

An examination of police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance

by

Neil Duane Lingle

B.S., California State University, Long Beach, 1984
M.S., California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 1992

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education

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Abstract

Community colleges educate and train significant numbers of U.S. police officers; however, an erosion of public trust and confidence in the police has overcome communities nationwide (Fagan, 2008; Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015). High-profile law enforcement-related deaths of unarmed Black citizens have further heightened calls for police education reform nationwide. Community colleges are uniquely positioned to bring about social change, particularly in police reform and race relations (Dennis, 2020). Many states mandate diversity, implicit bias, or cultural competence curricula for police academy students; thus, new officer cultural competence education and training begins in the police academy and establishes community expectations for law enforcement behavior and performance (Oakley, 2020). Effective cultural competence education and training of new peace officers could contribute to facilitating trust, legitimacy, and just policing demanded by communities nationally.

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study examined the cultural competencies of new police officers who completed a police academy but had less than 3 years of police experience at the time of data collection. The study explored two different geographic regions of the United States, demonstrating socioeconomic and cultural differences. The findings of this study can inform community college and professional policing personnel and contribute to the social transformation of law enforcement.

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Approved by:

Co-Major Professor
Dr. Terry Calaway

Approved by:

Co-Major Professor
Dr. Margaretta B. Mathis

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the most important people in my universe: My wife, Deborah M. Lingle, and our five children, Nicolas, Matthew, Courtney, Brett, and William. Each of you fills my days with more happiness, contentment, and love than I ever believed possible. I am blessed.

My mother often reminded me that I could accomplish anything. Well, mom, who knew? I wish you were still with us to celebrate your family.

“Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Community colleges are primarily responsible for educating and training U.S. police officers (Finkel, 2021). Although police officers, also referred to as peace officers, are entrusted with building and maintaining public confidence, communities nationally have experienced an erosion of public trust and confidence in police (Fagan, 2008; Office of Community Oriented Policing Services [COPS Office], 2015). According to Walsh (2021), “Fatal interactions between police officers and civilians—particularly unarmed Black people—have drawn more attention in recent years, fueling bouts of nationwide protests and calls for police reform” (para. 7). As stated by Braga et al. (2019), “The American public has grown progressively interested in attending to allegations of widespread racially disparate policing practices” (p. 538). A 2017 PEW Research Center poll found race is at the heart of how a community perceives policing. Similarly, Dennis (2020) asserted community colleges occupy unique places in communities and provide a path to offer social growth, most notably in police reform and race relations. Cultural competence has been found to build public trust and establish police legitimacy (de Guzman et al., 2016).

Cultural competence education and training in law enforcement begins in the police academy and aligns with community expectations for law enforcement behavior and performance (Oakley, 2020). Cross et al. (1989) first used the term *cultural competence* to describe a healthcare framework for emotionally disturbed children. As Cross et al. (1989) stated, “Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p. 13). Cultural competence builds on a continuum of four explicit components (i.e., awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills) and manifests when successful interaction occurs (Martin & Vaughn, n.d.).

Across the United States, state agencies responsible for police officers' education and training mandate police academy curricula (Finkel, 2021; Oakley, 2020); however, there remains a lack of a national standard for police academy education and training (Police1, 2021). Kuhn and Lurie (2018) reported many police academies do not teach the history of race relations, leaving recruits to learn about race, local cultural phenomena, and environmental norms during departmental assimilation. Conversely, Rhymes and Brown (2005) found, "Cultural competency is most often used concerning racial and ethnic minority groups" (p. 7).

A democratic society demands a law enforcement culture that recognizes and respects human rights and individual differences (COPS Office, 2015). Rahr and Rice (2015) noted, "It turns out that people don't care as much about crime rates as they do about how they are treated by the police" (p. 3). According to Stand Together Trust (2019), "The most effective way to achieve public safety in local communities results from police and community members working collaboratively to create public safety" (para. 10). Previous studies have addressed police officer cultural sensitivity and awareness (e.g., Briceno, 2009), adaptability (e.g., Elton, 2013), and implicit bias (e.g., Whitfield, 2019). However, there is sparse research examining police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance.

Statement of the Problem

Effective policing necessitates relating to people, earning trust, and being culturally competent (Hudson, 2014). As Kuhn and Lurie (2018) observed, police academies often fail to teach the rich racial and ethnic histories of individual agencies and communities. For example, although California has been a minority-majority state for over 2 decades, a 2020 Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) survey found only 39% of respondents believed officers treated racial and ethnic minorities fairly (Lofstrom & Martin, 2021).

Further evidence has suggested although police academy training does not affect new officers' racial attitudes, fieldwork may increase negative attitudes toward people of color (e.g., Briceno, 2009). For example, on January 7, 2023, Tyre Nichols, an unarmed Black man, was stopped by five Memphis police officers, physically removed from his car, and beaten to death (Washburn, 2023). The killing of Tyre Nichols was captured on body cameras worn by the involved officers. Again, nationwide protests followed, demanding increased accountability and police education and training reform. Nichol's death has been one of many controversial law enforcement-related deaths in the past decade.

Deardorff (2006) argued intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitude are requisite to effective communication and intercultural response. Because police officers interact with people from diverse backgrounds daily, cultural competence is necessary to do the work (U.S. Department of Justice [U. S. DOJ], n.d.-a). The importance of police cultural competence and need for reform was underscored in the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015). This study aimed to explore the best practices that define this work.

Background of the Problem

Since 1967, two presidential commissions have addressed police reform: (a) President Lyndon B. Johnson's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice (U.S. Department of Justice, 1967), and (b) President Barrack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (COPS Office, 2015). One distinction between the Johnson and Obama presidential commissions is Johnson viewed policing as a construct of police administration, whereas Obama aimed to garner more control of policing philosophy and practices (Christensen, 2022); however, each commission was challenged by a similar complexity: societal distrust of the police.

Though decades apart, these commissions bore some resemblance. In a study examining police decision making, Christensen (2022) noted:

Though separated by nearly fifty years, both commissions explored the tense relationship between the police and the public, between democracy and policing, identifying in common issues such as police distrust, racial antagonism, and police violence as central problems facing modern law enforcement. (p. 11)

Over the past 3 decades, the community policing model has been the primary law enforcement philosophy and policy instrument to build public trust and confidence, with some success (Wehrman & DeAngelis, 2011). The community policing model is a policing strategy that is comprised of three core elements: (a) community partnerships, (b) organizational transformation, and (c) problem solving (COPS Office, 2014).

Although community policing has existed for over 30 years, the model's existence has given way to a period of questionable police legitimacy. Legitimacy is predicated on public trust and confidence and implies the authority of a person, unit, or organization to dictate behavior (Fischer, 2014; Peyton et al., 2019). Melekian (2022) held the officer in the field determines police legitimacy. Still, legitimacy is only given to those who act procedurally just (COPS Office, 2015). As stated in "The Policy Circle" (2019):

The role of the police is to ensure the safety and security of those who uphold the law, and to protect and help communities from those who do not. But they need to do so without using tactics that disrespect civil liberties or generate animosity in the neighborhoods they serve. (Conclusion section)

Research exists underscoring that societal perceptions of the police are divided along racial lines (e.g., PEW Research Center, 2014). In 2014, the deaths of Black citizens Eric Garner,

Michael Brown, and Tamir Rice at the hands of the police ignited nationwide civil unrest and pushed the United States toward increased police accountability (Walsh, 2021). The Black Lives Matter movement, founded in the wake of the 2012 murder of unarmed Black teenager, Trayvon Martin, mobilized people of every race, ethnicity, and economic stratum to protest police actions peacefully (Ransby, 2018). As a result, federal, state, and local governments were summoned to action.

In late 2014, President Obama convened The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing to identify best practices and present recommendations on crime reduction while building public trust (COPS Office, 2015). Crime reduction and mistrust of the police were so urgent the presidential task force was given 90 days to complete its work. As a result, the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) delivered a firm message to the criminal justice community that police officers should have a guardian instead of a warrior mindset, noting:

Trust between law enforcement and the people they protect and serve is essential in a democracy. It is the key to the stability of our communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system, and the safe and effective delivery of policing services. (p. 1)

President Obama further underscored the significance of the findings, noting:

When any part of the American family does not feel like it is being treated fairly, that's a problem for all of us. It means that we are not as strong as a country as we can be. And when applied to the criminal justice system, it means we're not as effective in fighting crime as we could be. (p. 23)

Many police academies serve multiple law enforcement agencies to meet regional training needs (Buehler, 2021). About half of all police agencies in the United States are

comprised of 10 full-time officers or less, demonstrating the importance of local and regional police academies (Goodison, 2020). Officers are not generally required to live in the jurisdiction where they work. Frequently, officers commute to neighboring cities or counties, leaving new officers with limited knowledge about the people, neighborhoods, and communities they have sworn to protect.

Fundamentally, the police are responsible for understanding the culture, history, and issues affecting the communities they serve (COPS Office, 2015). In research on police officer adaptability, Elton (2013) suggested a multijurisdictional analysis and cited cultural competence as a critical dimension of adaptability. According to Nelson (2017), core cultural competencies learned in the police academy become essential to effective policing. Additionally, shaping public views through effective policing is likely to establish trust, confidence, and legitimacy (Tyler, 2014).

Previous researchers have explored various dimensions of police performance aligned with cultural competence (e.g., Briceno, 2009; Christensen, 2022; Elton, 2013; Hazen, 2021; Whitfield, 2019). However, limited research has demonstrated which specific cultural competencies learned in the academy benefit new officers in the field. Such information could engender the public trust, confidence, and legitimacy communities expect of law enforcement service providers. Building trust and legitimacy is not solely a police responsibility, but also a scholarly endeavor and community undertaking (COPS Office, 2015).

Police officers have different lived experiences that shape their worldviews. As a result, officers come to the job with individual assumptions, beliefs, and truths. Further research is needed to help understand new police officers' perceptions of cultural competencies learned in the police academy and applied in the field.

Still, only some researchers have explored the interconnectedness of these dimensions learned in the academy with new officer performance. For example, Hundersmarck (2004) found officers transitioning from the police academy to the field devalue academy-based learning experiences because academy knowledge may not directly connect to fieldwork.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine police academy cultural competence education on new officer field performance. Gaining an understanding of police officers' perceptions and identifying which core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance informed this study.

Research Questions

Two primary research questions guided this study:

1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers?
2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The theoretical framework guiding this study is the theory of cultural competence (Cross et al., 1989). The framework developed by Cross et al. (1989) provides a foundation for the definition of cultural competence, which is universally accepted across multiple disciplines and systems. Cross et al. combined the words culture and competence to highlight diverse perspectives. According to Cross et al., culture implies integrated human behaviors such as thoughts, actions, beliefs, and values. Competence means the capacity to function effectively (National Center for Cultural Competence, n.d.).

Cross et al. (1989) suggested five elements are necessary to attain cultural competence: (a) valuing diversity, (b) having the capacity for self-assessment, (c) being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, (d) having culturally institutionalized knowledge, and (e) having developed adaptations to service reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity. Martin and Vaughn (n.d.) described the contributions of Cross et al. as a continuum of competence that includes: (a) awareness, (b) attitude, (c) knowledge, and (d) skills.

The study is further informed by Ladson-Billings' (1995) theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings conducted extensive academic investigations of culturally relevant teaching practices for Black children. The research around improving teaching pedagogy and the intersectionality of culture, teaching, and learning resulted in the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Culturally relevant pedagogy consists of three elements: (a) students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The conceptual framework used in this study is the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model. Nerstrom, drawing upon the work of Mezirow (1978), concluded that transformative learning theory was too complex for students to understand. According to Mezirow (1978), transformative learning theory is a rational process in which learners challenge, question, and discuss the world around them. Transformative learning theory focuses on changing learners' thought processes by using introspection to analyze assumptions, beliefs, dilemmas, and situations based on new information (Western Governors University [WGU], 2020).

Mezirow (1978), in a study of adult women returning to school, concluded transformative learning is a 10-phase process. However, Nerstrom's (2014) study of adult educators' experiences in graduate school found there was no visual representation in Mezirow's work to explain the complexities of transformative learning. Subsequently, Nerstrom developed the transformative learning model, distilled from Mezirow's original 10 phases explaining transformative learning theory. The four phases composing Nerstrom's model include: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning. Drawing upon the work of Mezirow (1978), Nerstrom (2014) wrote:

Transformative learning posits that adults view life with limited perspectives based upon limited experiences that shape their personal beliefs (truths). Through expanding their experiences, individuals may challenge existing beliefs and gain new perspectives identified as transformative learning. (p. 326)

The conceptual framework used in this study is Nerstrom's (2014) transformative learning model, which was significantly informed by Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory. Transformative learning theory is suited for this study because the framework centers on the perceptions and experiences of new officers. The theoretical framework of cultural competence intersects with the four core elements derived from the combined research of Mezirow (1978) and Nerstrom (2014): having experiences, making assumptions, challenging perspectives, and experiencing transformative learning.

Methodology

The research methodology used for this study is quantitative-leading mixed methods examining the cultural competencies and perceptions of new police officers. The study employed an explanatory sequential design consisting of a survey and semistructured interview questions

using Nerstrom’s (2014) transformative learning model lens. In this study, Research Question 1 is quantitative, and Research Question 2 is qualitative.

Mixed-method research bridges the gap between methodologies to understand and make sense of practice (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Drawing from Lochmiller and Lester (2017), quantitative-leading research design relies on the privilege of using quantitative data to understand the problem, whereas qualitative data explore human interaction and observations to draw inferences about life. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), “Explanatory sequential design consists of first collecting quantitative data and then qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results” (p. 572).

Alignment Table

An alignment table provided a visual for research alignment. According to Booton (2018), an alignment table bridges ideas and structural components in research. The alignment table represents the alignment of this study’s problem, literature findings, research questions, survey and interview questions, frameworks, and methodology (see Appendix A).

Delimitations and Assumptions

A delimitation for this study is that participants were currently employed police officers who have graduated from the police academy and have less than 3 years of law enforcement experience. In addition, the study included police officers who are fully certified to work in the field. Participants are active-duty police officers from the West (southern California) and Southwest (central Arizona) geographic regions of the United States. Finally, lateral-entry transfer officers (i.e., those hired from another agency), or officers recertified from another state were excluded to maintain research integrity.

This research assumed that participants were bound by a code of ethics and were honest and accurate in their survey and interview responses, opinions, and experiences. In addition, participants are assumed to represent a larger population of police officers nationwide.

Significance of the Study

This study highlights police cultural competency at a critical juncture in societal discourse. Elton (2013) argued as communities in the United States have become more diverse, concerns have grown over the education and training of police officers in culturally competent practice. Although previous researchers have addressed various dimensions of cultural competence, only some have examined cultural competencies learned in the academy with police officer field performance (e.g., Briceno, 2009; Elton, 2013; Whitfield, 2019). Examining cultural competencies that benefit officers while gaining an understanding of their perceptions toward community members could inform professional policing.

Finally, much of the research around cultural competence has occurred in the health and human services field (e.g., Thackrah & Thompson, 2013). As such, examining cultural competencies learned in the police academy and acted upon in the field could inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing.

Definition of Terms

The terms identified are essential to understanding this research:

Cultural competence refers to a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al., 1989).

Diversity refers to the practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of U.S. people, including underserved communities (Executive Order No. 14035, 2021).

Implicit bias refers to thoughts and feelings about social groups that can influence people's perceptions, decisions, and actions without awareness (California Department of Justice, 2015).

Peace officer refers to a civil officer (such as a police officer) whose duty is to preserve public peace (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Police academy is a series of rigorous educational and physical modules that help prepare potential law enforcement officers for handling the demands of the position (Police 1, 2021).

Police legitimacy is predicated on public trust and confidence and implies the authority of a person, unit, or organization to dictate behavior (Fischer, 2014; Peyton et al., 2019).

Police officer refers to a sworn law enforcement officer who takes a constitutional oath to support the U.S. Constitution, their state, and jurisdictional laws where employed. Police officers protect lives and property (International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP], n.d.).

Racism refers to the failure to give equal consideration because of race alone (Schmid, 1996).

Chapter Summary

This study overview included (a) an introduction to the study, (b) the statement of the problem, (c) the background of the problem, (d) the study's purpose, (e) the research questions, (f) the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study, and (g) the methodological approach for conducting the study. Finally, the chapter concluded with delimitations and

assumptions, the study's significance, definitions of key terms used in the study, a chapter summary, and the organization of the study.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized in the following manner: Chapter 1 presented the problem, the background of the problem, the study's purpose, research questions, frameworks, methodology, alignment table, delimitations and assumptions, the study's significance, and the organization of the study. Chapter 2 provided a detailed literature review of societal expectations, police academy education and training, police culture, police leadership, and cultural competence. Chapter 3 presented the quantitative-leading mixed methods methodology used in the study. Chapter 4 described the research findings. Finally, Chapter 5 concluded the dissertation by discussing findings, implications, researcher recommendations surrounding the study, and conclusions.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In the United States, police officers have been challenged by increased multiculturalism (Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016a). Melekian (2015, as cited in Shusta et al., 2015), described the changing nature of diversity as “one of the most profound social changes to impact American law enforcement” (p. x). Law enforcement necessitates relating to people, yet building trust is largely predicated on being culturally competent (Hudson, 2014). Although cultural competence education and training is somewhat new to modern policing (U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], n.d.-a), researchers have recognized that cultural competence education and training likely begins at the onset of a police officer’s career (Oakley, 2020; Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016-b). The purpose of this literature review is to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new officer field performance.

The literature review in this chapter provides content and context to the study using source documents (e.g., peer-reviewed journals, industry-applicable articles, industry websites, government and professional reports, dissertations, books). The themes covered in this literature review include (a) the history of policing in the United States, (b) police academy education and training, (c) police culture, (d) police leadership, and (e) cultural competence. These thematic research areas support the topic and illuminate the literature substantiating the dearth of research pertaining to cultural competence and new police officer field performance. The chapter concludes by discussing the research gaps identified in the study.

History of Policing in the United States

Policing models in the United States emerged from those of the London Metropolitan Police Department, founded in 1829 by British Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel (Monkkonen, 1992). Historically, British thought and philosophy heavily influenced early policing practices in

the United States (Kelling & Moore, 1983). The British philosophy of policing valued older traditions “but was still based upon overt, reactive patrol” (Kelling & Moore, 1983, p. 52). The first organized police department in the United States was established in Boston in 1858 (Gaines & Miller, 2019). By 1861, many large U.S. urban cities (e.g., New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit) formed police agencies in the likeness of the London Metropolitan Police (Kelling & Moore, 1983; Uchida, 2021).

Policing is a delicate balance (Meares & Kahan, 1998) enriched by “a diverse ecosystem of cultures, ethnicities, values, perspectives, identities, and abilities” (Gailes, 2022, p. 18) among varied populations. Consequently, police officers are questioned frequently about the impact of community practice, often in communities of color, swaying public sentiment and opinions of law enforcement (Police Executive Research Forum [PERF], 2015). Friedman’s (2017) seminal work on democratic policing, *Unwarranted: Policing Without Permission*, shed some light on such questioning:

We have categorically failed to offer clear guidance to policing agencies as to what they are to do (or refrain from doing). If anything, we’ve sent mixed messages. We insist that above all we want safety and low crime. But then, when the police do their best to deliver, we start casting blame about the way they went about it. It is we who are at fault, for failing to specify how we wish to be policed, for largely ducking the question altogether. (p. 318)

Questioning police practices in the United States is commonplace. Although the United States ardently supports the equitable treatment of all people, evidence suggests otherwise (Braga et al., 2019). One example of this dichotomy is President Obama convening the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) in response to public distrust of the

police, more than 150 years after the first U.S. police department was founded. However, societal changes influencing performance and behavioral expectations for law enforcement continue to impact communities throughout the U.S. (Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016-b). Mounting public concern over unfair and disparate police practices, likely attributable to viewing contemporary policing through a historical lens, represses communities (Braga et al., 2019).

The respect for human rights and individual differences is a societal expectation for police officers in a democracy (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services [COPS Office], 2015). In addition, society expects police to understand cultural differences and respond appropriately when meeting community needs (Vodde, 2009). The evolution of policing in the United States provides context and helps inform contemporary societal expectations through three specific eras of policing: (a) the political era, (b) the reform era, and (c) the community era (Gaines & Miller, 2019). Each era of policing bears significance upon the history and evolution of policing in the United States (see Appendix B).

The Political Era (1840–1930)

The political era of policing was characterized by rampant politicization (Kelling & Moore, 1983). Uchida (2021) argued police officers belonged to partisan political factions and were little more than political operatives during this period. Favoritism, corruption, bribery, and cronyism were commonplace behaviors of the police, who preferred protecting and appeasing those in political power instead of serving the public good (Gaines & Miller, 2019). Although Potter (n.d.) stated, “It would be incorrect to say the late 19th century and early 20th century police were corrupt, they were in fact, primary instruments for the creation of corruption in the first place” (para. 20).

Eventually, politicians realized they could attract more votes by offering social services instead of arresting neighbors (Gaines & Miller, 2019); thus, police officers actively participated and supported citizens through social service provision to please political bosses (Gaines & Miller, 2019). As Monkkonen (1992) stated, “From very early on police did something for which they had not been created: they dispensed forms of welfare in response to the pressing demands of citizens” (p. 555). Further, the political era gave rise to the realization of overt racism and the disparate treatment of underrepresented communities (Gregory, 2022). According to Walker (2020), “The roots of racism in American policing—first planted centuries ago—have not yet been purged” (para. 5). Braga et al. (2019) noted:

The political era also represented a dark period in the racial history of the United States: For example, historians have uncovered that, in addition to functioning as slave patrols, surveilling and limiting black’s physical movement, early law enforcement officers were instrumental in a wide range of illegal activities: mob action, torture, and countless killings of freed blacks. (p. 539)

However, disparate treatment by the police was not limited to Black individuals. Delgado (2009) found Latinos in the U.S. Southwest experienced lynching similarly to Black people in the South during this period. As stated by Braga et al. (2019):

Blacks’ and Latino’s experiences with lynching are an undeniable and permanent stain on the legacy of early American law enforcement. Moreover, these past atrocities may also serve as the backdrop against which many people of color view contemporary policing practices, holding remnants of horrific misdeeds accountable for continuing police-minority community tensions. (p. 539)

Additionally, disparate treatment was commonplace in Asian settlements and communities in the post-Civil War era. The largest mass lynching in U.S. history occurred in Los Angeles, California in 1871. The *Chinatown War*, a violent confrontation between Chinese immigrants and White Angelinos, erupted over control of prostitution and resulted in the deaths of 18 Chinese immigrants (Lee, 2013). According to Zesch (2012), police were actively engaged in violent confrontations with Chinese immigrants preceding the lynchings.

