are hired to ensure their department policies and procedures are followed and ensure the safety of their personnel and the community. Instead, AALEEs are

charged to uphold the law but continue to see people who look like them killed by European American police officers.

Thompson (2003) writes:

> Although the available literature has given interested scholars a narrow glimpse into the early working world of black law enforcement officers, it has provided virtually no insight whatsoever into the collective experiences of those pioneers who have since ascended to positions of supervisory, command, or executive responsibility within what continues to be a largely white-dominated profession. (p. 75)

In other words, the existing literature has failed to explore the beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of African American supervisory, command, and executive personnel on a number and variety of debatable topics as well as theoretically interesting career-related dimensions.

Police leaders in a high position of authority potentially have a powerful effect on the culture of a police department and the officers' behavior (Wu, 2021). The findings from a case study conducted on the Philadelphia Police Department revealed that the personal philosophies of a police chief might outweigh the administrative policy that can affect officers' likelihood of the use of deadly force (White, 2001). Wu (2021) writes that "police force leadership matters; there is a significantly lower rate of civilians shot and killed by officers in a city with a black police chief than one with a European American police chief" (p. 414). In addition, officers' training, education levels, and the department's culture can impact officers' attitudes about using force (Oberfield, 2012).

African American police chiefs may place greater importance on training to decrease encounters between officers and civilians so conflictual situations are less likely to lead to force, and city mayors may decide that police violence is an important issue, assuming hiring of an

African American police chief may coincide with that overall initiative (Wu, 2021). Wu notes that "cities with a higher fraction of time with a black police chief have a much lower rate of officer-involved fatal shootings than otherwise similar cities" (p. 414). Wu's 2015 to 2020 longitudinal study of 100 most populated U.S. cities revealed that police departments led by black police chiefs have significantly lower per-capita rates of civilian deaths caused by officer shootings than those departments led by white police chiefs.

Significance of the Problem

There are articles written on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males (Crichlow et al., 2017; Petersson et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2020). However, little is written on the AALEEs' perspective of these topics. Additionally, there is a significant gap in the body of literature of African American Police Executives who have risen to supervisory, command, or executive responsibility within a mostly white-dominated profession (Thompson, 2003). White's (2001) study of the Philadelphia Police Department exploring police-involved shootings used data that spanned two decades. White writes:

> The findings support prior deadly force research suggesting that administrative policy can be an effective deadly force discretion control, but the Philadelphia experience indicates that formal policy can be outweighed by the personal philosophies and policies of the chief. (p. 131)

Sarver and Miller (2014) argue that "police chiefs' leadership styles are situational, in which they change as conditions change and that training can help supervisors identify the appropriate way to lead in various situations" (p. 128). It has also been found that styles vary between departments among leaders (Engel, 2001) and rank (Caless, 2011) and that no dominant style

may be exhibited (Kuykendall et al.,1982), but a mixed style can exist where a combination of styles is displayed (Caless, 2011; Kapla, 2005).

The police chief's influence outweighing administrative policy is an internal working environment factor. The internal working environment refers to elements within the police organization. However, it is best described as the degree of license given to police officers to use deadly force, such as the administrative policy, informal peer group norms, policies, and philosophies of the chief (Fyfe, 1987). Research shows that AALEEs often place greater importance on training to decrease encounters between officers and civilians (Wu, 2021). Wu's (2021) study analyzed the correlation between the race of police chiefs and the incidence of fatal shootings by police officers of the U.S 100 largest cities. Although this research focused on AALEE perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males, there is little focus on police culture as a whole. Further investigation is needed to understand how the police culture operates in society and the impact of having an AALEE as the executive. Moreover, more research is needed on AALEE's perceptions of this problem.

Purpose of Study

This study explores the perspective of six AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Most of the news media (mass and social media) coverage on police misconduct and police-involved shootings are reported from the victim's family's point of view (Brown, 2016; Haider-Markel et al.2017; Telafaro, 2016; Thomas et al., 2020). Therefore, this study explores the viewpoint of AALEEs and their sense of responsibility to the departments and communities they serve. In this period of police accountability, AALEEs' voices are essential for understanding potential connections between policing and improved relationships in the African American community.

There is a wide range of literature in which researchers attempt to explain police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males and police reform (Brown, 2016; Goncalves et al.,2021; Haider-Markel & Joslyn, 2017; Koch, 2020; Long 2019; Robinson, 2020; Simonson, 2021; Telafaro, 2016; Thomas, 2020), but the literature does not provide a view from the AALEEs' perspective. The literature also does not address the outcome of the utility action of an individual. This research will provide insight into an individual's outcome of utility actions and the impact on an individual and society.

This research provides a deeper understanding of African American police executives' thoughts about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males by European American police officers. Additionally, this study examines law enforcement leaders and non-leaders' understanding from an executive level, give the African American Community a law enforcement viewpoint, and add to the African American law enforcement research.

Research Questions

The following are the central points of this research:

1. What are the perspectives of AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?
2. How do the AALEEs perceive police reform, education and training are addressing the occurrences of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

These research questions allow the participants to explore their thoughts on police-involved shootings, how they are viewed within their departments as leaders, and if education and training are practical tools to police reform and reduce police-involved shootings. Through their reflection, the AALEE participants are provided an opportunity to improve as leaders and reform their departments to serve their community better.

Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical framework is the lens researchers use to understand their studies. It provides a way to organize thoughts, lay out assumptions and beliefs, and logically defend the organizing patterns (Bhattacharya, 2017). Race theory has been a basic sociological theme, from establishing the field and understanding classical theoretical statements. However, this research uses a critical race theory framework to examine police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males and African American police executive perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Critical race theory examines society and culture related to categorizing race, law, and power (Daftary, 2020). It seeks to empower voices and perspectives that have been marginalized and encourage a problem to be placed in social, political, and historical context while considering power, privilege, racism, and other forms of oppression. In the 1980s, after continued dissatisfaction with critical legal studies (CLS) and its failure to acknowledge how race is a central component of the same systems of law being challenged, several lawyers began to develop critical race theory (Martinez, 2014). Critical race theory's co-founding member Mari Matsuda (1991) defines the approach as:

> The work of progressive legal scholars of color who are attempting to develop a jurisprudence that accounts for the role of racism in American law and that works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination. (p. 1331)

Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris (2017) describe (CRT) as:

> a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power. The movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up but places them

> in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, setting, group and self-interest, and emotions and the unconscious. Unlike traditional civil rights discourse, which stresses incrementalism and step-by-step progress, critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law. (p. 7)

There have been studies to explore police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males (Crichlow & Fulcher, 2017; Gray, 2020; Haider et al., 2017; Hemenway et al., 2018; Jetelina, 2020; Koch, 2020; Mesic et al., 2018; Robinson, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020) but none of the studies have been viewed from the perspective of AALEEs.

Using CRT complements the theoretical framework lens and is vital to this research since the topic focuses on the shooting of unarmed African American males and AALEEs. The CRT lens critically examines the law as it intersects with race issues, challenges mainstream liberal approaches to racial justice, and examines social, cultural, and legal matters related to race and racism (Stefancic & Harris, 2017).

Methodology

Qualitative narrative inquiry methodology is used to gather the responses of how six AALEEs perceived police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. In comparison, qualitative research is used to discover a deeper understanding of society or human nature. Creswell and Poth (2003) state: "The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting" (p. 15). In other words, qualitative research builds a complex and complete picture in a natural setting.

Kim (2016) writes that narrative inquiry seeks to understand the meaning of human experiences, including the challenges of life events and the complexity of human actions (p. 69). In a narrative inquiry, the researcher collects participants' stories and retells those stories for research purposes. Narrative inquiry is the study of an individual's life experiences as a storied phenomenon. Bhattacharya (2017) suggests that narrative inquiry "focuses on the story as the basic unit of analysis and the interest in understanding how people articulate their life experiences in the structure of a story" (p. 27). Since I am one of the participants in this study, my personal narratives are woven throughout the study to develop a deeper understanding of the issues addressed in this research.

The four primary ways to collect data for qualitative research are interviews, observation, documents, and audiovisual (Johnson et al., 2017). In narrative inquiry research, interviews and observations are the most recommended method to collect participants' narratives (Kim, 2015). The interviews are often organized in an informal conversational manner to encourage the participants to reveal their individual stories (Johnson et al., 2017). However, the questions are formed in a formal, semi-structured interview format to collect the data. The formal semi-structured interview process involves the researcher preparing probing questions in advance (Bhattacharya, 2017). This method has a precise set of questions that do not allow participants to get sidetracked; however, it will enable the researcher to probe if needed.

In conducting this research, the researcher was granted unrestricted access to the AALEEs and will shadow them as they work in their departments. In addition to individual interviews, there were two group sessions. Since the participants are aware of the ramifications of this research to their careers, an overt observation method will be deployed. During the overt observation method, the researcher divulged his goal(s) and explained the purpose for the

research. Overt participant observation is done with the consent of the subjects being studied; the researcher spends a limited amount of time with the participant(s), and the researcher discloses the study's goal and informs the participants that they are under observation (Johnson et al., 2017). The research objective is to identify AALEEs' perspective on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males by European American police officers and understand how they might mitigate this problem through leadership, training, and education. The approach used in this research will allow these AALEEs to tell their story, including successes and challenges, through a dialog. The executives will be given the necessary time by the researcher to fully explore their careers in law enforcement and examine the underlying issues.

Assumptions

The researcher assumed the participants believe there is a problem with police involved shootings of unarmed African American males and will answer questions truthfully and accurately. Each participants' office setting was used, so the participants are in familiar surroundings and feel more comfortable opening up during the interviews.

Another assumption is that the participants with five or more years of law enforcement management experience have had sufficient knowledge and a level of competency to contribute to this study. Professional status or tenure is earned within three to four years of management experience in most organizations. In addition, duties and responsibilities require a police executive to attend meetings, leadership training sessions, and host conferences throughout that time. The final assumption was that the participant's education level and leadership training has influenced their perceived self-efficacy and confidence to lead a police department.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is it cannot be generalized. The information provided is the limited perspective of participants on the topic, and the information shared may not be verified and is from a specific and personal point of view. Also, the participants' perceptions may not agree with the perceptions of others in their senior leadership roles. My presence as a researcher and a former police executive may also affect the participant's response. The participants might try to respond the way they think I want them to respond. And I have preconceived concepts about knowledge sharing that may influence the interpretation of the results. CRT scholars caution that marginalized persons are difficult to categorize with various identities intersecting, known as intersectionality (Delgado et al., 2017).

This study did not draw definite conclusions due to its lack of statistical strength (Mesic et al., 2018). Still, it can inform future research to determine why and how things happen (Petersson et al., 2017) and if this problem is as prevalent under the leadership of AALEEs. Finally, the views and opinions of the AALEEs are solely their own and don't reflect their official position in the organization or the views of the organization in which they represent.

Researcher's Subjectivity

In 2012, the researcher's nephew was shot and killed by a European American police officer from the Baltimore City Police Department. The researcher's nephew was unarmed at the time of the incident. As a former AALEE, the researcher understands and is aware of the roles and responsibilities of an African American law enforcement executive. However, the researcher lacks an understanding of how other African American law enforcement executives (AALEEs) view what appears to be a high rate of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Because of the researcher's limited knowledge, the researcher will position

himself in a participant-observer role. It is critical as a researcher to maintain an open dialogue and allow the participants to speak and reflect on their responses. As a participant-observer, the researcher will spend time in the field learning from and engaging with AALEEs as a peer who shares similar experiences (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). The researcher seeks to explore how African American law enforcement executives feel about and respond to officers' killings of unarmed African American males as racially motivated and if police reform is needed to combat the crisis.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will help clarify the background and purpose of this study. In this section, the terms serve as building blocks for this research.

1. **AALEE: African American law enforcement executives (Police Commissioner, Police Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, Majors, and Captains)**: are the titles given to an appointed official or an elected individual in the chain of command of a police department (Resodihardjo et al., 2012).
2. **Calls for Service Departments**: are calls to law enforcement departments include calls to "911" for emergency assistance and may also include calls to non-emergency situations (Dichter & Rhodes, 2009).
3. **Critical Theory**: is the philosophical approach to culture that seeks to confront the social, historical, and ideological forces and structures that produce and constrain (Horkheimer, 1937).
4. **Critical Race Theory**: approach seeks to empower voices and perspectives that have been marginalized and encourage a problem to be placed in social, political, and

historical context while considering power, privilege, racism, and other forms of oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

5. **Dispatch Center**: individuals receive and respond to emergency and non-emergency communication and transfer the information to public safety personnel (Fire or police). (Kaminsky et al., 2021).
6. **Full-Service Departments**: perform Not only law enforcement functions but also have community services officers, dispatcher centers, administrative support personnel, police trainers, etc. (Wilson, 2017). They also provide more services than call for service departments.
7. **Law Enforcement Executives (Police Commissioner, Police Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, Majors, and Captains)**: are the titles given to an appointed official or an elected individual in the chain of command of a police department (Resodihardjo et al., 2012).
8. **Local Municipality**: refers to the Municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a district municipality within the county where it falls (Nolan, 2013).
9. **Police-Involved Shooting**: there appears to be no existing standard definition of the term. The term can be defined as the accidental or intentional discharge of a firearm by a police officer on or off duty (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2016).
10. **Police Officer**: also known as a policeman/policewoman, is an acceptable member of a police force (Sleath & Bull, 2012; Franklin, 1993).
11. **Police Reform**: this is a political way for lawmakers to establish new processes and guidelines about the supervision, administration, functions, and conduct of police forces and police officers (Wall & Correia, 2018). Since the police function falls under the

executive branch at all levels of government, lawmakers can change the police policies and procedures at will.

12. **Race Theory**: philosophy is based on the belief that each race possesses specific characteristics, abilities, qualities, etc., especially distinguishing it as superior or inferior (McGregor, 1997).
13. **Transformative Leadership**: **"**Transformative leadership is an ethnically based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interests of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owed by organizations to their stakeholders" (Caldwell et al., 2012, p. 176).
14. **Use of force-Continuum**: this standard provides law enforcement officers and civilians guidelines on how much force may be used against a resisting subject in each situation. (The use of force continuum, 2009).

Chapter Summary

The AALEEs are the key to accountability, professional development, improving the quality of an organization, and building a better relationship between the police and the community. Therefore, there is a need to better understand AALEEs' views on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. This chapter provided a background, statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology, participants, the definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, and the researcher's role.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

Before discussing police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males by European American police officers and getting the perspectives of AALEEs, an overview of existing literature on police-involved shootings is needed. The following sections contain theoretical and empirical research that will serve as a foundation for building future research in this area. In addition, this chapter includes a brief history of African American policing in the United States, American law enforcement executive's leadership, the use of force continuum, theoretical framework, and chapter summary.

Brief History of African American Policing in the United States

It is significant to investigate the history of policing in the United States to understand how it has developed and changed over the years. The purpose, duties, and structure of American police agencies have allowed the law enforcement profession to progress from ineffective watch groups to police agencies incorporating advanced technology and problem-solving strategies into their daily operations (Potter, 2013).

This section provides a brief overview of the history of American policing, beginning with a discussion of the English influence Sir Robert Peel and the London Metropolitan Police had on the development of early law enforcement efforts in Colonial America. American policing has been heavily influenced by the English system throughout history (Wadman et al., 2004). Potter (2013) writes:

> In 1829, Sir Robert Peel (Home Secretary of England) introduced the Bill for Improving the Police in and Near the Metropolis (Metropolitan Police Act) to Parliament with the goal of creating a police force to manage the social conflict resulting from rapid

urbanization and industrialization taking place in the city of London. (p. 3)

Sir Robert Peel is referred to as the father of modern policing. He played an important role in creating police departments and the basic principles that would later guide the foundation of police departments in the United States (Wadman et al., 2004). In the early phases of the development of law enforcement in both England and Colonial America, citizens were responsible for law enforcement in their communities (Panek, 2003).

The earliest method of policing was called kin policing, which involved families, clans, and tribes enforcing informal rules and customs (Barrie & Broomhall 2012; Campesi, 2016; Frazier, 2011; Panek, 2003; Potter, 2013; Wadman & Allison 2004). Each group member was given authority to enforce the established rules, and individuals who strayed from community norms were often dealt with harshly (Frazier, 2011; Potter, 2013).

Colonial Policing

In 1636 Boston created the first-night watch or watchmen system of policing followed by New York in 1658 and Philadelphia in 1700 (Potter, 2013). During that time, a watchmen system consisting of citizen volunteers (usually white men) remained in place until the mid-19th century (Frazier, 2011; Potter, 2013). Citizens who were part of watchmen groups provided social services, including lighting streetlamps, running soup kitchens, recovering lost children, capturing runaway animals, and various other services; their involvement in crime control activities was minimal (Potter, 2013). Policing in England and Colonial America was largely ineffective, as it was based on a volunteer system and their method of the patrol was disorganized (Wadman et al., 2004). The citizen-based watchmen groups were not equipped to deal with the increasing social unrest and rioting in Colonial America during the late 1700s

through the early 1800s (Panek, 2003), when the publicly funded police departments emerged across Colonial America (Panek, 2003; Potter, 2013).

Colonial America experienced an increase in population in major cities during the 1700s. The cities began seeing an arrival of immigrant groups moving in from various European countries, which directly contributed to the rapid increase in population (Panek, 2003). The population growth created an increase in social disorder and unrest. The City of Boston established the first American police force in 1838 (Potter, 2013). The first metropolitan police department was created in 1844 in Albany, New York City (Barrie & Broomhall, 2012; Wadman & Allison, 2004), where police officers only patrolled during daylight hours, leaving the former night watchmen to patrol during the dark hours of the day (Barrie & Broomhall, 2012).

Colonial America's social tension and the introduction of new racial and ethnic groups were identified as a common source of discord (Wadman et al., 2004). The racial and ethnic struggle was a problem in both the Northern and Southern regions of the country. Wadman et al. (2004) comment:

> Most of the historical literature describing the early development of policing in Colonial America focuses specifically on the northern regions of the country while neglecting events that took place in the southern region specifically, the creation of slave patrols in the South (p. 5).

Slave Patrols

Slave patrols first emerged in the Colonial America Southern regions in the early 1700s (Reichel, 1988). Slave patrols were the first publicly funded police agencies in the American South (Walker, 1980). One purpose of the slave patrols was to maintain control over the Black slave populations and White indentured servants and manage race-based conflicts occurring in

the Southern region of Colonial America (Reichel, 1988). Frazier (2011) writes, "The slave patrols were created to apprehend runaway slaves and to ensure that slaves did not rise up against their owners" (p. 7). When the slave patrol would apprehend runaway slaves, they often inflicted what they considered justice on the spot, typically using violence (Frazier, 2011).

Potter (2013) writes:

> Slave patrols had three primary functions: (1) to chase down, apprehend, and return to their owners, runaway slaves; (2) to provide a form of organized terror to deter slave revolts; and (3) to maintain a form of discipline for slave-workers who were subject to summary justice, outside of the law, if they violated any plantation rules. (p. 2)

Additionally, the slave patrols duties included searching of slave cabins, keeping slaves off the roadways, and disassembling meetings organized by groups of slaves (Hadden et al., 2013). At the end of the Civil War, the slave patrols were disbanded; however, this provided Ku Klux Klan's motivation to terrorize Black families and Black communities not utterly different from the slave patrols (Frazier, 2011). Furthermore, following the Civil War, the slave patrol vigilante-style organizations progressed into the Southern police departments to control freed slaves who were now laborers working in agriculture and enforcing Jim Crow segregation laws, designed to deny freed slaves equal rights and access to the political system (Potter, 2013).

African American Police Officers

Some researchers have found a significant correlation between an officer's race and an officer's decision to use force (Cohen & Chaiken, 1972). This correlation is not surprising because much academic examination concerning police use of force and race has been built on previous research of the 1960s (Keyes, 2014). Minorities did not make significant progress in policing until the 1970s. One possible reason for the early absence of African American officers

within the literature on police use of force can be attributed to their nonexistence in the field and the process by which police departments hire fewer numbers of African Americans to avoid negative media and national attention (Dulaney, 1996; Gardner, 2012).

According to Dispatch (2017), an e-newsletter of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) published by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has been serving in the law enforcement field for over 100 years. The article chronologizes African American roles in American's law enforcement as the following:

> In 1867, African American police officers were appointed to the police department in Selma, Alabama; they would be followed in 1868 by officers in Jackson, Florida, and in 1870 by officers in Houston and Galveston, Texas.
>
> In 1870, New Orleans, Louisiana had 177 African American officers, and three of five police board members were African American. On April 12, 1870, Officer William Johnson of Jacksonville, Florida, became the first recognized African American police officer killed in the line of duty. In 1875, Bass Reeves was appointed as the first African American Deputy U.S. Marshal.
>
> In 1919, the Los Angeles Police Department hired Georgia Ann Robison as a policewoman, making her the first African American policewoman in the United States (Colmant, 2014; Grant et al., 2012). Robison was originally hired in 1916 as a matron with the Los Angeles Police Department, but in 1919 she was promoted to an actual policewoman (Grant & Terry, 2012). In 1928, Dr. Louis Tompkins Wright was the first known African American police surgeon. He would later become president of the NAACP Board of Directors. In 1941, William B. Lindsay became the first known African American state trooper hired by the Illinois State Police. In 1966, Sheriff Lucius

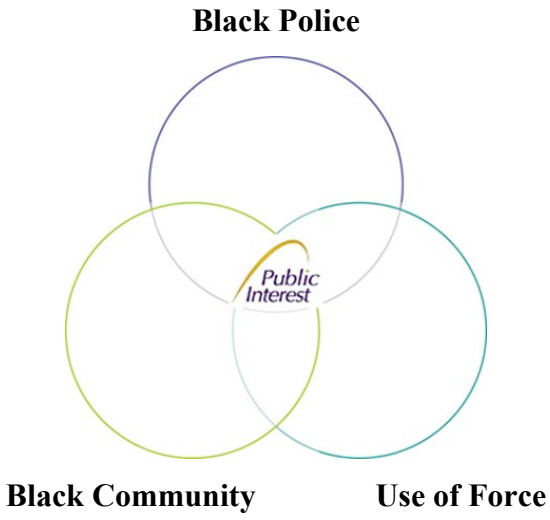
> Anderson was one of the first elected African American sheriffs, serving in Macon County, Alabama. (p. 1)

However, racial quota filling is currently a less plausible explanation for excluding African American officers mentioned in academia (Shusta et al., 2011; Sklansky, 2006). African Americans have served in some of the most prominent positions in the nation's largest police agencies (Dulaney, 1996). Additionally, African American police officers are becoming more visible to the point where they are overrepresented on television (Mastro & Robinson, 2000). The Bureau of Justice Statistics (2013) "report on municipal police, researchers found that about 1 in 4 officers were members of a racial or ethnic minority in 2007, compared to 1 in 6 officers in 1987" (p. 1). Additionally, some researchers believe that the most remarkable change in policing since the 1960s has been in diversity (Shusta et al., 2011; Sklansky, 2006).

The presence of African Americans in the police ranks simultaneously provided the European American power structure with a monitoring tool in African American communities and afforded members of the African American community with a measure of protection from at least the African American criminal element, as early African American officers had no arrest authority over European American (Dulaney, 1996). It is also possible, but not known that African American police would be fairer in their communities when compared to their European American counterparts if for no other reason than self-interest (Keyes, 2014). As a product of racial segregation, early African American police officers lived in the communities they policed and would not risk damaging their community relationships outside policing by abusing or otherwise unnecessarily alienating members of their community (Alex, 1969; Berlin, 2010; Dulaney, 1996).

Police in a democracy applies an enormous amount of power relative to most other government officials (Samaha, 2012). Historically, however, society stripped African American officers of their authority outside African American communities, and they became professionally invisible and powerless (Keyes, 2014). Bolton and Feagin (2004) state, "that a person is often either a black person or a police officer, but not both. In many discussions of policing, all the law enforcement officers are, implicitly or explicitly, taken to be white" (p. 2). Realizing their precarious position, African American officers commonly focused their role within a narrow policing sphere and self-identify as defenders and advocates for justice within African American communities (Alex, 1969; Dulaney, 1996; Gardner, 2012). Despite an initial petition for same race officers, some African American citizens began to resent African American police after considering that African American police only had access to the state's coercive power to the extent they could apply it against other African Americans (Dulaney, 1996). Keyes (2014) suggests, "this dynamic set the stage for first the marginalization and later the anonymity of Black Police within their departments and communities" (p. 10).

Figure 2-1 Black Police Intersection (Keyes, 2014)



African American officers share similar professional concerns as European American officers; however, because African Americans exist to a lesser degree in policing and continue to remain on the periphery of society's awareness of them, African American officers cope with two specific opposing ideologies not experienced by European American officers (Alex, 1969). African American officers' colleagues first see them as African Americans, whereas members of their racial group primarily identify them as police (Leinen, 1984). Some European American police officers expect African American officers to deny their racial identity and ties to the African American community based on their occupation, while some African American citizens would have them forfeit their professionalism based on race (Keyes, 2014). Bolton and Feagin (2004) note that:

> White police officers have historically used violent force to control Black communities. Further, they opine that "many white officers fear black officers' unity with black communities and seem to feel that black officers can only be 'real' police officers to the extent that they do not identify with those communities (p. 202).