In contrast, Cook (2012) asserted lynching resulted from other social dynamics, such as sizeable immobile underrepresented populations, poor economic conditions among white individuals, perceived economic threats in the Black community, and shifting partisan political power. Similarly, Carr (2016) rejected the premise that lynching was lawless, characterizing the act as a legitimate and democratic law enforcement tool during the period. Still, the relationship between lynching and policing in the period is undeniable. As Gregory (2022) stated, “Lynching remains the most studied and yet indefinite link between late nineteenth-century law enforcement and customary racism” (p. 98).

Jim Crow segregation laws created even greater social division in the United States from the end of the Civil War through the Civil Rights movement of 1960s. Litwak (1998) observed the police enforced Jim Crow laws unabated in a system that proffered absolute control over Black individuals, even though codified law implied a colorblind justice system. Welke (2001) similarly highlighted the intersection of Jim Crow laws with status and race. The political period elucidated military occupation, racial oppression, the structural inequalities of policing, enforced segregation, and racialized policing (Gregory, 2022).

The Reform Era (1930–1980)

The reform era of policing, also known as the professional era, gained momentum around 1929 (Gaines & Miller, 2019). However, initial reform efforts experienced limited success because of public opposition to unpopular liquor laws (Kelling & Moore, 1983). As stated by Kelling and Moore (1983):

Popular opposition to the liquor laws was so widespread that “equal enforcement of the laws” was out of the question, and “corruption” reappeared to accommodate the unwillingness of responsible citizens to comply with the law. This “lesson,” whatever its flaws and whatever unforeseen consequences, laid the basis for the next phase of American policing, in which the police became primarily concerned with serious crime: murder, assault, robbery, rape, burglary, and theft. (p. 55)

Toward the end of Prohibition (1919–1933), calls for police reform intensified because of blatant lawlessness and more significant opportunities for police corruption (Potter, n.d.). According to Potter (n.d.), “By the end of prohibition, the corrupting of American policing was almost total” (para. 22).

President Hoover (1931), responding to rising crime rates, police brutality, police ineffectiveness, and increased corrupting political influences in criminal justice, appointed the Commission on Law Observances and Enforcement, also known as the Wickersham Commission, to assess the U.S. criminal justice system (Gaines & Miller, 2019; Potter, n.d.). The Wickersham Commission found police professionalization depended on establishing higher personnel standards, centralization, and technological advancements (U.S. Department of Justice, 1931).

The 1940s was a transformative period in the history of policing in the United States (Schrader, 2021). Police reform was temporarily disrupted as police officers left their jobs to join the war effort (Schrader, 2021). Following World War II (1939–1945), police departments grappled with the social implications of Japanese internment camps, post-war militarization of civilian policing, and the influence of veterans on police professionalism (Kashima, 2004; Schrader, 2021). As stated by Schrader, “As a conservative estimate, between 10 and 20 percent of police joined the military during the war” (pp. 162–163).

By the 1950s, progressive police reformers such as Berkeley, California’s Chief of Police, August Vollmer; and Los Angeles, California’s Chief of Police, William H. Parker, envisioned contemporary police practice as independent, disciplined, and quasi-military structures joined by geographic boundaries and meritocracy (Kelling & Moore, 1983; Potter, n.d.). At the same time, Berkeley police officer and protégé of August Vollmer, O. W. Wilson, distinguished himself as the principal architect of police professionalism (Bopp, 1977). According to Bopp (1977), O.W. Wilson is credited with transforming policing by introducing efficiencies, advanced technology, scientific methodology, and deployment strategies to maximize fighting crime. Additionally, O.W. Wilson is responsible for developing and overseeing: (a) a code of ethics, (b) a systematic approach to combating juvenile delinquency, (c) a college cadet program, (d) the first professional school of criminology, and (e) the hiring of the first female police captain (Bopp, 1977).

Despite noteworthy contributions to police professionalism, there were pitfalls during this era. Notably, the mobile deployment of officers with advanced communications systems under a centralized authoritarian command distanced the police from community members (Bopp, 1977).

Potter (n.d.) suggested structurally isolating the police from the community was intentional, believing it would curb corruption.

Sparse literature has supported the stance that the military-inspired model of policing—championed by Wilson, Vollmer, and Parker—ever produced professionalism in police officers (Bopp, 1977). Noted criminal justice author, Walker (1996), observed after more than 50 years of professionalization, reformers had done little more than create bureaucratic, isolated, and defensive police agencies intolerant of public criticism. Walker’s observations contradicted the Wickersham Commission’s recommendation that centralization was essential to professionalizing the police. Potter (n.d.) was more direct, noting, “Professionalism antagonized tensions between the police and the communities they served and created rancor and dissension with the departments themselves” (para. 31).

Significant social and political change in the 1960s magnified public tension between the police and the community (Lepore, 2020). The Civil Rights movement; the Vietnam War; nationwide college campus protests; labor unrest; strike busting; and the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy (1963), Malcolm X (1965), Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968), and Senator Robert F. Kennedy (1968) illuminated the period (Potter, n.d.). Between 1967–1968 alone, there were 292 mass demonstrations across 163 college campuses in the United States. (Potter, n.d.). Often, the police were ill-prepared for these clashes; thus, police response and behavior to these occurrences elicited intense public scrutiny. In response to layers of bureaucracy and increased accountability, nearly all major police departments in the United States were unionized by the early 1970s (Potter, n.d.).

The Community Era (1980–2000)

The review of literature supported that the community policing period began in the 1970s but was not widely accepted until the 1980s and ended with the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the United States (Gaines & Miller, 2019). Like the political era, the community era signaled a return of police officers to the community (Gaines & Miller, 2019). Although the political era was imperfect, police were more present in the community than the reform period (Gaines & Miller, 2019). In addition, the community era served as a period of clarity for the police (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1991). Inspired by the 1982 seminal work of George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson's *Broken Windows*, the police recognized community voice mattered in combating crime, improving quality of life, and solving problems collaboratively (Carter, 1996). According to Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a), the police moved from enforcing the law to being community problem solvers.

Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1991) held community policing philosophy rests on the premise that police officers are working generalists deployed to specific beats as permanent problem solvers. The objective of community policing is to inspire mutual trust and respect, thereby strengthening relationships between the police and community (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1991). In contrast, Potter (n.d.) described community policing in a more morose context, stating:

Community policing is the latest iteration in efforts to (1) improve relations between the police and the community; (2) decentralize the police; and (3) in response to the overwhelming body of scholarly literature which finds that the police have virtually no impact on crime, no matter their emphasis or role, provide a means to make citizens feel

more comfortable about what has been a seemingly insoluble American dilemma. (para. 37)

Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1991) further noted demographic changes, economic uncertainty, and anxiety over race and economic status dogged U.S. cities from 1980–2000. As noted by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1991):

It is also true that community policing cannot by itself hope to end racism, ethnocentrism, elitism, classism, and prejudice. But as the foregoing suggests, it is a good place to start, and it offers the police new opportunities to become the catalyst for positive social change. (p. 22)

Nearly 2 decades later, in the July 20, 2020 edition of *The New Yorker* magazine, Lepore (2020) wrote, “The crisis in policing is the culmination of a thousand other failures—failures of education, social services, public health, gun regulation, criminal justice, and economic development” (para. 4).

Beyond the Community Era (2000–2023)

There has been much debate over policing philosophy and strategy since the end of the community era. Glensor (2022) argued against the need to create another era of policing amid rapidly changing communities. Glensor also suggested varied policing strategies—such as relationship policing, impartial policing, constitutional policing, principled policing, intelligence-led policing, predictive policing, and community policing—are not bifurcated. Instead, predictive and intelligence-led policing will likely lead to the advancement of further community-oriented policing practice.

In contrast, Skinner (2022) asserted residents have no attachment to the police, and the chasm between police officers and community members has continued to grow. As Skinner (2022) stated:

With little time to spend on interaction, relationship building, and problem solving, modern day police officers are less of a partner with the neighborhoods they serve and more like a rapidly moving force, separated from the community by a high-speed cage of glass and steel. (pp. 8–9)

Bykov (2014) observed even amid widespread community support for community policing, police academies have continued to resist community-based philosophy in support of a status quo para-military structure. Additionally, Kelling and Kliesmet (1996) argued police culture has not historically viewed community policing as real police work. The impetus of 20th-century police reforms centered on greater bureaucratic control, improved performance standards for officers, and renewed public value resulting from improved service (McCabe, 2000).

Policing a democracy is dependent on partnership, mutual trust, and accountability to sustain a system of justice that is fair, impartial, and transparent (Exec Order 14074, 2022). Skinner (2022) summarized, “The future success of American policing lies in the ability to recognize these important conditions and develop strategies that focus on redefining the relationship between police officers and the community” (p. 9).

Police Academy Education and Training

Skinner (2022) noted, “At its core, policing is about community service” (p. 10). Although the community era inspired a policing philosophy of community partnerships and collaborative problem solving, police academy education and training have not kept pace with providing police officers the skills necessary to effectively interact with vastly changing

communities (Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016a). Bradford and Pynes (1999) noted police training has historically failed to keep pace with police practices. However, Wolfe et al. (2020) reported police scholarship has long recognized social interaction skills as necessary attributes for police officers.

In a study of how knowledge is used between the police academy and field training, Hundesmarck (2004), found task-oriented learning dominates the academy experience. An Oakland, California, police academy study identified that graduate officers believed they were not prepared for 34% of the work they were asked to perform, elevating Hundesmarck's earlier findings (Sedevic, 2012).

In addition, in a 2018 U.S. DOJ report on state and local law enforcement training academies, Buehler (2021) reported the average length of basic police academy training in the United States was 833 hours; however, the longest basic police academy training consisted of 1,074 hours, which may help explain why some officers feel more prepared than others. In a study examining the influences of academy training on future officer performance, Caro (2010) found because national standards do not exist, academy courses and hours of instruction vary across states significantly.

The 2018 U.S. DOJ report also found the most significant number of hours of academy instruction were dedicated to firearms skills (73 hours), defensive tactics (61 hours), and patrol procedures (52 hours). Although 93.8% of police academies in the United States delivered diversity content in 2018, the average number of hours of instructional content was 14 hours (Buehler, 2021). Vodde (2009) suggested cultural competence education and training are necessary early in an officer's career to perform the job in all situations. Notably, cultural

competence was not identified in curriculum nor explicitly measured in the U.S. DOJ police academy report (Buehler, 2021).

In contrast, Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a) advocated the need for soft skills competencies, critical thinking skills, and interpersonal communication skills, allowing officers to improve decision-making skills and challenge assumptions and beliefs. According to Sereni-Massinger and Wood, societal changes have necessitated soft skills training in law enforcement. As Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a) noted:

Today's police training addresses the tactical side of the use of force; specifically addressing how an officer protects his or herself from a threat. Further education is required to provide a social context on how interaction between an officer and individual will later impact the community, as well as police-community relations. (p. 258)

In a study of the relationship between noncognitive skills and academic achievement of African American men in community colleges, Gordon (2021) argued noncognitive skills are critical and should be considered. Barrett (2014) found noncognitive skills are critical and should be a serious academic consideration. Traditional police academy training has overlooked subject areas such as communications, diversity, and problem solving in favor of legal studies and officer safety content (Chappell, 2008). Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016-b) argued that societal changes necessitate police agencies embrace soft skills training as they evolve into roles of community partners and advocates instead of purely enforcement agencies.

Police Academy Training Standards

Police academies in the United States systematically indoctrinate recruits with the theoretical foundation essential to perform as expected in the police culture (Caro, 2011). Bykov (2014) maintained the police academy is where recruits learn a unified, bureaucratic way of

addressing complex political, social, and economic conditions that influence their work; however, no national governing body exists that oversees police officer education standards in the United States (“Brief Law Enforcement,” 2017).

Bykov (2014), in a study evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of police academies, found that police academies retain outdated beliefs around race and gender. For example, women in policing are underrepresented, only increasing from 2% to 10% of the workforce from 1970 to 1990 (Zhao et al., 2010). According to Wilson and Buckler (2010), gender integration and equality for women in policing have only been made possible through social changes and statutory law.

Although most police academy curriculum and training standards follow state training board or peace officer standards and training (POST) commission guidelines, inconsistencies among police academies remain (Caro, 2011). For example, police academies can be sponsored by individual state, region, and local agencies, along with 2-year colleges and universities (Bradford & Pynes, 1999).

Bykov (2014) found policing structure is disorganized and decentralized because “the federal government designated law enforcement a responsibility of local municipalities and states” (p. 144). There is no standardized police academy curriculum or level of expectation taught to academy recruits (Bykov, 2014). As a result, only about 10% of what is learned in the police academy applies in the field (Caro, 2010).

As of 2024, police education and training requirements are subjects of wide debate in the United States; for example, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021 directed the U.S. DOJ to create uniform accreditation standards for federal law enforcement (H.R. Rep. No. 1280, 2021). Although federal law enforcement guidelines do not impose mandates on states,

consistent standards overall may benefit police agencies and community members. Bykov (2014) noted, “Although each state has its own policies concerning police academies and policing practices, more uniformity across the states would help efficiency in the criminal justice system” (p. 153). Caro (2011) asserted policing in the United States should be a federal government responsibility to ameliorate uniformity of police academies and policing practice nationally. Similar policing education, training standards and practices would hold all police agencies to consistent standards, mitigate civil litigation, encourage public cooperation, and elevate public trust (Caro, 2011). Birzer (2003) stated training is essential to facilitating change in police organizations. According to Bykov (2014), standardizing police academies and policing practices in the United States should be further explored.

The Role of the Community College

According to the 2018 U.S. DOJ report on law enforcement training academies, all 681 local and state police academies delivered basic training to 59,511 recruits (Buehler, 2021). Notably, 2-year colleges accounted for one third of all police academies while delivering education and training to 25% of all recruits nationally (Buehler, 2021). Because community colleges are open-access institutions (McClenney & Mathis, 2011), college and university police academies include recruits (i.e., students) who are self-sponsored, along with recruits employed by police agencies.

Community colleges are essential partners in law enforcement academy education and training, often delivering curriculum required by state boards and commissions (Finkel, 2021). In California, roughly 80% of police officers are trained by community colleges (Zinshteyn, 2020). However, McPhail et al. (2001) asserted educators should be aware it is the student who brings culturally formed knowledge, which ultimately informs new learning.

Former California Community Colleges Chancellor, Eloy Ortiz Oakley (2020), issued a call to action in 2020 for the California Community Colleges system to reform law enforcement curriculum considering highly publicized police-related deaths. Police academy education and training curriculum reform would make certain what was being taught by community colleges was appropriate for students and reflected community expectations (Oakley, 2020).

In addition to California, the state of Minnesota system of public universities and community colleges and Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training has undertaken examining curriculum and policies around police academy training from an equity perspective (Finkel, 2021). For example, Minnesota community colleges have adopted an inclusive antiracial ethos and culturally responsive pedagogy as an organizing and structural principle of police academy education and training (Finkel, 2021).

Police Academy Curriculum and Instruction

There is no national consensus on an education and training curriculum to produce competent and effective police officers (Caro, 2011). Police academy curricula are prescribed by each state's licensing or certifying authority (Buehler, 2021; Caro, 2010). Additionally, educational content in the academy is based on what is critical to a specific department, area, or region (Bykov, 2014). Conversely, Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a) found traditional police academies teach from a pedagogical perspective of teaching and learning police work, rather than solving specific community problems. In their research on police training, Hall et al. (2016) observed control, dominance, and violence outweigh effective communication, deliberation and understanding in resolving community problems. Still, many academies share similar instruction modules (Police 1, 2021).

The 2018 DOJ report on law enforcement training academies further identified 47 distinct subjects in six specific content areas: (a) operations, (b) weapons and defensive tactics, (c) legal, (d) community policing, (e) self-improvement, and (f) special topics. However, the length of police academies varies according to type: state, local, county, or college and university academy. The average length of all police academies is 833 hours, whereas county police academies average 1,074 hours, and other state agency academies average 653 hours (Buehler, 2021). In a correlational study linking police training programs with learning institutions, Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016b) found there was no standard for training police officers nationwide, including content and hours of instruction. Inconsistencies are evident in how much, and what type of education and training police academy recruits should receive (Buehler, 2021; Caro, 2011).

Police academy instruction is also inconsistent in the United States (Buehler, 2021). In 2018, only 7 in 10 academies required full-time academy instructors to have a minimum of 4 years of law enforcement experience (Buehler, 2021). In addition, civilian instructors comprised a scant 11% of full-time and 5% of part-time police academy instructors (Buehler, 2021). Harris (2008) observed law enforcement instructors possess an eagerness to tell stories related to their experiences, whether they were outdated or politically incorrect. In a study examining the transition of police instructors to police educators, Basham (2014) noted police culture was a barrier to educational practices in academy learning.

According to McCampbell (1987), a significant gap exists between classroom instruction and real-world application. Makin (2016) critically observed, “Wherein what is taught in the academy is not necessarily what is needed to police” (p. 12). As such, the field training that new

officers receive post-academy is essential in transferring knowledge learned in the academy to situational field experiences (McCampbell, 1987).)

From the Classroom to the Field

Following graduation from a police academy, new officers are assigned to departmental field training programs. Field training is on-the-job training aimed at providing a new officer with the skill sets to perform the duties of a police officer (McCampbell, 1987). During the field training program, new officers are paired with more experienced field training officers responsible for new officer orientation, training, and field performance (Getty et al., 2014).

Field training officers are integral in the lives of trainees, personally and professionally, during the training period (Getty et al., 2014). Field training officers are authority figures tasked with developing trainees into self-sufficient police officers (Getty et al., 2014). Bennet (1984) suggested field training is when new officers are taught the values and competencies that transcend the academy experience. McCampbell (1987) described field training as an opportunity to close the gap between what is learned in the academy and applied in the field. As Getty et al. (2104) stated:

Recruits presumably bring to the job an understanding of book knowledge, but they cannot be taught in an academy how to fairly and impartially apply *all* they learned in real-world situations. In other words, new officers can be taught when to legally arrest and use force, but the academy cannot instill in each trainee the intangible community value-based decision-making skills necessary to manage unpredictable incidents in varying situations. (p. 2)

In contrast, Haberfield (2013) posited field training is a process to counter poor hiring choices and deficiencies in academy training. Field training is also viewed as a mere extension of the hiring process (McC Campbell, 1987).

Based on research of 22 police academies, Bradford and Pynes (1999) concluded over 90% of academy training time was spent on task-oriented and reactionary training. Two decades later, Buehler's (2021) analysis of police academies across the United States affirmed tactical education and training remain a priority over soft skills content delivery. Caro (2011) reported unpleasant police interaction with communities was likely attributable to the gap in curriculum received in the academy and the experiences of officers in the field.

Getty et al. (2014) suggested the job outlook and work style of new officers are more attributable to field training than educational content in the academy. In addition, although previous scholars have researched various aspects of field training, little is known about the behavioral attitudes and tendencies of field training officers and their influence on postgraduate recruits (e.g., Sun, 2002).

The precipitous nature of policing warrants critical thinking, use of common sense and good judgment, demonstrated empathy, and community understanding. Sun (2002) said, "Field training programs have become the principal formal mechanism for transmitting the police culture and craft to new officers" (p. 69).

Police Culture

A predominant theme in most studies of police culture is officer behavior toward community members (Terrill et al., 2003). Paoline et al. (2000) described the traditional view of police culture as a set of attitudes and values shared among officers in a stressful occupation. Similarly, Schein and Schein (2017) viewed culture as shared learning occurring in groups,

solving problems, and passing cultural knowledge along to new members as “the correct way to think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems” (p. 6). Terrill et al. (2003) summarized the police officer perspective of organizational culture, noting:

Police culture posits that officers should, almost uniformly, hold strongly unfavorable views of both citizens and supervisors, show disdain and resentment toward procedural guidelines, reject all roles except that which involves fighting crime, and value aggressive patrolling tactics and selectivity in performing their law enforcement duties. (p. 1007)

In contrast, in a study of the experiences and perspectives of postgraduate officers from underrepresented communities, Brown (2020) found officer attitudes toward community members determined police legitimacy. An understanding of police culture further informed this study because the topic area assesses attitudinal and behavioral implications of new officers transitioning from the police academy.

Since the 1950s, scholars on policing have studied the phenomenon of police culture, examining the connection between culture and behavior (Terrill et al., 2003). Chan (1997) found literature on police culture has not been well-defined. For example, police researchers Westly (1953) and Skolnick (1966) pioneered research around the formation and existence of police culture. The seminal works of Westly and Skolnick characterized police culture somewhat differently. Whereas Westley explored culture from the perspective of secrecy and loyalty among police officers, Skolnick’s working personality theory described the danger, authority, and efficiency informing the police subculture and work regime of police officers. Police culture has been identified as the most considerable impediment to successful reform (Chappell, 2007).

Police researchers have studied police culture to explain differences between the police and community and why they occur (e.g., Crank, 2004; Gutschmidt & Vera, 2020; Terrill et al.,

2003; Thomas, 2019). However, research remains sparse examining which specific cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit officers most in the field.

Recognizing that cultural competence education and training is relatively new to policing (Norman-Major & Gooden, 2012), the training raises the question about whether there may be value in expanding research to include an experienced officer population. Bennet's (1984) longitudinal study of police recruit occupational socialization found because recruit profiles change rapidly, similarities of officers with 1–10 years of experience were not comparable. Furthermore, Rokeach et al. (1971) conducted a cross-sectional analysis investigating changes over time among different groups of officers with varied years of service. Rokeach et al. found no difference among the groups of officers. Research attributed to what effect, if any, police culture has upon officers' perceptions of academy learned cultural competence education and training may add value to the study (Fletcher, 2014; Terrill et al., 2003).

Cultural Dilemmas

The United States is projected to be a minority–majority nation by 2045 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Vast demographic changes across the United States have illuminated the significance of cultural competence as an essential employment skill to communicate and work effectively with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds (de Guzman et al., 2016). Research on effective leadership and cultural competence training outcomes (Brown, 2019) have suggested demographic changes could be explored from the context of police effectiveness. Brown (2019) proposed enduring structural change between the police and community is predicated on mutual understanding, mutual respect, and honest dialogue.

Law enforcement culture has been further challenged by an enduring civil rights and political debate over law enforcement authority and practice (U.S. DOJ, n.d.-b). Researchers

have suggested the crimefighter or warrior mentality is detrimental to police–community relationships (e.g., Kelling & Kliesmet, 1996). In contrast, Crank (2014) offered that culture is what makes the police more like community members instead of separate from the community. In an essay on the broken culture of many police departments, Brooks (2020) portrayed police culture as “invisible but all determining” (para. 28).

One socialization hypothesis of police culture is that attitudinal and value differences between police officers and community members rest on the uniqueness of the job itself (Bennett, 1984). Brook’s (2020) work, *The Culture of Policing is Broken*, reported cultural norms in policing often contribute to police personnel ignoring vulnerabilities and repressing emotion. However, research exists refuting a unique personality hypothesis; for example, researchers have found police officers possess no more authoritarian tendencies in attitudes and values than the general population (e.g., Bayley & Mendelsohn, 1969; Bennett & Greenstein, 1975). In addition, previous researchers have concluded minority police officers perform consistently during interaction with community members regardless of race or ethnicity (Skogan & Frydl, 2004).

Community integration is another dilemma for the police. Policing is a delicate balance (Meares & Kahan, 1998) and participation in community affairs and events should be encouraged (U.S.D.O.J, n.d.-b). Fletcher’s (2014) research on cultural competence in community college policing held that promoting cultural competence is an opportunity for the police to address inaccurate public services and programs while better preparing officers for field work. However, earlier research by Fielding (1988) challenged the notion of organizational competence, pointing out that competence is experiential, insufficient, and not applicable to police work.

Police Leadership

New officers are taught to think, feel, and behave culturally based on the accumulated problem-solving learning of others organizationally (Schein & Schein, 2017). Police officers likely accept the transference of organizational learning out of respect for the power and influence that leaders have on certification, collateral assignment, and promotional opportunities. Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) found validation from leaders and peers is more meaningful to officers than what community members may think.

According to Cockcroft (2019), little attention has been paid to the relationship between police leaders and police culture. Police officers are guided by policy, rules, regulations, guidelines, and procedures. The role of police leaders is to ensure the maintenance of good order and organizational discipline. Cockcroft (2019) theorized that police leaders are merely a means of mitigating damage caused by occupational culture. Nonetheless, the role of police leaders in enforcing policy and limiting cultural conflict is essential (Fletcher, 2014; Schein, 2017).

Embedding Culturally Competent Leadership

Organizationally, officers are often unclear about supervisory expectations, which can lead to increased negativity (Terrill et al., 2003). Brown (1988) described this relationship, stating, “What must be recognized is that patrolmen lead somewhat of a schizophrenic existence: they must cope with not only terror of an often hostile and unpredictable citizenry, but also with a hostile-even tyrannical- and unpredictable bureaucracy” (p. 9). Kelling and Kliesmet (1996) found officers often cope with leadership ambiguities by immersion into traditional crime fighter roles. In contrast, Fletcher (2014) argued effective policy enforced by police leadership encourages culturally competent performance.

In a study evaluating police communication, trust, and retention, Chandler (2021) noted organizational leadership significantly influences agency structure, culture, and practice. In research on police officer self-legitimacy and organizational identification, White et al. (2020) stated three primary groups influence an officer's sense of cultural compatibility: (a) coworkers, (b) supervisors, and (c) management. White et al. concluded although organizations influence how police culture is shaped, they are mostly inattentive to how officers situate culturally.

Schein's (2017) seminal work on organizational culture differentiated operators, engineers, and executive culture, a consistent paradigm in the industry. Schein argued effective organizations recognize and manage these three "macro functions" (p. 221), or subcultures. Successful organizations minimize destructive cultural conflict through organizational alignment, thus mitigating internal fighting, power struggles, and conflict among personnel (Schein, 2017). The macro functions described by Schein are structurally consistent with most police departments: (a) coworkers, (b) supervisors, and (c) managers (White et al., 2020).

In a quantitative study examining dimensions of culture among high-ranking German police officers, Gutschmidt et al. (2020) found police units often establish their own subcultures. These subcultures are highly influenced by the overall organizational culture of the agency effecting cultural and workforce dynamics (Gutschmidt et al., 2020). Schein and Schein (2017) reported even though subcultures exist, each formulates a set of values while holding onto the values of leaders.

According to Rice (2011), cultural competence begins with self-awareness among police leadership (the dominant culture). Moran et al. (2011) explained the importance of culturally competent leadership, noting, "Because management philosophies and practices are culturally conditioned, it stands to reason that there is much to be gained by including cultural studies in all

management and professional development” (p. 34). As Tolbert and Hall (2009) found, factors such as past performance and changing conditions often have more impact on the people in an organization than leadership-driven policies or decisions.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is more than exercising tolerance for individual or group differences; being culturally competent includes appreciation, affirmation, and acceptance of all people (de Guzman, 2016). Elton (2013) imagined cultural competence as a starting point for law enforcement to engage community members without prejudicial assumptions. According to Norman-Major and Goodman (2012), cultural competence is a benchmark of sound government ensuring the equitable delivery of public services to all people, not just the few.

The fields of healthcare, social work, and K–12 education pioneered early research on cultural competence (Elton, 2013) with public administration sectors (including policing) becoming engaged more recently (Norman-Major & Gooden, 2012). Cultural competence was first introduced as an emerging field in U.S. healthcare in 2002; a decade later, cultural competence was firmly established in healthcare accreditation standards (Betancourt et al., 2002). Elton (2013) noted cultural competence models are similar in that they share cultural congruence (i.e., attitude, knowledge, and skills).

Many definitions of cultural competence abound. The literature review included several definitions that provide context and meaning to the study. For example:

- Betancourt et al. (2002), defined cultural competence as “the ability of systems to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors, including tailoring to meet patient’s social, cultural, and linguistic needs” (p. v).

- The National Center for Cultural Competence (n.d.), a leading authority in cultural competence, modifying the work of Cross et al. (1989), noted, “Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills along the cultural competence continuum” (p. 2).
- As de Guzman et al. (2016) noted, “Cultural competence is the ability of a person to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds” (p. 1).
- Peffer (2012) reported, “Cultural competence is not an issue of access or even equity; it is an issue of understanding” (p. 32). According to Peffer (2012), “Cultural competence is the ability of all department personnel to work effectively with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, including people from different racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds; individuals with various disabilities; and other groups” (p. 32).

However, the seminal work of Cross et al. (1989) is the lens of this study.

- Cross et al. (1989) defined cultural competence as “A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p. 13).

Cross et al.’s (1989) cultural congruence supports the transformative adult learning theory framework guiding the study. According to Elton (2013), adult learning theory is relatively new to law enforcement academic investigation. Birzer (2003) noted adult learning theory andragogy comports nicely with police education and training.

Cultural competence was distinguished from diversity and social equity in the study. Although there may be interdependence, cultural competence stands alone. Norman-Major and Gooden (2012) stated although diversity, social equity, and cultural competency are linked in existing literature, each serves a distinct purpose among underrepresented communities. Diversity is based largely on population sets and represent bureaucracy, fostering dialogue of civil rights, discrimination, and civic engagement (Norman-Major & Gooden, 2012). In addition, social equity provides the policy structure to apply fairness and justice through services and support programs (Norman-Major & Gooden, 2012). Cultural competence, as noted by Martin and Vaughn (n.d.), moves along a continuum, whereas de Guzman et al. (2016) alluded to cultural competence as a lifelong process beyond simple tolerance.

Law Enforcement Barriers

The challenges facing police agencies in the United States are significant. Arguably, the most immediate challenge is the increased diversity and globalization of U.S. society (de Guzman et al., 2016). The 2021 U.S. Census Bureau data on race and ethnicity presented in Table 2.1 illustrate these population shifts.

Table 2.1. U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

Race and ethnicity	U.S. population (%)
White	59.3
Hispanic	18.9
Black	13.6
Asian	6.1
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.3
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islanders	0.3
Two or more races	2.9

The review of literature indicated potential barriers to police cultural competence, such as race, ethnicity, bias, societal distrust, policing history, police academy education and training, police culture, and law enforcement leadership. Table 2.2 provides U.S. DOJ data on police academy recruit race and ethnicity.

Table 2.2. Race or Ethnicity of Recruits Who Started Basic Training, 2006, 2011–2013, and 2018

Race or ethnicity	2018	2011–2013	2006
White/a	64.8%	70.8%	70.1%
Black/a	14.2%	12.7%	12.7%
Hispanic	17.5%	13.0%	13.3%
Other/a,b	3.6%	3.5%	3.9%

Note. Adapted from Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of Law Enforcement Training Academies, 2006, 2013, and 2018. Excludes recruits with an unknown race or ethnicity. Among academies that provided information on recruit race or ethnicity, less than 2% of all recruits were of an unknown race or ethnicity in 2006, 2011–13, and 2018. ^aExcludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic whites and “Black” refers to non-Hispanic Blacks). ^bIncludes Asians, Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and persons of two or more races.

The nature of law enforcement requires that police officers interact with people from diverse populations daily (U.S. DOJ, n.d.). Elton (2013) communicated that culturally competent practice is a vehicle to eliminating barriers. The awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of police officers not only represent a continuum of cultural competence, but are requisite to effective performance (Deardorff, 2006; Martin & Vaughn, n.d.). Cultural competence helps to

inform the knowledge, understanding, and self-awareness of police officers to effectively deliver services (Fletcher, 2014). Shusta et al. (2015) shared it is through increasing awareness, knowledge, and skills that cultural competence is gained in policing.

In contrast, McManus and Mosca (2015) contended police officers are often discouraged from open communication, resulting in few meaningful organizational contributions. An absence of internal communication diminishes officer self-efficacy, diluting officer confidence and performance (Bandura, 2010). Shao and Ariss (2020) concluded when employees cannot express themselves, it is demoralizing, leads to mistrust, and mitigates confidence among employees and leaders. Police organizational structures themselves may be significant barriers to advancing cultural competence (McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Building on a Continuum of Cultural Competence

Cultural congruence (i.e., awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills) was consistent across the literature (Deardorff, 2006; Martin & Vaughn, n.d.; National Center for Cultural Competence, n.d.; Shusta, 2015). Martin and Vaughn (n.d.) identified each element of cultural congruence in their definition of cultural competence; however, they also established a framework where attitude is separated from awareness to avoid introducing cultural bias and beliefs into consciousness when assessing cultural competence. Drawing from social science research, Devine (1989) found those believed to be low in prejudice acted otherwise in cross-cultural encounters. According to McPhail et al. (2001), diverse students who are not taught cultural differences often struggle. Martin and Vaughn (n.d.) argued attitude change is not significant in acquiring cultural knowledge.

The attitude, knowledge, and skills learned enhance cross-cultural communication and engagement in policing (Elton, 2013). Cross et al. (1989) reported organizations will only change

when communities are attentive to how officers are educated and trained, thereby reconciling concerns over officer awareness, attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Previous research also indicated new officers undergo reality shock upon being transferred to the field following graduation from the police academy (e.g., Harris, 1973; Neiderhoffer, 1967; Van Maanen, 1975). The relationship between police recruit education and training and occupational socialization influences public trust (Bennet, 1984).

In research on cultural competence, de Guzman et al. (2016) said, “Developing cultural competence is a process rather than an end point” (p. 3). For example, healthcare research in Australia found understanding culture in clinical settings informed the role of cultural competency and created better patient outcomes (Thackrah & Thompson, 2013). However, Sereni-Massinger et al. (2015) questioned whether police officers who learn cultural competence in a classroom setting can really understand other cultures without immersion. Conversely, police officers who are educated and trained in cultural competence demonstrate self-awareness, tolerance of individual differences and adaptability to meet community needs (Elton, 2013).

Earning Community Trust

The review of literature revealed a gap between what is learned in the police academy and applied in the field (Hundersmarck, 2004). A significant hurdle for police involves transitioning from traditional education and training that emphasizes survival skills, such as marksmanship, weaponless defense, and emergency vehicle operations (Alpert & Dunham, 1997), to softer skills like reasoning and decision making. Bradford and Pynes (1999) conducted a study of 22 police academies and found less than 3% of the educational experience was attributed to soft skills. Still, nearly 2 decades later, Buehler (2018) reported the highest number

of hours taught in police academies nationally were attributed to firearms skills, defensive tactics, and patrol procedures, thus affirming Bradford and Pynes's (1999) earlier study.

According to Chappell (2007), essential performance areas such as communication, diversity, and community problem solving have been largely absent from police recruit training. Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a) contended problem solving is a basic tool for police officers, yet cultural competence education and training was not an explicitly identified subject in Buehler's (2018) later national report on police academies. A lack of prioritizing cultural competence education and training impedes problem solving, further eroding public trust in policing.

Because police education and training have held fast to pedagogy instead of learner-centered, culturally responsive andragogy, adaptation to community interests and problem solving has lagged (Finkel, 2021). *Pedagogy* is a teacher-centered approach that relies upon obedience, whereas *andragogy* is self-directed interactive adult learning where the instructor represents the catalyst for educational attainment (Birzer, 2003; Chappell, 2007; Glenn et al., 2003). Police recruits are adults who benefit more from interactive learning than historically favored pedagogy (Glenn et al., 2003).

The training and education of new officers is critical to understanding community problems, community needs, and earning public trust. The tenets of the community-oriented policing model being taught suggest police officers and citizens work together provide the answers to crime, disorder, and conflict (Rosenbaum & Lurigio, 1994). Although community policing has had some successes (Wehrman & DeAngelis, 2011), it has not been the panacea politicians, theorists, and policing professionals have envisioned (Bradford & Pynes, 1999).

Chappell (2007) argued new officers need to learn traditional skills of policing; however, soft skills are equally important.

Norman-Major and Gooden (2012) noted cultural competence in public organizations has not kept pace with the social complexities of race, ethnicity, and gender. When police agencies fail to recognize the significance of soft skills education and training, public trust suffers.

Research exists suggesting public service delivery is lacking because cultural differences and variations are considered invisible, illegitimate, and negative (Adler, 1986; Rice, 2007).

Conversely, Rice (2008) viewed cultural competence in policing as the integration and transformation of knowledge in culturally appropriate settings to inform policy and practice leading to positive community outcomes. Effective cultural competence policy is embedded in the mission statement, integrated planning, and public communications of the agency. This institutionalization of cultural competence policy fosters a learning organization (Fletcher, 2014).

Summary

The literature review presented a gap in the research examining new police officers' perceptions of cultural competencies learned in the police academy and applied in the field. Rapidly changing communities and globalization provide police officers with the opportunity to strengthen community relations, reacquire public trust, and deliver the quality of service expected in a democratic society.

Although cultural competence is a component of some police academy instruction, there remains a disconnect in the curriculum. Diversity, community-oriented policing philosophy, and a culturally responsive pedagogy may intersect in the police culture. The literature review captured the significance of field training and police leadership in advancing cultural competence in professional policing. Although this study focused on the cultural competencies applied most

by new officers in the field, the study also drew upon officers' perceptions of core cultural competence. Examining what cultural competencies are learned in the police academy and applied most in the field may help close the gap in the literature.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Chapter 3 introduces the methodology used to conduct the research study. The chapter's organization includes the study's purpose, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, research design, study setting, study participants, instrumentation, data collection, data sources, data analysis, alignment table (see Appendix A), limitations, ethical considerations, and study quality. The chapter concludes with a summary of key points.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. As discussed earlier, little research has examined police officer cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance.

Research Questions

Two primary research questions guided this study:

1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers?
2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The theoretical framework represents the more significant assumptions, served as the foundation of the research study, and guided the research design (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). In contrast, the conceptual framework provided “an argument about why the topic of study matters, and why the methods proposed to study it are appropriate and rigorous” (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017, p. 5). Maxwell (2013) explained a conceptual framework transcends mere verbal or visual

presentation of ideas, instead requiring commitment to an actual framework informing and guiding the study toward greater understanding.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this study was the theory of cultural competence (Cross et al., 1989). According to Lochmiller and Lester (2017), a theoretical framework is the basis or foundation of a research study. Lochmiller and Lester explained, “A theoretical framework serves as a broad lens for your research study. And, most important, it provides an anchor for your study relative to the larger literature base” (p. 31).

The contributions of Cross et al. (1989) to cultural congruence is well-documented across the literature (e.g., Elton, 2013; Fletcher, 2014; Martin & Vaughn, n.d.; National Association of Social Workers, 2015; National Center for Cultural Competence, n.d.; Rice, 2011; U.S. DOJ, n.d.-a). The framework developed by Cross et al. (1989) provided a foundation for the definition of cultural competence that is universally accepted across multiple disciplines and systems. Cross et al. (1989) combined the words culture and competence to highlight diverse perspectives. According to Cross et al. (1989), culture implies integrated human behaviors such as thoughts, actions, beliefs, and values. Competence means the capacity to function effectively (National Center for Cultural Competence, n.d.).

Cross et al. (1989) identified five characteristics essential to cultural competence: (a) valuing diversity, (b) having the capacity for self-assessment, (c) being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, (d) having culturally institutionalized knowledge, and (e) having developed adaptations to service reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity. Martin and Vaughn (n.d.) viewed the contributions of Cross et al. (1989) as a continuum of competence represented by four explicit components: awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills.

However, as presented earlier, the seminal work of Ladson-Billings (1995) further informed the study. Ladson-Billings (1995) pioneered the development of culturally relevant teaching practices for Black children. The research around improving teaching pedagogy and the intersectionality of culture, teaching, and learning bore the theory of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). According to Ladson-Billings (1995), a culturally relevant pedagogy consists of three elements: (a) students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order.

The culturally relevant pedagogy informs the contributions of Cross et al. along with the four core elements derived from the combined research of Mezirow (1978) and Nerstrom (2014); having experiences, making assumptions, challenging perspectives, and experiencing transformative learning.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this study was the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) described a conceptual framework as, “A more fine-grained lens that operationalizes and explains relationships between theoretical concepts” (p. 31). Miles et al. (2014) said the conceptual framework is “the researcher’s map of the territory being investigated” (p. 20).

Although a relatively new research framework, Nerstrom’s transformative learning model drew from Mezirow’s (1978) transformative learning theory. Transformative learning theory, also called transformative adult learning theory, is a rational process where learners challenge, question, and discuss the world around them (Mezirow, 1978). Transformative learning theory posits that learners acquiring new information consider past knowledge and understanding,

altering their worldview as new information is processed and reflected ([Western Governors University] WGU, 2020).

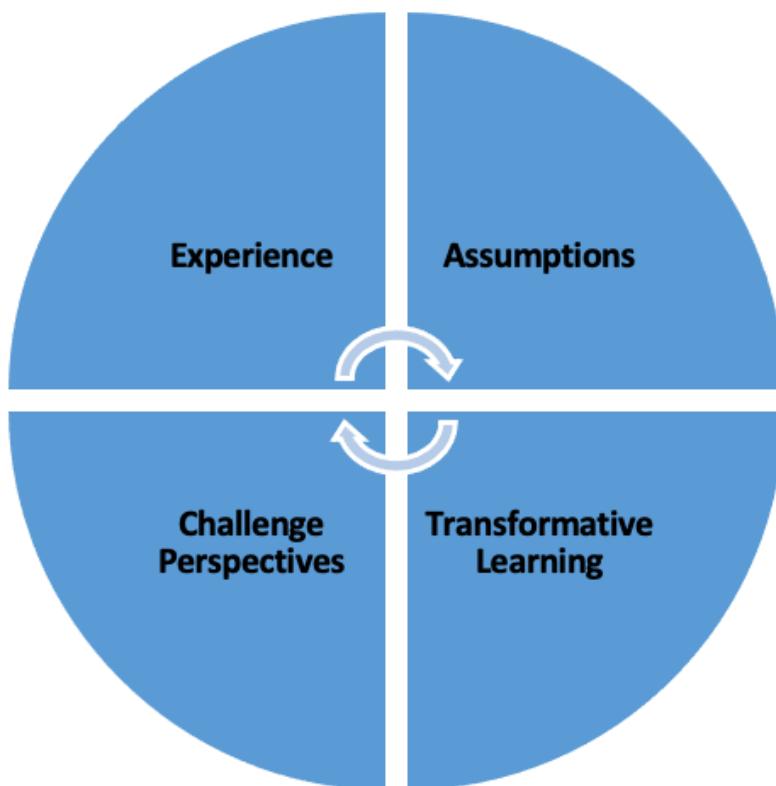
Transformative learning theory derived from Mezirow's (1978) early research examining adult women who had returned to school. Mezirow (1978) theorized what individuals thought, believed, and learned in childhood yields critical reflection and transformative adult learning experiences, further influencing beliefs and understanding. In addition, Mezirow (1978) reported that adult learners do not apply previously held knowledge to new situations, thus requiring new perspectives based on new information to grasp change.

Mezirow's (1978) study around adult learners identified 10 phases that constitute transformative learning; (a) a disorienting dilemma, (b) self-examination of assumptions, (c) critical reflections on assumptions, (d) recognition of dissatisfaction, (e) exploration of alternatives, (f) plan for action, (g) acquisition of new knowledge, (h) experimentation with roles, (i) competence building, and (j) reintegration of new perspectives into one's life. Mezirow (1997) later concluded, "Transformative learning involves transforming frames of reference through critical reflection of assumptions, validating contested beliefs through discourse, taking action on one's reflective insight, and critically assessing it" (p. 11).