Similarly, African Americans tend to express embitterment toward African American officers for their representation of a historically oppressive force within African American communities and expect leniency from African American officers based on a shared racial group (Alex, 1969; Moskos, 2008; Slonaker et al., 2001; Walker, 1983). African American police officers exist in an inconsistent state; it appears they can only experience conditional acceptance within their professional and racial groups. As a result, despite the thousands of African Americans currently employed in law enforcement, they remain absent from the academic eye and largely neglected within the literature of police use of force (Keyes, 2014).

Racism in Policing

Police officers have gone through great extents to protect their professional independence through litigation and the formation of labor groups, which also reinforce the police culture (Roberg et al., 2005; Swanson et al., 2012). In addition, from my personal experience, there is internal racism against African American police officers within the police culture. Keyes (2014) writes, "An overview and interpretation of the existing literature regarding Black officers in the atmosphere of their police role identifies their exposure to one of three elements, which are overt, subtle & symbolic, and vicarious racism" (p. 15).

Despite shouldering the role of protectors within African American communities, African American officers have also been the victims of overt racism, both internally within policing and more generally in society (Keyes, 2014). Overt racism takes two forms within the police department: institutional and personal (Leinen, 1984). Before the changes implemented after the Civil Rights Movement, police departments kept African American officers powerless by denying them arrest authority over European Americans, assigning them only to African American neighborhoods, denying their participation in labor unions, and preventing them from exercising any police powers (Keyes, 2014). Early African Americans hired as officers in some cities were generally assigned to custodial duties (Palmiotto et al., 2005). In most cases, African American officers were denied equal pay (Delaney, 1996). Because of federal mandates and civil litigation, police departments have enacted policies that prohibited racial discrimination making organizational race-based disparate treatment less apparent (Keyes, 2014). As a result, overt structural racism has disappeared but has been replaced by interpersonal prejudiced action (Bolton & Feagin, 2004).

The transition from organizational to individual racism is not as universal but offensive, nevertheless. Individual overt racism is when a group of European American officers make explicit, disparaging remarks regarding African American officers and their fitness for police work in the presence of African American officers (Bolton & Feagin, 2004). Other officers have engaged in less direct but still insensitive attacks and harassment through racial slurs, jokes, and stereotypical and exaggerated caricatures of African American officers (Bolton, 2003). In some occurrences, European American officers refused to partner with African American officers because of their race (Haarr, 1997). In addition to the challenges African American officers faced in the workplace with coworkers, some European American members of the public have repeatedly subjected African American officers to overt disrespect and discrimination in the form of racial slurs, race-based disobedience of police authority, and the refusal to acknowledge African American officers as legitimate police representatives (Alex, 1969; Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Dulaney, 1996; Keyes, 2014).

Police Brutality

Police brutality has a long history in the U.S, dating back to the 1800s (Darien, 2020). According to the Black's Law Dictionary website (2021), "police brutality is the use of excessive and/or unnecessary force by police when dealing with civilians" (p. 12). Campney (2021) writes, "Scholarly literature on racist violence has typically focused on the experiences of young males who suffer a disproportionate share of the police violence directed at their communities" (p. 108). Usually, scholars have focused on the victimization of African Americans (Brundage 1993; Finnegan 2013; Loewen 2005). For example, Carrigan et al. (2013) and Villanueva (2017) have explored violence Whites use to seize Texas away from its Mexican-descended people. Whites have consistently regarded persons of Mexican descent as foreigners, outsiders who

could never be thoroughly American and could never be worthy of Whites' rights, privileges, and protections (Balderrama & Rodríguez 2006; Huynh et al., 2011). Black's Law Dictionary (2021) described five forms of police brutality:

- Excessive Use of Force: Unnecessary and excessive use of control methods may constitute excessive use of force. This includes (but is not limited to) batons, tasers, firearms, nerve gases, pepper sprays, and unsanctioned holds and takedowns.
- Wrongful Search and Seizure: Police officers typically must secure a warrant before searching a premises or seizing any possessions. When a warrant isn't obtained, an individual's Fourth Amendment rights may be violated.
- Racial Discrimination: Police officers have the duty of protecting and serving all individuals regardless of race (Appendix B). When racial biases affect an officer's actions, it can potentially lead to an instance of racial discrimination.
- False Arrest and Wrongful Imprisonment: The Fourth Amendment protects individuals against arbitrary arrests and detainments. This form of police brutality occurs when these expectations are infringed.
- Sexual Harassment and Abuse: This form of police brutality includes any type of sexual harassment and abuse (physical or verbal) by a police officer. These situations often involve an officer taking advantage of the power dynamic between the police and civilians. (p. 227)

The evidence and recognition of the history of police brutality have moved from the inner city to the center of public consciousness. As a result, the U.S. Legal System and elected officials look for solutions to correct the problem.

Internal Subtle and Symbolic Racism

Subtle and symbolic forms of racism are different from overt racism and are challenging to identify and prove, causing some researchers to question their ideological existence (Sniderma et al., 1991). Brunson's 2007 studied differential perception based on race, politics, and class, discussed the issue of certain groups playing the race card and acknowledging cloaked acts of racism (Keyes, 2014). Subtle and symbolic racism occurs when an act is continued based on race and intended to harm, discredit, or make the target uncomfortable without their awareness of the racist act (Nelson et al., 2007; Sniderman et al., 1991). Symbolic racism occurs when an adverse action is taken because of the race but is justified through some non-racial perceived failing or undesirable characteristic of the recipient(s) (Henry & Sears, 2002).

Despite claims by some researchers saying symbolic racism is a repetitive concept, which manifests itself more in the minds of those affected than in substance (Sidanius et al., 1992), other researchers found the theory of symbolic racism as a practiced belief system to be empirically sound (Tarman & Sears 2005). Some of these less detectable elements of subtle and symbolic racism concerning African American officers expressed in rumors, insufficient training, failure to assist African American officers on calls, greater rigorous critique of African American officer performance, disparate discipline, inferior assignments, generalizations about African American officers, and limited promotional opportunity (Bolton, 2003; Bolton & Feagin, 2004). In addition, a minor combined form of subtle and symbolic racism occurs through personal race-based alienation that signifies a lack of support but is unaccompanied by other actions related to the profession (Haarr, 1997; Leinen, 1984).

Internal Vicarious racism

Americans generally, and police specifically, associate Blackness and criminality as interchangeable (Brown, 2005). If certain police parties accept African American officers, they are considered different from most African Americans as a condition of their police service (Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Dulaney, 1996). This form of racism that negatively affects African American officers is vicarious racism or racism not directed towards them but that they experience because of their race (Keyes, 2014). Vicarious racism is third-party racial suffering which is unique in that it includes both overt, subtle and symbolic forms of racism.

Openly, African American officers may be informed by their European American colleagues that African Americans, in general, are criminogenic, inferior, or otherwise defective, but that they are not labeled as such because they have proven themselves to be unlike typical African Americans (Bolton & Feagin, 2004). Blatant vicarious racism includes the use of racial slurs to describe African American citizens and direct molestation of African Americans to include harassment and physical force, but because African American officers are less likely to tolerate vicarious racism in these severe forms, subtle and symbolic vicarious racism is likely to occur more frequently (Brown & Frank, 2006; Dulaney, 1996).

African American officers feel it necessary to train other African Americans on how to respond to the police to prevent them from being unwarrantedly injured or killed (Free, 2004). In addition, they are prone to educating family and friends on how race and racial profiling influence policing (Barlow & Barlow, 2002). African American officers have complained of witnessing racially disparaging behavior by European American officers without any articulable reason (Barlow & Barlow, 2002; Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Wilkins & Williams, 2008). The action of European American officers in African American neighborhoods may be

predominately born of negative cultural-racial beliefs associated with African Americans in general (Moskos, 2008); however, police productivity, such as unwarranted stops of African Americans, is often used to disguise racist behavior (Wilkins et al. 2008). African American officers are aware of and are collaterally affected by what they perceive as overeager efforts on the part of European American colleagues to police African Americans (Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Dulaney, 1996; Leinen, 1984) and aggressive police actions within African American communities' cause division among racial lines within police departments.

African American female officers are viewed as being too soft for policing, having to balance work and family, and being subjective to sexual harassment and gender discrimination; African American female police officers also have race barriers to deal with. African American female officers see themselves as African American women and half of them believe they are discriminated against based on race (Texeira, 2002). African American female officers feel they must demand respect and are subjected to verbal racial insults while European women are put on pedestals (Texeira, 2002). Despite the barriers that African American female officers have dealt with over the years in the law enforcement field, they continue to advance and bring assets to the departments and the communities they serve, as history has shown.

When I was up for promotion for a captain position, one of the department requirements for getting promoted to the executive level was to have a new background check completed. For some reason, my background check was taking longer than usual. So, unknowingly to my European American counterparts, I came into work early and sat in one of the vacant offices. While getting my paperwork together for my shift, I heard my European American counterparts discussing my promotion. I heard comments like, "They are not going to promote him. If they do, it is just because he is Black". I also heard comments like, "I do not think he could do the job

anyway." I just laughed because the European American counterparts discussing my promotion did not make the promotion list. Two weeks later, I was promoted to captain. I became the first-line supervisor of two of my former European American counterparts discussing my promotion. Another instance I can think of is when I was promoted to the police chief. One of my European American police captains told me he could not work for me because I was Black, and he resigned from the department.

During my career, I found education was the equalizer to reduce the racist actions from my European American colleagues. Not only did I continue my traditional education, but I also attended police leadership courses with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, The Southern Police Institute, and Johns Hopkins University's Police Executive Leadership Program. My European American counterparts may have racist thoughts, but they did not display their racist views or actions in my presence after a while. Unfortunately, today I still must educate my grandchildren on how to respond to the police.

Structural Racism

Laderman and Whittington (2016) define structural racism as "a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity" (p. 82). Likewise, Hardeman, Medina, and Kozhimannil (2016) describe structural racism as "a confluence of institutions, culture, history, ideology, and codified practices that generate and perpetuate inequity among racial and ethnic groups and it is the common denominator of the violence that is cutting lives short in the United States" (p. 2113). Lawrence and Keleher (2004) write that structural racism in the U.S. is:

> the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage whites while producing

> cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by white supremacy – the preferential treatment, privilege, and power for white people at the expense of Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Arab, and other racially oppressed people. (p. 1)

The practice of structural racism was established in early U.S. History. Nittle (2020) writes, “the three-fifths compromise was an agreement reached by the state delegates at the 1787 Constitutional Convention. Under the compromise, every enslaved American would be counted as three-fifths of a person for taxation and representation purposes” (p. 1). Structural racism identifies proportions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges connected with “whiteness” and disadvantages related with “color” to suffer and familiarize over time (Gamarra, 2020, p. 87). Structural racism is not something that a limited number of people choose to practice; it has been a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist (Mesic et al., 2018).

The privileges that relate to whiteness are called “White Privilege.” (Macintosh, 1989). White privilege refers to whites' historical and current advantages in access to quality education, decent jobs, livable wages, homeownership, education, wealth, etc. (Gamarra, 2020). Macintosh (1989) writes, " As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege which puts me at an advantage” (p. 1). White privilege contributes to the white officers' attitude when interacting with African Americans.

Gamarra (2020) suggests there are three noticeable characteristics of structural racism:

1. The hierarchical racial schemas are central in framing how agents interpret and respond to the world. Central to these schemas is the doctrine of racialism, which

forms the basis for the racialized practices of categorization and differential treatment that produce racial hierarchy.

2. The influence of the hierarchical racial schemas described in fundamentally transforms the relations among socially positioned agents within the structure. As a result, the social positions that make up the structure become embodiments of racial hierarchy. In other words, they become racialized positions.
3. The reproduction of oppressive social relations between social groups is defined based on the hierarchical racial schemas (1). (p. 82)

As a result, structural racism has differential significance on the life choices of individuals depending on their position in the structure that is, depending on whether they belong to a subordinate (i.e., non-white) or superordinate (i.e., white) racialized group (Gamarra, 2020). For example, some suggest that structural racism is linked to police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males by European American police officers, which is a reason for police reform (Mock, 2018). European American police officers use their department's standard use of force continuum/rule of engagement when interacting with African American individuals.

American Law Enforcement Executives Leadership

Farr-Wharton, Xerri, Saccon, and Brunetto (n.d.) write, "Historically, the role of police officers was to protect its citizens from domestic threats. More recently, police officers are also expected to protect citizens from terrorism" (p. 1), and researchers continue to be interested in police leadership (Bryman et al. 1996; Kerr & Jermier 1978). Brunetto et al. (2017) wrote, "While there is an expectation that police will keep the public safe, there appears to be no expectation that police management will be effective in managing police activities" (p. 759). The theme of law enforcement leadership practice and theory reveal that the law enforcement

profession has inflexible and non-participatory characteristics when examining law enforcement leadership skills (Lawson, 2010). There is no agreement on the principal leadership style within the law enforcement field (Sarver & Miller, 2014). What is known is that the command-and-control trait of the authoritarian style of leadership is ever-present in the policing profession due to the type of paramilitary organizational structure of police departments (Campbell & Kodz, 2011). Outram et al., (2014) write police leaders must have "new approaches and fresh thinking" (p. 92), and challenges "traditional leadership models for police officers given the multiple, often competing agendas they face" (Farr-Wharton et al. 2021, p. 1). There is a systematic police leadership failure prevalent in the U.S. (Kellis & Ran, 2015). Public administration research is lagging behind most other disciplines in understanding the importance of police leadership for achieving public goals (Tummers & Knies, 2016). Getha-Taylor et al. (2011) maintains that "public leadership ought to be considered distinct from general leadership studies" (p. 8). Farr-Wharton et al. (nd) writes, "it may be that public leadership models are 'not fit for purpose' because public administration has traditionally been dominated by rational bureaucratic models" (p. 1). Studies reveal that police organizations typically do not deploy transactional leadership, and in the worst cases autocratic leadership models are the norm (Van Wart, 2013), with evidence that bullying has occurred (Farr-Wharton et al., 2017).

Effective police leadership appears such a desired service within policing and limited scholarly attention has been given to reviewing leadership processes and the barriers to developing more effective leadership practices. (Hoggett et al., 2019; Mastrofski, 2002, 2006). Police leaders have come to accept a wide range of management approaches that have been appropriated from private and public sector groups (Adlam, 2002). Based on the research of processes of culture audit, this study suggests that a shadowy deep structure' socio-biological

elitist rationality might diffuse police leadership practices (Adlam, 2002). Police leadership is allied to the postmodern rationality of image management, indicating that leadership is often an elaborate set of exercises designed to secure power and extend the disciplinary society's techniques (Adlam, 2002; Hoggett, et al., 2019).

African American Law Enforcement Executives

To better understand African American Law Enforcement Executive, the researcher conducted a literature review of scholarly databases, peer review studies, and dissertations, and discovered that there was minimal information on this group. The search results revealed that further study on the African American Law Enforcement Executive was necessary. In the related literature that was found, no literature mainly focused on the African American Law Enforcement Executive in the context of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Schultz (2019), in his dissertation focused on understanding African American Law Enforcement Executives in community policing. Two additional studies provided an understanding of the African American Law Enforcement Executive's leadership style and influences (Ferguson, 2014; Oliver, 2013). However, neither of the three publications focused on police primarily involved shootings.

Despite the lack of literature on African American Law Enforcement Executives, African Americans have made significant progress in their upward mobility in the law enforcement field during the 1970s; however, it appeared to slow or reverse during the affirmative action backlash period of the 1980s (Mann, 1993; Nkomo & Cox, 1990).

Figure 2-2 Commissioner Willie L. Williams

Willie L. Williams was the first African American police chief in 1988. Chief Williams served as Philadelphia Police Chief and would later become the first African American Commissioner of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1992 (Dispatch, 2017).

Figure 2-3 Police Chief Harvard

In 1994, Beverly Harvard was selected as Police Chief of Atlanta Ga Police Department, making her the first African American woman police chief (Schulz, 2003; Smith, 2015) after serving as a policewoman since 1973. Chief Harvard served as the police chief from 1994 to 2002 (Schulz, 2003).

However, researchers in police science have noted the lack of data on race (Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Leinin, 1984), and virtually no data on AALEE exist (Jollevet, 2008). Thompson (2006) writes, "very little information is available regarding what it had been like for Blacks to advance within the ranks of a profession that has been historically dominated by Whites" (p. 165). Studies on the racial structure of police departments and relationships between African

Americans and European American officers have been steady in representing that virtually no African American police executives existed in the USA until the late 1970s (Bolton & Feagin, 2004).

The integration of African American police officers into the European American dominated police field has been slow and partial (Camp et al., 1997; Mann, 1993). Jollevet (2008) writes, “minority police officers faced institutional racism and prejudice on a daily basis” (p. 18). Researchers have noted African American police officers are faced with what is called blue culture, also considered to be a white culture, within the police departments (Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Holdaway & O’Neill, 2004; Leinin, 1984). Jollevet (2008) writes, “White culture is held together by informal relationships and associations through which information is disseminated that is critical to advancement in the system. The network provides mentoring and entry into line positions that are necessary for advancement” (p. 18).

This informal system is a barrier to the advancement of minority police officers, and it is racist and sexist (Holder et al., 2000), it is exclusionary (Bannon & Wilt, 1973; Bolton & Feagin, 2004; Holdaway & O’Neill, 2004; Leinin, 1984; Mann, 1993) and it is authoritarian, materialistic, and lacking in compassion (Jollevet, 2008; Teahan, 1975). During Dr. Jollevet's (2008) research of AALEE, their findings revealed: "all interviewees at the commander level reported experiencing and witnessing acts of racial discrimination during their careers" (p. 23). In addition, Jolivet’s research of AALEE (chiefs and junior-level executives) noted, "interviewees reported being delayed or denied access to specialized training and certain stretch assignments, such as investigations and other specialized positions" (p. 24). African American executive officers who have been promoted experience marginalization from various sources and experience rejection from other critical support groups along the way (Thompson, 2006).

Thompson (2006) writes, “Blacks who are promoted, not only confront rejection from White supervisory peers but also experience differential treatment and reactions by White superior and subordinate personnel who refuse to acknowledge them as deserving of the same respect given to others” (p. 166).

Research findings indicate that a significant payoff for African American executive officers is their investment in higher education, which significantly increases the probability of achieving a command-level position. AALEE had to invest more in their human capital (themselves) than did European American executive officers to achieve the same rate of promotion (James, 2000). Research suggests that African American officers who aspire to attain executive-level positions in law enforcement must invest in their education (Jollevet, 2008).

AALEE officers generally are not provided the same level of support as European American law enforcement executive (EALEE) officers. They are 2.5 times more likely to experience severe racism than their subordinates (Jollevet, 2008). AALEE at the peak of their careers in law enforcement still experience increased resistance from European Americans about their commands (James, 2000). Jollevet (2008) argues:

> African Americans occupying command positions not only have to deal with whites under their jurisdiction, for whom resistance can bring charges of insubordination, reprimand, suspension, or even dismissal, but they also deal with other political entities, such as mayor’s offices, city councils, trustees, unions, and the general public. (p. 28)

During my career, I invested time and money into my traditional education and career-related training to make it hard for the blue culture to be a barrier in my career advancement. However, from my experience, even after I reached an executive position as an African

American, I was still subject to pressures, criticisms, and resistance beyond what I saw my EALEE counterparts experience. In many cases, many of my fellow EALEEs did not even want to meet with me to discuss our departments working together.

African American Law Enforcement Executives Leadership Style

Studies have revealed that African American Law Enforcement Executives preferred deploying a transformational leadership style more than other ethnic groups (Andreescu & Vito, 2010; Givens, 2008). Kauppi (1994) writes, “James MacGregor Burns first introduced the concept of transforming leadership in 1978. According to Burns, transforming leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (p.1). Kauppi describes transformational leadership as:

> a leadership approach that causes a change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspire them; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance. (p. 1)

Transformational leadership theory was later explored by Bass (1985, 1998) and other researchers such as Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Tichy and Devanna (1986). The central premise of the transformational leadership theory is the leader's ability to motivate the people to accomplish more than what they planned to achieve (Krishnan, 2005). Transformational

leadership has four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). Burns (1978) argues that transformational leaders inspire people to accomplish more by intent on the person's values and to help others associate these values with the organization's values.

Bass and Avolio (1994) suggest that subordinates' personal satisfaction increases when leaders demonstrate what they define as the four I's: idealized leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration:

- Idealized leadership: Leaders who demonstrate self-confidence and power by acting as role models for their followers. Idealized leadership also includes idealized attributes and idealized behavior, where the former is where followers admire, respect, and trust leaders as a result of perceiving them as acting in a manner beneficial to followers, teams, and the organization, and the latter is where leaders seek to gain follower buy-in, participate in risk sharing, and consistently handle issues relative to employee conduct, ethics, standards, and values.
- Inspirational motivation: Leaders possessing this trait to motivate and inspire followers by providing meaning and understanding to the task to accomplish. These leaders are able to communicate effectively in a manner that facilitates a team atmosphere with a shared vision for the future.
- Intellectual stimulation: These leaders stimulate their followers to take calculated risks and use innovation and creativity to develop new ways of accomplishing goals and objectives. Such leaders encourage critical thinking on the part of followers to solve problems and improve performance.

- Individual consideration: Leaders possessing this trait are in tune with the needs of others and aid followers in reaching a higher level of performance. One of the priorities of these leaders is employee development, which might entail mentoring and coaching. (p. 94-95)

Furthermore, Burns (1978) identified transformational leadership as a relationship in which the leader and the people motivated each other to higher levels, resulting in a value system similarity between the leader and the personal (Krishnan, 2002). Transformational leadership has also been associated with the personal outcomes of the person as well as organizational (Boerner et al., 2007; Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005). Research shows that transformational leadership impacts people's satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and commitment to organizational change (Barling et al., 1996; Koh et al., 1998). Rees (2010) outlined seven principal fundamental components to the transformational leadership theory:

Simplification: Successful leadership begins with a vision, which reflects the shared purpose. The ability to articulate a clear, practical, transformational vision which answers the question, "Where are we headed?"

1. Motivation: The ability to gain the agreement and commitment of other people to the vision. Once the transformational leader is able to bring synergy to the organization, he must then use various means to energize (motivate) the staff.
2. Facilitation: The ability to effectively facilitate the learning of individuals, teams, and other reliable and reputable resources.
3. Innovation: The ability to boldly initiate powerful change when needed.
4. Mobilization: The ability to enlist, equip and empower others to fulfill the vision. Transformational leaders look for willing participants who have already been given

formal leadership responsibilities and among people who have not. They desire leadership at all levels, so they find ways to invite and ignite leadership at all levels.

5. Preparation: The ability to never stop learning about themselves with and without the help of others. Rick Warren says, "Leaders are learners." Transformational leaders realize that the transformation they pursue reflects their own spiritual quest--that they must serve the world through their giftedness because that is the only way they truly fulfill their life mission.
6. Determination: The ability to finish the race. A leader's missions are sometimes difficult, and their journey is often lonely. Leaders depend on their stamina, endurance, courage, and strength to finish each day. Because their focus is not only on raising their own leadership but the development of others, the most rigorous and humbling of all human endeavors. (p. 1-3)

Use of Force Continuum

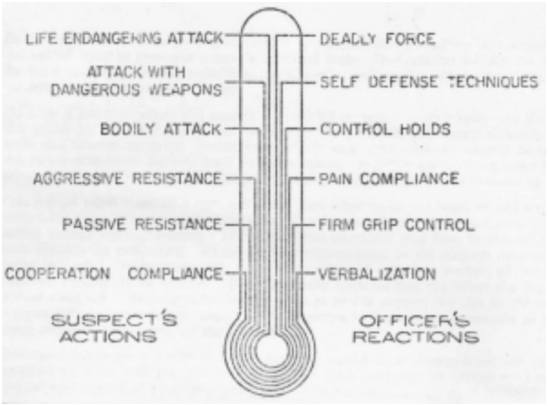
The use of force continuum is a standard that provides police officers and civilians with a course of action regarding the level of force in a situation (National Institute of Justice, 2009). In late 1960, police defensive tactics instructors developed the use of force continuums to teach the use of force subjects (Williams, 2002).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the police department's defensive tactics instructors were large males with former military training (Peters & Brave 2006). They taught karate, judo, jiu-jitsu, boxing, and other fighting arts. Peters and Brave (2006) argue that these defensive tactics instructors "were often at odds with baton and firearms instructors because they often viewed the other disciplines with disdain, rather than viewing them as a system which complements rather than competes" (p. 1).

Use of Force Continuum History

Daigle (2020) writes, "The history of the use of force continuum can be traced back to the mid-1970s when Professor Gregory Connor created the first "force continuum" as an instructional aide, designed to assist criminal justice trainers throughout the country (p. 1). As a result, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) developed the "Force Continuum Barometer," published in their 1978 training bulletin.

Figure 2-4 LAPD Force Continuum Barometer Model (LAPD, 1978)

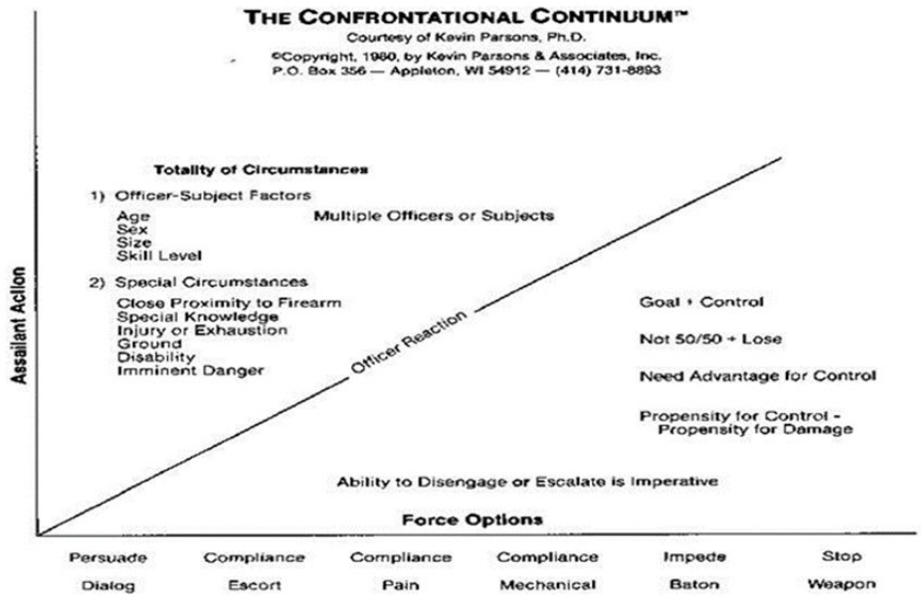


Peters and Brave (2006) note:

> The Los Angeles, CA Police Department (LAPD) Training Bulletin depicted force choices on a diagram resembling a barometer. Titled Use of Force Part I, its language emphasizes escalation and de-escalation of force concepts. Part II focuses on deadly force applications that most force continuums concentrated on during these “early” days (p. 2).

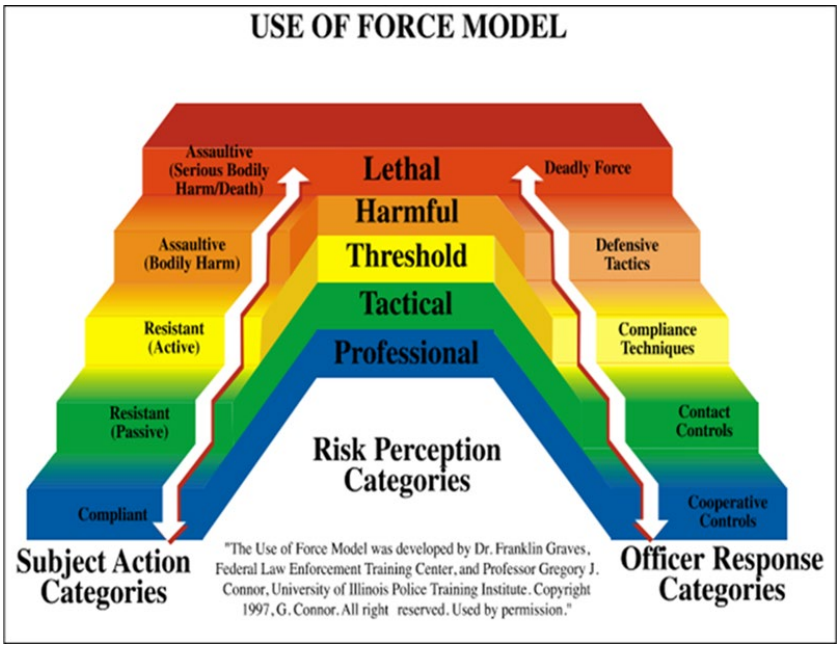
In 1980, international trainer Dr. Kevin Parsons developed the Confrontational Continuum. The concept of Parsons’ Continuum was to explain to police officers when to use force instead of the traditional defensive tactics class that dealt only with how to use force (Williams, 2002).

Figure 2-5 Confrontational Continuum Model (Parsons, 1980)



In 1997, Professor Gregory J. Connor from the University of Illinois Police Training Institute, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) staff member published their use of force continuum (Institute, 2006). Today, this use of force continuum is still being taught at FLETC.

Figure 2-6 FLETC Use of Force Continuum Model (FLETC, 2000)



The Levels of Force

National Institute of Justice (2009) stated that:

> most law enforcement agencies use of force policies describe an escalating series of actions an officer may take to resolve a situation. This continuum generally has many levels, and officers are instructed to respond with a level of force appropriate to the situation at hand, acknowledging that the officer may move from one part of the continuum to another in a matter of seconds. (p. 1)

The use of force continuum usually has five levels. Officers can respond with the appropriate level of force but can move to a lower or higher level of force if the situation dictates. The following is an example of a use of force continuum outlined by the National Institute of Justice in 2009:

> **Officer Presence:** No force is used. Considered the best way to resolve a situation. The presence of a law enforcement officer works to deter crime or diffuse a situation, and their attitudes are professional and nonthreatening.
>
> **Verbalization:** Force is not physical. Officers issue calm, nonthreatening commands, such as "Let me see your identification and registration." Officers may increase their volume and shorten commands to gain compliance. Short commands might include stop or do not move.
>
> **Empty-Hand Control:** Officers use bodily force to gain control of a situation. Soft technique. Officers use grabs, holds, and joint locks to restrain an individual. In addition, officers can use punches and kicks to restrain an individual.
>
> **Less-Lethal Methods:** Officers use less-lethal technologies to gain control of a situation. Blunt or direct impact - Officers may use a baton or projectile to immobilize a combative

person. Chemical - Officers may use chemical sprays or projectiles embedded with chemicals to restrain an individual (e.g., pepper spray) and Conducted Energy Devices (CEDs/tasers) - Officers may use CEDs to immobilize an individual. CEDs discharge a high-voltage, low-amperage jolt of electricity at a distance.

Lethal Force: Officers use lethal weapons to gain control of a situation. It should only be used if a suspect poses a serious threat to the officer or another individual. Officers use deadly weapons such as firearms to stop an individual's actions. (p. 2)

Regardless of the use of force continuum, a police department trains their officers on the administrative standards police officers are held to; in a court of law, police officers are held to the objectively reasonable standard as described by the U.S. Supreme Court in Graham v. Connor (Appendix C).

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the 1989 case of Graham v. Connor that excessive use of force claims must be evaluated under the objectively reasonable standard of the Fourth Amendment (Herd, 2020). In 2015 Gold wrote, "The force used to effectuate "an arrest, investigatory stop, or other 'seizure' of a free citizen" must be "objectively reasonable." Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386, 395-97 (1989)" (p. 26). Thus, the reasonableness factor of use of force incidents are to be judged from the viewpoint of a reasonable police officer on the scene and judged to understand that police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions depending on the situation.

Race in Use of Force

Research shows that two percent of the U.S. police contacts result in the necessity of threat or actual use of force (Davis et al., 2018). That two percent equates to over one million incidents of threatened or existing use of force by police officers (Koch, 2020). When European

American police officers kill unarmed African American males, the question that naturally comes up is whether racism had anything to do with it. The role of race in policing has been documented (Epp et al., 2014), and studies indicate that racism plays a part in causing European American police officers to pull the trigger more quickly on African American suspects than on European American (Mock, 2018). Race impacts how individuals view events related to policing and the race of officers affects police encounters with citizens (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Weitzer, 2002; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004). Law enforcement leadership tries to rule out racism by arguing that no one knows what was in an officer's heart when these killings occur (Daigle, 2020). Mesic et al. (2018) noted that, "This Black-White disparity in firearm homicide in the U.S. has been widely recognized and has recently gained public attention in the context of fatal police shootings" (p. 106). Regardless of whether the individual is armed or unarmed, police-involved shootings provoke a wide range of emotions from the public.

Community Health Scientist and Professor Michael Siegel led a team of researchers at the Boston University School of Public Health to determine whether the kind of racism intertwined into laws and policies also informs racial disparities in police violence (Mock, 2018). Siegel and his team explored fatal police shootings data from 2013 to 2017 from the Mapping Police Violence Database. The website describes the Mapping Police Violence Database as an interactive collection of interactive tools, maps, and figures illustrating police violence in the United States (Mapping Police Violence, 2021). Siegel's research team looked at five key indicators of systemic racism: racial segregation, incarceration rate gaps, educational achievement gaps, the economic disparity index, and employment disparity gaps for each state (Mesic et al., 2018). According to Siegel's research team, 82 % of the world's firearm homicides occur in the United States, and 59 % of the victims are African American, even though African

Americans only account for 14 % of the population in the United States (Mesic et al., 2018). Furthermore, African Americans are eight times more likely to be killed by a firearm than European American people.

Although the striking disparity in firearm deaths between African Americans and European Americans has been documented and a similarly striking racial disparity in the shooting by police of unarmed people has been reported, the underlying cause of these disparities is still unknown (Thomas et al., 2021). Schwartz (2020) posits:

> According to Statistics in the U.S. there have been, a total of 429 civilians shot, 88 of whom were Black, as of June 4, 2020. In 2018, there were 996 fatal police shootings, and in 2019 the number increased to 1004. Additionally, the rate of fatal police shootings among Black Americans was much higher than that of any other ethnicity, standing at 30 fatal shootings per million of the population as of June 2020. (p. 281)

Combined with the racial brutality of the law enforcement organization in America is the misuse of the American military-style tactic against the American people they are sworn to protect. Then there is the American prisons and jails system, where millions of African American men and women are incarcerated.

Police-Involved Shootings

> Cops give a damn about a negro pull the trigger kill a
> nigga he's a hero
> YouTube Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfF8jMN-2CM
> (Tupac Shakur, 1992).

Above are the lyrics from Rapper Tupac Shakur's song entitled *Changes*, recorded in 1992. In the song, the Rapper expressed that it is time to change how we (Black and White Americans) treat each other and how police are viewed when they kill an African American. In contrast, the founding fathers drafted the United States of America's Declaration of

Independence as the foundation for humanity and racial equality for the new world (Moore et al, 2016). The Declaration states among other things:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. (Jefferson, 1776)

What is troubling is the increasing frequency of the violation of the right to life resulting in the death of unarmed African American males from police shootings (Moore et al, 2016). Haider-Markel and Joslyn (2017) wrote that "numerous recent encounters between police and African Americans have resulted in tragic deaths, highlighting potential problems with policing" (p. 359). A poem entitled *A Death of Justice,* written by Sylvia Telafaro contains narratives of young African American males growing up trying to figure out who they should be in a society that does not always love or appreciate them.

Telafaro (2016) poem starts:

> Years ago, I had "the talk" with my son, before he was old enough to learn that justice in our America is not color blind. He had to know; how to act wherever he may go how to walk, and never run, how to speak and answer in polite monotone, how a violation of this could become a deadly risk, especially if he is stopped and frisked. (p. 1) (full poem in Appendix D)

According to Telafaro (2016), the poem is a cry for justice for all African American males being marginalized in the United States and abroad. After numerous high-profile police shootings in America, the killing of unarmed African American males at the hands of police officers has

become a primary focus of social justice interests (Crichlow & Fulcher, 2017; Robinson, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020). Researchers maintain that the likelihood for police misconduct increases in economically challenged communities and where the residents are ethnic minorities (Mollen Commission, 1994; Weitzer et al, 2008). This is possibly the current policing strategy employed today, as most African Americans still live-in poor urban overpoliced areas (Gilbert & Ray, 2016).

A disproportionate amount of brutality has been inflicted on African Americans in disadvantaged communities, and it was widely accepted in these communities that police frequently abused African American citizens in this environment with impunity (Cashmore & McLaughlin, 2013). Weitzer, Tuch, and Skogan (2008) argue, "Dominant-group attitudes toward other racial groups are shaped by a sense of superiority over other racial groups and by a desire to defend dominant-group interests against threats, whether real or perceived" (p. 400). In other words, police officers have a sense of superiority and the authority to police African Americans by any means necessary to protect the dominant class.

Assistant professor at the University of Georgia School of Social Work, Michael A. Robinson (2017), conducted a study to examine the historical relationship between police and the African American community by taking a closer look at the killing of unarmed African American males from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015, using and analyzing newspapers retrieved from two data sources: *The Washington Post*, the oldest existing U.S. newspaper founded in 1877, and *The Guardian* (The Counted), a British newspaper founded in 1821. Robinson (2017) writes, "I find these two sources to be credible as they rely on local established news sources for reports on police shootings and are vetted and scrutinized before being uploaded into the databases" (p. 560). Robinson (2017) analyzed 219 cases where individuals

were killed at the hands of police officers in 2015. Out of the 219 people killed, 101 were European American males, 79 were African American males, and 39 were Latino American males. Robinson writes, “The 79 African American males killed by police represent approximately 36 percent of unarmed men killed by police yet African American males are only seven percent of the U.S. population” (p. 561). Robinson (2017) noted:

> Unarmed Black men were killed at an alarming rate of 0.41 per 100,000 as compared with Latinos at 0.14 and White men at 0.08 per 100,000. Unarmed Black men were killed at a rate of five times that of White men. Further analyzed the data by states and found that unarmed African American males killed by police in 15 of the former slaveholding states represent 41 percent of unarmed persons killed by police across the United States
>
> (p. 561).

In 2019, Rutgers University's Professor Frank Edwards of the School of Criminal Justice led a team to examine police-involved killings, and published a report entitled, "Risk of Being Killed by Police Use of Force in the U.S. by Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Sex" (Schwartz, 2020). Edward (as cited in Schwartz 2020) and his team reported:

> We use novel data on police-involved deaths to estimate how the risk of being killed by police use of force in the United States varies across social groups. We estimate the lifetime and age specific risks of being killed by police by race and sex. We also provide estimates of the proportion of all death accounted for by police use of force. We find that African American men and women, American Indian/Alaska Native men and women, and Latino men face a higher lifetime risk of being killed by police than their white peers. (p. 407)

Schwartz (2020) analyzed the report and stated, "African American men were about two and half times more likely than White men to be killed by police. Men of color face a non-trivial lifetime risk of being killed by police" (p. 284). Reports of African American Males losing their lives during encounters with police seemed to open old wounds (Coates, 2015), and unescapable problems of racial distrust, class conflict, and anger in urban communities were on full display (Bierman & Tanfani, 2015; Covert, 2014). Because of the aggressive policing approaches and perceived social and economic inequalities, many African Americans in inner cities view law enforcement as oppressive rather than protective (Staples, 1975; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004; Wiley, 2001). Research reveals that incidents in which police use force are at higher levels on people of color than their counterparts of other ethnicities (Lee et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2001), and that unarmed African American males are being killed at a rate of three-six times more than unarmed European American males (Swaine et al. 2015).

Who is Keeping Track?

Because of the frequency of the use of force by police officers, the issue has come to be one of the most highly visible social issues in America (Crichlow & Fulcher, 2017; Robinson, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020). Many groups and individuals were shocked to learn that official U.S Government statistics on police officer-involved shootings are full of holes, and the U.S. Criminal Justice System has no sufficient idea of how often police officers kill U.S. Citizens (Comey, 2015; Fyfe, 2002; Klinger, 2012). Because accurate information was not available on the police-involved shooting, *The Washington Post* (Klinger & Slocum, 2017) and the British newspaper *The Guardian* (Robinson, 2017; Swaine 2015) took on the challenge to track U.S. police officers who fatally shoot citizens (Klinger & Slocum, 2017).

In 2015, *The Washington Post* developed an internet database to track police-involved shootings (Tate et al, 2021). It was found credible because it relies on local news sources to report police-involved shootings. In addition, the sources are vetted and scrutinized before uploading the information into the database (Robinson, 2017). In 2015 *The Washington Post* tracking discovered that 991 people were killed by police officers (Klinger & Slocum, 2017), while the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported there were 442 people killed by police officers (U.S. FBI, 2015) which validates how poor U.S Official statistics concerning this life-threatening matter were. *The Washington Post's* database provides a far more complete count of deaths from police-involved shootings than the U.S. Government statistics. Schwartz (2020) also examined 2015 statistical data from *The Washington Post's* database, and wrote:

> Although half of the people shot and killed by police are White, Black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate. They account for just 13% of the U.S. population, but more than a quarter of police shooting victims. The disparity is even more pronounced among unarmed victims, of whom more than a third are black. (p. 284)

Data from 2015 suggests that police and public-initiated contacts are similar, with 46 % of the contacts initiated by police and 43 % by the public with only three percent of all contacts resulting in the threat of or actual use of force (Davis et al., 2018). However, according to the FBI records, police contacts declined from 26 % in 2011 to 21.1 percent in 2015 (Davis et al., 2018). Koch (2020) suggests, "The reasons for the decline can likely be attributed to the social climate towards law enforcement" (p. 6).

Figure 2-7 U. S. Population by Race Between 2015 – 2021 (Tate et al., 2021)

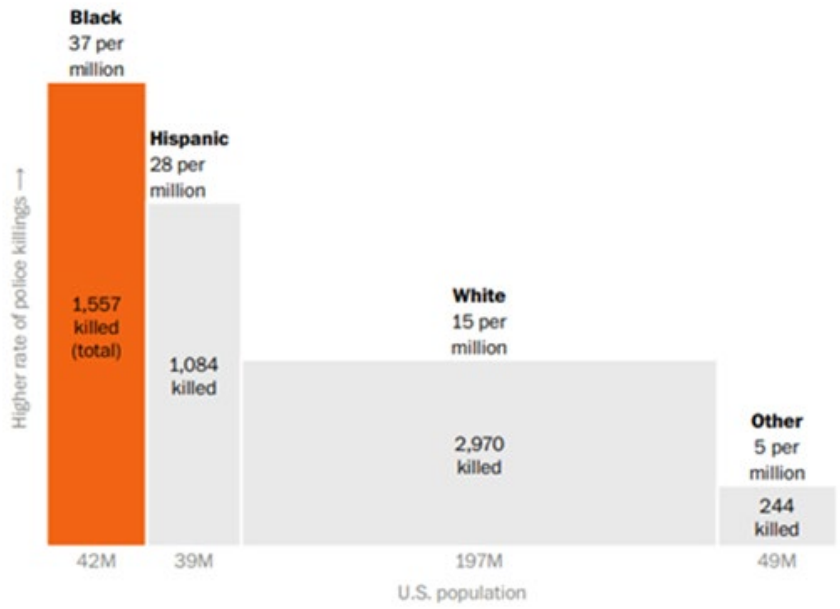
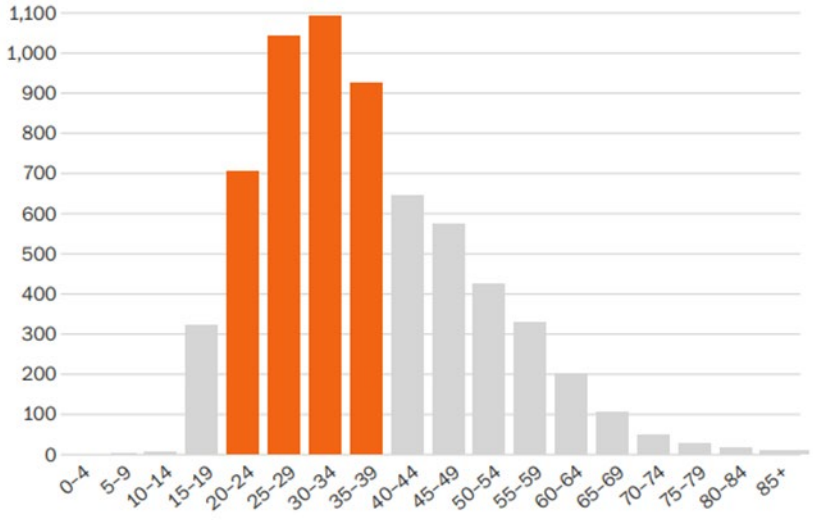


Figure 2-8 Victims Killed by Age (*Tate et al., 2021*)



As these tables show, marginalized, unarmed males are victims of police shootings at a higher rate, and the primary age of the victims is between the ages of 20-39. Police have reduced their contacts with individuals because of the high-profile confrontations and resulting public protests that officers perceive to threaten their safety (Morin et al., 2017). In 2017, *The Washington Post,*

regional and local news outlets, and social media gathered information about the officers involved in shooting incidents in 2016; the search revealed that police officers killed 962 people, and 51 were unarmed (Koch, 2020).

Research and statistics show that the rate of fatal police-involved shootings among African Americans was much higher than in any other ethnic group. While being murdered is the worst-case scenario for African American males, interactions with police and incarceration are also a concern.

Theoretical Frameworks

This research uses the critical race theory (CRT) framework to examine AALEEs' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. However, before discussing CRT, race theory and critical theory is developed as the foundation of this theoretical framework.

Race Theory

Race theory is different from CRT. Race theory has always been an essential sociological theme, from the founding of the field and the construction of classical theoretical statements to the present. However, sociological viewpoints on race have expanded and changed since the nineteenth century, reflecting shifts in large-scale political processes (Winant, 2000). Race theory took root in Australia in the mid-19th century. The philosophy is based on the belief that each race possesses specific characteristics, abilities, and qualities (McGregor, 1997). Unfortunately, there is very little literature on race theory. McGregor describes race theory:

> Flourishing in the latter years of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. By the period between world wars, the doomed race theory was showing a sign of withering, although it persisted, albeit with declining vigor, until at least the 1950s. (p. ix)

Winant (2000) writes:

> As the twentieth century dawned, sociology came to be dominated by U.S.-based figures. DuBois and the Chicago School presented the first notable challenges to the field's racist assumptions. In the aftermath of World War II, with the destruction of European colonialism, the rise of the civil rights movement, and the surge in migration on a world scale, the sociology of race became a central topic. The field moved toward a more critical, more egalitarian awareness of race, focused particularly on the overcoming of prejudice and discrimination. (p. 169)

The race theory concept is fundamentally a modern one, although prefigured in various ways by ethnocentrism, taking primary form in ancient concepts of civilization and barbarity (Snowden 1983), citizen and out-sider/slave (Hannaford 1996; Finley 1983). Because of the continued practice of structural racism, racism will continue to be a factor in America.

Critical Theory

Critical theory is the 1929-1930s social theory that criticizes and changes society (Crossman, 2020). Critical theory arose from the Marxist tradition and was established by sociologists at the University of Frankfurt in Germany, who referred to themselves as The Frankfurt School (Felluga, 2015). Crossman (2020) writes:

> Following in Marx's critical footsteps, Hungarian György Lukács and Italian Antonio Gramsci developed theories that explored the cultural and ideological sides of power and domination. Shortly after Lukács and Gramsci published their ideas, the Institute for Social Research was founded at the University of Frankfurt, and the Frankfurt School of critical theorists took shape. The work of the Frankfurt School members, including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Walter Benjamin, Jürgen Habermas, and

> Herbert Marcuse is considered the heart of critical theory. (p. 3)

According to Horkheimer (1937):

> Critical theory of society as it is, a theory dominated at every turn by a concern for reasonable conditions of life. The isolated consideration of particular activities and branches of activity, along with their contents and objects, requires for its validity an accompanying concrete awareness of its own limitations. A conception is needed which overcomes the one sidedness that necessarily arises when limited intellectual processes are detached from their matrix in the total activity of society. (p. 188-189)

Cole, (2020) states:

> Over the years, many social scientists and philosophers who rose to prominence after the Frankfurt School have adopted the goals and tenets of critical theory. We can recognize critical theory today in many feminist theories and approaches to conducting social science. It is also found in critical race theory, cultural theory, gender, and queer theory, as well as in media theory and media studies" (p. 5).

Out of the critical theory in the 1970s comes the critical race theory.

Critical Race Theory

The researcher used a critical race theory framework lens to examine the literature. Crenshaw, Thomas, and Williams (2021) point out that, "critical race theory was a movement that initially started at Harvard under Professor Derrick Bell in the 1980s. It evolved in reaction to critical legal studies, which came about in the 70s and dissected the idea that law was just and neutral" (p. 2). Critical race theory is a theoretical framework in the social sciences that examines society and culture related to categorizing race, law, and power (Daftary, 2020).

Norman (2013) argues that:

> Critical Race Theory (CRT) expanded from critical theory because of power issues, white feminists, black feminists, and Critical Legal Studies (CLS), a legal movement. Critical Legal Studies arose during the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement era from a group of white law professors that isolated themselves from liberal advancements, which were dominant in law and legal education, arguing that there needed to be a change from one group dominating another group of individuals. (p. 28)

Critical race theory seeks to empower voices and perspectives that have been marginalized and encourage a problem to be placed in social, political, and historical context while considering power, privilege, racism and other forms of oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In 1989, after continued dissatisfaction with critical legal studies (CLS) and CLS's failure to acknowledge how race is a central component to the same systems of law being challenged, several lawyers reacted against the CLS and formed the critical race theory (Martinez, 2014). Critical race theory co-founding member Mari Matsuda (1991) defines the CRT as:

> The work of progressive legal scholars of color who are attempting to develop a jurisprudence that accounts for the role of racism in American law and that works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination. (p. 1331)

CRT consists of legal scholarship and an academic movement of U.S. civil-rights scholars and activists who seek to examine the juncture of race and U.S. laws critically and confront conventional American liberal attitudes to racial justice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Edwards & Schmidt, 2006; Gordon, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT explores social, cultural, and legal issues primarily related to race and racism in America and principles that racism and disparate

racial outcomes result from complex, changing, and often subtle social and established dynamics rather than explicit and intentional prejudices of individuals (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1999).