In a qualitative study, *Truths About Transformative Learning: The Narrative Inquiry of Adult Educators' Experiences in Graduate Education*, Nerstrom (2014) found after examining over 500 transformative learning studies, there was no visual illustration to explain the complexities of transformative learning theory. Therefore, Nerstrom (2014) developed the transformative learning model, distilled from Mezirow's (1978) 10 phases, to explain transformative learning theory. The four phases, or quadrants, composing the Nerstrom model include: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d)

experiencing transformative learning (Nerstrom, 2014). According to Nerstrom (2014), the model represents transformative construction and presents the cyclical nature of transformative adult learning. Figure 3.1 illustrates the Nerstrom transformative learning model:

Figure 3.1. The Nerstrom Transformative Learning Model



Note. Adapted from “*An emerging model for transformative learning*” by N. Nerstrom (2014), p. 328. [Conference Session] Adult Education Research Conference.

An integration of frameworks was selected because new police officers are adult learners who encounter situations and people stimulating introspection about previously held beliefs and assumptions (WGU, 2020). In addition, Nerstrom (2014) applied this framework to adult

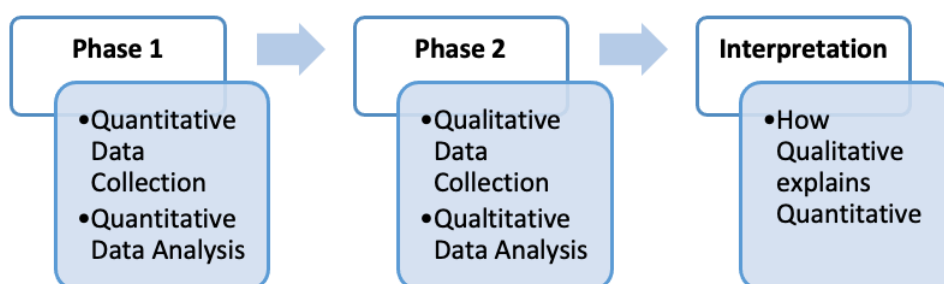
learners from diverse backgrounds, demonstrating its applicability to higher education. Nerstrom concluded that once transformative learning is experienced, learners are open to future learning experiences and rebuff previously held beliefs.

Finally, the conceptual framework aided the researcher in situating the study within the literature and explaining relationships among key concepts. The conceptual framework helped frame the ideas to define the research (e.g., survey and interviews), refine research questions and evaluate data. An alignment table further illustrated the relationship between the survey and interview questions and conceptual framework (see Appendix A).

Research Design

The research design for this study was explanatory-sequential mixed methods examining the cultural competence and perceptions of new police officers. Research design is a planning process (Saunders et al., 2012) or research strategy intended to answer a set of questions (McCombs, 2021). The study used an explanatory-sequential design employing a survey and semistructured interview questions using the lens of cultural competence crafted by Cross et al. (1989). Figure 3.2 provides a visual illustration of explanatory sequential design.

Figure 3.2. Explanatory Sequential Design



Note. Adapted from “Choosing a Mixed Methods Design,” by J. W. Creswell and V. Plano Clark, 2011, p. 69. In J. W. Creswell and V. Plano Clark (Eds.), *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Copyright 2011 by SAGE Publications.

Quantitative research was conducted first and is central to the study. The rationale was to capture a deeper understanding of the quantitative research question through the closed-ended survey. Then, the quantitative results were analyzed, informing how qualitative data would be used (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017).

The study’s qualitative phase allowed the researcher to collect, analyze, explore, and refine data. Subedi (2016) stated, “The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem: more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is needed to refine, extend or explain the general picture” (p. 572).

Mixed-methods research is a pragmatic approach (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017) integrating quantitative results with qualitative findings (Creswell, 2014). Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) further suggested in mixed-methods research, it is essential to justify the integration of quantitative and qualitative data. In this study, qualitative data enriched the survey results, providing a deeper explanation to a complex problem.

Study Setting

The selected study sites included large urban regional police academies in the West (southern California) and Southwest (central Arizona) regions of the United States. Larger law enforcement agencies often sponsor regional police academies through affiliation with local community college districts. Regional police academies serve multiple law enforcement organizations and communities.

Other sites considered in the study included large urban police academies in the Midwest, Southeast, and Northeast regions of the United States; however, the reluctance of community college districts in these regions to release police academy graduate contact information, coupled with the refusal of police agencies to participate in the study, mitigated the use of multiple study sites. Therefore, the study examined only two different geographic regions of the United States. The identity of the selected sites was protected by referencing the geographic region, state, and urban regional academy without specifying a particular community college district or police organization.

Study Participants

The study participants were police officers who: (a) graduated from a police academy, (b) had less than 3 years of police experience, (c) had completed a field training program, and (d) were working in field assignments. The study population represented new police officers because these officers were either in a probationary status or recently released from probationary to full-time status.

The sampling used was random assignment. In this study, random assignment was essential because of the importance of capturing new police officers from multiple police organizations. The method assured each police officer who met the criteria had an equal chance of participation. Capturing 50 police officer survey respondents from each region was an objective in the study. However, the researcher received only 90 of the 100 desired new officer participants: 56 were from the West (southern California), and 34 from the Southwest (central Arizona) regions of the United States. Once the researcher received survey responses and analyzed results, 14 respondents indicated a willingness to be interviewed, seven from southern California and seven from central Arizona. In total, 10 interviews were conducted among new

officers in the qualitative phase. According to Guest et al. (2006), an appropriate sample size when investigating experiences occurs as early as six interviews, whereas thematic saturation is present within the first 12 interviews.

Instrumentation

The researcher used a survey instrument for the quantitative phase and semistructured interviews for the qualitative phase in this mixed-methods study. The study integrated quantitative and qualitative data to establish trustworthiness and reliability (Subedi, 2016). According to Silver et al. (2023), a reliable measure is one that generates the same result over multiple administrations.

The quantitative phase of the study incorporated a 2006 survey from the National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (see Appendix C). The Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment (CLCPA) was initially developed in the healthcare sector to support community health centers (Fletcher et al., 2019). The researcher modified the 51-question survey to measure the integration of cultural competence among new police officers. The modified survey instrument was peer-reviewed prior to implementation.

The CLCPA survey was selected for this study because the questions in the assessment explored the studied population's cultural awareness, skill, knowledge, and practice. Fletcher et al. (2019) employed the CLCPA in a study of cultural competence in college police departments.

The CLCPA survey is a self-assessment instrument based on three assumptions: (a) achieving cultural competence is a developmental process at both individual and organizational levels; (b) with appropriate support, individuals can enhance their cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills over time; and (c) cultural strengths exist within organizations or networks

of professionals, but often go unnoticed and untapped (Mason, 1995). These three CLCPA survey assumptions comport with the five essential characteristics described by Cross et al. (1989) for an individual or agency to become culturally competent.

The CLCPA survey included seven subscales. Each subscale contained between three and 10 questions assessing cultural competence awareness, knowledge, skill, and practice. These seven subscales were also identified themes for evaluation in this study. The CLCPA subscales included:

- **Knowledge of Diverse Communities:** The Knowledge of Diverse Communities subscale consisted of 10 questions. This dimension of questions centered on knowledge of identified cultural groups in the new police officers' respective service areas, internal differences, and differences from the dominant culture. The subscale assessed new police officers' cultural competence knowledge in identifying specific cultural groups, service area demographics, social strengths, social problems, quality of life, and languages and dialects.
- **Organizational Philosophy:** The Organizational Philosophy subscale incorporated 10 questions. These questions queried new police officers' knowledge of culturally and linguistically competent service delivery. Interview questions probed the integration of cultural competencies into a police department's mission, structure, practice, policy, and collaboration with community members.
- **Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities:** The Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities subscale was comprised of six questions. This field of questioning addressed how organizations and their officers demonstrated reciprocity within

diverse and ethnic communities. The emphasis was on new officer participation in social and recreational events and investing in the communities they served.

- **Resources and Linkages:** The Resources and Linkages subscale consisted of four questions focused on the ability of an organization and its staff to use formalized and natural networks of support.
- **Human Resources:** The Human Resources subscale posed eight questions involving an organization's ability to sustain a diverse workforce that is culturally and linguistically competent.
- **Community Practice:** The Community Practice subscale consisted of four questions. This subscale addressed the ability of individuals and organizations to adapt approaches to law enforcement service delivery based on cultural and linguistic differences. Moreover, the subscale focused on sustaining a culturally and linguistically competent workforce.
- **Engagement of Diverse Communities:** The Engagement of Diverse Communities subscale consisted of three questions. This area of questioning involved the nature and scope of activities related to engaging diverse communities in relationship building and crime reduction.

A four-item Likert survey scale was used in the quantitative phase of the study. The Likert scale quantified close-ended questions related to respondents' thoughts, beliefs, and values around cultural competence at a granular level. The Likert-scale results in this study are reported in the mean.

Comparisons were made between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona to determine if there were significant differences between the means among

respondents. A two-tailed *t* test was run for each theme or subscale to compare the two groups of officers. The subscale mean scores were calculated overall and by state.

The qualitative phase of the study focused upon the perceptions of cultural competence among new police officers. The interview segment of the study introduced semistructured, peer-reviewed questions (see Appendix D) allowing the researcher to interpret data and explain behavior and further informing the research (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Examples included using probes such as “tell me about” and “please explain” to encourage participants to elaborate on responses (Stegeman, 2021, p. 39).

Finally, the survey research did not solely explain the data results. Therefore, qualitative research was used to describe cultural competence trends and behavior among new police officers (Creswell, 2002). The qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to further explore new police officers’ perceptions of cultural competence and what core competencies they believed were important in field performance. The use of quantitative survey results and qualitative interviews helped the researcher establish greater cultural competence clarity among a new police officer population.

Data Collection and Data Sources

Data for this study were collected from a survey and semistructured interviews. The survey instrument used in the study was a modified National Center of Cultural Competence, Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment (see Appendix C). Using SurveyMonkey, an online link was provided to the study population. The sample size was 50 police officers from each region studied.

A total of 575 surveys were distributed to new officers in the study population. Police officers in the West (southern California) region were sent 248 survey invitations, whereas new

officers in the Southwest (central Arizona) region were sent 327. Notably, police academies nationwide have experienced lower class sizes following the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The department heads from the employing agencies of graduate officers were contacted via email, introducing them to the study. In the case of some departments, the email was followed up by a telephone call to the respective police chief, sheriff, or departmental representative, explaining the purpose of the study and potential contributions to inform knowledge, practice, and policy of professional policing. Electronic copies of correspondence such as emails, letters, participation incentives, and survey links were provided to departmental representatives for review and distribution. Dates to distribute the study's materials were mutually agreed upon, and the researcher was copied on all correspondence.

Each participating police agency handled the distribution of information and study materials differently. For example, some agencies requested the survey link be sent to a single departmental representative to distribute materials internally. In contrast, others provided the email addresses of the new officer sample directly to the researcher. Informed consents forms were provided to all study participants (see Appendix E).

Participants were given 3 weeks to complete the survey, followed by weekly email reminders. The email reminders were sent on varying days and times to comport with the participants 24/7 work schedules. Each participant completing the survey was entered into a random drawing to win one of four \$25.00 Amazon gift cards and a customized police automatic rifle. Winners were determined by placing participant names and email addresses into an Excel spreadsheet by region, using the "randbetween" feature to produce a random number for each response, and selecting the top four numbers, two from each area studied.

After collecting survey data, 14 police officers, seven from each studied region, indicated a willingness to participate in follow-up research. Ultimately, 10 officers, five from each region, participated in the interview phase of the study. Emails were sent to each of the officers and agencies employing the officers, inviting them to interview. Email reminders were sent to those officers that did not respond. Because of time and distance, the researcher conducted interviews via Zoom, recorded with the approval of each participant. The respondents were provided informed consent forms before the interview. In addition, consent was affirmed with each respondent prior to the interview. Interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes, with each participant receiving a \$50.00 Amazon gift card.

According to a report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019), study replicability is reliant upon transparency and detailed reporting. The credibility and trustworthiness of the research allows others to assess study quality and determine probative value of the work. Sufficient detail contained in the study, adhering to an original protocol, and complete transparency provide the best opportunity for replication (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019).

Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of two parts in this mixed-methods study: (a) survey and (b) semistructured interviews. First, quantitative data elicited from the CLCPA survey were analyzed by SurveyMonkey administrative level software, coded numerically, allowing the researcher to perform descriptive analysis. Second, the researcher collected and transcribed qualitative data through semistructured interviews. To ensure accuracy, the researcher listened to interviews while reading the associated interview text. The researcher used member checking to ensure further accuracy. Following transcription, the data were coded, categorized, and grouped

to anonymize participants. Lastly, the researcher triangulated the results from multiple perspectives.

Saldaña (2013) described coding as a word or phrase that assigns meaning to data capturing its essence. The researcher used a thematic analysis model for nonnumerical data. Thematic analysis helps identify themes aligned with the focus of the research, research questions, and theoretical framework (Roberts et al., 2019). Coding guidelines were based on the work of Boyatzis (1998) and classified as: (a) label, (b) definition, (c) description qualifications or exclusions, and (d) examples.

Limitations

According to Ross and Bibler Zaidi (2019), “Study limitations represent weaknesses within a research design that may influence outcomes and conclusions of the research” (p. 261). The study had several limitations, beginning with the response size and the small number of police academies studied. Another limitation is only 2 of the 5 geographic regions in the United States were used in the study. There was a reluctance among large urban police academies to participate in the study. For example, one large police agency declined to participate, citing too many survey requests and collective bargaining unit concerns over compensation for member officer participation. Another large police agency described the demands upon officers working special events, coupled with critical staffing shortages, as reasons for nonparticipation in the study. Other large police agencies did not respond to the researcher.

Another limitation was that community colleges would not release student email addresses. Therefore, the study relied upon the participation of individual police agencies sponsoring new officers in regional police academies. Those who elected to participate in the research study was another limitation.

Notably, the researcher considered a document analysis of police officer field training program evaluations, providing additional insight into interactions between police officers and community members related to individual strengths, weaknesses, and areas of performance where cultural competence was required. However, the confidential evaluative reports were part of an individual officer's confidential personnel file and not made available to the researcher even though a signed waiver would have been required and the identities of the individual officers were coded to ensure anonymity.

Finally, some participants may have provided biased responses based on what they believed the researcher favored. In addition, potential environmental events when the study was conducted could be a limitation. For example, highly publicized events or crimes external to the study in jurisdictions where participants are employed may have affected responses.

Ethical Considerations

According to Lochmiller and Lester (2017), ethics is the foundation of research. Richards and Schwartz (2002) stated anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent best meet a research study's challenges. The researcher followed recognized ethical research standards required by Kansas State University, receiving Institutional Review Board approval before collecting data (see Appendix F). All participation in the study was voluntary. Informed consent forms were provided to all participants, and informed they could withdraw from the study at any time (see Appendix E).

In this study, confidentiality was essential. Some participants in the study were probationary police officers. Any breach of confidentiality could damage the job interest of an individual police officer. Probationary police officers have no vested job rights. Therefore, the employing police agency does not have to provide a reason or substantiate cause for dismissal.

All that is required for dismissal is to inform the officer that they have not successfully completed the probationary period. New police officers are particularly sensitive to behaviors or actions that could jeopardize continued employment. Although it is doubtful that participation in the study alone would have harmed an officer's job interest, participants were notified when distributing the informed consent form.

Study participants and data collected throughout the study were anonymized. For example, a working list of study participants and sites was linked to pseudonyms from the onset of the study. Those participants selected for the interview were protected from harm by maintaining privacy and confidentiality. Participant interview audio data were recorded only with the consent of study participants. All data are housed on an external hard drive and will be stored in a safe deposit box for at least 5 years in a secured facility. The researcher addressed any concerns of the participants or study site representatives personally or virtually.

To avoid researcher bias and ensure the credibility of the research, a reflexivity statement documenting and disclosing the personal and professional experiences of the researcher accompanies the study.

Reflexivity Statement

The researcher is a 66-year-old, upper-middle class, straight, White man born in the United States with no emotional or developmental disabilities. He is of European heritage, speaks only English, and is a member of the Catholic Church.

The researcher is also a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, retired senior law enforcement executive, and has been a member of the academic leadership team at College of the Desert, located in the low desert region of southern California, for the past 8 years. The College of the Desert's Public Safety Academy is one of the many academic programs under his leadership. He

has been at the College of the Desert for over 30 years as an adjunct faculty member in Criminal Justice and Business. In addition, the researcher has taught baccalaureate and graduate studies at surrounding universities since 1991.

Although born in the Midwest, the researcher lived his childhood in San Pedro, California, home to the Port of Los Angeles. The researcher's father was a military officer stationed at Fort MacArthur, also in San Pedro. At age 4, his father was killed in a helicopter accident while deployed in Korea. The researcher's mother chose to stay in San Pedro and raise their family.

San Pedro is located in the greater Los Angeles basin. San Pedro is a primarily blue-collar community where longshoremen and dockworkers comprise a significant percentage of the population. San Pedro, also known as the L.A. Harbor, is multicultural. Italian Americans, Asian Americans, Native Pacific Islanders, Bosnians, Serbians, Greeks, Polish Americans, Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics are among the many cultures that comprise the community. The relationships with diverse groups of people influenced the researcher's worldview.

The researcher received a parochial education from the third grade through high school. He attended a predominately Black high school by choice. Athletic competition was an important component of the researcher's educational experience. The opportunity to participate with teammates from different races and ethnicities fostered understanding, appreciation, and respect for different cultures.

Following high school, the researcher attended community college for 1 semester and quickly recognized he needed more structure. He found that structure in the U.S. Marine Corps. The researcher's military occupational specialty (MOS) was the military police. Military experience, high school socialization, and living in an eclectic community ignited the

researcher's interest in other people's cultures; however, one event would change the life course of the researcher.

At 19, the researcher was a young marine attending military police school at Fort McClellan in Anniston, Alabama. One evening, four young marines left the military base and went into Anniston for dinner: three White marines and one Black marine. The group of friends went to a steakhouse and waited to be seated. As they waited to be seated, several customers who arrived after they had were seated at open booths and tables. Curious, the researcher spoke to the hostess. He was told that if they all wanted to sit together, they would wait until a table behind a curtain opened became available to seat the Black gentleman in the party. However, the three White marines in the party could be seated immediately. It was a moment the researcher has never forgotten. Never really being away from California, the researcher did not understand the Deep South's racial dynamics and cultural realities.

After separating from the military, the researcher found a calling in California law enforcement, accepting employment with the city of Gardena, California, police department. Ironically, Gardena was even more multicultural than San Pedro and home to the largest Japanese-American population in Los Angeles County. While in Gardena, the researcher began to see, experience, understand, and question perceived injustices. For the next 6.5 years, the researcher stored observations and experiences to inform thoughts and actions as a future law enforcement leader.

While working for the Gardena Police Department, the researcher attended college full-time. At California State University, Long Beach, he enrolled in Black Studies courses that ameliorated cultural understanding and helped frame social and political thought.

Eight years after graduating with a baccalaureate in criminal justice, the researcher completed graduate study at California Polytechnic University at Pomona while working for the Riverside County, California, Sheriff's Department. He published a master's thesis titled, *People of Color and Culture: The Future of California Law Enforcement*. His graduate research, conducted while attending the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training Law Enforcement Command College, was a prelude to many years of meaningful work in law enforcement leadership and higher education, inspiring achievement for everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, or lifestyle. The researcher later retired as the undersheriff and chief operating officer of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.

The researcher recognizes that research is imperfect, yet disclosing how the researcher is situated in the research influences the study's credibility (Darwin Holmes, 2020). Cohen et al. (2017) asserted that conceptually, reflexivity is a process where researchers acknowledge, understand, and disclose themselves in their research. As Malterud (2001) explained:

Reflexivity starts by identifying preconceptions brought into the project by the researcher, representing previous personal and professional experiences, pre-study beliefs about how things are and what is to be investigated, motivation and qualifications for exploration of the field, and perspectives and theoretical foundations related to education and interests. (p. 484)

Study Quality

Mixed-methods research requires trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that if researchers can persuade themselves and others that research findings are meaningful, then the research is trustworthy. In contrast to the quantitative assessment criteria of validity and reliability to establish trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba also introduced credibility,

transferability, dependability, and confirmability as companion assessments of trustworthiness in qualitative research.

This study used construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability tests. Construct validity, also called content validity, focused on multiple sources of evidence, key informant review of specific research segments, and appropriately measured skills and behaviors (Yin, 2018; Zohrabi, 2013). According to Zohrabi (2013), “Internal validity is concerned with the congruence of the research findings with the reality” (p. 258). Internal validity matched patterns addressed rival explanations, distinguished relationships, and incorporated explanation building (Yin, 2018). Merriam (1998) recommended six methods to elevate internal validity: (a) triangulation, (b) member checks, (c) long-term observation, (d) peer examination, (e) involving participants in all phases of inquiry, and (f) awareness of researcher bias. External validity considered generalizability and replication (Yin, 2018). Although external validity is concerned with applicability in other settings with different participants, replicability may depend on contextual similarities (Zohrabi, 2013).

The reliability of a mixed-methods study is also dependent on internal and external factors (Zohrabi, 2013). Internal validity is concerned with consistency in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, whereas external validity is more concerned with replication (Yin, 2008; Zohrabi, 2013). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merriam (1998) identified three techniques to assure the dependability of a study’s findings: (a) the academic investigator’s position, (b) triangulation, and (c) audit trail.

Lastly, reliability requires maintaining a study protocol, establishing databases, creating a chain of evidence, and demonstrating operationally that a study can be repeated (Yin, 2008). According to Yin (2008), each of these tests represents design work to which the researcher

should be attentive. Zohrabi (2013) stated, “One of the main requirements of any research process is the reliability of the data and findings” (p. 259).

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed-methods study was to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. In addition, the goal of this study was to address the gap in the literature associated with police officers' cultural competence and to inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing.