In discussing CRT, it is important to understand how counter storytelling plays a role in the theory. Delgado and Stefancic (2017) define counter storytelling as "writing that aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority" (p. 171). Counter-storytelling is a tool that CRT scholars employ to contradict racist characterizations of social life. Merriweather Hunn et al. (2006) write, "Counter-storytelling also aims to expose race neutral discourse to reveal how white privilege operates within an ideological framework to reinforce and support unequal social relations between whites and people of color (p. 244). In other words, counter-storytelling provides a process for subordinated groups to address circumstances where the current conception of justice provides no means by which the marginalized person can express how they have been wronged in terms that the system will understand.

Anti-Critical Race Theory

After President Trump signed a memo restricting federal employee from learning about CRT ignited a nationwide debate. Kim (2021) writes:

> In September 2020, the Trump administration issued a memo to federal agencies directing them to identify and cancel any staff training programs that focus on CRT or “white privilege.” Weeks later, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that restricted the federal government and its contractors from conducting diversity training that examined systemic racism, white privilege, and other issues involving race and gender bias. (p. 64)

Mocombe (2017) writes:

> Critical Race theory (CRT) seeks to apply the negative dialectics of critical theory to the intersection of race, law, and power in the pursuit of racial and ethnic equality in Western society. That is to say, critical race theorists seek to convict Western society for not identifying with their values and ideals (liberty, equality, fraternity, etc.) due to the prevalence of racial and ethnic oppression and subordination in the society. (p. 83)

President Trump's executive order was rescinded by President Biden on his first day in office. However, today there many states drafting and passing laws banning or limiting CRT being taught in public schools (Mocombe, 2017). Despite the nationwide debate for this study, the researcher will view the issue through a CRT lens.

Chapter Summary

The literature review included structural racism, the history of U. S. policing, the use of force continuum, African American police officers, African American law enforcement executives, police-involved shootings, race in policing, and tracking police-involved shootings. Much of the literature focused on the systemic marginalization of African Americans in the U.S and the African American males' lives lost at the hands of police officers. Police use of violence in the United States is a historical and modern phenomenon that has created public order, racial dominance, and social control since its conception from the slave patrols. The literature review included highlights of the gap between African American law enforcement executives and police-involved shootings. CRT highlighted the role of race in American policing; the theory provided a lens for exploring police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

CRT will be used to analyze the data. CRT seeks social justice by focusing on the effects of race, racism, and the hegemonic White supremacy structure (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998)). CRT also provides an explanation of how African Americans are viewed in America. The CRT provides a perspective from a society and culture related to categorizing race, law, and power. Since U.S. laws give police officers power over individuals, CRT is the appropriate lens to view the phenomena.

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology

Introduction

The methodology suggests how studies should be conducted by pointing out what problems are worth examining and how to frame a problem to be explored (Jackson, Drummond, & Camara, 2007). It also suggests acquiring appropriate data and making a rational link between the problem, data generated, analysis, and conclusions drawn. Methodologies have a synergetic relationship with methods and are often defined differently based on the researcher's philosophical stance (Kaplan, 1964).

This qualitative narrative inquiry study explored African American law enforcement executives' (AALEEs) perspectives about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. This research examined the AALEEs' education and training background, their perspective on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males, police reform, and recruitment processes. A qualitative method will provide a starting point for this line of research.

This chapter is organized in the following sections: (a) introduction, (b) research design, (c) research questions, (d) researcher's role, (e) participant selection, (f) research site, (g) data collection, (h) data analysis, (i) chapter summary.

Research Design

The primary purpose of this qualitative narrative inquiry study is to explore African American law enforcement executives' (AALEEs) perspectives about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. The researcher used the qualitative narrative method to get the AALEEs' perspectives instead of the quantitative approach. Quantitative research focuses on

testing theories and hypotheses, identifying variables, and conducting experiments, which results in numerical data that can be statistically analyzed (Creswell, 2003; Johnson et al., 2017).

Quantitative research begins with a hypothesis and focuses on quantity, empirical data, random samples, non-living instruments, deductive analysis, and precise findings (Merriam, 2009). In comparison, qualitative research is the method for discovering and exploring untold social or human problems. It focuses on fieldwork, purposeful samples, inductive analysis, rich descriptive findings, and the researcher as the instrument (Kim, 2016). Qualitative research investigates social or human problems based on a method of inquiry that does not involve calculations or measurable data (Creswell, 2007). Corbin and Strauss (2008) write, "Qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover, rather than test variables" (p. 12).

Qualitative research is an informational, adaptable, context-sensitive process-oriented posture (Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative researchers use phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, or narrative inquiry approaches to explore participants' values, beliefs, or attitudes on a specific topic (Bhattacharya, 2017; Creswell, 2007; Johnson et al., 2017), and these methods have been used in sociology, anthropology, political science, psychology, social work, and educational research (Bhattacharya, 2017). Creswell (2007) writes, "All five approaches have in common the general process of research that begins with the research problem and proceeds to the questions, the data, the data analysis, and the research report" (p. 76).

All qualitative methods use the same processes to collect data, such as individual interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell, 2007; Polkinghorne, 2005). However, each method differs in its motivation or what they are trying to achieve. For example, Creswell

(2007) writes that phenomenology involves "understanding the essence of the experience"; grounded theory "develops a theory grounded in data from the field"; ethnography study "describes and interprets a culture-sharing group"; case study seeks an "in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases" (p. 78).

Narrative Inquiry, Counter Storytelling and Pragmatic Constructivist

Kim (2016) writes that:

> The word narrative is from Latin narrat- "related," "told"), narrare ("to tell"), or late Latin narrativus (telling a story"), all of which are akin to Latin gnarus (knowing), derived from the ancient Sanskrit gna ("to know"). Thus, a narrative is a form of knowledge that catches the two sides of a narrative: telling and knowing. (p.6)

Narrative inquiry studies an individual's life experiences as a storied phenomenon (Kim, 2016). Bhattacharya (2017) suggests that narrative inquiry "focuses on the story as the basic unit of analysis and the interest in understanding how people articulate their life experiences in the structure of a story" (p. 27). A few examples of a narrative are biographies, narrative interviews, and oral histories.

This study examined AALEEs' stories using a narrative inquiry approach. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) described the narrative inquiry approach as an "inquiry into a narrative. By this, we mean that narrative is both a phenomenon and a method. Narrative names the structured quality of experience to be studied, and it names the patterns of inquiry for its study" (p.2). Lincoln and Guba (1985) state, "If you want people to understand better than they otherwise might, provide them the information in the form in which they usually experience it" (p. 120).

Therefore, a narrative inquiry is needed to provide in-depth information regarding AALEEs' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

Since this study focused on the participants' perspectives rather than numbers, a qualitative narrative method is appropriate. Bhattacharya (2017) writes that narrative "also allowed for counternarratives to emerge that challenged dominant, ethnocentric narratives" (p. 75).

Counter - Storytelling

Counternarratives or counter-storytelling will play an essential role in this study. Love (2004) describes the importance of counter-storytelling:

> changes the form and content of research and conversations about events, situations, and societal participation. It starts from different premises and examines the same data with different goals in mind. It can do so because counter-storytelling situates and centers race as a filter for examining prevailing stories and constructions of reality. (p. 233)

Solorzano and Yosso (2002b) view counter-storytelling as a means "for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege" (p. 32). In other words, counter-storytelling provides a means for subordinated groups to deal with circumstances where the general conception of justice provides no means by which the marginalized groups can express how they have been wronged so the dominant structure can understand (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Pragmatic Constructivist

Pragmatic constructivist processing is the retrieval of memories in which those memories are altered, revised, or influenced by newer information (Taura et al., 2011). One of the characteristics of the pragmatic constructivist approach is its insistence on direct participation in

the research in the life of the participant involved (Henriksen et al., 2004; Henriksen, 2021). The concept is to help develop new concepts and new verbiage to help solve real problems as they are discovered in the participant's life or their thought on a research topic (Henriksen et al., 2004).

Henriksen (2021) describes the process as follows:

> The researchers get into a dialogue with the actor in the field. The result of this dialogue is, in the first place, data about the actors' realities and life worlds. This data is a bundle of chaotic, discordant stories and narratives, but hopefully, it is also a process where observants and actors jointly create new narratives and new concepts. After an encounter, it is the job of both the observant and the actor to reflect upon the encounter. The actor should think of which problems he or she wants to do something about and how to solve them, and the observant should use his or her entire scientific arsenal to reflect upon the data he or she got from the first encounter (p. 26).

As the researcher, I am responsible for creating an ordered, concordant narrative out of all the data collected and making it understandable for the reader.

Research Questions

This narrative inquiry obtained AALEEs' perspectives, and the following two research questions guided the study:

1. What are the perspectives of AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

2. How do the AALEEs perceive police reform, education and training are addressing the occurrences of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Researcher's Role

The researcher has 24 years of law enforcement experience, with 11 years working at an executive level. The researcher's primary roles are observing the participants' interaction with their staff and the public and conducting individual interviews with the participants for data collection. However, an opportunity may present itself for additional questions and new

information may arise during observations because the researcher's role is known (Loftland & Loftland, 1995).

The researchers maintained a low-profile through his dress, demeanor, and expressions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The researcher's actions were significant because he wanted honest responses during the participant interviews; therefore, the researcher did not share my personal beliefs or experiences during the interviews, preferring to listen except to stimulate each participant's responses when lulls in the interviews occurred. The researcher served as a research instrument to collect data in narrative inquiry research (Kim, 2016; Patton, 2001).

Since data was collected during multiple times, situations were evaluated as a whole, some data was processed immediately, any feedback needed to be received an immediate response was verified, and the unforeseen investigated. The researcher made intentional efforts to be objective and involved only upon request.

Positionality

It is essential for a researcher to know their positionality concerning the research context and limit truth claims versus making grand statements with supposed universal applicability (Sheppard, 2002). As a participant, the researcher's positionality was vital to this study because it included the researcher's perspective, privilege, and power because of the researcher's privilege as a former AALEE. The perspective refers to many intersecting socio-cultural identities and the experiences that contributed to their information (Amoo-Adare, 2018). It is perspective that formulates many of our preferences and biases and influences everything we create, interpret, and understand (Rose, 1997). Privilege occurs due to my socio-cultural identities and how they position the researcher in any given context or location (Amoo-Adare, 2018). Finally, the power the researcher possesses was a consequence of the researcher's privilege and operation through

the system of relationships and the role(s) he played in continuing that power by maintaining its knowledge and discourses (Amoo-Adare, 2018).

For credible and trustworthy studies and to address the researcher's positionality, the researcher assessed himself as a researcher to reduce potential biases. Amoo-Adare (2018) suggests researchers should ask themselves questions like:

1. "What brought me to this research topic?" (p. 10). For the researcher, the conviction of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for murdering an unarmed African American male named George Floyd.

2. "Can I trace when I first became interested in the subject?" (p. 10). The researcher became interested in the topic in 2012 when his unarmed nephew Maurice D. Johnson was shot and killed by a Baltimore City police officer.

The below link is to a documentary entitled To Serve and Protect: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8__UEeTd0Y (Bechill, 2020). Bechill (2020) writes, "This film examines the relationship between the Baltimore Police Department and its citizens with disabilities, most notably those experiencing mental crises." My nephew Maurice, whom a White officer killed, is discussed in the documentary.

3. "Why is the topic specifically important?" (p. 16). Many news reports about European police officers shooting and killing unarmed African American males focus on the perspective of the surviving family member or reporters. This study provides another side to the topic. The research is relevant to the current crisis as an African American male, a former law enforcement executive (AALEE), and a person whose family member was killed by a European police officer. Moreover, it is crucial to understand AALEE's perspectives on the crisis.

The reader's form of reflexivity gives them a fuller understanding of the researcher and research context, including comprehending the in-between nature of the relationships (Rose, 1997). In addition, it can help the reader understand how the research is vigorously located in a complex web of places but not place-bound interactions.

Participant Selection

This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of AALEEs' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males; therefore, purposive sampling was used to select the study participants. A sample is a set of elements taken from a larger population, and the elements are the basic unit selected from the population (Johnson et al., 2017). Johnson et al. (2017) writes, "purposive sampling occurs when "the researchers specify the characteristics of the population of interest and locate individuals with those characteristics" (p. 685). Polkinghorne (2005) states that purposive sampling creates "refinement and clarity necessary to understand an experience" (p. 140).

The selection criteria for the participants are:

1. Must be an African American male.
2. Must have 15 or more years of service in law enforcement.
3. Must have held a law enforcement executive position for over five years.
4. Must currently or have managed a police department with 20 to 100 sworn police officers.
5. Preference is given to those serving in Maryland and Pennsylvania for convenience.

The third requirement is essential because, from the researcher's experience, a law enforcement executive's (Police Commissioners, Police Chiefs, and Deputy Chiefs) average time with the same department at a local level is approximately four to five years. Law enforcement

executives are typically replaced when a new mayor is elected, or a new city manager is hired. Law enforcement executives serve at the pleasure of elected officials and can be terminated or let go without cause at any time. For this reason, the police departments were not named in this study to protect the participants.

From the researcher's experience, executives can know their entire staff in smaller departments, and it is easier to build a good working relationship when compared to larger departments. The researcher's experience provided credibility with participants in this study. Because the participants provided their perspectives in this study, confidentiality was maintained. Johnson et al. (2017) state, "Confidentiality is the means that researchers use to protect the privacy of the research participants. In the context of a research study, confidentiality is an agreement with the research investigators about what can be done with the information obtained about a research participant" (p. 140). As a participant-observer, the researcher was one of the participants and compared and analyzed the researcher's experience with the other five participants.

Research Site

Overt participant observation was used with the agreement of the subjects being studied. Thus, overt participant observation was done with the consent of the participants being studied and are aware they were under observation (Johnson et al., 2017). During the overt observation, the researcher divulged his goals and explained the purpose of the research. The research objective was to identify participants' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males during the interviews and observations. The interviews and observations were conducted at each participant's police station.

Participants' Interviews

James Nathan Miller (1965) writes, "There is no such thing as a worthless conversation, provided you know what to listen for. And questions are the breath of life for a conversation" (p. 27). Law enforcement officials and researchers use interviews as a tool to access people's experiences and their perceptions, attitudes, and feelings (Zhang & Wildermuth, nd). The three types of interviews conducted in a qualitative study are unstructured, semi-structured, and structured (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Longhurst, 2003; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Whiting, 2008). Zhang and Wildemuth (nd) write:

> A structured interview is an interview that has a set of predefined questions, and the questions are asked in the same order for all respondents. This standardization is intended to minimize the effects of the method and the interviewer on the research results. Structured interviews are similar to surveys, except they are administered orally rather than in writing. Semi-structured interviews are more flexible. An interview guide, usually including both closed-ended and open-ended questions, is prepared; but during the interview, the interviewer has a certain amount of room to adjust the sequence of the questions to be asked and to add questions based on the context of the participants' responses. (p. 1)

The researcher used semi-structured questions as a data collection tool for this study. Semi-structured interviews were guided by predetermined questions (Merriam et al., 2016). Open-ended questions were developed to probe for deeper meanings. While question themes are created and specific questions are pre-written, the questions can be adjusted to fit a particular participant (Longhurst, 2003; Merriam et al., 2016). Semi-structured interviews are typically relaxed and conversational rather than the stricter, structured interview guidelines (Longhurst,

2003). An advantage of using a semi-structured format is that it allows for exploring themes and topics introduced by the participant's response and is not bound by a specific group of questions that must be asked in a specific sequence (Merriam et al., 2016).

Human Protection

Ethical concerns related to the protection of the research participants are essential in any study (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Therefore, prior to seeking approval from the research committee and Kansas State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher completed the required training with the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program). The courses completed were: Human Subjects Research, IRB Research and personnel on IRB, and responsible research conduct. The courses included the following modules: Authorship, Human Subject, Assessing Risk, Privacy and Confidentiality, Data Management, Conflict of Interest, Informed Consent, and Research Misconduct. After obtaining approval from IRB, the researcher solicited volunteers and reviewed the informed consent. On March 24, 2022, the researcher received approval from the IRB to conduct the research (Appendix J).

Protection Protocol

The informed consent contained a description of the research purpose (Johnson et al., 2017). At the beginning of the initial interviews, the researcher explained the study's purpose and scope to the participants. Next, the participants reviewed and signed an informed consent statement (Appendix E) and received a copy for their records. To retain the integrity of the responses, participants had an opportunity to check transcripts to avoid any misunderstanding of data. Additionally, any significant identifying information about the participants and their locations remained confidential. Any research-related data remains stored securely with a password on the researcher's computer.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data on AALEEs' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males from multiple sources, including observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Furthermore, the researcher collected participants' stories and retold those stories for research purposes.

Interviews

The interviews were organized in an informal conversation to encourage the participants to reveal their individual stories (Johnson et al., 2017). However, the questions were formatted in a formal, semi-structured interview approach to collect the best data based on the perspectives of each participant. The formal semi-structured interview process involved the researcher preparing questions in advance with the probes identified (Bhattacharya, 2017). The interview questions were not overly structured to allow the participant to still share openly about their lived experiences and bring in topics and stories outside of the anticipated research questions. Law enforcement professionals' interviews are non-accusatory and allow individuals to do most of the talking with open-ended questions designed to provoke a discussion (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Oxburgh, 2016; Royal & Schutt, 1976; Yeschke, 1987). The researcher conducted one semi-structured interview with each participant, estimated at 45 minutes to one hour, at their worksite. Interview protocol and interview questions were provided to the participants in advance. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants being recorded using an audio recording device.

In addition to individual interviews, the participants came together for a focus group. A focus group is a group interview in which a researcher leads a discussion with a small group of participants to examine, in detail, how the group members think and feel about a topic (Johnson

et al., 2017). deMarrais and Lapan (2004) write, "Individual interviews and focus group interviews can be used in combination in order to gather the information that participants may be reluctant to share publicly (p. 92).

Observations

This study observed the participants in the natural setting of their departments; hence, it was important that the participants felt comfortable with the researcher in their presence so as not to be a distraction to daily operations. In addition, the researcher shared his law enforcement background and the purpose of his presence with the participants and their staff, which played a significant part in gaining respect from the five participants and their department staff.

The researcher arrived an hour before roll call, greeted staff members, and dressed professionally during these visits. For this research, the researcher used the participant-observation method as the source of data collection. The participant-observation model involves the researcher participating in the events and assuming various roles where the investigator can perceive reality from an insider's viewpoint rather than an outsider to the research (Yin, 2003). The researcher selected the participant-observer method because it allows for his contribution to in-depth exploration of the topic during the study.

In addition, this design feature provided a detailed, in-depth picture of AALEEs' actions, interactions, and responses (Brown, 2008). Observations are related to interviews and are an essential part of data collection. Johnson et al. (2017) defines "observation as the watching of the behavior pattern of people in certain situations to obtain information about the phenomenon of interest" (p. 240). Observation data can be the researcher's field notes, verbal descriptions of the site, people, activities, substantive quotes, and observer comments (Merriam, 2009).

Data Management

Transcribing

Bailey (2008) writes, "qualitative studies collect audio or video data (e.g., recordings of interviews, focus groups or talk in consultation), and these are usually transcribed into written form for closer study" (p.127). Agar (1980) suggests that researchers "read the transcripts in their entirety several times. Immerse yourself in the details, trying to get a sense of the individual interview as a whole before breaking it into parts" (p. 103).

A researcher can analyze for codes within the data by counting the frequency of the occurrence of each code (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interpreting data represents the researcher's understanding of the experience investigated. Because this is a narrative study, the researcher pursued detailed descriptions of the topic. The researcher transcribed the data and kept detailed notes of the interviews and the representation shows how all the different sources of information were categorized into themes. The data has been kept confidential and not discussed with anyone to protect the participants' confidentiality and the study. For managing purposes, the data was transcribed after each interview, which allowed the researcher to review the data for emerging themes.

Data Analysis

As a participant and researcher, the researcher sought to stay objective when conducting the research and address my positionality and any potential biases to ensure credibility and trustworthiness during the data analysis process. Data analysis is the process of answering the research questions, and the answers are the categories, themes, and findings from the data collected (Johnson et al., 2017).

Merriam (1998) comments that "Data analysis is a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, description and interpretation" (p. 178). Data was collected and analyzed from multiple sources: semi-structured interviews, observations, and focus groups. The interviews were analyzed using NVivo and developed word clouds to identify major themes.

Data analysis consisted of obtaining a broad understanding of all the data collected by reviewing individual interviews, focus group transcripts, and observation field notes. The researcher also received participant feedback through member checking to clarify and confirm the accuracy of the data obtained.

After obtaining, reviewing, clarifying, and confirming the data, the researcher organized the data systematically by assigning codes. Pattern coding involves identifying code data similarities and organizing the data into emergent themes (Johnson et al., 2017). Pattern coding reduced the large amounts of data into related themes. Each transcript was coded, and emerging themes were constructed from the individual narratives. These codes were then written in reflective journal/field notes and interview transcripts were highlighted to be distinguished easily from any initial coding that may have been initiated throughout the data collection period. The field notes and researcher's comments were coded and then categorized from the observations. The interviews, observation field notes, and focus groups were coded and then categorized from which themes were developed.

Trustworthiness

It is crucial for a researcher conducting a qualitative research study to establish trustworthiness during the study (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Rubin, 2000; Yin, 1994). Trustworthiness addresses the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the

findings from the study (Gay et al., 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 1994). To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, the researcher deployed the following approaches:

Visits in the field, peer debriefing, member checks, detailed, thick descriptions, purposive sampling, audit trail, and reflexivity (Anfera et al., 2002; Creswell, 2007; Gay et al., 2009). Creswell (2007) suggests utilizing at least two strategies to ensure trustworthiness to add rigor to the study. With rigor, subjectivity is achieved when reliability is established (Eisner, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005). According to Tracy (2010), there are eight criteria for a quality qualitative study.

Tracy (2010) outlines the following as criteria for excellent qualitative research:

Worthy topic: The topic of the research is relevant, timely, significant, and engaging;

Rich rigor: The study uses sufficient, abundant, appropriate, complex, theoretical constructs, data and time in the field, sample(s), context(s), data collection and analysis processes;

Sincerity: The study is characterized by self-reflexivity about subjective values, biases, and inclinations of the researcher(s), transparency about the methods and challenges;

Credibility: The research is marked by thick description, concrete detail, explication of tacit (non-textual) knowledge, showing rather than telling, triangulation or crystallization, multivocality, and member reflections;

Resonance: The research influences, affects, or moves particular readers or a variety of audiences through, aesthetic, evocative representation, naturalistic generalizations, and transferable findings;

Significant contribution: The research provides a significant contribution conceptually/ theoretically, practically, morally, methodologically, and heuristically;

Ethical: The research considers procedural ethics (such as human subjects), situational and culturally specific ethics, relational ethics, exiting ethics (leaving the scene and sharing the research);

Meaningful coherence: The study achieves what it purports to be about by using methods and procedures that fit its stated goals. Meaningfully interconnects literature, research questions/foci, findings, and interpretations with each other. (p. 840)

Member Checking

The researcher used a validation procedure called member checking to validate the participants' responses (Birt et al., 2016). After the participants' responses were transcribed, they were returned to the participants to check for accuracy (deMarrais & Lapan, 2004). The feedback received from the participants through member checks clarified and confirmed the accuracy of the data obtained.

Triangulation

The researcher used triangulation during the data analysis process to understand the problem completely. Triangulation is using multiple data sources in qualitative research to develop a complete knowledge of phenomena (Carter et al., 2014). Triangulation is a strategy used to test validity by merging information from different sources in a qualitative study. The multiple data sources triangulated were the interviews, the focus groups, and the observations.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative narrative study was conducted to get the perspective of AALEEs on the police-involved shooting of unarmed African American males. This chapter covered the methodology and research design, including a review of research questions, researcher's role,

participant selection, research site, participant interviews, human protection, data collection, data management, data analysis, and trustworthiness.

Additionally, this chapter described the data sources, including participant interviews, focus groups, and observations field notes. Chapter Four will provide details and descriptions of the researcher's findings from the individual interviews, observations, and group discussions.

Chapter 4 - Analysis of Data

Introduction

This chapter offers a detailed description of data and data analysis. The study investigated African American law enforcement executives' views on the police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. The participants were residents of Maryland and Pennsylvania. The researcher received approval to interview and observe the participants at their work site for one day. The participants also agreed to be re-interviewed in a group setting. The participants were made aware of my role and the purpose of this research; an overt observation method was used. The researcher analyzed each data source independently through the CRT lens while integrating the findings. Subsequently, the researcher combined the data sources to find categories and themes through coding. The data sources include participant interviews, observations, and researcher's notes. Data analysis is making sense of the data by developing themes and categories that interpret the meaning of the data (Merriam, 2009). The chapter contains (a) an introduction; (b) interview protocol; (c) the participants' background information; (d) participants' interview sites, responses, and observations; (e) focus group discussions (f) the themes and subthemes; (g) analysis and synthesis of the data sources; and (h) chapter summary.