This chapter provided the research methods used in the study. Specifically, this chapter reviewed the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, study setting, study participants, instrumentation, data collection, data sources, data analysis, and study alignment. The chapter further addressed limitations, ethical considerations, study quality, and the summation of key points. Chapter 4 uses a conceptual framework lens to discuss research findings and report on the data collected. Chapter 5 presents findings and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

As stated in Chapter 1, this study was designed to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. The chapter includes a review of the research questions and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study. The researcher then presents an analysis of the data collected, description of the sample, and findings related to each research question. The researcher also provides an additional policy analysis within the chapter comparing cultural competency policy knowledge among new police officers regionally. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Research Questions

The study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance in two regions of the United States.

Two research questions guided this study:

1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers?
2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?

Research Question 1 (RQ1) focused on applying police academy cultural competence learning. The modified Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment (CLCPA, 2006) survey queried new police officers' understanding and use of cultural competence through thematic questioning of (a) Knowledge of Diverse Communities, (b) Organizational Philosophy, (c) Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities, (d) Resources and Linkages, (e) Human Resources, (f) Community Practice, and (g) Engagement of Diverse Communities (see Appendix C). Research Question 2 (RQ2) focused on the perceptions of cultural competence among new

police officers and what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefitted their performance in the field.

Cross's Theory of Cultural Competence

The overarching worldview guiding this study was the theory of cultural competence proposed by Cross et al. (1989). Cross et al. defined cultural competence in the context of five elements for an individual or agency to become culturally competent: (a) valuing diversity, (b) having the capacity for self-assessment, (c) being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, (d) having institutionalized cultural knowledge, and (e) having developed adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the study was further informed by the work of Ladson-Billings (1995). According to Ladson-Billings, culturally relevant pedagogy consists of three elements: (a) students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order. A culturally relevant pedagogy further represents the lived experiences of police academy graduates.

Conceptual Framework

Nerstrom's (2014) transformative learning model served as the conceptual lens of the study. Nerstrom, drawing upon the work of Mezirow (1978), identified four phases of transformative learning: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning. Again, transformative learning theory is suited for this study because the framework centers on the perceptions and experiences of new police officers.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher used two sources of data in the study: (a) quantitative survey and (b) qualitative interviews. The CLCPA survey was selected for this study because of its adaptability to police work. The CLCPA was previously used in research by Fletcher (2014), who assessed cultural competence among community college police departments. This survey instrument assessed new police officers' overall cultural competence awareness, knowledge, skill, and practice. As described in Chapter 1, there exists sparse research around new police officer cultural competence. Data were coded using Excel spreadsheets and the four-phase model of the transformative learning model proposed by Nerstrom (2014) to identify themes and most common cultural competencies used by new police officers.

Quantitative Survey

The quantitative instrument for this study was a modified CLCPA survey, distributed to urban police academy graduates in the West (southern California) and Southwest (central Arizona) regions of the United States. A total of 575 surveys were sent to new police officers working field assignments over the 3-year period from August 2020–2023.

After fielding, the researcher received 90 useable surveys. Although the response rate was richer than anticipated, 22.6% in southern California (56/248), and 10.4% in central Arizona (34/327), lower numbers of officers are attending police academies nationwide following the COVID-19 global pandemic, police killing of George Floyd, and heightened community frustration with the police profession generally (Duret & Weithua, 2023; Police Executive Research Forum [PERF], 2023). These landmark events have created an historic police recruitment crisis and challenged police education and training at the studied sites (PERF, 2023).

After all fielding, the researcher received 90 completed surveys ($n = 90$) from the 575 distributed, generating a 15.6% response rate. The study findings allow for a generalization of a larger new police officer population. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the CLCPA survey data.

Qualitative Interviews

The qualitative data for this study were collected using semistructured interviews to understand new police officers' perceptions of cultural competence. As described in Chapter 3, the qualitative interview segment of the study allowed the researcher to identify trends, interpret data, and explain behavior further informing research findings. Subedi (2016) explained that integrating quantitative and qualitative data in a study establishes trustworthiness and reliability.

Among the 90 new police officers who completed the CLCPA survey, 14 officers—seven each from southern California and central Arizona—indicated a willingness to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. The researcher contacted this subset of 14 new police officers through email and designated departmental representatives; however, email communications lagged because participant officers were cautioned against opening external email messages on government computer systems. Nonetheless, participating police agency points of contact ensured the researcher's electronic communications were received by the subset of 14 officers. Prospectively, ransomware and phishing schemes mining for governmental employees personal or confidential information likely contributed to some police agencies not participating in the study.

Overall, 10 new police officers were interviewed. Four officers either withdrew, failed to follow up, or did not respond to multiple interview requests. All interviews were conducted one on one, creating a level of comfort for the participants to answer questions openly. The one-on-

one interview protocol allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions based on the responses of each participant. All participant interviews were conducted using Zoom audio, video, and audio transcription recording, with the permission of each participant.

Following the interviews, the researcher emailed each interview participant their transcript, allowing for member checking. Once member-checking responses were recorded, the researcher used Excel software to code interview transcripts. The researcher identified key words, phrases, and responses with similar meaning in the interview transcripts to discover emerging themes. Interview transcripts were reviewed multiple times in conjunction with audio recordings to fully understand the data.

The researcher identified themes and was cognizant of saturation. The researcher noted recurring themes at six interviews, and then conducted an additional four interviews to validate saturation and further understand the perceptions and experiences of new police officers pertaining to cultural competence. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix D, Interview Protocol.

Description of the Sample

Two geographic regions of the United States were selected sites for this study: (a) West region (southern California) and (b) Southwest region (central Arizona). Using distinct regions of the United States in the study allowed the researcher to explore, assess, and synthesize police academy cultural competence education and training among new police officers regionally. The sample included new police officers who had completed a large urban police academy and worked in a field assignment in the 3-year study period. In addition, the sample of new police officers represented various municipal and county law enforcement agencies in each region studied.

Findings: RQ1

This section contains an analysis of the research data related to RQ1. Findings are presented using the CLCPA survey results and related qualitative interview data. The purpose of the quantitative survey was to assist the researcher in identifying areas of cultural competence awareness, knowledge, skill, and practice among new police officers in two geographic regions of the United States. Participant interview data further enriched findings for RQ1: What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers?

Notably, some survey respondents did not answer every question. Therefore, the sample size data associated with each question grouping varied in the analysis. As stated previously, the qualitative interviews comprised 10 new police officers—five from each region studied.

Knowledge of Diverse Communities – Quantitative Results

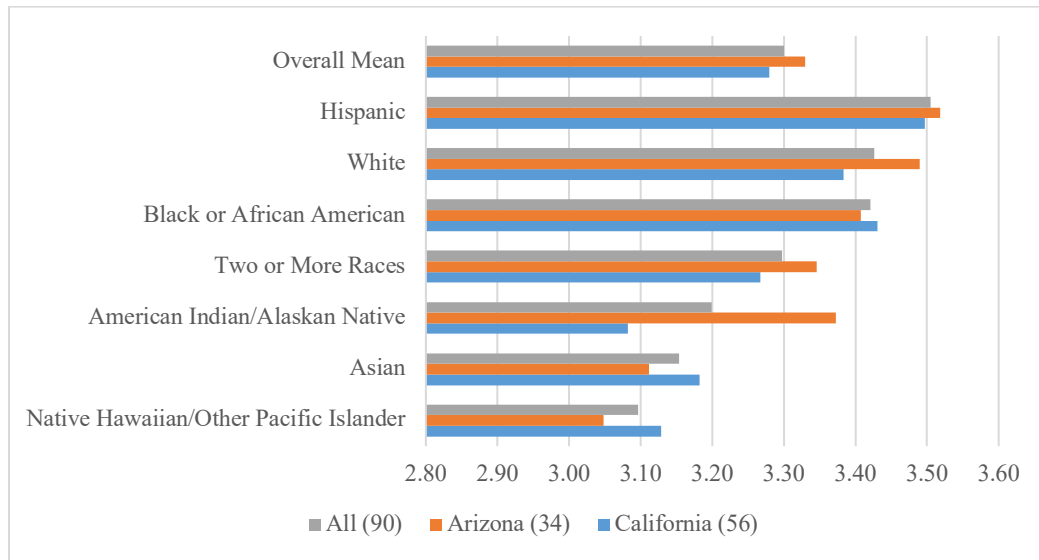
In this subscale, Survey Questions 1–6 were combined for knowledge of diverse communities by race and ethnicity. Survey Questions 7–10 were combined for knowledge of cultural groups. A two-tailed *t* test of two samples assuming equal variances was run for each question grouping between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona across two dimensions: (a) race and ethnicity, and (b) knowledge of cultural groups within new police officers' respective service areas. Table 4.1 indicates the results of the two-tailed *t* test for knowledge of diverse communities by race and ethnicity.

Table 4.1. Knowledge of Diverse Communities (Q1–6 Combined)

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.33	3.28
Standard deviation	0.71	0.79
Variance	0.4996	0.6190
Observations	1320	1976
Pooled variance	0.5712	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	3294	
<i>t</i> Stat	1.699	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.045	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.645	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.089	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.961	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 1 through 6 combined by race and ethnicity showed a *t* statistic of 1.6999, smaller than the critical value of 1.961—indicating knowledge of race and ethnicity within the service areas of new police officers in southern California ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.79$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.71$). Figure 4.1 visually disaggregates new police officers’ knowledge of race and ethnicity for Questions 1 through 6.

Figure 4.1. Knowledge of Diverse Communities – Combined By Race/Ethnicity



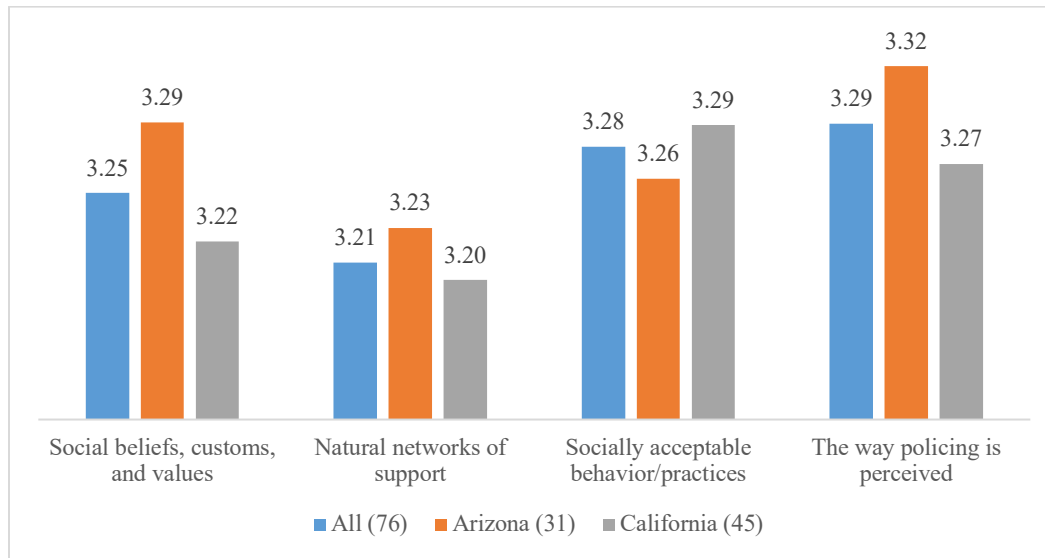
New police officers in southern California and central Arizona demonstrated higher cultural competence knowledge among Hispanic populations than other racial or ethnic groups. In contrast, new officers in both regions showed lower cultural competence knowledge of Native Hawaiians/Other Pacific Islander populations than other racial or ethnic groups in their service areas. Table 4.2 reveals the results of the two-tailed *t* test for new police officers' knowledge of diverse communities by cultural group.

Table 4.2. Knowledge of Diverse Communities – Combined by Cultural Group)

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.27	3.24
Standard deviation	0.65	0.67
Variance	0.4283	0.4539
Observations	124	180
Pooled variance	0.4434	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	302	
<i>t</i> Stat	0.3828	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.3511	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6499	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.7021	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9679	

The two-tailed *t*-test results for Questions 7 through 10 combined revealed a *t* statistic of 0.3828, less than the critical value of 1.9679—indicating knowledge of diverse cultural groups within the service areas of new police officers in southern California ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.67$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.65$). Figure 4.2 illustrates new police officers' knowledge of diverse cultural groups for Questions 7 through 10.

Figure 4.2. Knowledge of Diverse Cultural Groups



Although no significant statistical differences were found among new police officers' knowledge of diverse cultural groups within their respective service areas, central Arizona officers demonstrated more overall knowledge than their counterparts in southern California.

Organizational Philosophy – Quantitative Results

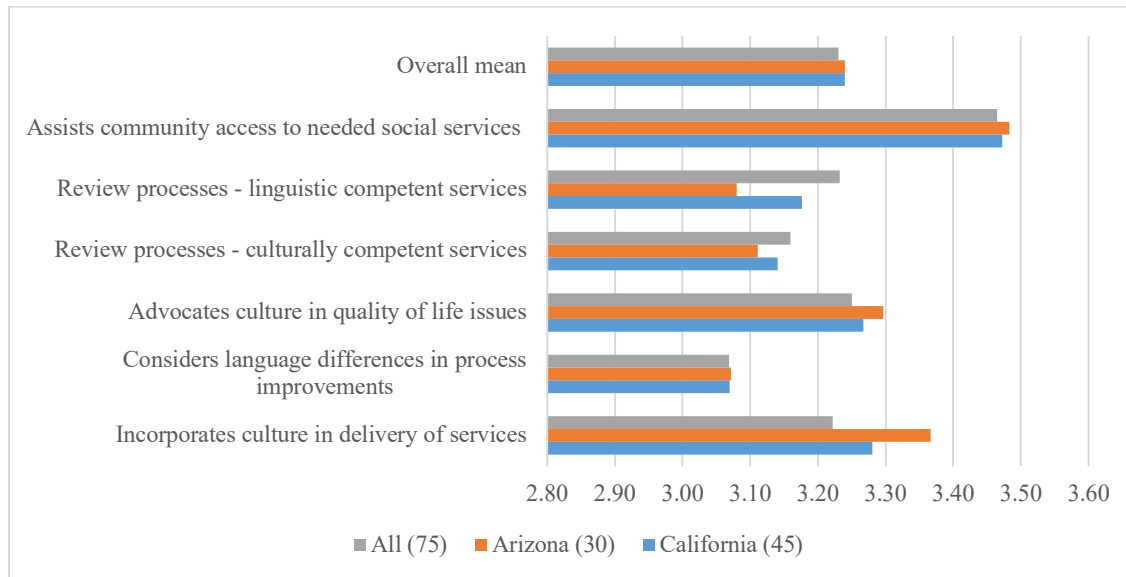
Questions 12–17 in this subscale were combined for organizational commitment to cultural competence. Survey Question 18 was valued independently to assess knowledge of structural elements for community member participation in organizational cultural competence. A two-tailed t test of samples assuming equal variances was run for each question, grouping between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona across two dimensions: (a) organizational commitment to cultural competence, and (b) structural elements assuring community member participation in organizational cultural competence. Table 4.3 provides the results of the two-tailed t test for organizational commitment to cultural competence.

Table 4.3. Organizational Commitment to Cultural Competence

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.24	3.23
Standard deviation	0.76	0.77
Variance	0.58	0.59
Observations	166	263
Pooled variance	0.5883	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	427	
<i>t</i> Stat	0.1187	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.4528	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6484	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.9056	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9655	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 12 through 17 combined by organizational commitment to cultural competence indicated a *t* statistic of 0.1187, smaller than the critical value of 1.9655—indicating new police officers’ knowledge of organizational commitment to cultural competence in southern California ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.77$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.76$). Figure 4.3 visualizes new police officers’ knowledge of organizational commitment to cultural competence for Questions 12 through 17.

Figure 4.3. Organizational Commitment to Cultural Competence



There were similarities between police officers in southern California and central Arizona in this subscale of questions. Although not statistically significant, southern California officers demonstrated more procedural awareness concerning culturally and linguistically competent service delivery than central Arizona officers; however, central Arizona officers earned higher marks for supporting culture in the delivery of services than officers in southern California.

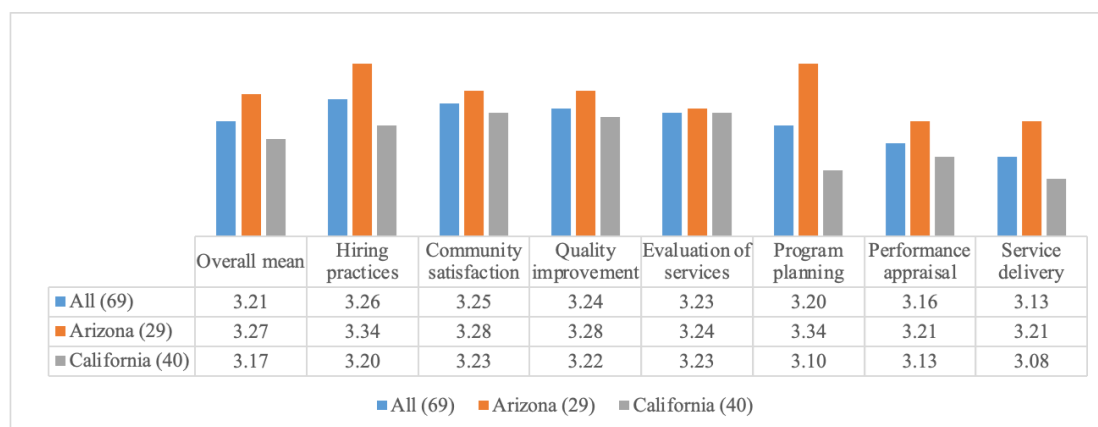
Table 4.4 exhibits the results of the two-tailed t test for new police officers' knowledge of structural elements assuring community member participation in organizational cultural competence.

Table 4.4. Structures Assuring Community Participation

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.27	3.17
Standard deviation	0.78	0.83
Variance	0.60	0.69
Observations	203	280
Pooled variance	0.6553	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	481	
<i>t</i> Stat	1.3813	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.0839	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6480	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.1678	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9649	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Question 18 shows a *t* statistic of 1.3813, smaller than the critical value of 1.9649—indicating new police officers’ knowledge of structural elements assuring community member participation in organizational cultural competence for new police officers in southern California ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.83$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.78$). Figure 4.4 depicts new police officers’ knowledge of organizational structures assuring community participation across southern California and central Arizona.

Figure 4.4. Structures Assuring Community Participation



Overall, new police officers in central Arizona demonstrated more understanding of organizational structures assuring community member participation in culturally competent service delivery than southern California officers. Central Arizona officers posted higher marks in all seven dimensions analyzed in this subscale.

Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities – Quantitative Results

In this subscale, Questions 21–26 were combined for new police officers’ personal involvement in diverse communities. A two-tailed *t* test of samples assuming equal variances was run for this group of questions between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Table 4.5 displays the results of the two-tailed *t* test for new police officers’ personal involvement in diverse communities.

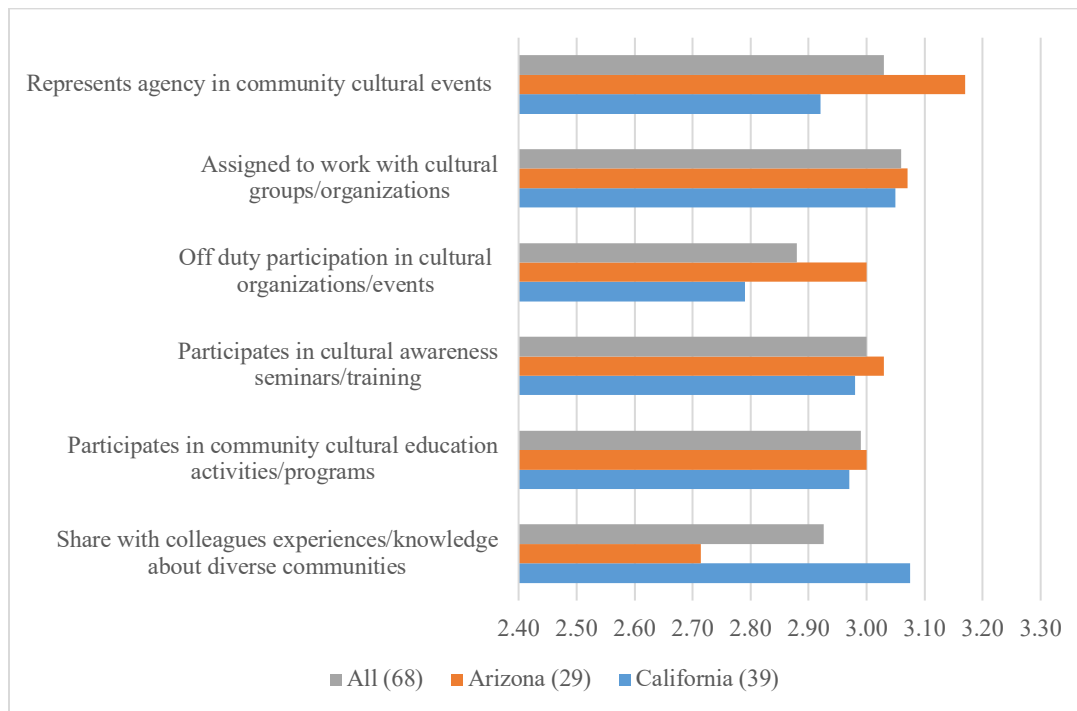
Table 4.5. New Police Officers’ Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.00	2.97
Standard deviation	0.88	0.85
Variance	0.77	0.73
Observations	172	236
Pooled variance	0.7481	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	406	
<i>t</i> Stat	0.3909	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.3480	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6486	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.6961	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9658	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 21 through 26 showed a *t* statistic value of 0.3909, less than the critical value of 1.9658—indicating new police officers’ personal involvement in diverse communities in southern California (*M* = 2.97, *SD* = 0.85) was not

significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.88$). Figure 4.5 highlights new police officers' personal involvement in diverse communities.

Figure 4.5. Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities



Although there was no statistical significance in the findings, new police officers in central Arizona showed more gains representing their respective agencies in cultural organizations and events than officers in southern California. Comparatively, southern California officers were more apt to identify opportunities to share their experiences and knowledge about diverse communities with colleagues than officers in central Arizona.