Interview Protocol

This qualitative narrative study was conducted between April to August of 2022. The researcher emailed the participants the interview questions (Appendix F) and the Participants Informed Consent Form (Appendix E) two days before their interviews. Before starting each interview, participants with provided with a copy of the Participants Informed Consent Form. Then, before each interview, the consent form was read to the participants. Then, each participant was asked if they had any questions, which were answered as they arose. The

participants and the researcher then signed the form, and a copy was made for the participants' records. The interview and observation day consisted of interviewing the participants for approximately 45 minutes to two hours, then observing the participants for the remainder of the day. A one-hour debrief was scheduled at the end of the day to allow clarification of the day's activities and discussions. The participants was provide a debriefing statement to sign to ensure I still had his consent to use their data from the individual interviews and focus groups in the study.

Participants' Backgrounds Information

The participants have diverse work backgrounds and educational levels and have managed different size departments. The size of the police department is determined by the size of the population they serve (Cunha, 2017), and the majority of the police departments in the U.S. are small (Berman, 2021). Additionally, the participants have held different ranks and worked at different levels of government. However, they do have some similarities. All participants are African American males, over 50 years old, have more than fifteen years of law enforcement experience, and have worked as law enforcement executives for more than five years.

Table 4-1 Participants' Demographic Profiles

Participants	P 1	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5	P 6
Service Years	26	36	24	25	29	27
Executive Years	15	6	11	19	20	17
Rank	Chief	Captain	Chief	Commissioner	Chief	Major
Education Level	Masters	High School	Masters	Bachelor	Masters	Bachelor
Employer	County	County	Federal	City	County	City
Department Size	Small	Small	Mid-Size	Large	Small	Mid-Size

Table 4-2 U.S. Police Department Sizes (Berman, 2021)

U.S. Police Departments	Townships	Small Cities	Major Cities
Size	Small	Mid-Size	Larger
Number Sworn Officers	3-25	26-75	76-1000+

Participant 1: He has a bachelor's degree and is currently working on his master's degree. He has also completed several leadership and management certification programs with the FLETC, Southern Police Institute, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He has twenty-six years of law enforcement experience, with fifteen years of experience working at an executive level and has seven years of correctional officer experiences. Additionally, he served in the military and has held leadership roles prior to his present position. He is currently employed with a local municipality in Maryland, is the secretary of the local county police chief association, a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. He currently oversees a department of twenty-four police officers and eleven civilian employees. The department is a full-service department with a dispatch center, investigation unit, code enforcement unit, traffic control unit, internal affairs unit, and community policing unit.

Participant 2: He has thirty-six years of law enforcement experience, and the last six years served as a police captain. He completed high school. He stated, "I have completed four academies, Washington DC Police Academy, Virginia Department of Correction Academy, Virginia Criminal Justice Academy, and Maryland Police Academy." He added that he has completed additional police leadership and management courses. He has twelve years of correctional officer experience with the Virginia Department of Corrections and does not have any military experience. He is currently employed with a local municipality in Maryland and a local police recruitment association member. He helps oversee a small-size department that

consists of twenty police officers and one civilian employee. The primary purpose of his department is traffic control and calls for service.

Participant 3 (Researcher): Left his last chief position in the federal government on July 5, 2015, to pursue a career in adult education and has twenty-four years of law enforcement experience with eleven years of experience at the executive level. He has two associate degrees, a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree, and is currently working on a doctorate for which this research is for this dissertation. He has completed leadership and management certification programs with the FLETC, Southern Police Institute, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Johns Hopkins University. He is a former member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and served in the military where he held several leadership roles. Participant two also has eight years of correctional officer experience with the Maryland Division of Corrections. During his career he oversaw two mid-size police departments, which employed seventy-five to ninety police officers and five civilian employees. Each department had a dispatch center, patrol units, and a traffic control unit.

Participant 4: He has a total of twenty-two years of law enforcement experience, with the last six years as police commissioner. He has an associate degree and is currently working on his bachelor's degree. He has two years of correctional experience with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and is currently employed by a city government. The participant does not have any military experience**.** He is an active member of the local Black Chief of Police Association. He oversees a large-size department; his department employs one hundred police officers and thirty-five civilian employees and is a full-service department.

Participant 5: He has bachelor's and master's degrees. He has over twenty-nine years of law enforcement experience, with twenty years of experience working at an executive level. He also has correctional officer experience and is currently employed with a local municipality in Maryland, where he holds the rank of police chief. The participant does not have any military experience, and currently oversees a small department of twenty-four police officers and three civilian employees.

Participant 6: He has an associate's and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. He has also completed first and second-level supervisor certification programs with the FLETC. He has twenty-three years of law enforcement experience, with ten years of experience working at an executive level. The participant served ten years in the U.S. Army. He also has five years of correctional officer experience and is currently employed with a local municipality in Maryland, where he holds the rank of major. He currently helps oversee a mid-size department of forty-six officers and eight civilian employees.

Interview Sites, Participants' Narratives, and Observations

Each interview and observation process were different. The communities of the participants are similar but the service they provide differs. NVivo transcription software was used to transcribe and analyze the participants' recorded responses. All the transcriptions are in the participants' own words. Field notes and unrecorded documented conversations were utilized during the observation phase.

Participant 1 Interview Site

On the interview day, I arrived at 6:00 AM at the department. As I approached the front door of the police station, the front door buzzed, and I was granted entry to the station's main lobby. Once in the lobby, a female officer behind a secure window asked if she could help me. I

stated my name and informed her I was there to meet with the chief. The female officer said, "We have been waiting for you." While in the lobby, I noticed they had pictures of the officers, supervisors, and dispatchers of the month and the year displayed on the wall. I also noticed that no photos of the police department's chain of command were on the walls.

A few minutes later, the inner lobby door buzzed, and I was able to enter the central part of the police department. As I walked into the central part of the department, I was greeted by someone who introduced himself as the watch commander (captain). I noticed the emergency communications center was located to the left of the main hallway, and it was staffed with four civilian personnel. The captain escorted me down the hallway to the chief's office. Adjacent to the hallway were the training/roll call room, the deputy chief's office, the supervisor/watch commander's office, the locked evidence room, and the chief's office. As we walked into Participant 1's office, I greeted him and thanked him for participating in the study. Next, I asked Participant 1 if it was ok if I recorded the interview; he stated, "Sure, if there is something I do not want to be recorded, I will let you know." After a few minutes of small talk, Participant 1 said, "Let us do this, neither one of us has all day." After completing the interview protocol, I informed participant 1 I would start with the demographic questions to understand his background better. After completing the demographic questions, I started with the interview questions.

Participant 1 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

Participant 1 stated:

> It is unfortunate, but my viewpoint on the matter is very impartial. I think that we have seen an increase of unarmed African America males being shot by the police. However,

> when you dive down a little deeper into the investigations, you will see that it is usually something else. There are many police-involved shootings per year, typically have about anywhere from 50 to 1000. When you break down police involved shootings by race, it is mostly you will have like 42% to 46% that are Caucasian. Organizations like Black Lives Matter, faith base advocates, and the media put the light on African American shootings and draw attention because we felt we have been mistreated.

After participant 1 responded, I explained that studies statistically show African Americans are 13% to 15% of the American population. Moreover, the research compares the race population and the police-involved shooting to develop their findings. Researchers collate the African American population and the police-involved shooting to validate their finding that African Americans make up 13% of the U.S. population but are being shot and killed three to six times more than Whites.

Participant 1 said:

> Yeah, I have read that, but you still have to look at the circumstances around the shootings. Caucasian law enforcement officers do not target African Americans, but I will say that to statistically look at the viewpoint of the police, it all comes down to the area where you live. Prince George's County is predominantly African American, and most of the contact you probably will have will be African American. But when it comes down to shooting, you can see that it may come down to the lack of compliance with officers or mental illness when you investigate it. There are a lot of factors that go into why individuals are shot. So, if you are trying to understand police-involved shootings, you must dive a little deeper into the totality of circumstances to figure out why those unarmed individuals were shot.

Participant 1 commented that he worked as an internal affairs investigator and has investigated several police shootings. He stated that:

> From my viewpoint on shootings of unarmed African Americans, I would say that it is alarming to everybody. But you have to put things in perspective and see what is the total number of people shot period and what the circumstances were.

Participant 1 was passionate during his response. At one point, his voice was elevated. Finally, he caught himself and apologized for raising his voice. We both laughed and continued the interview.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 1 stated:

> As leaders, we should help develop our leaders. First, we have to hire the right people for the job. Often, culturally, we hire people who are not normally accustomed to dealing with certain races. For example, they may encounter somebody using their hands to talk, or when speaking, some may see that as an act of aggression. They may perceive someone who used profanity when trying to tell their story as a threat. As the leader of this department, it is my responsibility to hire people who will serve the community no matter their race. In my recruitment and hiring process, I have an outside department conduct an initial background check on my applicant. After the outside agency completes their check and provides the information to me, I give it to my investigators, and they conduct a background check to see if the applicant is a good fit for our department. The outside department is checking to see if the applicant is qualified to be a police officer, according to the Maryland Police Commission. My investigator is checking to see if the applicant is a good fit for the department. I want to know how the

applicant interacts with people from other races and people in general. After being hired, I meet with every new hire and tell them what they can expect from me and what I expect from them. Then, after they are on board, it is my responsibility to provide them with culture and diversity training, so they will be able to serve the community effectively.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 1 responded:

> Cultural training is what is lacking! I think if officers have the proper training and learn to understand the differences in cultures and socialization that will go a long way in how we treat people on the street. For example, as part of my professional development before COVID, I took my sergeants and above to the African American Culture Museum and we went from the bottom to the top of the museum. Then I took them to the Holocaust Museum. I gave them a perspective of different cultures. As a leader, we should always increase our employee's awareness to try to help to get rid of some of the explicit and implicit biases that people have. So, for me, just being able to add these types of resources is going to help how we interact with people on the street.

Participant 1 added that when the COVID-19 Pandemic is over, he plans to take his line officers to the museums.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Participant 1 indicated:

> What I see to be most needed is selecting the right person for the job and culture and diversity training for the police personnel. I went one step further; I developed a Citizen

> Police Academy for the community. Anyone who is 18 years old can attend the academy. The purpose of the academy is to teach the citizens in the community why we respond to situations in a certain way. We encourage all of our residents and council members to come to our community police academy (Citizen Police Academy). So, they get that insight into what it is like being a police officer. We put them through shoot don't shoot scenario training, and we bring in our criminal law instructors and they discuss what to do if your child is stopped by the police. The Citizen Police Academy is a huge tool, and it is a great resource to bring the community in to give them a different perspective on what it is like to be a police officer and why officers make the decisions they make. But on top of that, they get some knowledge on the use of force, and can ask those questions. Also, what is not in place yet but is forthcoming is the implementation of an advisory board, which I am working on putting in place here. The advisory board will consist of members from the community, and they can come to talk to the chief and have conversations about officers' interaction or talk about the use of force.

Participant 1 also commented that unless the individual completes the Maryland Police Training Commission training, they will not be allowed to be a board member. The interview took longer than we planned.

Observation

After the interview, participant 1 gave me a tour of his department. We first stopped at the communication center (Dispatch Center). He introduced me to the staff. One of the employees asked me, "Why are you here? Are you our new deputy chief?" I replied, "No, I am not your new deputy chief." I explained to the staff that I was conducting research for my dissertation, and I interviewed their chief. Then we went to the roll call/ training room. I noticed

there were two sets of computer work areas, four in each set. I asked about the areas. Participant 1 stated:

> The five computers to the right are work computers. The officers use them to write reports, do research during an investigation, and receive and send departmental emails. The officer can use the five computers to the left for their personal use, checking emails, or do personal research.

Participant 1 took me upstairs and introduced me to the mayor and city manager. He explained to them what I was doing there. He also explained that the interview and observation are confidential and that the final draft will not be connected to the department or the city. They welcomed me to the city afterwards; then we went on patrol. As we drove through the community, I noticed everyone seemed to know participant 1. People would wave as we drove by, and some honked their car horns and waved. I saw firsthand what participant 1 was saying during the interview about community engagement. It appeared that everyone in the community liked and respected him. Participant 1 and I attended a city council meeting where he presented a proposal to update the department's weapons. He presented his proposal passionately and the city council approved the funding for the weapon upgrade. We attended a county chief of police association meeting where participant 1 was voted to be the association secretary. Participant 1's interaction with the community, coworkers, elected officials, and employees was always positive.

Post-Interview Reflection

I reflected on participant 1's interview while driving home. Even though he felt it was unfortunate that unarmed African American males were being shot and killed by White police officers, I could not understand how he believed White Americans are being shot and killed by

police more than Black Americans, particularly after he read the statistical data on police-involved shootings. At one point during the interview, I felt I crossed the line when the participant appeared to get upset during the discussion. Maybe by reminding him about the statistical data, he felt I was challenging his experience as an internal affairs investigator, and I know I crossed the line as a researcher. After the interview, I knew I wanted him to be the one who interviewed me for this study. I wanted him to hear my responses to the questions so he could hear another viewpoint on the topic. Although my responses may not change his mind, at least he could hear my thoughts on the topic without getting upset or feeling challenged.

Participant 2 Interview Site

As instructed, I arrived at the station at 9:00 AM on the interview day. I walked into the small lobby of the police department without any restriction. Once in the lobby, the captain buzzed me into the main part of the department. It was a small area that consisted of two desks with computers and three offices adjacent to the main room. One of the offices was being used as a storage closet. Instead of interviewing the captain in his office, he took me to a conference room. The conference room was adjacent to the meeting area used by the city council members. I also observed there were no employees or leadership photos displayed on the walls. The conference room wasn't well lit and the furniture looked old and worn. I thanked participant 2 for his willingness to participate in the study. I asked him if it was ok to record the interview, which he agreed to. I followed the above interview protocol to ensure the participant was aware of his rights as the research participant and signed the consent form.

Participant 2 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Participant 2 commented:

I think what has happened recently is a bad decision and poor judgment on the officers' part. A lot of times, deadly force is not necessary, especially when you are dealing with an unarmed person. Officers are trained to use their weapons in different circumstances and deadly force should be the last resort. You should really try to refrain from using deadly force. Taking a life is something that I do not think anybody wants to do, but you may have to in some cases. But in my view, hands-on is how I dealt with an unarmed person. I am trying to control the individual, not kill them. If an individual pulls out a weapon, then I will resort to my weapons. But only to the level of the weapon the individual is attempting to use. If an individual pulls out a knife, I can use my taser or pepper spray on them but not pull out my gun and shoot them. Besides, police officers are not trained to shoot to kill. We are trained to stop the threat, which does not always mean using a gun. So, my viewpoint on police-involved shootings is it happens too often to unarmed people, Blacks and Whites.

Participant 2 paused for a minute, then added:

I think recruitment and training are the keys to preventing police-involved shootings. I do not think any officer starts their day planning to kill someone. If the departments hire the right person for the job and train that person correctly, not that many shootings will occur. Like in corrections, you are taught how to deal with situations without using force. First, you are outnumbered in jails and prisons, so you have to be able to control the situation with your presence and verbal commands. Second, you are not accessible to the weapons that police officers have. I think if police officers start their law enforcement careers working in a jail or prison, they will develop the skills needed to deal with unarmed people on the street.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 2 commented:

> In Maryland, individuals can pay their way through a police academy at the local community college and then get hired by a police department, or they can get hired by a large police department, and the department pays the individual while they attend their academy. Either way, the individual has to have a background check completed. Most of my officers are recruited from the community college academy. I find that individuals that pay their way through the academy deal with the public better and have not developed any bad habits from another department. Therefore, I can train them on how they should act and respond to the citizens in this community. Besides, after a new officer has completed and passed the department's field training program (FTO), the officer goes on patrol with me for five days so I can evaluate the officer on what they were taught in the academy and during the FTO process.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 2 stated:

> As I stated earlier, hire the right person for the job and train them to do the job correctly. I think officers should start their law enforcement careers working in a prison. That is where you learn how to deal with people and deescalate situations without using your gun.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

What I see to be most needed in police reform is officer accountability. Not just the officer that did the act but also the officers that stood by and did nothing to stop the act should be held accountable. You see, the three officers in the George Floyd case were convicted for doing nothing to help George Floyd. When officers put their handcuffs on someone, they are responsible for their safety. That is police 101! When the other officers heard Floyd say he could not breath, someone should have stepped in to protect Floyd. It has nothing to do with whether you are Black or White. It is about human rights and safety.

Observation

Participant 2 and I went on patrol immediately after the interview. We drove around as he pointed out the city landmarks. We made a few stops at the neighborhood stores, apartment complexes, and his department substation during the day. I asked why we were stopping at those places. He stated, “I like to get out and let the business owners know we are there if they need us.” Going in and out of those locations, I noticed the participant's demeanor was a little aggressive toward a few of the citizens we encountered. On our way to another location, we were sitting at a stoplight waiting for it to change for us to proceed when someone ran through a red light. He hit his police lights and siren and pursued the light runner. After the car pulled off the road, we both got out of the cruiser and approached the vehicle. I maintained my distance and positioned myself near the rear on the vehicle's passenger side as the participant approached the driver. Again, I noticed he used an aggressive tone with the driver. Two of his officers drove up as we waited for participant 2 to check the vehicle and driver's information. After completing the vehicle, driver’s license, and insurance check, he issued the driver a ticket for running the light. When we got back into the cruiser, I stated, "You were a little harsh to the

driver, weren't you?" He stated, "No, I was not. They need to learn they cannot be breaking the law around here and get away with it." Then we departed the scene. Nothing noteworthy occurred the remainder of the day.

Post-Interview Reflection

Participant 2 was a police executive, but he performed more line officers' duties than executive duties. It appeared he enjoyed being out on patrol and not sitting in the office. Besides the interview, we spent more time outside on patrol even though he had a patrol supervisor. This interview was different from the first interview. Some of the interactions with the citizens were aggressive. During our patrol, I was thinking, if he was under my command, I would send him to interpersonal training so he would learn how to interact with the people he serves. I wondered if anyone has ever filed a complaint about his negative interaction and if the chief has done anything to correct it. I wonder if his behavior is an indication of the department's mindset.

Participant 3 Interview Site

As the researcher and a participant in this study, I responded to the interview questions as the other participants did. Since I am no longer employed as a law enforcement officer and do not work for a police department, I asked participant 1 to interview me for this study. Participant 1 agreed and offered his office as the interview location, but no observation was conducted. My interview took place three weeks after participant 1 received the transcription of his interview.

Participant 3 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

Participant 3 stated:

> What is my viewpoint on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males? As a former law enforcement executive, I cannot understand how unarmed

individuals are being shot and killed by police officers. I believe all police departments have a use of force policy and use of force continuum, and now some departments have computerized shoot/do not shoot training programs. Officers have other tools on their duty/utility belt to deploy on unarmed individuals besides their guns. They have pepper spray, an asp baton, and a taser, and if all else fails, they can call for backup. I think the problem is that we, as leaders, are hiring the wrong people for the positions and are not training them to the best of our ability. As leaders, we spend more time focused on getting people on the streets and reducing overtime; we miss the sign of a problem officer. In some cases, as I have read, even when the officer shows a sign of abuse toward citizens, some departments ignore the incident and try to cover it up. That gives an officer the idea that they can do what they want without being held accountable. Being a former correctional officer, I think police officers should spend some time working in prisons before being given a gun and sent out on the street. Being a correctional officer teaches you how to deal with situations without escalating them to a point where you must use your gun. So, I think police-involved shootings of unarmed persons, regardless of the ethnic group, are wrong. But, again, we as leaders must do a better job hiring the right people, whether they are Black or White or another ethnic group and training that person to deal with all ethnic groups within the community they serve.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 3 commented:

> Well, working for the federal government, our recruitment and hiring process is a little different from the state and local levels. We all interview and select our officers, but we

do not have any control over the selectees' background checks at the federal level. Another federal agency conducts applicants' background checks, and the only thing they are trying to verify is that the applicant is not a threat to national security. Even though we call the applicant's references and conduct interviews, we do not adjudicate the background check results. So, if the individual is not a threat to national security, we do not know what type of employee we are getting until they are on board. Then we must spend time getting rid of them if their habits do not align with the department's goals and objectives. I remember one time I hired a person straight out of the military, thinking this person was already trained and it should not take much for him to adjust to being a civilian police officer. How wrong I was! This employee did not want to come to work, and when he did come, he would come late. He had several negative run-ins with just about everyone he encountered within the community. It took about a year to fire that person.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 3 stated:

As law enforcement leaders, we must do a better job selecting the people we hire. Then train those people how to interact with all races. I think we as leaders should provide our new and old officers with cultural and diversity training because they will encounter people from different ethnic groups. I think that would reduce police-involved shootings.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Participant 3 stated:

> More police accountability is needed in police reform. I think the message that officers will be held accountable for their actions has been sent with the conviction of former Minneapolis Officer Derek Chauvin and the three officers with him. Even though police officers shooting and killing people regardless of the ethnic group is not anything new, it is just being more publicized now because of social media. Unfortunately, you still do not hear about every police-involved shooting that occurs in the U.S. You just hear about the ones that hit the social media platforms. I think better recruitment, cultural and diversity training, and officer accountability will reduce the police-involved shooting of unarmed citizens.

Post-Interview Reflection

It was my turn to be the participant instead of the researcher, and I could not wait for participant 1 to hear my responses. To be honest, being interviewed by participant 1 was uneventful, and I did not react the way I was anticipating. He asked questions and took notes but did not display any emotions. I felt he was in interrogation mode, not in interview mode.
I think he deployed the tactic he learned as an internal affairs investigator when interrogating someone. He was stone-faced the entire interview. I was disappointed because I did not know if he got what I was trying to tell him during his interview or if he felt I challenged him during his interview. But nevertheless, the interview was completed.

Participant 4 Interview Site

This interview was conducted by Zoom. At 10:00 AM I Zoom with the Commissioner with he was is his officer at the police station. It appeared to be bookshelves lined the walls in the commissioner's office. He had a big wooden desk that matched the bookshelves. It appeared

he had training certifications and photos on the other wall in his office. I thanked participant 4 for his willingness to participate in the study. I asked him if it was ok if I recorded the interview, and he agreed to allow the interview to be recorded. I followed the above interview protocol to ensure the participant knew his rights as a research participant, and we signed the consent form. We had a few minutes of small talk to get to know one another. He asked me about my background in law enforcement, which I told him. Then he stated, "Thank you for asking me to participate in your research. Let us do this because I know you have better things to do than hang around here all day."

Participant 4 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

Participant 4 knocked on his desk twice as a sign of good luck and stated:

> Thank God it has not happened here, and I have not had to deal with it. I think the problem starts with recruitment. People become police officers for different reasons. Some joined to serve the public, some joined because of the job security, and some because they really want to do a good job protecting the public. But I think we as leaders miss the signs of a potential bad officer during the recruitment process and after they are hired. You would not know if an individual had an issue until you hire them in most cases. At that point, I blame the leadership, including myself, for why the officers are killing so many unarmed Black and White citizens. Look at the Derek Chauvin and George Floyd case. Chauvin had prior complaints of excessive force filed against him before his encounter with Floyd. Chauvin's leadership did not take appropriate action to correct Chauvin's behavior from the news reports. I started my law enforcement career with this department many years ago. I was also fortunate enough to work with my

father here for four years before I left to work with the local school police department. So, I am second-generation law enforcement. Now I am back here as the commissioner. I have worked with most of the employees in this department, and they already know my standards on how to respect the citizens. So, my viewpoint on police-involved shootings of unarmed males, whether Black, White, or any other ethnic group, is that it's wrong, and the officers should be held accountable for their actions.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 4 stated:

The recruitment and hiring process was one of the first things I changed when I took over. Many departments, including this one when I got here, prioritized applicant high tests scores. However, I just do not want someone that can pass a test; I want someone who can interact with the community without causing problems. So, I look at the applications' psychological examination and background checks as a priority for this department. Just about anyone can pass the test to be a police officer. Ours like other departments, have an outside company conduct our psychological exams. But the company that conducts our exams knows this department's standards and ensures the applicant can work within our standards and policies. As for the applicant's background check, my internal affairs unit conducts the background checks, not an outside department. My viewpoint is that internal affairs are already employed with the department and are familiar with the department's standards and policies. Besides, the job is to investigate officers accused of wrongdoing. So, if they conduct the initial background check, they should be able to identify any potential bad apples. That is being proactive instead of reactive.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 4 stated:

> I think if every department does their due diligence to hire the right person for the job and takes the time to train the individual so they will follow the laws and policies, that will reduce the police shootings of unarmed citizens. I really do not think you will be able to eliminate police-involved shootings because we do not have a national or state-mandated hiring process. Each department sets its recruiting and hiring process, and sometimes bad apples slip through the process, and you do not know it until they do something wrong.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Participant 4 stated:

> The most important aspect of the new police reform is holding officers accountable for their actions. But even that is hard! Of course, the police unions will fight tooth and nail for their members. But, in some cases, even if the officers are found to be wrong, their leadership does not take the proper action to correct the behavior or terminate the employee. That is why I say it is the responsibility of the leadership to be proactive when it comes to the recruiting and hiring processes.

Observation

The participant unavailable for observation.

Post-Interview Reflection

Participant 4 had a serving approach, which was similar to how I ran my departments. I think by him being second generation law enforcement, he has witnessed the positive and negative aspects that come with being a black police officer through his father's experiences. I could tell

he felt grateful to be in his position and wanted to do an excellent job for the city. I could tell he was proud that he left the department as an officer and returned as the commissioner. It was a pleasure to interview him.

Participant 5 Interview Site

On the interview day, I arrived at the station at 9:30 AM. One of the department's sergeants was sitting at the desk in the front of the station. The sergeant came to the window and asked if he could help me. I asked if the captain was in. I told him my name and heard a voice from one of the offices telling the sergeant to let me in. The sergeant opened the door and pointed to the chief's office. The sergeant said, "You can just go into the office." I thanked the sergeant and walked into the chief's office. The chief was sitting in the office with his captain. The chief arose from his desk and walked to me to greet me. We shook hands and I thanked him for taking the time to be interviewed. He stated, "No problem, I am glad to help." I gave him a copy of my resume so he could get a bit of my background and build a rapport. The chief's office had two desks facing each other for him and the captain. There was a safe where the new weapons were being stored. There were also two file cabinets, a blue sofa against the wall, and two single black chairs in the center of the office. After completing the interview protocol, I informed participant 5 that I would start with the demographic questions to understand his background better. Therefore, I will begin with the interview questions after completing the demographic questions.

Participant 5 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Participant 5 stated:

There are way too many shootings of unarmed African American males! It is because the police across the country do not know about the culture of Black Americans. I believe that has a lot to do with current and past years of racism in this country which is still relevant today. I believe it is due to the lack of cultural education in the police departments. We do not trust the police agencies because of our culture and the relationship between African Americans and their history with the police. The trust cannot be established until we decide to educate the police departments on African males' culture. Right now, African American males are seen as dangerous. So, when police encounter African American males, many interactions across the country are escalated instead of de-escalated, which causes them to become confrontational and results in shootings. We have a use of force continuum which establishes our de-escalation protocol. It begins with the officer's presence, which is followed by using verbal commands and other means to de-escalate the situation. The last resort is using the firearm. If you notice in a lot of shootings, there is a verbal altercation instead of de-escalation, straight to the use of a handgun. Over the years this has grown, especially within the past years. There are African American males around this country dying every day, because of the belief that police departments do not know the culture of Black American males. I can give you a prime example. In the Black culture, we like to hang out in groups. The police see that as a threat. They see that as something negative. That's a part of our social makeup. We hang out in groups and we talk. I'll give you another example. At the barber shops, we like to go to the barbershop and communicate. We get in groups and we talk about what's happening, including sports other current events. That's our way of sharing information. It doesn't have to mean anything bad, but

that's just our culture and the way our ancestors did it and that's the way we do it. The police see a group of Blacks. If they see more than two Blacks congregating that indicates something illegal is going on, which is not always the case; however, they perceive the gathering as dangerous and a confrontation ensues most of the time.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 5 stated:

Well, my agency is a small agency. Since we are a small agency, which is one of 27 municipalities in this area, we try to recruit individuals we can retain. The most significant hinderance regarding retention is our low pay. This causes our employees to leave our agency and go to another agency that pays more. We hire individuals who pass the regular background check, and we also try to hire people who can relate to the community. One of the questions we might ask is, where have our candidates worked in the past. We do thorough background checks, especially the background investigation, with neighbors in the community to see what kind of person the applicant is. We even go back to their high school to find out what kind of background the individual had. I'm looking for a police force that is community-oriented and can work well with different backgrounds and cultures.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 5 stated:

As I stated earlier, until the police departments and the community develop an understanding, this will continue to happen at this rate. One of the things I spoke about in recent interviews was to make sure police departments know about the Black culture first and foremost. If they learn about the Black culture, this will transition their

interactions from being mostly negative to more positive. After the education in the police departments, we should focus on being transparent as an agency. We would then be able to encourage community policing, which will ultimately reduce the number of shootings of unarmed African American males. We have a long way to go. Until this happens, we will never move forward.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Participant 5 stated:

> What's most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males are transparency, accountability, and education, which consists of sensitivity training, racial biases, and myths.

Observation

The participant did not have the time to be observed. He had to attend to departmental business.

Post-Interview Reflection

Participate 5 was the new police chief of the department. Even though the chief agreed to be interviewed, I did not want to interview him in front of his captain. I thought if the new chief said something the captain disagreed with, it would get out to departmental staff and cause problems for the chief down the line. I know firsthand that you are looked at as an outsider as a new chief until you prove yourself to your staff. As a new chief, every decision I made was scrutinized by my staff. This is how they determine how you will lead the department and if they would want to work for you or not.

Participant 6 Interview Site

As instructed, I arrived at the station at 7:00 AM on the interview day. The major met me in the lobby and ordered the male officer posted at the desk to issue me a visitor badge. The same officer buzzed the door, allowing us to enter the department's main lobby. The major informed me the chief was holding roll call and we were going to the training room. After roll call, I greeted the chief, then the major and I went to the major's office. The major's wall displayed the things he has accomplished over the years. The major had his degrees, certificate of accommodation from the mayor, and a medal of honor framed on the wall. On the top of a bookshelf was a plaque given to him four years ago by his officers and the community for being an outstanding leader. The plaque read:

> **A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't know necessarily want to go, but ought to be.**

I asked him about the plaque. He stated, "Out of every accomplishment, I received so far in law enforcement, that one means the most to me. I have always tried to do right by my officers and the community, and I wasn't sure if I was doing a good job until I was presented that plaque." I congratulated the major and shook his hand for being an outstanding leader. After completing the interview protocol, I informed participant 6 I would start with the demographic questions to understand his background better. After completing the demographic questions, I will begin with the interview questions.

Participant 6 Personal Narratives

1. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

Participant 6 stated:

It is sad when anyone gets shot, but I cannot understand how officers are shooting unarmed people, whether they are Black or White. Unfortunately, most of the unarmed civilians being shot and killed by White officers are young Black men. One of my White officers stated it was population control. I corrected him on the spot in front of his peers. The next day in all three roll calls, I addressed that thinking and told everyone that mindset would not be tolerated in this department. If you feel that way, you need to go to work in another department. The officer who made that comment stood up and apologized to everyone for making that comment and anyone he has offended and for disrespecting the uniform and the department. I thought that was very big of the White officer to apologize. So, what do I think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males? It needs to stop and the officers that do it should go to jail just like any other person who shoots an unarmed person.

2. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

Participant 6 stated:

Well, our recruitment and hiring process might be a little different than other departments. When I was hired as the operation officer, the prior chief said he was getting too many complaints from the citizens about how the officers were treating them and he told me to fix it and stop the complaints. I first evaluated the department. The department then consisted primarily of White males. There was one Black male and three White female officers in the department. The Black male worked on the night shift while the three White female officers worked in and around the public schools. I started attending the community association and church meetings where I heard the complaints myself. I returned, briefed the chief, and asked if I could change the recruitment process.

Most departments hire someone outside their departments to conduct their applicants' background checks. Fortunately for us, we have an investigation and an internal affairs unit. I took one officer from each unit and made them my background investigators and recruiters. But before I sent them out to do background checks and recruiting, I took them with me to a few community associations and church meetings so they could hear the complaints for themselves. I sent them to ethics, diversity, and a refresher background investigation training. I think the department should reflect the public they serve. I am not sure if you are aware, but here in Maryland, individuals can pay their way through a police academy through the community college. I like hiring those individuals because first, they invested in themselves and second, they haven't developed any bad habits yet. We do hire veteran officers but ensure they know they are here to serve the community. Well, my plan worked. Now we have a very diverse department. The department is comprised of men and women with Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds. Now the department reflects the entire community we serve.

3. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Participant 6 stated:

I think police-involved shootings can be reduced by departments developing a hiring process to ensure their departments represent the communities they serve. Additionally, ethics and diversity training are great tools as well. I don't mean just taking the course and you are done. I mean, the same amount of time we spend at the range practicing with our weapons, we should spend understanding other ethnic groups. We don't know from day to day who may need our help, so we should be culturally aware of different ethnic

groups. I know it works for this department! The diversity and ethics training are part of our department's annual in-service training and it includes role players. The role players act out different incidents that could have and have happened and then the class discusses how to handle the situation. Everyone attends the training and the chief hasn't received any complaints from the citizens.

4. What do you see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Participant 6 commented:

> I think the new police reform has addressed it, holding officers accountable for their actions. A few ethics and diversity courses wouldn't hurt either. I also think the leadership should be held accountable as well. Officers must understand their job is not a Law-and-Order episode where the officer shoots someone and 30 minutes later, they are cleared of the shooting. They need to know if they shoot unarmed people, they can go to jail just like anyone else. Leadership that has condoned such bad behavior should be held accountable too. I am sure if you check the personnel records of officers who have shot and killed a Black male, they have at least one complaint filed against them, and their leadership did nothing to correct their behavior. Look at Derek Chauvin! It was reported that he had three prior complaints filed against him but his leadership did nothing. So now you have one man dead and four in jail.

Observation

The major did not have the time to be observed. He was scheduled to conduct active shooter training for his department.

Post-Interview Reflection

I could tell participant 6 had been in his department for a while. His officers joked with him like he was one of the guys, but they showed him the utmost respect. I could tell the energy between him and his staff was positive, except for the incident where he corrected a white officer for saying "the killing of unarmed black males is population control." I wanted positive energy with my staff, but most of the time I felt my efforts were futile. Unfortunately for me, he had a busy schedule, and I could not accompany him to his departmental activities. I think I would've enjoyed seeing him out in the community interacting with the civilians.

Interview Transcription and Member Checking

At the end of each interview and observation day with the participants, I uploaded the audio recording into the NVivo, a transcription software program on my computer for transcribing and coding. After the data was transcribed, their transcribed data was sent to the participants for validation. After receiving the participants' responses, I coded the participants' interview responses for similarities and organized the data into emergent themes.

Focus Groups

Getting all the participants together for a focus group was challenging because of their work and personal obligations. Additionally, because of the COVID-19 restrictions being lifted, the participants wanted to engage with their community as they did per to COVID-19. As a result, one participant was unavailable to participate in the focus group discussion. A second focus group was with participant 5 and 6.

Focus Group Sites

The first focus group consisted of participants 1, 2, and 3. Because of the geographical location of participant 1 and participant 2, participant 1 hosted the focus group in his department's conference room. The second focus group consisted of participant 3, 5, and 6. Participant 5 hosted focus group in his office.

First Focus Group Narratives

I provided participants 1 and 2 with a copy of the focus group informed consent form to review and sign. After completing the interview protocol, I informed the Participants that there were four questions that I would like to discuss during the focus group.

1. Do you see any opportunities or strategies to support this reform through education and training? If so, please describe.

Participant 1 stated:

> Absolutely, education and training are the keys to the success of police reform. The more you and your employees are knowledgeable about police reform, other ethnic groups, and their communities, the better the reform will be.

Participant 2 commented:

> All this is good, but officers and, in some cases, their leaders need to be held accountable the officer's actions. If the officers and leaders know they will be held accountable, they would thing before they act.

Participant 3 agreed with participants 1 and 2s' comments and added that we also should be doing a better job in recruitment. Participants 1 and 2 agreed.

2. Have you been involved in any local, regional, or national reform efforts?

Participant 2 stated:

> The only police reform I am involved in is reforming my department to follow the new police reform and serve our community better.

Participant 1 added:

I am also reforming my department, but I am also transparent with the community I serve. I want them to know we are here to serve and protect them, and there is no thin blue line with my department. It is not them against us! It is us against the criminals.

3. What do you see as the future of police reform?

Participant 2 commented:

> I see the new police reform sending a lot of officers to prison if they do not conform to the new reform. With social media and everyone having cameras and videos on their phones, officers' actions are broadcast on social media before the leadership knows what has happened and can respond to it.

Participant 1stated:

> Besides, officers are now wearing body cams, and that can either help or damage an officer, depending on their actions.

Participant 3 agreed with the other participants' responses.

4. What do you think about police officers working as correctional officers prior to working as police officers on the street?

Participant 2 stated:

> I think it would be a good practice but that would not ever happen. A lot of officers do not want to go into a prison and pick up a person for questioning because they have to give up their weapons.

Participant 3 commented,

> I remember one time when I was working in the prison control room when two police officers came to pick up an inmate to question him about a murder, they thought he had committed while he was on the street. The officers drove into the sallyport, where inmates could securely enter vehicles without escaping. The officers got out of their car and started pulling on the door, trying to enter the prison. I got on the intercom system and asked the officers to come to the window. When the officer got to the window, I informed them that if they wanted to come in, they would have to give me their weapons because outside weapons were not allowed in the institution. One of the officers said, I am not giving up my weapon and the other said, well can you bring the inmate out to us? I informed the officers that one of them would have to come in and sign for the inmate before he could be released to them. They looked at each other and said, "I am not giving up my weapon." They turned to me and said, "He won't be picked up today if we have to give up our weapons."

Participant 1 stated:

> He remembered a similar incident like that when he worked in the prison system. He went on to say, there is a shortage of correctional and police officers. With the social media and the news handpicking the negative things a few police officers have done, it makes us all look bad. No one wants to be a police officer anymore, and unless you have been exposed to the penal system, people do not know what a correctional officer is.

Participant 3 stated:

> As a correctional officer, I learned how to keep my cool in a stressful situation and how to deescalate situations. I was always outnumbered working in a housing unit. It was

> usually me with 90 to 120 inmates at any time. All I had to use for protection was my radio to call for help, a pair of handcuffs, and pepper spray. But working in that environment taught me self-control, and I transferred that to the street and leadership. Because I know the inmates could overrun the prison at any time they wanted because we were outnumbered. But most of them just want to do their time and go home.

Both participants agreed with participant 3's comment.

Second Focus Group Narratives

1. Do you see any opportunities or strategies to support this reform through education and training? If so, please describe.

Participant 6 stated,

> Yes, education and training are the keys to police reform. During the reform, it is time for the field to take a hard look at itself. We need to look at where policing originated from and has been for so long and look for ways to improve the field. I think we need a national standard for the police field that way. We all should be trained and educated the same. If I am not mistaken, that is what the fire department does. I believe they have a national training and education standard.

Participant 3 committed:

> I agree with the major; we need to look at ourselves hard. But, as leaders, we also must take a hard look at the people we are hiring, how we are training them and what we are emphasizing when we are teaching them whether they are new or seasoned officers. If we spend more time at the range than we do training on culture awareness, it is just as much our fault as the officer who pulled the trigger.

2. Have you been involved in any local, regional, or national reform efforts?

Participants 5 and 6 stated they had not been involved in police reform besides within their departments.

3. What do you see as the future of police reform?

Participant 5 stated:

> In my opinion, we will get through the latest reform with very few changes nationwide, then things will go back to how they were, sadly. All I know is that as long as I wear a police uniform, I will respect everyone I come in contact with and demand that everyone under my command does the same. If I have to use my weapon, it will be because someone had a weapon trying to hurt me or someone else.
>
> Participant 3 and 6 agreed with participant 5's statement.

4. What do you think about police officers working as correctional officers prior to working as police officers on the street?

Participant 6 commented:

> No offense, some of these current police officers would not be police officers if they were required to work in a jail or prison before working on the streets. I guess firefighters and correctional officers are alike. For firefighters, people may ask why they want to run into a building that you know is burning down. For correctional officers, people may ask why they want to work in a building where they know individuals are murderers, rapists, and all-around criminals. All I know is that it takes heart to work as a correctional officer. When I worked in the prison system, I was outnumbered by 50 to 100 inmates at any given time. And the only thing I had to protect myself was my respect, handcuffs, radio, and pepper spray. But one thing being a correctional officer taught me was how to defuse a situation without killing someone or getting hurt myself.

Participant 5 stated:

> That's a great question. As stated earlier, I had a correctional officer background before joining the police department. Working in the correctional facility is actually a great way to get job training and field training. I think it's a great way for police officers to understand the black culture, since most of the people incarcerated are Black American males. You see the behavior; you see the reactions; you understand their culture; you understand them and everything in that environment because you're around them 24 hours a day in that facility. Even though they're locked down, they still express their culture and their meaning. They will stand up for what the Black culture is about. They're just in an incarcerated state, but they're still in an environment with their race and how they communicate is the same as they do on the street. They're just in a different environment. But as I stated earlier, I was able to study and learn a lot. Even though I'm an African American, I was able to learn a lot of things I didn't know about the culture and the street life that the police deal with daily, being a street officer on patrol. My experience as a correctional officer was very useful. I learned a lot, and it made me a better officer over my 29 years in law enforcement.

During the focus groups, the participants specified that they must stick together to survive in their positions. As a former police executive, I know how having a target on your back feels. One wrong statement or action and your officers, leadership, community, or the media can complain, and you can be out of a job. So, it is comforting to have someone in the same position as you to discuss issues you are facing.

After each focus group, I uploaded the audio recording into the NVivo on my computer for transcribing and coding. After the data was transcribed, I sent the participants 1 and 2 the

transcribed data for validation. After receiving the participants' responses, I coded the focus group data for similarities and organized the data into emergent themes. Additionally, I provided the participants a debriefing statement to ensure I still had their consent to use their data for the study (Appendix I).

Analysis and Synthesis of the Data Sources

Participant Interview Analysis

In the findings, the researcher analyzed each data source independently, followed by a combined analysis to achieve synthesis across the data sources. Data sources include participant's interviews, observations, and the two focus groups.

Analysis, Reflection, Discovery, and Word Cloud

Participant 1 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-3 Participant 1's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Investigation Shootings	"dive down a little deeper into the investigations, you will see that it is usually something else."
Training	"have the proper training and learn to understand the differences in cultures and socialism":
Citizen Police Training	"Anyone who is 18 years old can attend the academy. The purpose of the academy is to teach the citizens in the community why we respond to situations in a certain way."
Recruitment	"see if the applicant is a good fit for the department."

Figure 4-1 Participant 1's Word Cloud

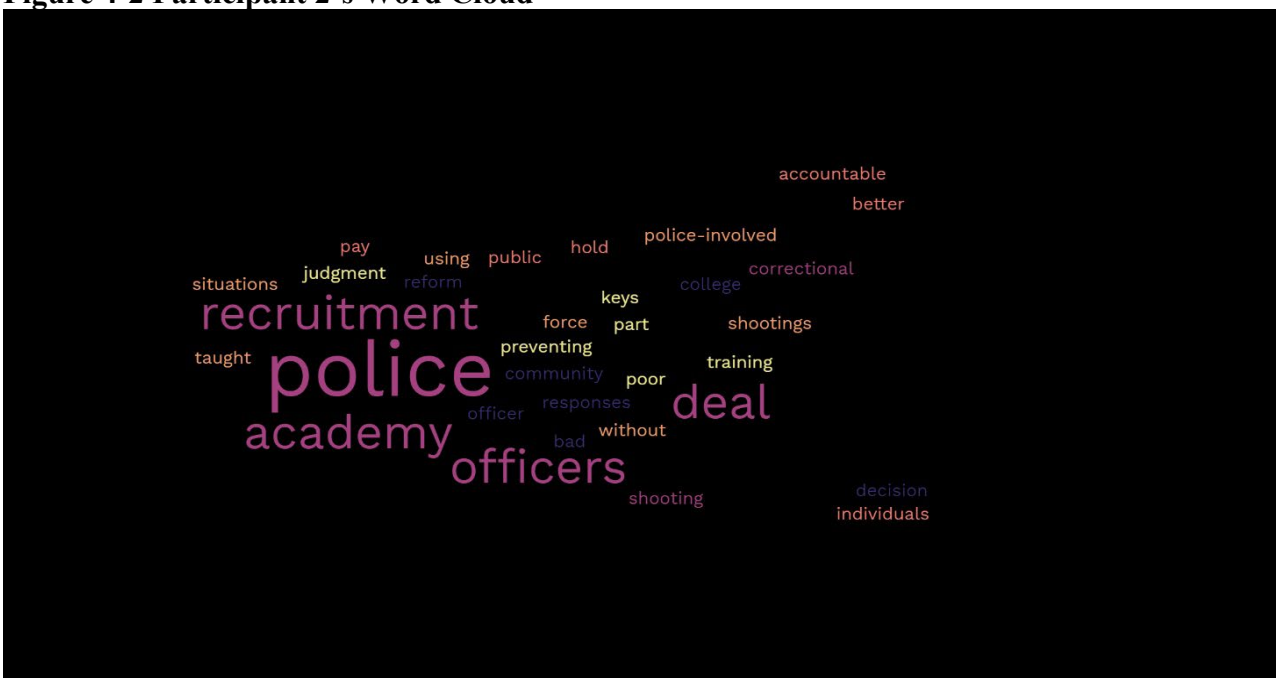
As shown in Figure 4, Participant 1 most emphasized the words training, police, and academy. The researcher found that the use of words was relevant to answering the research questions.

Participant 2 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-4 Participant 2's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Police Shooting	"bad decision and poor judgment on the officers' part"
Recruitment	"recruitment and training are the keys to preventing police-involved shootings."
Correctional Officer	"you are taught how to deal with situations without using force."
Community College Police Academy	"individuals that pay their way through the academy deal with the public better"
Police Reform	"Hold officers accountable"

Figure 4-2 Participant 2's Word Cloud



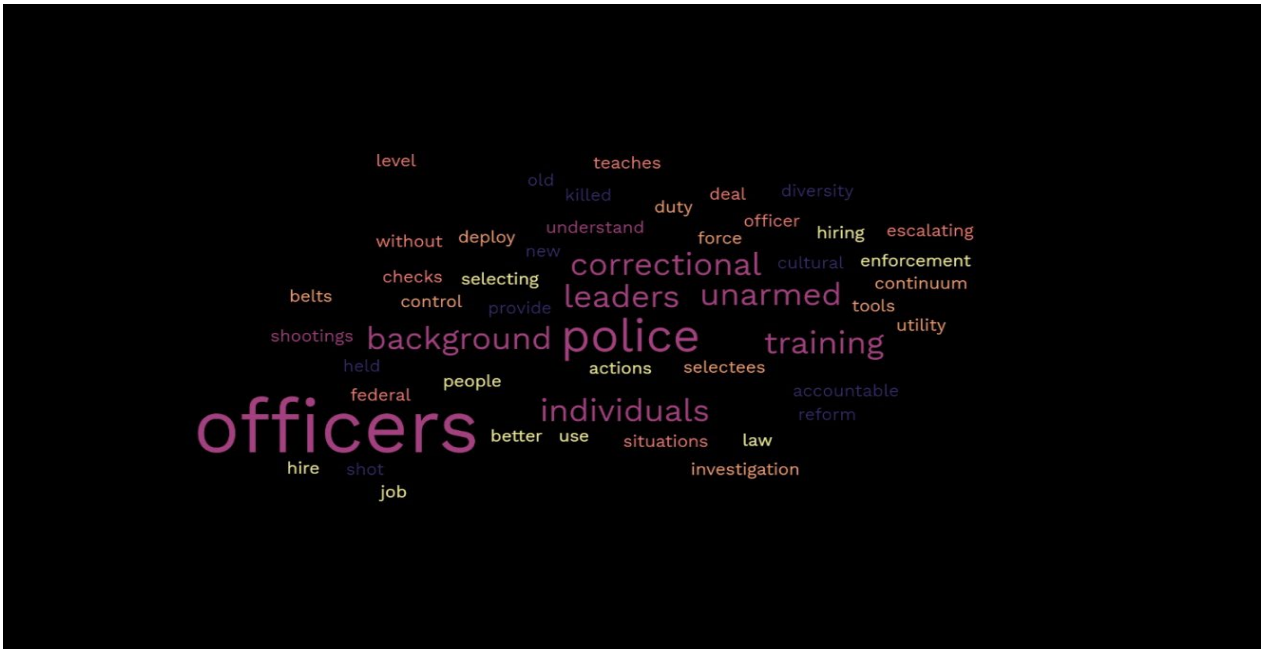
As shown in Figure 4, Participant 2 most stressed the words police, recruitment, officer, academy, and deal. The use of the word "deal" was irrelevant to answering the research questions.