Resources and Linkages – Quantitative Results

The Resources and Linkages subscale combined Questions 27–30. This group of questions analyzed new police officers' knowledge of formalized and natural networks of

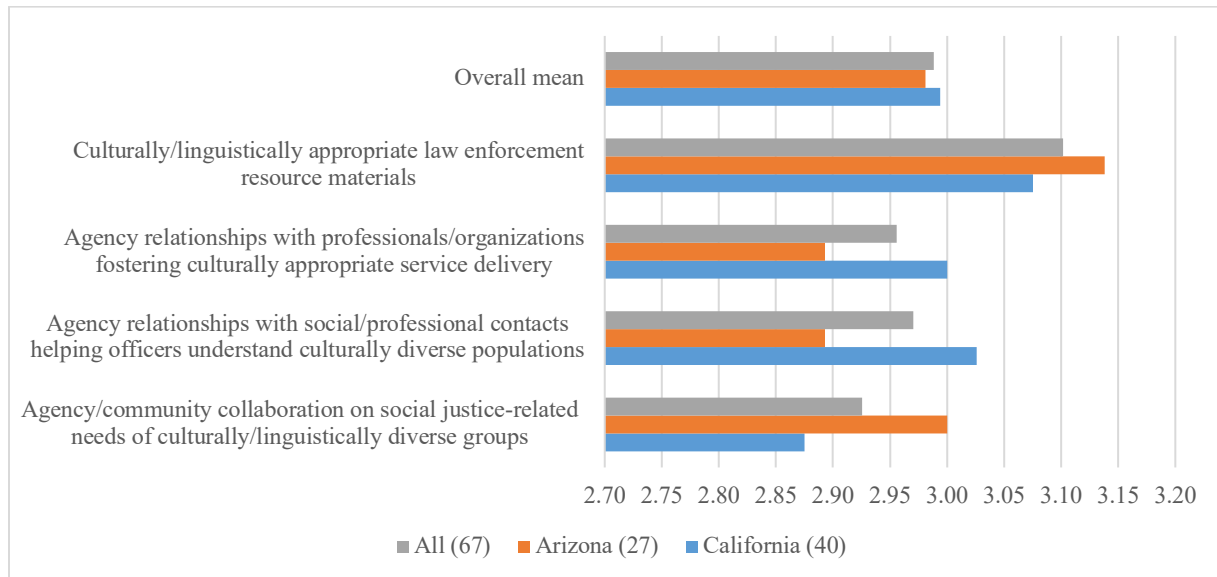
support within culturally diverse communities in their service areas. A two-tailed t test of two samples assuming equal variances was run for this question grouping between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Table 4.6 indicates the results of the two-tailed t test for new police officers' knowledge of networks of support within diverse communities in southern California and central Arizona.

Table 4.6. New Police Officer Knowledge of Networks of Support in Diverse Communities

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	2.98	2.99
Standard deviation	0.79	0.82
Variance	0.63	0.68
Observations	112	159
Pooled variance	0.6578	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
df	269	
t Stat	-0.1156	
$P(T \leq t)$ one-tail	0.4540	
t Critical one-tail	1.6505	
$P(T \leq t)$ two-tail	0.9080	
t Critical two-tail	1.9688	

The results of the two-tailed t test for Questions 27 through 30 showed a t statistic of -0.1156, less than the critical value of 1.9688—indicating knowledge of networks of support within culturally diverse communities in their service areas for new police officers in southern California ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.82$) was not significantly different from police officers in central Arizona ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.79$). Figure 4.6 visualizes new police officers' knowledge of networks of support within culturally diverse communities in southern California and central Arizona.

Figure 4.6. Knowledge of Networks of Support in Diverse Communities



Even though there was no statistical significance, new police officers in southern California and central Arizona demonstrated different knowledge bases in this subscale. Southern California officers were more understanding about fostering relationships and contacts to deliver culturally appropriate services, whereas officers in central Arizona better understood collaborating with diverse community groups over social justice needs and culturally appropriate resource materials.

Human Resources – Quantitative Results

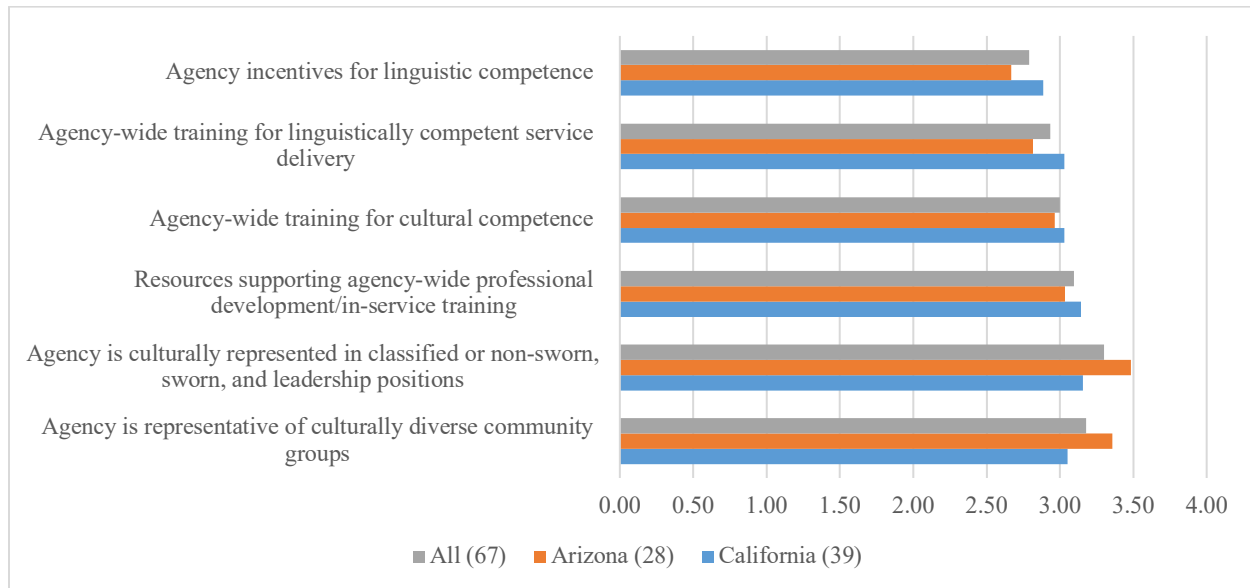
In this subscale, Survey Questions 31–38 were combined for the ability of an organization to sustain a culturally and linguistic competent workforce. A two-tailed *t* test of two samples assuming equal variances was run for this question grouping between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Table 4.7 reveals the results of the two-tailed *t* test for sustaining a culturally and linguistic competent workforce.

Table 4.7. Sustaining a Culturally and Linguistic Competent Workforce

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.06	3.05
Standard deviation	0.87	0.94
Variance	0.76	0.88
Observations	167	215
Pooled variance	0.8259	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	380	
<i>t</i> Stat	0.0930	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.4630	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6489	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.9260	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9662	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 31 through 38 show a *t* statistic of 0.0930, smaller than the critical value of 1.9662—indicating knowledge of sustaining a culturally and linguistic competent workforce within new police officers respective departments in southern California ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 0.94$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.87$). Figure 4.7 shows new police officers’ knowledge of sustaining a culturally and linguistic competent workforce in southern California and central Arizona.

Figure 4.7. Knowledge of Sustaining a Culturally and Linguistic Competent Workforce



There was no statistical significance found in this subscale of questions; however, there were different perspectives of organizational strengths between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Southern California officers believed their agencies performed well providing language incentives, language training, professional development, and agency-wide cultural competence training. Central Arizona officers saw their agencies personnel reflecting the demography of the communities served.

Community Practice – Quantitative Results

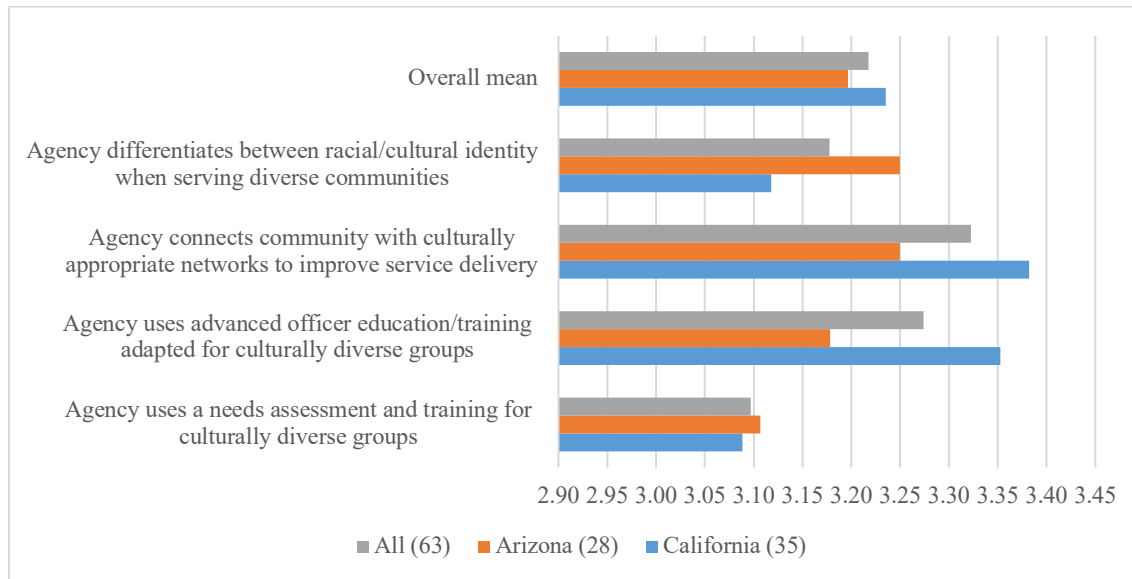
Questions 39–42 in this subscale were combined for the ability of an organization to approach law enforcement service delivery based on cultural and linguistic differences. A two-tailed t test of samples assuming equal variances was run for this group of questions between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Table 4.8 presents the results of the two-tailed t test for new police officers' knowledge of their department's ability to approach law enforcement service delivery based on cultural and linguistic differences.

Table 4.8. Law Enforcement Service Delivery Based on Cultural and Linguistic Differences

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.20	3.24
Standard deviation	0.80	0.81
Variance	0.65	0.66
Observations	112	136
Pooled variance	0.6510	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	246	
<i>t</i> Stat	-0.3775	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.3531	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.6511	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.7061	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.9697	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 39 through 42 shows a *t* statistic of -0.3775, smaller than the critical value of 1.9697—indicating knowledge of an organizations ability to approach law enforcement service delivery based on cultural and linguistic differences within new police officers’ respective departments in southern California ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.81$) was not significantly different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.80$). Figure 4.8 illustrates new police officers’ knowledge of their organization’s ability to approach law enforcement service delivery based on cultural and linguistic differences.

Figure 4.8. Law Enforcement Service Delivery Based on Cultural and Linguistic Differences



This subscale of questions queried new police officers' understanding of their respective agencies' capacity to deliver services based on cultural and linguistic differences. Although no significant statistical difference was evident, southern California officers presented more knowledge about training officers in cultural competence and connecting to communities than officers in central Arizona. Comparatively, central Arizona officers displayed more knowledge differentiating among cultural groups and assessing needs for cultural competence training.

Engagement of Diverse Communities – Quantitative Results

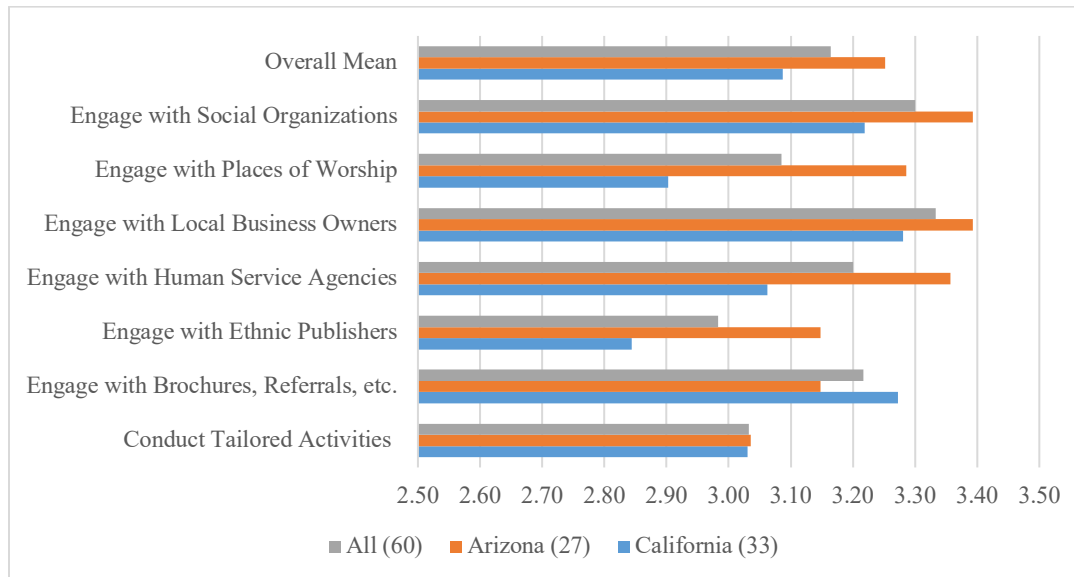
In this subscale, Survey Questions 43–45 were combined for determining the nature and scope of activities conducted by a police department and its staff to engage diverse communities, build relationships, and reduce crime. A two-tailed *t* test of two samples assuming equal variances was run for this question grouping between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. Table 4.9 shows the results of the two-tailed *t* test for new police officers' knowledge of engagement with diverse communities, relationship building, and crime reduction.

Table 4.9. New Police Officers' Engagement of Diverse Communities

Result	Arizona	California
Mean	3.25	3.09
Standard deviation	0.87	0.87
Variance	0.76	0.77
Observations	194	225
Pooled variance	0.7646	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
<i>df</i>	417	
<i>t</i> Stat	1.911	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.028	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.649	
<i>P</i> (<i>T</i> ≤ <i>t</i>) two-tail	0.057	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	1.966	

The results of the two-tailed *t* test for Questions 43 through 45 show a *t* statistic of 1.911. Although smaller than the critical value of 1.966, this subscale of questions was closer to being significant than any other theme analyzed in the study. Particularly, the activities of a police department and its staff to engage diverse communities, build relationships, and reduce crime in southern California ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.87$) was noticeably different from officers in central Arizona ($M = 3.252$, $SD = 0.87$). Figure 4.9 shows new police officers' engagement of diverse communities.

Figure 4.9. Engagement of Diverse Communities



New police officers in central Arizona demonstrated more knowledge in 6 of the 7 factors analyzed in this subscale, indicating central Arizona officers do better engaging diverse community members and organizations than southern California officers.

Research Question 1 – Qualitative Results

Where the CLCPA survey helped new police officers frame thoughts, beliefs, and values around cultural competence, the qualitative interview phase of the study called upon the perceptions and experiences of participant officers. The researcher presented RQ1 as one of the 12 qualitative interview questions, further enriching the research. As stated previously, 10 new police officers participated in the qualitative interview phase of the study, five each from southern California and central Arizona. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data was essential to answering RQ1. Table 4.10 presents aggregate interview findings relative to cultural competencies applied most by new police officers in southern California and central Arizona.

Table 4.10. Cultural Competencies Applied Most by New Police Officers

Cultural competency applied most by new officers	Number of participants who identified competency	Number of times participants identified competency
Hispanic culture and language	7	55
Community interaction	5	14
Understanding cultural differences and families	10	120
Understanding behavioral health needs and communication	1	3

Note. n = 10.

Understanding Cultural Differences and Families

As shown in Table 4.10, understanding cultural differences and families was unanimously the most prominent cultural competency identified by new police officers in southern California and central Arizona. All interview participants said that understanding cultural differences and families was the most applied cultural competency learned in the police academy. Participant CA1 commented, “Most important is studying various cultures. There were nine different cultures represented in my police academy class alone. I look back on the academy experience as I go into homes with people of various cultures every day.” Participant AZ1 observed:

Interacting with Hispanics and the anti-police culture is very important. Also, understanding why people do or do not report crime. Blacks and Hispanics, even in violent crime occurrences, are hesitant to report crimes. Whites report everything. Not understanding different cultures and language barriers impacts our work in the field.

Participant AZ2 explained:

Beside members of the community coming in and talking to us, I thought about our Mormon population. They do missions and embed in our communities—maybe we should consider immersion training. Also, we went to a home in the community as part of an academy group project. We helped families clean yards after having been flagged by code enforcement. We saw things firsthand. Some people live in poverty just miles from us. All of our class valued cultural competency training and found it helpful.

Some participants emphasized the cultural differences among families. Participant AZ3 stated:

I think understanding other cultures is huge. It is an officer safety issue. Some cultures have higher emotions than others. Generally, people are reactive and feed off one another. I needed to understand specific cultures' family dynamics. So, understanding how embedded family is to one's culture. The police academy did not prepare me enough to understand the populations where I would be assigned to work.

Hispanic Culture and Language

Hispanic culture and language was the second-most prominent cultural competency identified by interview participants. Seven of the 10 officers interviewed said knowledge of Hispanic culture and language learned in the police academy is a common cultural competency applied in the field. Participant CA4 stated:

I would not say that I learned it in the academy, but just because it's part of my ethnic background. I'm Hispanic. So, speaking Spanish is important because we run into a lot of people, you know, in traffic stops, or whatever, or just a lot of various calls. We learned Spanish in the academy, but not enough. I translate all of the time for other officers.

Participant AZ1 further observed:

Understanding how to deal with language barriers is critical. We were taught in the academy to use an app on our phones to help in difficult situations. One example is that I had to use the phone interpreter app to communicate with an Arabic family.

Finally, participant AZ4 stated, “Truth is—the police academy is watered down. It is the basics. They need to teach us about the demographics and communities we will be working in. Hispanic history is important when working in the field.”

Community Interaction

Community interaction was also identified as a core cultural competency learned in the police academy and applied most by new police officers. Although 50% of interview participants identified community interaction as an essential cultural competency, the competency was only mentioned 14 times across all interviews. Participant AZ2 observed:

No one calls 911 when they are having a good day. Not everyone views the badge the same. I had to learn it can be a scary thing for some people. Treat every interaction as it will have a lasting impression—it will determine if they present law enforcement in a good or bad light. Treat every interaction with the community with care.

Participant AZ4 added, “Respect everyone. Treat people with good customer service. For example, teach us about working on a reservation if that is in our service area.” Lastly, participant CA2 said, “We must be aware of how to interact with other people. If you can’t talk with people, you can’t help them.”

Understanding Behavioral Health Needs and Communication

This cultural competency was identified by one interview participant. Overall, understanding behavioral health needs and communication was identified only three times by

interview participants. Although communication was mentioned in various contexts across all interviews, communication associated with understanding behavioral health needs was sparse.

Comparison of Regional Findings for RQ1

As discussed in Chapter 2, what is learned in the police academy does not necessarily translate to an officer's field performance (Makin, 2016; McCampbell, 1987). According to Getty et al. (2014), new police officers cannot apply all they have learned in the academy without real-world experience. Thus, providing evidence that police officers' post-academy lived experiences transfer knowledge learned in the academy to situational field experiences and inform transformative learning (Bennet, 1984; McCampbell, 1987).

Using the four phases from the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model, the researcher conducted a regional comparison of transformative learning among participants. The comparison of regional findings for transformative learning are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11. Comparison of Regional Findings for Transformative Learning

Nerstrom's four phases of transformative learning	Number of participants who identified phase	Arizona	California
Having experiences	10	5	5
Making assumptions	10	5	5
Challenging perspectives	8	4	4
Experiencing transformative learning	10	5	5

By analyzing the data gathered from the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews, the researcher was able to use descriptive statistics and triangulation of multiple data points to develop a comprehensive understanding of the data. The researcher also used member checking among interview participants to establish validity and trustworthiness of the findings through convergence of information from multiple sources for RQ1.

Findings: Research Question 2

This section contains an analysis of the research data for RQ2: Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance? Findings are presented from qualitative interview data using the four phases of Nerstrom's (2014) transformative learning model lens: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning. The researcher presents data from the perceptions and lived experiences of new police officers in southern California and central Arizona.

Perceptions of Cultural Competence

The perceptions of cultural competence varied among new police officers. Four of the 10 interview participants requested more context to inform responses to the question, "What is your perception of cultural competence?" Some participants asked the researcher to define cultural competence before answering the question. For other participants, cultural competence was confused with cultural awareness and cultural diversity. Participant CA4 commented, "Cultural competency is having cultural awareness with things that are constantly progressing." Participant CA5 said, "It's about the same. Every day is different. We are all different and should approach things with an open mind because everyone has their own beliefs."

Eight of the 10 participants identified cultural understanding when explaining their perceptions of cultural competence. As participant AZ2 said, "Someone who is understanding of different cultures that you work with. A police officer's understanding of people who they interact with daily." Participant AZ4 discussed their perception of cultural competence in the context of people from other countries. Participant AZ4 explained:

I believe that cultural competence is important to the extent of understanding what the community needs to focus on. The backgrounds and experiences in the United States versus other countries. So, who are the police as opposed to where they came from?

Two participants equated cultural competence with cultural divisions. Participant CA1 offered, “Being aware of divisions between cultures. It is important to understand cultural significances. We are a melting pot.” Another participant, AZ3, contributed, “Understanding divisions. America is a mixing pot. Coming in to control with other people.”

Field Application of Cultural Competencies Learned in the Police Academy

All 10 participants interviewed said cultural competence is used every day on the job. Participant AZ5 said, “I use it all the time without consciously thinking about it. Every situation is different. Being able to use it subconsciously. Understanding situations.” Participant CA3 stated, “I use it every day. We are meeting new people all of the time. Best not to judge – we have to make quick decisions.” Participant CA5 observed, “It’s an everyday thing. I never know what cultures I’ll contact.” Finally, participant AZ2 said, “I use cultural competence in every situation that I am in.”

How Cultural Competence Situated Organizationally

The perceptions of how cultural competence situated in organizations employing new police officers in southern California and central Arizona was examined. Table 4.12 shows participants’ perceptions of how cultural competence situated in their respective organizations.

Table 4.12. How Cultural Competence Situates Organizationally

How cultural competence situates organizationally	All participants	Arizona	California
Not in specific policy	1	1	
Very important	6	2	4
Somewhat important	1	1	
A priority	1		1
High regard	1	1	

Note. n = 10

Six of the 10 participants believed cultural competence is very important within their respective departments. As stated by participant AZ5, “Cultural competence is very important. My agency is diverse and always trying to evolve to the betterment of the community.” Participant CA1 said, “It is important. Veterans rely on younger officers. They want to get us ready because they need us. We round table situations every day in briefing.”

In addition, two of the 10 participants identified cultural competence as a priority or believed cultural competence was held with high regard departmentally. Participant CA3 commented, “It is a priority, but one of those things that is always there. There are too many taboos with culture and gender. People tread lightly because of political correctness.” Participant AZ3 stated, “It is held in high regard. There are different opportunities for community engagement. We can work with various communities to support various events.” Another participant, AZ1, remarked about cultural competence in their department, “Cultural competence is not in a specific policy. It is learned in the field. It is developed informally over time.”

Perceptions of Police Leadership Cultural Competence Training

Participants focused on perceptions of how cultural competence training was delivered and renewed to police leaders in their departments. Table 4.13 presents new police officers’

perceptions of how police leadership receives cultural competence education and training in their respective departments.

Table 4.13. Perception of Police Leadership Cultural Competence Training

Police leadership cultural competence training	All participants	Arizona	California
I don't know	8	4	4
Upward	1		1
Community engagement reports	1	1	

Note. $n = 10$.

Eight of the 10 participants interviewed did not know how police leadership in their departments received cultural competence training, nor did they understand how that training might be renewed. The researcher noted the two participants who did identify how police leadership received cultural competence education and training were uncertain in their responses. Participant AZ1 commented, “I don’t really know. I would imagine through community engagement reports.” Participant CA1 stated, “Upward, I think. Sergeants train with us. Lieutenants hear about it.”

Perceptions of Cultural Competence in Police Academy Education and Training

The perceptions of police academy cultural competence education and training differed among interview participants. Three participants found little value in police academy cultural competence education content and training. As stated by participant AZ4:

We didn’t cover too much of it in the academy because they started off with, like the whole perception of, this is basic training where we just cover basic materials. So, obviously they taught us some demographic differences but there was not a whole lot of focus on it until our post-academy field training.

Participant AZ5 noted, “I don’t know that I have ever thought of it that way. I’m not sure how to answer it.” Another participant, CA3, said:

In the police academy there was a lot of emphasis on not stereotyping people. Rely on what you know—how you grew up. I’m a military veteran so I had a nonjudgmental mindset coming into the job. God created us all equal.

In contrast, seven of the 10 new police officers interviewed found value in police academy cultural competence education and training. Participant AZ3 discussed police academy education and training related to previous employment:

It has influenced my performance. The academy broadened my perspective even though I worked in a similar field before police work. I was aware, but still learned so much. The academy helped me relate to others. They do not hate us—many people just do not understand.

Participant AZ2 stated, “It has had a huge impact. I knew it before even going into the field. I thought to myself the training would keep me safe and survive on the street.” Another participant CA5 said, “The academy is a good first step. It provides the foundation. Everyday experiences create cultural competence.” CA1 contributed, “It helps me think—to assess situations. I am careful not to offend, but still get all of the information that I can to do the job.” Finally, AZ5 suggested, “The academy did a good job of trying to be diverse and show that every new officer brings their own culture to the job. Just continuing to understand that people are different.”

Most Essential Cultural Competency Learned in the Police Academy

Participants reflected upon which cultural competencies learned in the police academy most benefited their field performance. Table 4.14 illustrates the perceptions of new police

officers concerning essential cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefitting field performance regionally.

Table 4.14. Cultural Competencies Benefiting Field Performance Most

Most essential cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefiting performance	All participant s	Arizon a	Californi a
Understanding language barriers	1	1	
Open mindedness	1		1
Understanding cultural differences and backgrounds	6	3	3
Social stigma of law enforcement	1		1
Respect	1	1	

Note. $n = 10$.

Six of the 10 interview participants identified understanding cultural differences and backgrounds of others as the most essential cultural competence learned in the police academy. There were an equal number of new police officers in each region that identified understanding of cultural differences and backgrounds as essential. As stated by participant CA3, “Learning and understanding various backgrounds is critical. In the academy we shared our cultures with one another. We had a day where we talked about family structures and then shared food. We just talked.” Participant AZ2 added, “The POST courses were great. Introduction to different cultures and backgrounds was awesome training. Police work is not a cookie-cutter job. Respect and reach others. Make a difference. Touch people the right way.” Finally, participant AZ3 said, “Probably recognizing the upbringing of people and how it effects their view of things. The cultural experiences they have are real, especially with law enforcement.”

Curriculum Enhancements to Strengthen Police Academy Education and Training

Participants focused on police academy cultural competence curriculum additions or modifications they believed would strengthen police academy education and training content.

Table 4.15 documents new police officers' perceptions of cultural competence curriculum enhancement to strengthen police academy education and training.

Table 4.15. Police Academy Cultural Competence Curriculum Enhancements

Cultural competence curriculum enhancements	All participants	Arizona	California
More realistic scenarios	2	1	1
Police academy field trips	1		1
Student-based learning	2	1	1
Police academy ride-a-longs	1		1
Extend current courses	1		1
Offer language courses	1	1	
Community-based instruction	1	1	
Tactical communication course	1	1	

Note. $n = 10$.

Two areas of cultural competence curriculum enhancement were identified most by participants in southern California and central Arizona to strengthen cultural competence content, more realistic training scenarios and student-based learning. However, the researcher noted some similarities among participant responses. Reasonably, police academy ride-a-longs and community-based instruction could be braided with more realistic field scenarios or student-based learning, respectively. Ameliorating participant numerical data in the cultural competence curriculum enhancements are exhibited in Table 4.15.

As described, two participants focused on more realistic training scenarios to strengthen police academy cultural competence education and training. As stated by participant CA1, "Use more real-life scenarios. Everything is hypothetical in the academy. Research the mistakes of

others and learn how issues were resolved.” Participant AZ4 said, “Scenario-based training helped us in the academy. It provides an opportunity to understand how to handle situations before actually being in the field.”

In addition, two participants focused on student-based learning opportunities to strengthen cultural competence curriculum. Participant CA3 commented, “More student-based learning. Learning from one another about our backgrounds. Younger people have a fresher perspective than learning from a 10-year old book.” Participant AZ5 offered, “The other recruits also bring a lot to it.”

Embedding Police Academy Cultural Competencies to Benefit Performance

Participants focused on their perceptions of critical core competencies that might be embedded into police academy education and training to benefit new police officer performance in the field. Table 4.16 shows the critical cultural competencies identified by participants.

Table 4.16. Police Academy Embedded Cultural Competencies Benefiting Field Performance

Embedded critical cultural competencies benefitting performance	All participant s	Arizona	California
Real-world training	2		2
Extended courses	1		1
Communication courses	1		1
Greater exposure to other cultures	1	1	
More community-based instruction	3	3	
Community history content	1	1	
More Spanish language instruction	1		1

Note. $n = 10$.

Three of the 10 participants said more embedded community-based instruction in the police academy might benefit new police officer field performance. As participant AZ3 stated,

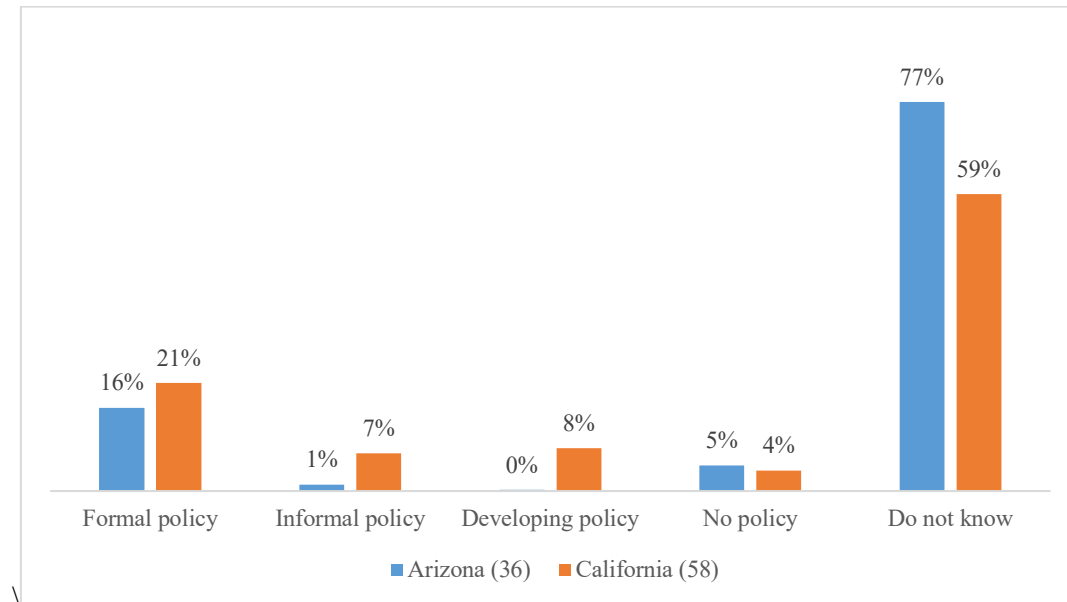
“Understanding the populations where I would be assigned to work. They did not prepare me enough.” Participant AZ4 observed, “We received multiple curriculum that addressed cultural competence. Having a course or program that takes a deeper dive. We had civilians teach us in the academy which was good.”

Still, two participants focused on embedding real world cultural competence education and training application during the police academy. Participant CA2 remarked, “More real world examples – not stereotypical watered down scenarios. More realistic applications are needed.” Lastly, participant CA5 said, “Guest speakers from the community. Bring in real people to talk with us.”

Regional Cultural Competence Policy Analysis

The CLCPA survey further focused on new police officers’ cultural competence policy knowledge. Most CLCPA survey questions (41 of 45) were presented with an associated policy knowledge question. Following each survey question, respondents were asked to clarify supporting policy knowledge, if any. The policy questions prompted respondents to identify if there were (a) no policy, (b) informal policy, (c) developing policy, (d) formal policy, or responded (e) I do not know. Figure 4.10 provides a visual comparison of cultural competence policy knowledge among new police officers in southern California and central Arizona.

Figure 4.10. Regional Policy Knowledge Comparison



The findings suggest a gap in cultural competence policy knowledge among new police officers regionally. Central Arizona officers demonstrated little understanding of informal or developing cultural competence policy. These officers either understood formal policy existed or did not know. Southern California officers' cultural competence policy knowledge was similar to central Arizona officers; however, they were more informed about informal and developing policies.

In addition, three qualitative interview questions explored new police officer policy knowledge in two areas: (a) how cultural competence situates within their respective departments, (b) how often cultural competence leadership training is delivered, and (c) how cultural competence training is renewed in its delivery to police leadership (see Tables 4.12 and 4.13, respectively). The qualitative interview findings around these three interview questions corroborate the quantitative findings, indicating a gap in policy knowledge among new police officers regionally.

Summary

This chapter began with a review of the research questions and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The researcher then presented an analysis of the data from the sequential mixed-methods study examining police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. The integrated data were presented through the lens of the conceptual framework guiding this study; Nerstrom's (2014) four-phase transformative learning model. The study identified cultural competencies learned in the police academy used most often by new police officers in the field. The study further identified new police officers' perceptions of the cultural competencies learned in the police academy that most benefited field performance. Chapter 5 provides further analysis related to the research questions, implications of the findings, recommendations for future research, and the summary.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents an overview of key study elements. The chapter includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study. These sections of the chapter are followed by a description of the study methodology and data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with findings from the research, implications of the study, recommendations for future research, and a summary.

Statement of the Problem

Relating to people, earning trust, and being culturally competent is essential to effective policing (Hudson, 2014). Police academies often fail to teach police recruits community and agency history leaving them unprepared to serve community members effectively (Kuhn & Lurie, 2018). A 2020 Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) survey found only 39% of respondents believed police officers treated racial and ethnic minorities fairly (Lofstrom & Martin, 2021).

Although there is ample evidence to suggest police academy training does not affect new officers' racial attitudes, fieldwork may increase negative attitudes toward people of color (e.g., Briceno, 2009). According to Cobb (2023), policing in the United States has a population-wide problem with violence. Moreover, police violence is disproportionately directed toward Black people (Cobb, 2023). An example is the January 27, 2023, murder of Tyree Nichols. Tyree Nichols, an unarmed Black man, was stopped by five Black Memphis police officers, physically removed from his car, and beaten to death (Washburn, 2023). Three of the five police officers charged in the killing of Tyree Nichols attended college, two of the officers were members of a fraternity dedicated to serving the Black community (Cobb, 2023).

The killing of Tyree Nichols was captured on body cameras worn by the involved officers. Again, nationwide protests followed, demanding increased accountability and police education and training reform. Nichol's death is but one example of the many controversial law enforcement-related deaths in the past decade.

Intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitude are tenets of effective communication and essential intercultural response (Deardorff, 2006). Because police officers interact with people of diverse backgrounds every day, cultural competence is a requirement of the job (U.S. Department of Justice [U.S. DOJ], n.d.-a). As described in Chapter 1, the importance of cultural competence and need for police reform was underscored in the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015). This study explored police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new officer field performance. Gaining an understanding of police officers' perceptions and identifying which core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance informed this study.

Research Questions

Two primary research questions informed this study:

1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers?
2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Cross et al.'s (1989) theory of cultural competence was the framework selected to guide this study. Cross et al. suggested that there are five essential elements required for an individual or agency to become culturally competent: (a) valuing diversity, (b) having the capacity for self-assessment, (c) being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, (d) having institutionalized cultural knowledge, and (e) having developed adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity. This study focused on an examination of police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance, and Cross et al.' theory was used as an overarching worldview guiding the study.

The conceptual framework used in this study was Nerstrom's (2014) transformative learning model. Nerstrom, drawing upon the work of Mezirow (1978), identified four phases of transformative learning: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning. This model provided a framework for analyzing new police officers' cultural competence knowledge, skills, awareness, and use in two geographic regions of the United States. The theory of cultural competence proposed by Cross et al. (1989) and Nerstrom's (2014) transformative learning model were used for data collection and analysis for Research Question 1 (RQ1).

The Nerstrom model was used for data collection and analysis for Research Question 2 (RQ2). This model provided a framework for examining the perceptions of new police officers related to police academy cultural competence education and training, and determined what academy learned cultural competencies benefited field performance. Transformative learning theory has been used in previous studies to measure individual police officer and organizational cultural competence (Fletcher, 2014).

Methodology

The researcher selected an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study design to examine the cultural competence and perceptions of new police officers. A quantitative leading study allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of the problem while using qualitative data to further enrich findings. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggested using both approaches provides the researcher with an opportunity to think about and analyzing the data differently. In this study, RQ1 was designed to gather quantitative data; RQ2 was designed to gather qualitative data.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study included two primary sources of data: (a) quantitative survey and (b) qualitative interviews. The quantitative instrument for this study was a modified Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment (CLCPA) survey, distributed to police academy graduates with less than 3 years of police experience. A total of 575 surveys were sent to police academy graduates in southern California and central Arizona who had completed a police academy and worked in a field assignment in the 3-year period from August 2020 through 2023. The CLCPA survey instrument was selected for this study because of its adaptability to police work (Fletcher, 2014).

From the 575 surveys distributed to new police officers, the researcher received 90 that were useable. Among the 90 respondents, 14 new police officers indicated a willingness to participate in the interviews. As described in Chapter 3, the qualitative interview segment of the study allowed the researcher to identify trends, interpret data, and explain behavior further informing research findings.

Ultimately, 10 police officers—five each from southern California and central Arizona—participated in the interviews. The interview questions and protocols were piloted before distribution to participants. All interviews followed established protocols (see Appendix D). The interview questions were semistructured allowing the researcher to ask follow-up and probing questions for clarity. All participant interviews were conducted using Zoom audio, video, and audio transcription recording, with the permission of each participant.

Following the interviews, the researcher conducted member checking. Once member checking responses were recorded, the researcher used Excel software to code interview transcripts. Emerging themes were identified through key words, phrases, and responses with similar meaning in the interview transcripts. Interview transcripts were reviewed multiple times along with audio recordings to fully understand the data.

Discussion of Findings and Related Literature

In this study, the researcher examined police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance through the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model lens. Findings included cultural competencies learned in the police academy and applied most by new police officers in the field and identifying core cultural competencies learned in the police academy that benefited new police officer field performance. The findings of this study are categorized by research questions and germane literature.

RQ1

RQ1 asked, What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers? Everyday new police officers are challenged by interacting with cultures different from their own. These challenges may be ameliorated when new police officers receive police academy cultural competence education and training useful to them in

field situations. The researcher used a quantitative survey to help new police officers' frame thoughts, beliefs, and values around cultural competence. Then, the researcher presented RQ1 in the context of one of 12 structured interview questions to further answer RQ1. The knowledge gained from this study supports the four-phase Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model identifying how new police officers' cultural competence learning intersects across four dimensions: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning.

The research revealed four cultural competencies learned in the police academy that new police officers use most: (a) understanding cultural differences and families, (b) Hispanic culture and language, (c) community interaction and (d) understanding behavioral needs and communication. A closer examination of each of these cultural competencies provided the researcher with a richer understanding of cultural competencies valued by new police officers.

Understanding Cultural Differences and Families

Police officers serve all community members. Therefore, possessing some understanding about the cultures of other human beings is an essential characteristic of police work. Vodde (2019) said society expects the police to understand cultural differences if they are to meet community needs. According to Skinner (2022), the success of policing is incumbent on the relationship between police officers and the communities they serve.

The significance of police officers understanding other cultures is affirmed in this study. Collectively, new police officers in southern California and central Arizona demonstrated a stronger understanding of Hispanic, White, and African-American cultural groups than Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander groups; a curious finding given the proximity to geographically unique population centers among the study sites.

An example is southern California and central Arizona both home to significant tribal lands exerting American Indian wealth, political power, and influence. However, police officers' understanding of American Indian cultural differences and families lagged behind other cultural groups regionally.

Moreover, California continues to experience the effects of a growing Asian population. According to a 2021 PEW Research Center study, almost half of the 22 million Asians (45%) in the United States live in the West, with nearly a third (30%) making California home. An example of growing Asian influence occurred on March 1, 2024, when the city of Los Angeles appointed the first Asian police chief in the over 242-year history of the city.

Finally, the findings support the importance of new police officers' understanding of cultural differences and families. During the interview phase of the study, understanding cultural differences and families was overwhelmingly identified as the most applied cultural competence learned in the police academy (see Table 4.10). Further, participants viewed understanding cultural differences and backgrounds of others as the most essential cultural competence learned in the police academy to benefit field performance (see Table 4.14).

Hispanic Culture and Language

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2021), the United States will become a minority majority population by 2045. Therefore, police academy cultural competence education and training related to Hispanic culture and language becomes an even more essential skill for police officers. Caro (2011) suggested that unpleasant police interaction with communities often results from the gap in police academy curriculum and the experiences of officers in the field.

The ability to communicate with community members is an essential skill for effective police officer performance. Sereni-Massinger and Wood (2016a) advocated the need for soft

skills, particularly interpersonal communication skills allowing officers to improve decision-making and challenge assumptions and beliefs. The capacity to communicate across cultures is an essential employment skill for police officers amidst vastly changing communities (de Guzman et al., 2016).

The research supports that new police officers in the studied regions experienced demographic changes within their service areas. Consequently, Hispanic culture and language was the second most used cultural competency identified in this study. Survey respondents in the subscale for *Knowledge of Diverse Communities* identified having more Hispanic culture and language group knowledge than any other cultural group (see Figure 4.1). Additionally, seven of the 10 participants identified Hispanic culture and language a total of 55 times demonstrating their importance (see Table 4.10). Throughout the study, new police officers identified the importance of understanding language barriers, cultural differences and backgrounds, and the need for more police academy curriculum in language, communications, and Spanish (see Tables 4.14–4.16).

Community Interaction

Law enforcement service delivery requires that police officers interact with people from diverse populations daily (U.S. DOJ, n.d.). As stated by Chappell (2008), areas such as communications, diversity, and problem solving are often overlooked in police academy training in favor of more traditional legal studies and perishable skills content. Nonetheless, the care that police officers take to better understand community history and culture eliminates barriers to meaningful community interaction (Elton, 2013).

Although the CLCPA survey did not directly address community interaction, the *Engagement of Diverse Communities* subscale did attribute questions connecting officers to

individuals, groups, and entities supporting the law enforcement related needs of culturally diverse groups (see Figure 4.9). As noted previously, new police officers in central Arizona demonstrated more overall knowledge about engaging diverse community members and organizations than officers in southern California. An incongruous finding given that southern California officers demonstrated more knowledge about their agencies' community connections to culturally appropriate networks and advanced officer education and training that contribute to service delivery of culturally diverse groups (see Figure 4.8).

Although, community interaction was identified as an essential core cultural competency learned in the police academy, it was only mentioned 14 times across all interviews by five participants (see Table 4.10). However, even though community interaction was sparsely mentioned, it was evident in interview statements that the capacity to communicate and understand others is a critical component of police officer cultural competence. As stated in Chapter 2, removing barriers, earning community trust, and establishing police legitimacy is largely dependent on police officer performance in the field. A central tenet of police officer field performance rests upon positive community interaction.

Understanding Behavioral Needs and Communication

This cultural competency was identified by one interview participant in the qualitative phase answering RQ1. Overall, understanding behavioral health needs and communication was identified only three times by interview participants. Although communication is mentioned generally in various contexts across all interviews, communication associated with understanding behavioral health needs was scant. This may be associated with the limited field experiences of the participant officers.