Participant 3 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-5 Participant 3's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Police Shootings	"cannot understand how unarmed individuals are being shot"
Training	"leaders should provide cultural and diversity training"
Police Reform	"officers will be held accountable for their actions"
Hiring	"leaders, we must do a better job selecting the people we hire."
Use of Force Continuum	"Officers have other tools on their duty/utility belts to deploy"
Background Investigation	"do not have any control over the selectees' background checks"
Correctional Officers	"correctional officers know how to deal with situations without force"

Figure 4-3 Participant 3's Word Cloud



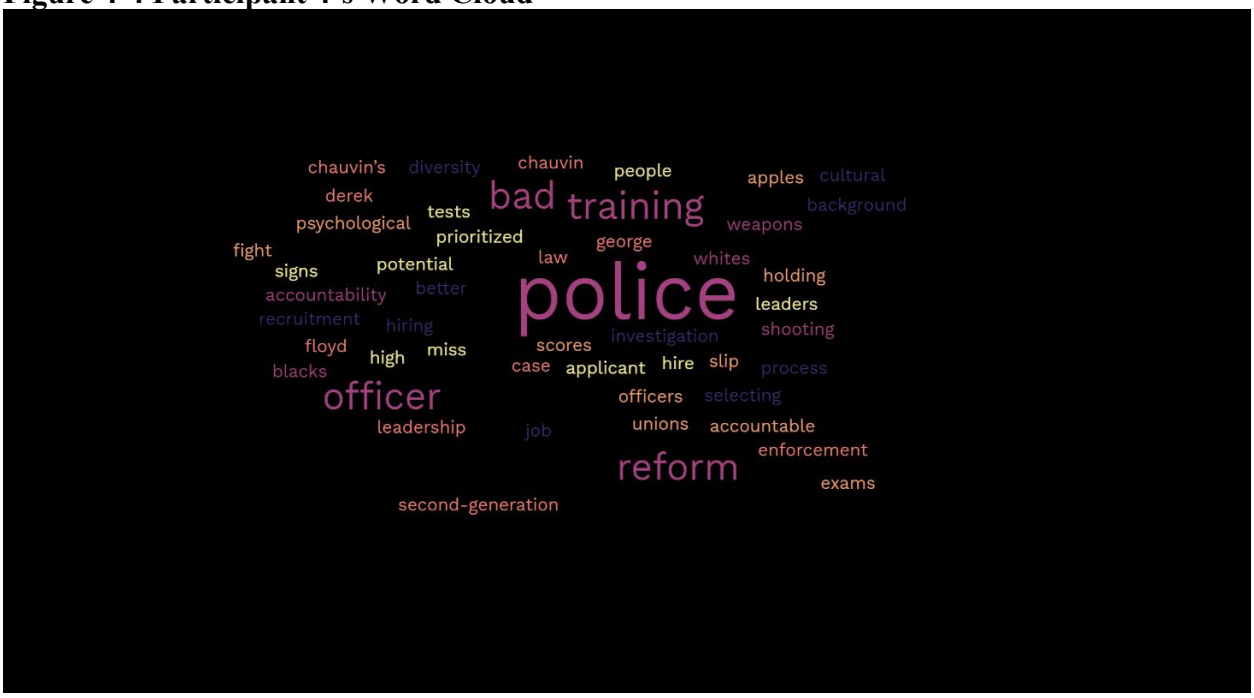
As shown in Figure 4, Participant 3 most stressed the words officer, police, correctional, unarmed, leaders, training, and background. All the words used were relevant to answering the research questions.

Participant 4 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-6 Participant 4's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Police Shootings	"leaders miss the signs of a potential bad officer"
Recruitment and Hiring Process	"prioritized applicant high tests scores and psychological exams, bad apples slip through"
Police Reform	"holding officers accountable, police unions will fight"

Figure 4-4 Participant 4's Word Cloud



As shown in Figure 4, Participant 4 most highlighted the words officer, police, training, reform, and bad. The use of the word "bad" was irrelevant to answering the research questions.

Participant 5 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-7 Participant 5's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Police Shootings	"police across the country do not know about the culture of Black Americans"
Recruiting and Hiring Process	"hire people who can relate to the community"
shootings of unarmed African American males	"police departments and the community develop an understanding; this will continue to happen at this rate"
Police Reform	"transparency, accountability, and education, which consists of sensitivity training, racial biases, and myths"

Figure 4-5 Participant 5's Word Cloud

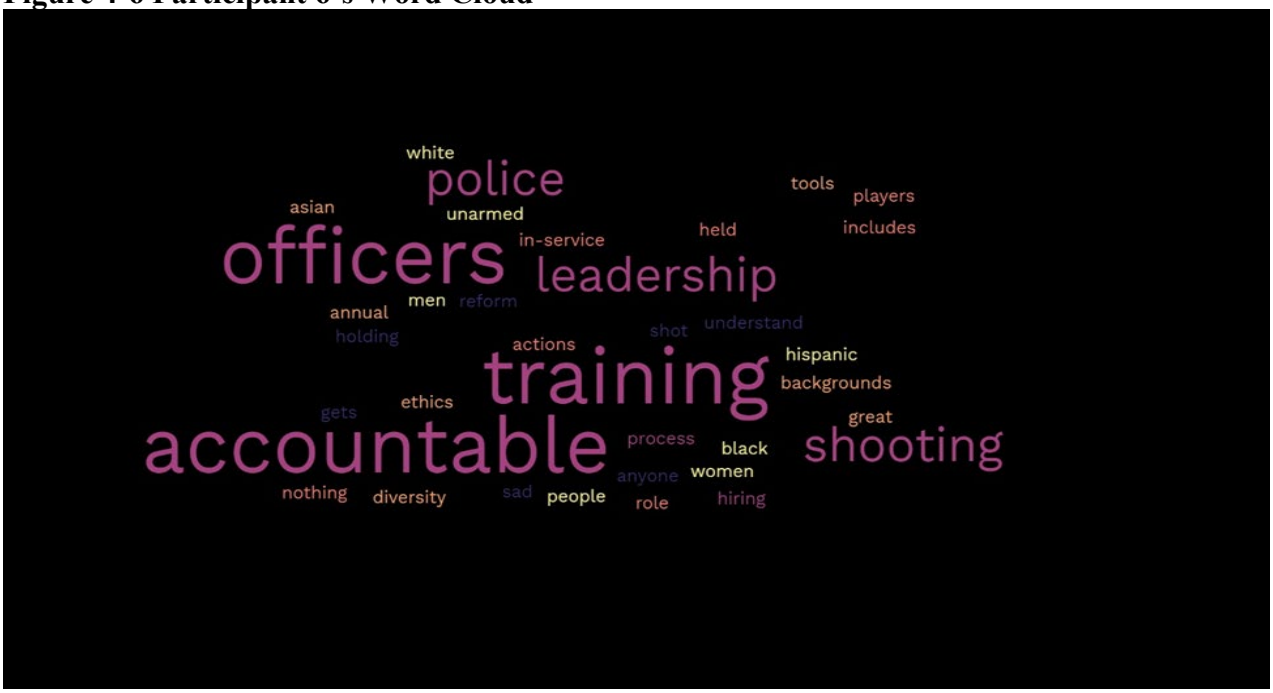
As shown in Figure 4, Participant 5 most emphasized the words police, training, reform, and community. The researcher found that the use of words was relevant to answering the research questions.

Participant 6 Analysis, Reflection, and Discovery

Table 4-8 Participant 6's Reflections, Discoveries, and Responses

Reflections and Discoveries	Responses
Police-Involved Shootings	"sad when anyone gets shot, but I cannot understand how officers are shooting unarmed people"
Hiring	"men and women with Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds."
Training	"ethics and diversity training are great tools, annual in-service training and it includes role players"
Reform	"leadership should be held accountable, officers accountable for their actions, leadership did nothing"

Figure 4-6 Participant 6's Word Cloud



As shown in Figure 4, Participant 6 most emphasized the words accountable, officer, police, training, leadership, and shooting. The researcher found that the use of words was relevant to answering the research questions.

Combined Participant Analysis Reflection

The participant combined data analysis from the interviews and focus group reveal the words background check, recruitment process, reflects the community, diversity, cultural, use of force policies, use of force continuum, accountably, police officer. After grouping the categories, four themes established to include police recruiting process, police training, departmental policies, and correctional officers (Figure 1 and Table 4.9).

Table 4-9 Themes, Subthemes and Example of Responses

Themes	Subthemes	Example of Responses
Police Recruiting	Background check Recruitment process Reflects the community	"background check to see if the applicant is a good fit for our department." "recruitment and training are the keys to preventing police-involved shootings."
Police Training	Diversity Cultural	"responsibility to provide them with culture and diversity training, so they will

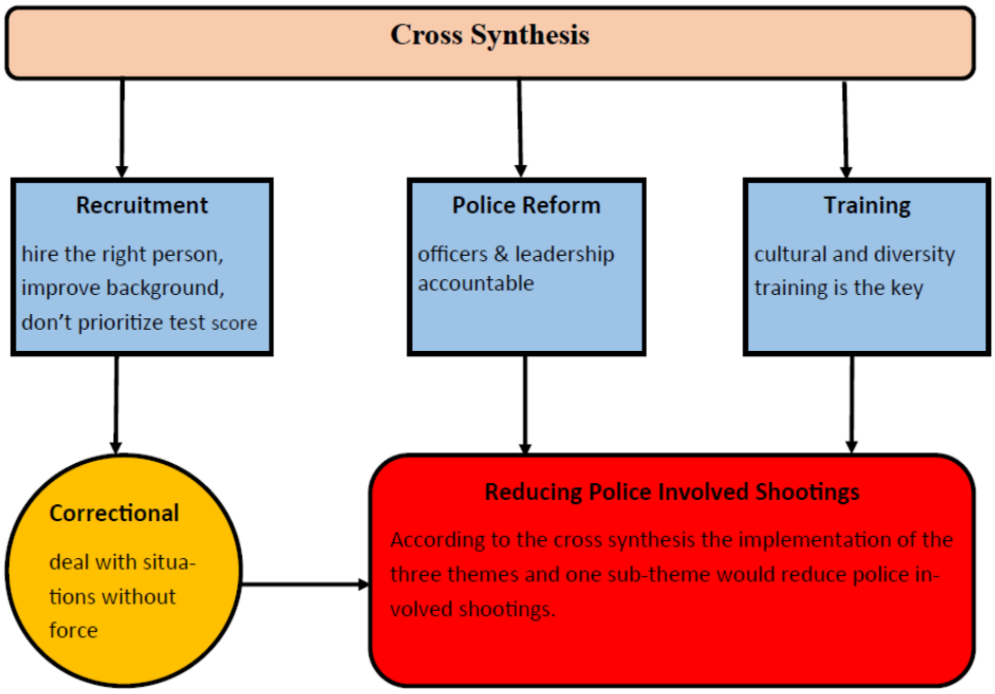
	Ethnicity	be able to serve the community effectively." "officers need ethnicity and diversity training."
Departmental Policies	Use of force policies Use of force continuum Accountably Transparency	"policies, that will reduce the police shootings of unarmed citizens." "departments have a use of force policy and use of force continuum" "new police reform is holding officers accountable for their actions." "transparent with the community I serve."
Correctional officers	Police officer	"police officers should spend some time working in prisons before being given a gun and sent out on the street."

Figure 4-7 Combined Participant Word Cloud

Data Cross synthesis

Synthesis in research is combining; instead of summarizing the main points of each source, you put together the ideas and findings of multiple sources to make an overall point (Lockwood & Porritt, 2015). Basically, you look for similarities and differences between the data collected. Cross-synthesis in research refers to integrating existing knowledge from research findings pertinent to a topic. The purpose of cross-synthesis is to increase the generality and applicability of those findings and to develop new knowledge through the process of integration (Cox, & Lowrie, 2015). In other words, the cross-synthesis of data provides a deeper understanding of the research data.

Figure 4-8 Cross synthesis



The cross-synthesis of the data revealed police recruitment, police reform, and police training as the key factors that could reduce police-involved shootings of unarmed citizens. As discussed in this study, the participants hire individuals who are already state-certified as police officers or who have paid their way through a community college police program. Milton Police Department in Wisconsin is changing the way they recruit police officers by updating their department's academy attendee pay scale and implementing commitment contracts.
Myers (2021) writes:

> Attracting not only more candidates but the right candidates for police officer positions requires a different approach, the chief said. "What we were finding is that we were getting fewer applicants overall, which is a theme in law enforcement throughout the county," Marquardt said. "Because we were limiting the pool of candidates to only those who already were certifiable, our pool grew even smaller." (p. 1)

In this new approach, the city hires individuals as officers, providing pay and benefits while sponsoring their attendance in the local community college program. Under this program, the city hopes to increase its police applicant pool and hire the right person for the job.

Regarding police reform and training, Engel et al. (2020) write, "In post-Ferguson America, police departments are being challenged to implement evidence-based changes in policies and training to reduce fatal police-citizen encounters" (p. 146). The President's Task Force on 21st-Century Policing has convened to explore best practices in policing that "can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust" (2015, 1). The panel provided recommendations they believed would reduce police shootings of unarmed citizens, such as body-worn cameras, de-escalation training, implicit bias training, early intervention systems, and civilian oversight (Robinson, 2020). However, Engel et al. (2020) write, "Although each of these interventions has been recommended by the President's Task Force or other policing experts, careful consideration of the evidence available demonstrates a patchwork of studies that collectively provide little confidence that these reforms will directly impact police shootings" (p. 148).

The available policing research exposes vast gaps in the collective knowledge regarding the effectiveness of police reforms most recommended to reduce officer use of force (Lum et al., 2016). While police executives seek to answer calls for reform while meeting expectations of evidence-based practice, there is limited scientific research to support them. Nevertheless, the pressure is intensifying for police executives to rapidly implement changes designed to reduce use-of-force incidents, as the public is eager to move "beyond what is legal and start focusing on what is preventable" (Kindy, 2015). The cross-synthesis data support this study's findings that police recruitment, police reform, and police training could be great tools to reduce police-involved shootings of unarmed citizens. The participants suggested that police-involved shootings are the long-term result of ineffective police recruitment, hiring processes, and the lack

of ethnic and diversity training throughout some U.S. police departments, and we must do a better job hiring.

Chapter Summary

This chapter contains the findings explored in this study. The qualitative narrative study was conducted to get the perspective of AALEEs on the police-involved shooting of unarmed African American males. This research will also help fill the research gap of AALEEs. The chapter contains: (a) an introduction; (b) interview protocol; (c) the participants' background information; (d) participants' interview sites, responses, and observations; (e) focus group discussions (f) the emerging themes; (g) analysis and synthesis of the data sources; and (h) chapter summary. The organization of the findings was according to the research questions. Data from semi-structured interviews, supported by observations, researcher field notes, and a focus group, revealed the participants' perspectives. As is typical of qualitative research, samples of quotations from participants are included with each finding. Using the participants' voices represented an attempt to build the readers' confidence by accurately presenting the reality of the participants in their work environment.

Chapter 5 - Summary and Discussion

This chapter summarizes the research study and significant conclusions drawn from the data findings presented in Chapter 4. In addition, this chapter includes (a) a study summary, (b) findings, (c) reflections (d) recommendations, (e) future research, (f) the researcher's final thoughts, and (g) a conclusion.

Study Summary

Because of the media's high visibility of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males, politicians in both political parties at the federal and state level sought to reform the U.S. Police Departments as well as defund the police. Although numerous studies have been done on police-involved shootings (Campney, 2021; Koch, 2020; Mehra et al., 2022), the findings of this study have not adequately determined the contributing factors connected to police shootings. This study aimed to get the perspectives of AALEEs' on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Little literature exists on AALEEs; this research helps to fill the literature gap.

Being an African American male, a former law enforcement executive, and someone whose male family member was killed by a White police officer, I believe this study will inform the following communities:

1. The Law Enforcement Community: Leaders and non-leaders within the community will get an understanding from an executive viewpoint.
2. The African American Community: Individuals within the community will get law enforcement's perspectives.
3. The Research Community: The study will add to the study of law enforcement and African American law enforcement executives.

This qualitative narrative inquiry was conducted between April and August 2022 after the U.S. COVID-19 restriction was lifted. The narrative inquiry allowed the researcher to investigate individuals' life experiences as a storied phenomenon and use their stories as the unit of analysis and understanding of how the participants' life experiences structure a story (Bhattacharya, 2017; Kim, 2016).

The research took place in five police stations in Maryland and Pennsylvania, using triangulation of multiple data sources to increase internal validity (Yin, 2008). Five participants, along with myself, took part in the study. The study's first phase was the individual semi-structured interview which started with the demographic questions. The demographic questions provided better background information on the participants and the ability to compare and analyze interview responses (Appendix F). Next, the participants responded orally to the questions and their responses were audio-recorded and transcribed. The semi-structured interviews are the primary data source and took place at the participants' worksite. The interviews took one to two and a half hours to explore the participants' opinions of the topic.

The second phase of the study was the observation phase. During this phase, when participants were available, their interactions with subordinates, peers, elected officials, and individuals in the community they serve were observed. During my observations, negative and positive interactions between the participants were recorded. For example, one participant's interactions with a motorist were harsh, but the participant disagreed with my assessment. On the other hand, I also observed interactions where the community members went out of their way to speak to the participant. Whether the interaction was negative or positive, the participants were always out of their offices, engaging the people they served. Unfortunately, two of the participants could not be observed because of their work obligations and I was not observed

because I am no longer employed as an AALEE. The researcher attempted to retrieve documentation such as departmental policies, personnel files, written reports, newspaper articles, etc. to aid in the data analysis. Participant 1 provided an old copy of his department's monthly activity report showing the department's calls for service totals and the community's crime statistics. Participant 2 provided a draft copy of the department's new use of force policy. Participant 4 provided a copy of the department's newly approved staffing chart, but Participant 5 did not offer any documents. The different types of documents provided were not enough for the researcher to use for meaningful analyses.

The third phase was the two focus group discussions. One participant declined to participate in the focus group phase. Therefore, four participants and I were available to participate in the focus group discussions. During this phase, additional questions were asked and discussed (Appendix H). Two potential study topics were developed from the focus group discussion, which will be discussed in the future study section.

The study's emerging themes with categories align with the theoretical framework. Member checking and triangulation strategies helped ensure the study's quality.

The guiding research questions were:

1. What are the perspectives of AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?
2. How do the AALEEs perceive police reform, education, and training are addressing the occurrences of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

Findings

Even though the participants were African American males, former and current law enforcement executives, they all did not share the same perspective regarding the police-

involved shootings of unarmed African American males. Additionally, although they all commented it was wrong and occurred too often, four themes emerged through coding to address the matter.

Theme one:

Suggested police leaders must improve their recruitment and hiring processes and hire the right people for the job. However, it quickly was noted that each department sets its standards when recruiting and hiring people. Sometimes, a bad apple slips through the process, and some individuals' background checks do not reveal the individuals are a problem until hired.

Theme Two:

Suggested departmental training should include diversity, cultural and ethnicity training. The theme also suggested that the courses should be part of the department's annual in-service training and mandated that everyone in the department takes the courses.

Theme Three:

Suggested officers who have abused their power or authority should be held accountable for their actions. Any officers who stood by and did nothing to stop others from abusing their authority should also be held accountable. Additionally, any leader who did not take the appropriate actions when officers showed they would abuse their power should be held responsible.

Theme four:

Suggest police officers should work within the prison system as correctional officers before they are given a gun and sent out on the streets. Correctional officers learn how to de-escalate situations because they do not have guns, or the weapons police officers possess to defend themselves.

Through coding of the interviews and focus group discussions, four themes suggested police-involved shootings would be reduced if they were implemented by police departments. In addition, it was suggested that the new police reform would force police leaders to invest in cultural and diversity training and change their policies to reflect the changes in the department's police culture.

Discussion

Since the conception of the U.S. law enforcement field during the Colonial era, citizens have been involved in maintaining order in their communities, starting with the first-night watch system (Potter, 2013; Wadman et al., 2004). Today U.S. law enforcement still are citizens maintaining order in communities, but the community may not be the one where they reside. Unlike the slave patrols in the early 1700s, whose primary purpose was to maintain control over the Black slave populations and White indentured servants (Frazier, 2011; Reichel, 1988), the law enforcement of today enforces enacted city, state, and federal laws and ordinances. Despite the fact that harsh treatment of African Americans during the development of the U.S. law enforcement field, research has revealed that African Americans have been a part of law enforcement in the New World since 1867, with the first appointment of African American police officers to Selma, Alabama's police department (Dispatch, 2017).

Studies have shown that White police officers and even Black citizens believe African American police officers are either Black people or police officers, but not both (Bolton & Feagin, 2004). Furthermore, African Americans tend to express embitterment toward African American officers for their representation of a historically oppressive force within the African American communities (Alex, 1969; Moskos, 2008; Slonaker et al., 2001; Walker, 1983). The participants face that challenging concept head-on by continually engaging with the citizens they

serve and teaching them police tactics. In addition, the participants use programs like Coffee with a Cop and Walk with the Chief to show citizens that police officers are people and are part of their community. Even though this study's participants have strived to improve the law enforcement and African American community relationships, the law enforcement field still has a culture.

Police officers have worked hard to protect their professional independence and reinforce the police culture (Roberg et al., 2005; Swanson et al., 2012). The participants are challenging this police culture and are taking measures to change it, starting with how they hire people and the type of people they hire. The participants want people with a serving attitude, not an oppressor attitude. Historically, U.S. law enforcement has been known for brutality dating back to the 1800s (Darien, 2020). With the U.S. 2020 Policing Reform Act, police officers are being held accountable for their actions of brutality. The participants have also changed their departmental policies to hold any officer who fails to stop the brutality accountable.

Historically, the U.S. police departments have a paramilitary structure (Campbell & Kodz, 2011). Outram et al. (2014) write that those who lead police departments must have "new approaches and fresh thinking" (p. 92) "to challenge traditional leadership models for police officers given the multiple, often competing agendas they face" (Farr-Wharton et al., 2021, p. 1). This study validates Andreescu and Vito's (2010) and Givens's (2008) studies that AALEEs preferred deploying a transformational leadership style. The participants are out in the community daily interacting with citizens and teaching citizens police tactics.

This research also supports Wu's (2021) study of the 100 cities in the U.S. with the largest police departments and the correlation between the race of police chiefs and the incidence of fatal shootings by police officers. In addition, Wu's study revealed that AALEEs often

emphasize training more to decrease negative encounters between officers and civilians. The participants in this research support using a citizen police academy to reduce the negative encounters by teaching citizens about the use of force continuum. The use of force continuum is a standard that provides police officers and civilians with a course of action regarding the level of force against a resisting subject in each situation (National Institute of Justice, 2009). Officers and civilians are taught the different levels of force on the continuum and are put through scenarios where they can utilize the level of force. The classroom and scenario training give these students an understanding of what police officers sometimes face. Participants 1 in Maryland and 4 in Pennsylvania run a citizen police academy. Participants 2 and 5 recruit citizens from their jurisdictions to attend participant 1's academy. Additionally, citizens who graduate from these academies also serve as part-time instructors.

CRT recommends that individuals should learn about the sources of the knowledge that others perceive as essential and not merely assume knowledge is universal and derived from the dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Although an individual's knowledge is shaped by their history, CRT emphasizes the need to listen to the experiences of others to gain hints about their perceptions of the factors that influence their behavior (Ladson-Billings Tate, 2006). A CRT lens shows how the racialized policing of the past persists in modern policing (Collins, 1982). This perspective suggests that African Americans experienced trauma through encounters with law enforcement, and the history and present reality of racialized policing eroded the trust between law enforcement and African Americans (Bowleg et al., 2021). This concept supports CRT's call for diversity training for law enforcement officers to explore a neighborhood's racial, socio-economic, and historical context to avoid assumptions and biases about an individual's behavior. (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006).

Reflecting the CRT lens, during the interview and focus group process, all six participants expressed a level of hostility towards the topic of police-involved shootings. The frequency of unarmed African American males being shot and killed in America is overwhelming to all the participants. One of the participants even apologized for getting loud during the interview. There was evidence that participant 1 view of police-involved shootings was influenced by his position as a law enforcement officer, and also held a position as an internal affairs investigator. He has investigated several police-involved shootings and believes that the entire situation surrounding the shooting should be looked at, not just the shooting itself. But no evidence of being an AALEE influenced the remaining participants' perceptions.

One participant indicated that police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males wasn't a racial issue. However, they all indicated it was an operational problem and better recruitment, training, and education could reduce the shooting of unarmed citizens. As identified in this study, the foundation concept of CRT does not apply and is not as cut and dry as the theory suggests. The participants were African Americans and police officers. However, they did not indicate they felt marginalized or participated in the marginalization of other people because they had the power to do so.

However, there was evidence that the remaining participants being African American males and having correctional officer training influenced the participants' perception. The participants could not understand how one person in a correctional uniform with no weapons can control over a hundred inmates or a situation in prison and how one person in a police uniform with weapons cannot control one unarmed person. There was also evidence that the AALEE influenced how their officers viewed police-involved shootings of African Americans being killed by police officers. One participant confronted a white police officer when he made a

comment about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males being population control. The participant's changes to departmental policies hold police officers accountable for abusing their authority. The policy change officers' views because they do not want to lose their jobs or go to jail. The CRT lens helps situate the lived experiences of this study's participants and how law-enforcement executives who are Black males must balance multiple identities in a racialized environment.

Recommendations

Although studies have shown discriminatory police practices rooted in a procedural justice method, this study provides the law enforcement community with recommendations to improve outcomes and relationships with African American communities (Peeples, 2020). Additionally, this study suggests ways to improve African American and law enforcement interactions and reduce police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

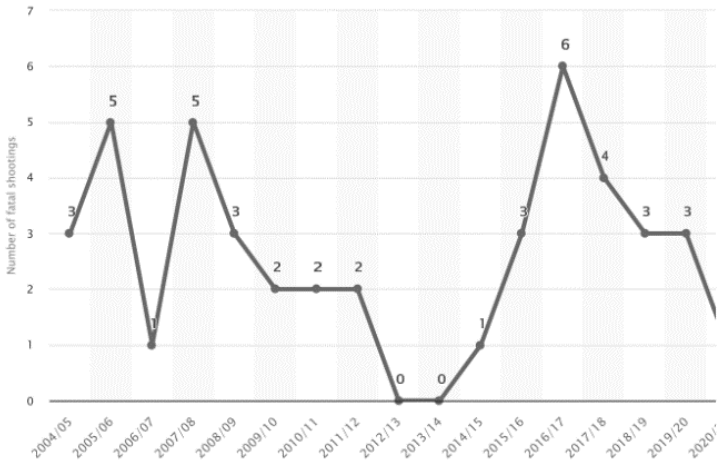
In the U.S., police departments have the autonomy to create their own policies and processes for recruitment and hiring, in contrast to how England's police department conducts its recruitment and hiring. Even though the U.S. Law Enforcement was modeled after England's, it does not use the same processes England has established a National Police Recruitment Assessment Process for their police departments (Cox, 2010). In addition to the standard application and interview process, a psychological assessment, and background check that U.S. departments uses, England has incorporated National Core Competencies during their assessment (Cox, 2010). Cox writes, “The National Core Competencies are a list of indicators describing the attributes necessary across various skills and abilities to become a police officer. They describe the attitudes and behaviors that are required (or that should be avoided) during everyday interactions” (p. 16).

According to Cox (2010), police applicants are assessed on respect for race and diversity, teamwork, community and customer focus, effective communication, problem-solving, personal responsibility, and resilience. Out of all the core competencies listed, respect for race and diversity are number one on the list. During the participants' interviews, they discussed that officers need ethnicity and diversity training. On this issue the participants in this study agree with England's police departments core standards. Cox writes:

> Respect for Race and Diversity means considering and showing respect for colleagues and public members' opinions, circumstances, and feelings, regardless of their position, backgrounds, circumstances, status, or appearance. To achieve this competency area, you must understand other people's views and take these into account. You must also be tactful and diplomatic when dealing with people, always treating them with dignity and respect. (p. 85)

Reading that passage reminds the researcher of a command he received when he completed the police academy. The researcher was told by a lieutenant, "You treat everyone with respect. These people are taxpayers! They are paying your salary. If you disrespect them, you are disrespecting me. Either way, you will lose your job." I carried that advice throughout my entire law enforcement career.

Figure 5-1 Number of fatal shootings by the police in the United Kingdom from 2004/05 to 2020/21 (Statista, 2021)



England's recruitment, hiring, and training process appears to work because they have fewer police-involved shootings than the U.S. Even though their statistics do not indicate the ethnic groups of the individuals killed or whether the individuals had a weapon or not, their fatal shooting rates are far lower when compared to the U.S. during the same timeframe. In 2015, *The Washington Post* started keeping track of all police-involved shootings in the U.S. In 2015, the United Kingdom had one fatal shooting by the police (Statista, 2021). In the United States, there were 994 individuals killed by the police (Tate et al., 2021). In 2017, six individuals were killed by police in the United Kingdom; this was the year with the highest number on record (Statista, 2021). Compared to that same year, in the United States, 984 individuals were killed by the police.

After reviewing the United Kingdom statistics of police-involved shootings and comparing them to the U.S., and hearing the participants' views on the recruitment, hiring process, and diversity training, there may be a valid reason to establish a National Police Recruitment Assessment Process and National Core Competencies for the United States Police Departments. Perhaps this would reduce the police-involved shootings of unarmed citizens.

Research suggests that the increase in the use of force by U.S. Police is because their departments have been growing more militarized in appearance, ideology, and practice (Koslicki, 2021). Kraska (2007) defines *police militarism* as "a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that stress the use of force and threat of violence as the most appropriate and efficacious means to solve problems. It emphasizes exercising military power, hardware, organization, operations, and technology as its primary problem-solving tools" (p. 503). U.S. Policing institutions have paramilitary roots originating from their development from militia groups (Kraska & Kappeler, 1997). Other studies have connected the slave patrol groups in the early South to the development of law enforcement in that region (Hadden, 2003). U.S. Policing may be influenced by its historical roots of paramilitary state control. When evaluating law enforcement at the organizational level, underlying societal culture influences every organization within a society. Individual organizations practice cultural influences that are part of the departments' history, location, and background, which are then reflected in these organizations' visible behaviors (Chan et al., 2003; Cordner, 2017; Paoline, 2003). Some departments have resorted to recruitment videos to combat the paramilitary mindset of new applicants.

Koslicki (2021) suggests, "Recruitment videos are an excellent source of capturing visible themes that may represent or signal the values of the recruiting organization to potential recruits" (p. 705). The traditional method of recruiting involves a hiring organization deciding what its most positive and attractive attributes are and then focusing on these aspects to attract individuals who also view them as attractive (Wanous, 1980). Matching the organizations' and applicants' values and goals increases the likelihood of achieving these organizations' cultural values (Herriot, 2004; Walker et al., 2009; Walker & Hinojosa, 2014). Technological

innovation, such as the internet and online video, consistently is an effective tool for attracting applicants to various organizations (Allen et al., 2004).

The findings in this study can't be generalized but the participants' perspectives support the existing research. Therefore, the researcher makes the following recommendations. First, eliminate each department's recruitment and hiring guidelines for hiring police personnel. Instead, have the states establish a state-wide Core Competencies Standards guidance or have the U.S. Justice Department establish a National Core Competencies Standards for hiring U.S. Police Officers as England has established. If everyone follows the same recruitment, hiring, and training processes for their officers, the number of unarmed citizens being shot and killed at the hands of those who have sworn to protect them might be reduced. The England model appears to be working; maybe the U.S. can adopt it. Another recommendation is that police officer candidates work in prison or jail as correctional officers before being hired as police officers and being placed on the street. This correctional officer experience teaches an individual how to deescalate a situation without using a gun.

Future Research

This limited study explored AALEEs' viewpoints on police-involved shootings of African American males. However, during the interviews and focus group discussions, the topic of having police officers work in a jail or prison as correctional officers a few years before being given a gun and put out on the street was introduced. Future quantitative correlational research could be conducted on correctional officers who became police officers and explore if they abuse their powers as police officers compared with officers who did not have this prior correctional officer experience. Another quantitative study might examine how many Black officers have shot and/or killed unarmed citizens. Additionally, a quantitative correlational study should be

done to determine if better recruitment and hiring processes and diversity training directly impact the shootings of unarmed citizens. If this study was redone, I suggest the participants be interviewed outside their work environments. That would allow the participants to relax from their department's day-to-day activities. Also, conducting the same study with female police executives would add a different perspective.

Researcher's Final Thoughts

A different thought on the issue:

One thought during the interview was that the shooting could not be examined as an isolated event. Instead, the whole situation and environment around the shooting needs to be considered. Participant 1 stated Whites are killed more than Blacks in the U.S., and a large percentage of the police-involved shootings have something to do with mental illness. He also stated the population and environment where shootings occur must be considered. The other participants disagreed with that participant and cannot understand why police are shooting unarmed people when they have more non-lethal equipment on their duty belts.

It was not until I conducted this study did I realize that African American officers are marginalized people that critical race theory tries to "empower" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Marginalized populations are communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions (National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, 2022). Additionally, African American officers are viewed as oppressors within the African American community because of the history of African Americans and law enforcement. (Corinna, 1998). They are part of the social, political, and historical context, power, privilege, racism, and oppression system (Daftary, 2020) that had disenfranchised marginalized people,

which critical race theory refers to, which made the researcher think about when he was a uniformed officer moving up the ranks. The researcher remembers not being invited to many family events hosted by his siblings or other family members. The researcher is unsure if he was not invited out of respect because some illegal activity may occur. Or family members saw the researcher as someone who would exercise his police authority over them and arrest them if illegal activities did occur in his presence.

Re-reading the interview transcripts, only one participant responded from the African American male viewpoint while the other participants, including the researcher, responded from a law enforcement executive viewpoint. The participant's responses made the researcher question if he was an African American male that just happened to be a police officer, or if he was a police officer who just happened to be an African American male. That question requires a deeper evaluation.

Conclusion

This study aimed to get the perspectives of AALEEs' on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. This study can be used to further research and ignite discussion between policymakers, police trainers, and police leadership. Koch (2020) suggests**,** "Exploring all possible methods of reducing the number of unarmed individuals killed by police is necessary to all involved in the criminal justice system" (p. 55). The findings suggest that better recruitment and hiring processes and diversity training could directly impact the shootings of unarmed citizens. This study also suggests that departments need to enhance their training to include de-escalation scenarios, since officers deal with individuals on drugs and individuals who may have mental health issues, as in the case of the researcher’s nephew.

The researcher is closing this study with a song dedicated to the unarmed men and women of all races who were killed at the hands of police. The lyrics are to a song titled "It's So Hard To Say Goodbye To Yesterday", a song was written for the movie *Cooley High*, which was a predominately African American high school in Detroit. In the film, the song is used to reflect the powerful emotions students feel when they graduate and have to move on with their life. The feelings described in the song can apply to anyone who must leave something behind, making it a popular theme song for funerals in the 1980s and 1990s in the African American community.

Hard to say goodbye to yesterday

How do I say goodbye to what we had?
The good times that made us laugh outweigh the bad.
I thought we'd get to see forever
But forever's gone away
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.
I don't know where this road
Is going to lead
All I know is where we've been and what we've been through.
If we get to see tomorrow
I hope it's worth all the wait
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.
And I'll take with me the memories
To be my sunshine after the rain
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday (Yarian & Perren, 1975)
Boyz II Men - It's So Hard To Say Goodbye To Yesterday - YouTube

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Appendix A - H.R.7120 George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 Summary

This bill addresses a wide range of policies and issues regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability. It increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, enhances transparency and data collection, and establishes best practices and training requirements.

The bill enhances existing enforcement mechanisms to remedy violations by law enforcement. Among other things, it does the following:

- lowers the criminal intent standard—from willful to knowing or reckless—to convict a law enforcement officer for misconduct in a federal prosecution,
- limits qualified immunity as a defense to liability in a private civil action against a law enforcement officer, and
- grants administrative subpoena power to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in pattern-or-practice investigations.

It establishes a framework to prevent and remedy racial profiling by law enforcement at the federal, state, and local levels. It also limits the unnecessary use of force and restricts the use of no-knock warrants, chokeholds, and carotid holds.

The bill creates a national registry—the National Police Misconduct Registry—to compile data on complaints and records of police misconduct. It also establishes new reporting requirements, including on the use of force, officer misconduct, and routine policing practices (e.g., stops and searches).

Finally, it directs DOJ to create uniform accreditation standards for law enforcement agencies and requires law enforcement officers to complete training on racial profiling, implicit bias, and the duty to intervene when another officer uses excessive force.

Appendix B - Law Enforcement Code of Ethics

The IACP adopted the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics at the 64th Annual IACP Conference and Exposition in October 1957. The Code of Ethics stands as a preface to the mission and commitment law enforcement agencies make to the public they serve.

Law Enforcement Code of Ethics

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality, and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to me or to my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed both in my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, political beliefs, aspirations, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of police service. I will never engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

I know that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession… law enforcement.

Appendix C - Graham v. Connor

United States Supreme Court

GRAHAM v. CONNOR (1989)

No. 87-6571

Argued: February 21, 1989

Decided: May 15, 1989

Petitioner Graham, a diabetic, asked his friend, Berry, to drive him to a convenience store to purchase orange juice to counteract the onset of an insulin reaction. Upon entering the store and seeing the number of people ahead of him, Graham hurried out and asked Berry to drive him to a friend's house instead. Respondent Connor, a city police officer, became suspicious after seeing Graham hastily enter and leave the store, followed Berry's car, and made an investigative stop, ordering the pair to wait while he found out what had happened in the store. Respondent backup police officers arrived on the scene, handcuffed Graham, and ignored or rebuffed attempts to explain and treat Graham's condition. During the encounter, Graham sustained multiple injuries. He was released when Connor learned that nothing had happened in the store. Graham filed suit in the District Court under 42 U.S.C. 1983 against respondents, alleging that they had used excessive force in making the stop, in violation of "rights secured to him under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and 42 U.S.C. 1983." The District Court granted respondents' motion for a directed verdict at the close of Graham's evidence, applying a four-factor test for determining when excessive use of force gives rise to a 1983 cause of action, which inquires, inter alia, whether the force was applied in a good-faith effort to maintain and restore discipline or maliciously and sadistically for the very purpose of causing harm. Johnson v. Glick, 481 F.2d 1028. The Court of Appeals affirmed, endorsing this test as generally applicable to all claims of constitutionally excessive force brought against government officials, rejecting Graham's argument that it was error to require him to prove that the allegedly excessive force was applied maliciously and sadistically to cause harm, and holding that a reasonable jury applying the Johnson v. Glick test to his evidence could not find that the force applied was constitutionally excessive.

Held: All claims that law enforcement officials have used excessive force - deadly or not - in the course of an arrest, investigatory stop, or other "seizure" of a free citizen are properly analyzed

under the Fourth Amendment's "objective reasonableness" standard, rather than under a substantive due process standard. Pp. 392-399. [490 U.S. 386, 387]

(a) The notion that all excessive force claims brought under 1983 are governed by a single generic standard is rejected. Instead, courts must identify the specific constitutional right allegedly infringed by the challenged application of force and then judge the claim by reference to the specific constitutional standard which governs that right. Pp. 393-394.

(b) Claims that law enforcement officials have used excessive force in the course of an arrest, investigatory stop, or other "seizure" of a free citizen are most properly characterized as invoking the protections of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees citizens the right "to be secure in their persons . . . against unreasonable seizures," and must be judged by reference to the Fourth Amendment's "reasonableness" standard. Pp. 394-395.

(c) The Fourth Amendment "reasonableness" inquiry is whether the officers' actions are "objectively reasonable" in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to their underlying intent or motivation. The "reasonableness" of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, and its calculus must embody an allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation. Pp. 396-397.

(d) The Johnson v. Glick test applied by the courts below is incompatible with a proper Fourth Amendment analysis. The suggestion that the test's "malicious and sadistic" inquiry is merely another way of describing conduct that is objectively unreasonable under the circumstances is rejected. Also rejected is the conclusion that because individual officers' subjective motivations are of central importance in deciding whether force used against a convicted prisoner violates the Eighth Amendment, it cannot be reversible error to inquire into them in deciding whether force used against a suspect or arrestee violates the Fourth Amendment. The Eighth Amendment terms "cruel" and "punishments" clearly suggest some inquiry into subjective state of mind, whereas the Fourth Amendment term "unreasonable" does not. Moreover, the less protective Eighth Amendment standard applies only after the State has complied with the constitutional guarantees traditionally associated with criminal prosecutions. Pp. 397-399.

Appendix D - A Death to Justice

By Sylvia Telafaro (2016)

Years ago,
I had “the talk” with my son,
before he was old enough to learn
that justice in our America
is not color blind.
He had to know;
how to act wherever he may go
how to walk, and never run,
how to speak and answer in
polite monotone,
how a violation of this
could become a deadly risk,
especially if he is
stopped and frisked.
I sternly told my son,
never bond with
a “gang style” crowd,
be careful how you express
your Black pride,
express your culture by staying alive.
My heart cries for other sons,
like Michael Brown,
who was gunned down in a
Missouri suburban town.
It wasn’t that Michael didn’t hear the “talk,”
I’m sure he knew
what to say and how to talk
yet he ended up dead on a cold sidewalk.

My heart cries for a small
town, called Ferguson
filled with Black and Brown sons
that police now have a verdict
that allows them to
indiscriminately use their guns.
My heart cries for the
Michael Browns in every town
in an America that places
less value on lives
of young Black and Brown males,
either shooting them down
or filling up her jails.
My heart screams
at the injustice
that erupts from an imaginary sea
of anger and fear
as status quo waves scream out in retaliation,
"Black lives will never truly matter here
in this nation."
In retaliation to this,
my heart yearns for peace;
I wait to see
if the disruption and violence will cease,
drying my tears and channeling my frustration,
counting the ways I can help make positive change,
joining with like minds to protect our sons
from mass incarceration,
police brutality, institutionalized and systemic racism
and mental capitulation.

I wait for a better day
a day when all sons
are safe from being choked,
tased or walking and talking
while Black.
I wait for a day when police will not
react to a perceived threat
generated by skin tone,
or a cell phone,
mistaken for a gun.
I wait for a day when our sons are not
shot down simply because they decided to run.
I wait to participate in a
revolution that is brewing underground,
that helps invoke changes that
overhaul policies and practices that
perpetuate this national
crisis of discriminatory policing
against Blacks and Browns.
I wait for justice
"I can't breathe"

I wrote "A Death to Justice" because I feel that young Black males in our communities are growing up with criticism, discrimination, disrespect, and different narratives about not who they are but who they should be in a world that doesn't always love or appreciate them. Our men are living in a society policed by people who fear them simply because of their skin tone. This fear is often perpetrated by negative messages in the corporate media, cementing the fear in the general population that they are violent and dangerous. In my opinion, this leads to insecurity, fear, and isolation among our young Black males that not only makes them feel invisible, it often encourages them to act out in negative and sometimes a hostile manner.

"A Death to Justice" was inspired by one such Black male, Michael J. Brown, an unarmed teenager, who had been marginalized, shot, and killed on August 9, 2014. It was a

reaction to the killing of Michael Brown by white police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, MO, and the aggressive and demeaning response of Ferguson's political and police leaders.

"A Death to Justice" is about more than Michael J. Brown; it is a cry for justice for all Black males being marginalized in the United States and abroad. It is a call to action to mothers, sisters, grandmothers, aunts, and the community at large that the lives of our men are being jeopardized by a systematic system still practicing Jim Crow ideology. "A Death to Justice" is a legacy for Michael J. Brown because his death has given a voice to many that had previously suffered in silence. It is a battle cry of "No Justice, No Peace!" reaffirming that unless we continue to fight for justice, it will become nonexistent.

Appendix E - Informed Consent Form

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Police-Involved Shootings of Unarmed African American males: African American Law Enforcement Executive Perspectives through Narrative Inquiry

PROJECT APPROVAL DATE/ EXPIRATION DATE: The interviews will take place between April and August of 2022

LENGTH OF STUDY: The participants are expected to participate in the study for approximately six hours

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D.

CO-INVESTIGATOR: Lamont Holloman, MS

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS: Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D., jzachara@ksu.edu, 785-532-5872

IRB CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION: Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224; Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

CONTACT NAME AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS: Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D., jzachara@ksu.edu, 785-532-5872; Lamont Holloman, MS, lamont3@ksu.edu, 443-938-7323

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: I am a doctoral candidate at Kansas State University. My doctoral dissertation is based on this research. The results of this research may be published in a professional journal or shared in a professional setting. At all times, the anonymity of the subjects will be maintained. The purpose of this research is to gain insight into African American Law Enforcement Executives' perspectives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. If you are being asked to participate in this research, you are an African American male holding a law enforcement executive position. The narrative inquiry study aims to explore the perspective of African American Law Enforcement Executives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED: I am requesting your participation in this study. One semi-structured individual interview will be conducted with the participants, estimated at forty-five minutes to one hour at your' worksite. Interview protocol and interview

questions will be provided to the participants in advance. There are no monetary or any other forms of compensation for participating in this study. Permission to quote you as anonymous is requested. Data will be analyzed from the researcher's perspective using critical race theory. The interviews will take place between April and August of 2022, with additional interviews to be scheduled as needed. The interviews will be audio-recorded, identified, dated, transcribed, and cataloged. You will be assigned a participant number to protect your identity and to maintain anonymity. The tapes will be erased upon completion of the study and all identifiers destroyed. Observations will occur during your hour of work on any date and time you decide between April and August of 2022. Field notes and interviews will be recorded, and an observation instrument will be used to observe the participants' responses.

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED: There are no anticipated risks from this study. Therefore, no intervention is to be implemented. This narrative inquiry involves observations by the researcher and individual interviews with the participants.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED: This study will contribute to fill the research gap of African American Law Enforcement Executive

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY: All participants' information will be kept confidential. All collected data: observation notes, interview transcripts, interview tapes, and other information will be stored in a locked file cabinet. The electronic information will be on a password-protected computer. All data used to identify the participants will be destroyed once the K-State Research Compliance Office approves the dissertation (shredded and/or deleted).

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION: I understand this project is research and that my participation is entirely voluntary. I also understand that I may withdraw my consent and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled. I understand there are no anticipated risks for participating in this research. I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and acknowledge that I will receive a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

Name of Participant:_____

Signature of Participant _____Date_____

Jeffrey Zacharakis, PhD: _____Date_____
Principal Investigator

Lamont Holloman, MS: _____Date_____
Co-Investigator

Appendix F - Demographics, Research, and Interview Questions

Demographic Questions

1. What is your current age?
2. How long have you been in the law enforcement field?
3. Do you have correctional officer experience?
4. How long have you been a law enforcement executive including any time as a caption or above rank?
5. What is your current rank?
6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
7. What level of government do you currently work for?
8. How many employees are on your staff (sworn and civilian)?

Research and Interview Questions

1. What are the perspectives of AALEEs on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

a. Tell me what you think about police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

b. Tell me about your recruiting and hiring process.

2. How do the AALEEs perceive police reform, education, and training are addressing the occurrences of police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

a. What can be done to reduce or limit police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males?

b. What do see as most needed in police reform to address the shooting of unarmed African American males?

Appendix G - Focus Group Informed Consent Form

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
FOCUS GROUP INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in a focus group described in this research project, which concerns Police-Involved Shootings of Unarmed African American males: African American Law Enforcement Executive Perspectives through Narrative Inquiry. I understand that my comments will be audio-recorded and used for a dissertation project to be conducted by Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D. and Lamont Holloman, MS with Kansas State University. The focus group will take place between April and August of 2022. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks associated with my participation. I also know that this study may benefit the U.S. Law Enforcement Community.

During the focus group discussions, I will not mention any personal or private, identifiable information such as the names of individuals who are not participating in the focus group. In addition, I agree that all conversations which take place in the focus group should not be discussed with anyone outside of the focus group(s) and its participants.

I give Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D. and Lamont Holloman, MS ownership of the tape and transcript from the focus group and understand that tape and transcript will be kept secured in the researchers' possession. I understand that information or quotations from tape and/or transcript will specify be used for a dissertation project and may be published following the review and approval of the K-State Research Compliance Office.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can end it at any time without consequences. I also understand that if I have questions about this research project, I can contact Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D., jzachara@ksu.edu, 785-532-5872 or contact IRB Chair Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224; Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Name of Participant:_____

Signature of Participant _____Date_____

Jeffrey Zacharakis, PhD: _____Date_____

Principal Investigator

Lamont Holloman, MS: _____Date_____

Co-Investigator

Appendix H - Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Do you see any opportunities or strategies to support this reform through education and training? If so, please describe.
2. Have you been involved in any local, regional, or national reform efforts?
3. What do you see as the future of police reform?
4. What do you think about police officers working as correctional officers prior to working as police officers on the street?

Appendix I - Debriefing Statement

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Thank you so much for participating in my study. Your participation was very valuable to me. I know you are very busy and very much appreciate the time you devoted to participating in the study.

Once the interview is transcribed I will return it to you to the participant to ensure the data is accurate. In the study, I was interested in understanding the viewpoint of African American male law enforcement executives on police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males. There is no prior research on African American male law enforcement executives or African American law enforcement community relating to police-involved shootings of unarmed African American males.

If you would like more information about Police-Involved Shootings of Unarmed African American males: African American Law Enforcement Executive Perspectives through Narrative Inquiry, you may be interested in the following: CITE, ARTICLE?

It is very important that you do not discuss this study with anyone else until the study is complete. Our efforts will be greatly compromised if participants come into this study knowing what it is about and how their ideas are analyzed.

Are you still consent to having your data used for the purposes of this study? Circle ONE: Yes or No

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ph.D., jzachara@ksu.edu, 785-532-5872 or Lamont Holloman, MS, lamont3@ksu.edu, 443-938-7323.

Thank you again for your participation!

Name of Participant:_____

Signature of Participant _____Date_____

Jeffrey Zacharakis, PhD: _____Date_____

Principal Investigator

Lamont Holloman, MS: _____Date_____

Co-Investigator

Appendix J - IRB Approval Letter

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | University Research Compliance Office

TO: Jeffrey Zacharakis
Educational Leadership
Manhattan, KS 66506

Proposal Number IRB-11103

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 03/24/2022

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "Police-Involved Shootings of Unarmed African American males: African American Law Enforcement Executive Perspectives through Narrative Inquiry."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for three years from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 03/24/2022

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/23/2025

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

No more than minimal risk to subjects

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

Electronically signed by Rick Scheidt on 03/24/2022 3:07 PM ET

203 Fairchild Hall, Manhattan, KS 66502 | (785) 532-3224 | fax: (785) 532-3278