Education and training are ingrained in new police officers because their survival may depend upon it. However, the study found a gap in new police officer policy and leadership education and training knowledge. Therefore, it is essential that communities, law enforcement organizations, and individual officers recognize how learning occurs. McPhail et al. (2001) offered that it is the student who brings culturally formed knowledge which ultimately informs new learning.

Beyond the four most applied cultural competencies learned in the police academy, the researcher noted that within the context of transformative learning new police officers rely upon individual experiences, working through assumptions, and introspectively challenging previous held beliefs and experiences to further improve performance.

RQ2

RQ2 asked, Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance? The researcher used semistructured interviews with new police officers in two regions of the United States to identify core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefitting field performance. Using Nerstrom's (2104) transformative learning model lens, and assessing the literature, the researcher found evidence of learned prominent core cultural competencies benefitting field performance among new police officers.

Bridging the gap between what is learned in the police and academy and found useful in field situations is a continuing challenge for new police officers (Makin, 2016; McCampbell, 1987). Findings from this study support demographic changes experienced by officers exemplify the value of cultural competence education and training (de Guzman et al., 2016). The absence of national standards for police academy cultural competence education and training coupled with

research underscoring societal perceptions of the police are divided along racial lines (e.g., PEW Research Center, 2014) significantly complicates police education programming. Police academy learned cultural competence coupled with field experience prepares officers for handling complex political, social, and economic conditions influencing field performance (Bykov, 2014).

RQ2 focused on new police officer perceptions of core cultural competencies benefiting field performance. As presented in Chapter 4, the researcher bifurcated data into two areas of analysis: (a) perceptions of cultural competence, and (b) perceptions of cultural competence in police academy education and training, to answer this research question.

Findings are presented from qualitative interview data using the four-phases of the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model lens: (a) having experiences, (b) making assumptions, (c) challenging perspectives, and (d) experiencing transformative learning. The researcher presents data from the perceptions and lived experiences of new police officers in southern California and central Arizona.

Field Application of Cultural Competencies Learned in the Police Academy

Effective law enforcement requires that officers provide services to all community members equally (Braga et al., 2019). The findings revealed new police officers use cultural competence every day in the performance of their duties. All officers interviewed said that academy learned cultural competencies were applied anywhere from once per shift to multiple occasions in the performance of their duties. Thus, police officers rely upon police academy cultural competence education and training informed by lived experiences to deliver police services across diverse communities.

How Cultural Competence is Situated Organizationally

New police officers understand the significance of cultural competence education and training in their respective organizations. More than 80% of the officers interviewed believed that cultural competence was either very important, a priority, or held in high regard by employing agencies. This finding is notable because comparatively, new officers in the survey phase of the study demonstrated very little policy knowledge across all themes or subscales (see Figure 4.10).

Perceptions of Police Leadership Cultural Competence Training

New police officers in both regions studied had little understanding of how police leadership in their respective departments received cultural competence training or how leadership training might be renewed (see Table 4.13). A remarkable finding given that participants well understood the significance of cultural competence training within their respective agencies. (see Table 4.12). Gutschmidt et al. (2020) noted an organization's culture could affect cultural and workforce dynamics. Therefore, the culture of a police department could limit new officers' exposure to higher-level cultural competence policy objectives. Thus, these findings may be influenced by the experience levels associated with the study sample, new police officers with less than 3 years of experience.

Most Essential Cultural Competence Learned in the Police Academy

As discussed in the findings for RQ1, understanding cultural differences and families was unanimous among respondents as the most applied cultural competence learned in the police academy (see Table 4.10). Notably, interview participants held a similar perspective of the most essential police academy learned cultural competence benefitting field performance with one distinction: knowledge of cultural backgrounds (see Table 4.14).

Interview participants were asked to formulate an experiential response to a question concerning the most essential cultural competence learned in the academy. Although police officers receive varying cultural competence education and training content during the police academy, it falls short of what they say they need. The study affirmed that based upon field experiences; new police officers believe they would benefit from a deeper understanding of the cultural backgrounds of community members in their service areas. New police officers' experiences, on and off the job, inform learning and improve field performance.

Curriculum Enhancements to Strengthen Police Academy Education and Training

New police officers in both regions studied identified the need for a more substantial interactive police academy curriculum (see Table 4.15). Realistic training scenarios and student-based learning opportunities were mentioned most by participants. However, there was also support for community members teaching police academy cultural competence content, not limiting instruction to law enforcement educators. In addition, police academy ride-a-longs with experienced officers received support.

Throughout the interview phase of the study, the researcher noted that participants were positive about learning from peers in the academy. The police academy can be a difficult and lonely experience. The evidence suggests that the relationships formed among officers of various racial and ethnic backgrounds in the academy may be an underutilized learning strategy in the education and training of future police officers. As AZ5 described, "The other recruits also bring a lot to it."

In the absence of experiences (police ride-a-longs), introspective learning opportunities (more realistic training scenarios), and community member instruction, police recruits have

limited opportunities to make assumptions and challenge perspectives through experiences during the police academy.

Embedding Police Academy Cultural Competencies to Benefit Field Performance

The findings varied between new police officers in southern California and central Arizona in this area of analysis. Officers in central Arizona said greater exposure to other cultures, community history, and community-based instruction was needed in the police academy to benefit field performance. However, southern California officers were more focused on communication, Spanish language, and real-world training scenario content to benefit field performance. Southern California officers also advocated for extending courses in communication and language during the academy.

Except for tribal cultures, the evidence suggested new police officers in central Arizona have a stronger sense community connection to their service areas than officers in southern California. Thus, explaining why cultural and historical knowledge content embedded in the academy is preferable. Figure 4.9 demonstrates central Arizona officers' strengths across multiple dimensions of community engagement corroborating this finding. However, there is much that contributes to the thoughts, values and beliefs of new officers relative to perceived needs in academy instruction. Population, demographics, community perceptions of the police, crime, community activism, economic standing, political power and influence, police culture, and post-academy field experiences likely influence new police officer views of their police academy experience.

Unexpected Findings

An unexpected finding in this study was that new police officers demonstrated little understanding of policy. This finding was significant because police officers operate within a

framework of laws and policies. Effective policing policies are essential for the maintenance of good order, discipline, and meeting community expectations for performance. Before starting on the job, new police officers are provided policy directives, general orders, or procedural guidelines and asked to read and understand them over the course of a few days. Once done, the new officers provide a signed attestation that they have read, understand, and will comply with all policies.

This study revealed that even though new police officers receive education and training in the police academy, they have little understanding of departmental policies. Again, although this study focused on cultural competence, there were a significant number of policy questions in the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. The sample represented new police officers with less than 3 years of experience in a field assignment. This data should be informative to the field of practice.

Practical Implications

Through this explanatory sequential mixed-methods study, the researcher aimed to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. This study provided the researcher with a deeper understanding of cultural competence among a new police officer population in two regions of the United States.

One implication identified by the researcher was that there is a need for national standards for police academy cultural competence education and training. Each state relies upon a regulatory body, most often a commission on peace officer standards and training, to define education and training curriculum. The researcher found that police academies continue to deliver traditional education and training curriculum at the expense of noncognitive or social interaction skills-based instruction required in police field work. The absence of national

standards for police academy education and training likely contributes to an identified gap between what is taught in the police academy and applied by officers in the field.

The second implication of this study is that new police officers develop a greater understanding of policy. Although this study was primarily focused on police academy cultural competence education and training, the findings indicate that new police officers have very little understanding of formal or developing cultural competence policy within their respective organizations. Additionally, new police officers did not have any knowledge of how police leadership in their respective agencies received cultural competence training or how that training was renewed. Thus, indicating the importance of police leadership communicating leadership organizational education and training requirements. Because police officers are guided by codified laws, agency specific general orders, and various policies and procedural guidelines, it is necessary for law enforcement organizations to develop and implement practices ensuring police officers understand established policies.

The final implication of the study is that police academies necessarily include instructional content relative to how learning occurs. The four-phases of the Nerstrom (2014) transformative learning model provided the lens of this study. New police officers in the studied regions indicated throughout the study that learning occurred but were not cognizant of the transformative elements associated with the learning, having experiences, making assumptions, and challenging perspectives. Instead, these officers associated learning with police academy content and field training without full understanding of how lived experiences transform learning and field performance.

In addition, law enforcement organizations might be well-served working with regional police academies to integrate regional and community specific history, culture, and linguistic

knowledge into curriculum. As described in Chapter 1, police officers are not required to live in the communities where they work. Therefore, curriculum aimed at providing police officers with greater cultural and linguistic understanding of American Indian, Asian, or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander populations could contribute to closing the cultural competence knowledge gap found in the regions studied.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study focused on examining police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance, the study raised other opportunities for further research. First, this study was limited to two geographic regions in the western United States. One recommendation would be to conduct the same study in police academies in other geographic regions reflecting different populations, economic conditions, and social policies. Such a study would be timely given the nationwide division over diversity, equity, and inclusion policy mandates. In addition, more study may assist new police officers who may be affected by social and governmental policies conflicting with personally held beliefs and lived experiences.

Second, a study exploring national standards for police academy cultural competence education and training could be beneficial to the field of practice. Police academy cultural competence curriculum represents a variety of cultural diversity content. Professional policing may be well-served by developing a standardized cultural competence curriculum that new police officers and community members could benefit from.

Third, a study examining cultural competence as a perishable skill for police officers at every level is recommended. Today, many police agencies require mandated advanced officer training to maintain skills in such areas as domestic violence, first aid/CPR, firearms training, and weaponless defense. Advanced cultural competence training for officers at all levels may

help bridge the gap in policy knowledge among police officers. This study has affirmed that cultural competence among police officers is a critical skill.

Fourth, although the study did not support understanding behavioral needs and communication as a prominent cultural competence, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the relationship between behavioral health needs and communication, and policing is worthy of future study.

Finally, a study exploring separating education and training components in the police academy is recommended. According to Buerger (2004), “Education and training are fundamentally different tasks, though in an ideal world they should complement each other” (para. 12). Higher education provides the opportunity for dialogue to expand students’ perceptions, critical thinking abilities’, and ultimately prepares students for employment (Buerger, 2004). A study exploring the bifurcation of police education and training may further inform study participants’ thoughts about cultural competence learning primarily occurring in field situations.

This recommendation for future research responds directly to what participants said they would like to see in police academy education and training. In addition, this type of research may well inform knowledge, practice, and policy in the field amidst public scrutiny in the training of United States police officers.

An unanticipated finding in this study was that new police officers do not understand policy. A final recommendation for future research is to structure a study examining how new police officers receive departmental policy education and training. AZ1 observed, “Cultural competence is not in a specific policy. It is learned in the field. It is developed informally over time.” Future research could provide police agencies valuable insight into police officer learning,

behavior, and performance, subsequently mitigating police officer personnel complaints, liability claims, and litigation against local governmental entities.

Conclusions

This research studied police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. Oakley (2020) rationalized that a police officer's cultural competence education and training begins in the police academy. With that information in mind, this researcher explored the thoughts, beliefs, values, lived experiences, and perceptions of cultural competence among new police officers with less than 3 years of experience in two regions of the United States. The information that follows provides a summary of the findings related to this study's two research questions.

RQ1

RQ1 asked, What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new police officers? The findings indicated new police officers in southern California and central Arizona unanimously relied upon understanding cultural differences and families in their service areas to competently perform their duties. Although the police academies in the studied regions provided basic cultural competence instructional content, new police officers believed the learning was not sufficient for them to do their jobs effectively.

New police officers' field experiences further informed their cultural competence knowledge base. The lessons learned by new field officers could be shared with police academy recruits by those same officers who lived the experiences. In preparing future police officers, police academies might reevaluate the delivery of traditional instructional content in favor of more cognitive and soft-skills based curriculum. The study findings affirmed there is a gap between what is learned in the police academy and applied in the field.

RQ2

RQ2 asked, Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance? Like the findings with RQ1, new police officers indicated understanding the cultural differences and backgrounds of others was a core cultural competency benefitting field performance. Although interview participants understood cultural competence was an organizational priority and critical to individual field performance, the study found new officers experienced difficulty distinguishing between cultural awareness, cultural diversity, and cultural competence. To assure consistency in police academy cultural competence education and training, higher education and law enforcement needs to adopt a nationally recognized definition for cultural competence. Additionally, states must work collaboratively to reevaluate police academy cultural competence education and training in support of standardizing curriculum nationwide.

Equally important to the field of practice is that new police officers did not know how police leadership in their organizations received cultural competence education and training. Policing resides in a quasi-military organizational structure where leaders desire the respect of subordinate police officers. Too often, police culture is a barrier to meaningful relationships between police officers and their superiors. One-way leaders earn respect is when officers understand their leaders are receiving similarly required training. Nationwide alignment of police cultural competence education and training, at all levels and classifications, is recommended.

Study participants expressed apprehension over the delivery of cultural competence education and training in the police academy. These officers acknowledged police academy cultural competence curriculum could be enhanced based on post-academy field experiences. Law enforcement leaders must be decidedly aware that police academy cultural competence

curriculum content is imperative in the education and training of future police officers. The opportunity for police recruits to learn interactively from community members during the academy experience could significantly improve cultural competence knowledge, field performance, and help restore trust and legitimacy to individual officers and agencies. A community's history is essential knowledge for new police officers to effectively deliver services (COPS Office, 2015).

An unexpected study finding was new police officers' lack of cultural competence policy knowledge. Although this study focused on cultural competence, this finding may well signal evidence of a broader policy knowledge gap among new police officers transferring from the police academy to field assignments. Fundamentally, statutory laws and organizational policies guide police officer performance. Therefore, police leaders rely heavily upon subordinate officers' understanding and following policies guiding individual behavior and practices. However, if these officers are new to the field and do not have adequate policy knowledge, community safety may be at unnecessary risk.

In conclusion, although law enforcement has made appreciable progress providing services to vastly changing communities, the public deserves more. Further work can be done to ensure that police officers in the United States are better educated, trained, and prepared to deliver culturally competent law enforcement services. Continuing to solicit the voices of new generations of police officers will be critical if professional policing hopes to restore public trust.

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Appendix A- Alignment Table

Appendix A Table **Error! No text of specified style in document.**1. Alignment of Problem

Based on Literature Findings, Research Questions, Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks, and Methodology

Problems based on literature findings	Research questions	Theoretical/conceptual frameworks	Methodology
Because police officers interact with people of diverse backgrounds daily, cultural competence is an essential characteristic of police work (U.S. DOJ, n.d.).	RQ1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new officers?	Theory of cultural competence (Cross et al., 1989) Transformative learning model (Nerstrom, 2014) Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978)	Quantitative survey (CLCPA) 1–10, 21–26, 43–45 Qualitative interviews 4, 5, 6
No national standards presently exist for police academy education and training (Police1, 2021).	RQ1. What cultural competencies learned in the police academy are placed into action most by new officers?	Theory of cultural competence (Cross et al., 1989)	Quantitative survey (CLCPA) 11–20, 27–42
A democratic society demands a law enforcement culture that recognizes and respects human rights and individual differences (COPS Office, 2015).	RQ2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?	Transformative learning model (Nerstrom, 2014) Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978)	Qualitative interviews 1 –3, 7 –10
Cultural competence begins with self-awareness among police leadership (Rice, 2011).	RQ2. Drawing upon new police officer perceptions, what core cultural competencies learned in the police academy benefit field performance?	Transformative learning model (Nerstrom, 2014) Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978)	Qualitative interviews 11–12
Effective policy enforced by police leadership encourages culturally competent performance (Rice, 2011).			

Appendix B - Three Eras of U.S. Policing

Appendix B Table B.2. The Three Eras of American Policing

	The Political Era	The Reform era	The Community Era
Time period	1840–1930	1930–1980	1980–2000
Primary function of the police	Provide range of social services to citizenry	Crime control	Continued to control crime while providing a broader range of social services
Organization	Decentralized	Centralized	Decentralized with specialized units and task forces
Police community/relationship tactics	Intimate	Professional and distant	Return to intimate
	Patrolling neighborhoods on foot	Patrolling neighborhoods in cars, rapid response to emergency calls for service (911)	Foot patrol, problem solving, and public relations
Strategic goal	Satisfy the needs of citizens and political bosses	Crime control	Improve the quality of life of citizens
Strategic weakness	Widespread police corruption and brutality	Lack of communication with citizens fostered mistrust and community violence (riots)	An overreliance on police officers to solve all of society's problems

Appendix C- CLCPA Survey

Online Survey Email Invitation

Dear Officer/Deputy,

My name is Neil Lingle. I am a retired undersheriff in Riverside County, California, Director of the Public Safety Academy at College of the Desert, and a doctoral student at Kansas State University. I am conducting a research study to fulfill the requirements of my doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance. I respectfully request your participation in a brief and confidential survey.

Your department has provided your contact information based on your academy graduation date and understands the survey is confidential and anonymous. The information you provide could help inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing nationwide. The short survey should take no more than 20 minutes.

By consenting to participate in the survey, you will be providing your consent for the researcher to include your responses in his data analysis. Your participation in the study is wholly voluntary, and you can terminate participation at any point without fear of reprisal or negative consequences. If you decide to withdraw from the survey at any time, all responses will be deleted along with the informed consent agreement.

The informed consent will be on page one of the survey. There will no information identifying you as a participant. All survey results will be presented as aggregate, summary data. A copy of the results of the research study will be provided upon request. Please email the researcher at xxxxx@ksu.edu.

Again, the survey should last no more than 20 minutes. Completed surveys will be entered into a drawing for one of four \$25 Amazon gift cards.

[Click here to take the survey](#)

Questions or comments regarding the survey should be directed to any of the following:

- Neil D. Lingle, xxxxx@ksu.edu
- KSU Dissertation Co-chair Dr. Terry Calaway, xxxxx@ksu.edu
- Lisa Rubin, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, XXX-XXX-XXXX
- Brad Woods, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, XXX-XXX-XXXX

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Neil D. Lingle
Doctoral Student
Kansas State University
xxxxx@ksu.edu

Law Enforcement Agency Survey Participation Request

Dear Chief/Sheriff,

My name is Neil Lingle. I am a retired undersheriff in Riverside County, California, Director of the Public Safety Academy at College of the Desert, located in Palm Desert, CA, and a doctoral student at Kansas State University. I am conducting a research study to fulfill the requirements of my doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to examine police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance.

I respectfully request your agencies participation in a study that could inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing nationwide. In reviewing police academy training rosters for the specified periods (a new officer population with less than 3 years of field experience), your agency has several officers that fit the necessary criteria. The survey is completely voluntary and participant officers may decline altogether or stop at any point. All responses will remain confidential and anonymous. All survey participants will be eligible to receive one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards.

With your consent, I would like to survey eligible officers in your agency. The survey would be brief, electronic, and confidential. There will be no reference to the agency or individual officers. All that is required is a willingness to participate on the part of the officers and departmental email addresses.

A smaller study was conducted in 2021 of two California police academies; Santa Rosa and Rio Hondo, under the supervision of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). The researcher worked directly with POST Executive Director Manny Alvarez.

Law enforcement agency participation is necessary to collect and analyze data. I would appreciate hearing from you or your designee soon. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration. Indeed, I understand the unique challenges faced by professional policing. This study could be of importance to us all. Be safe.

My Best,

Neil D. Lingle
Doctoral Student
Kansas State University
xxxxx@ksu.edu

Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment

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Conceptual Framework of the CLCPA

The CLCPA is based on three assumptions: (1) achieving cultural competence is a developmental process at both individual and organizational levels; (2) with appropriate support, individuals can enhance their cultural awareness, knowledge and skills over time; and (3) cultural strengths exist within organizations or networks of professionals but often go unnoticed and untapped (Mason, 1996). Linguistic competence, while defined differently, is integrally linked to cultural competence and is an essential aspect of cross-cultural communication. The CLCPA and the outcomes of the assessment process are intended to assist organizations to identify strengths and areas of growth for policy development and administration.

DEFINITIONS

Cultural Competence

The NCCC embraces a conceptual framework and model of achieving cultural competence adopted from Cross et al. (1989) definition. Cultural competence requires that organizations:

- have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitude, policies, and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally
- have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamic difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of the individuals, families and communities they serve
- incorporate the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery and systematically involve consumers and families

Linguistic Competence

The capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, and individuals with disabilities (Goode & Jones, 2006). This may include, but is not limited to the use of:

- bilingual/bicultural or multilingual/multicultural staff
- cross-cultural communication approaches
- cultural brokers
- print materials in easy to read, low literacy, picture and symbol formats
- public awareness materials and campaigns
- ethnic media in languages other than English (e.g., television, radio, Internet, newspapers, periodicals)

Culture

Culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior, which includes but is not limited to—thought, communication, languages, beliefs, values, practices, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious, social or political group; the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations; dynamic in nature (“Key Definitions”, National Center for Cultural Competence, 1999, Revised 2002).

Dialect

A regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language (Merriam Webster, 2006).

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985).

Policy is defined for the purposes of this instrument as a high level overall plan embracing the philosophy, general goals and acceptable procedures within an organization (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1985). Additionally, formal policy is written and codified. Informal policy is shared and understood verbally, however, compliance may or may not be enforceable and adherence may vary.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE POLICY ASSESSMENT

Guidelines for Completing the CLCPA

The instrument requires that you respond to detailed questions including your awareness of supporting policy. Please answer every question to the best of your knowledge. There are no right or wrong answers. Your organization may use the data to inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing. **Please remember to answer the question supporting policy found adjacent to each question.**

Knowledge of Diverse Communities

The *Knowledge of Diverse Communities* subscale consists of ten questions. It concerns knowledge of the identified cultural groups, how they differ internally and how they differ from the dominant culture. Its central focus is organizational policy that takes into consideration cultural beliefs, strengths, vulnerabilities, community demographics and contextual realities. Responses to these items can range from "not at all" to "very well". The existence of supporting policy can range from "no policy" to "formal policy".

1. Is your agency able to identify the culturally diverse communities in your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

2. Is your agency familiar with current and projected demographics for your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

3. Is your agency able to describe the social strengths (e.g., support networks, family ties, spiritual leadership, etc.) of diverse cultural groups in your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

4. Is your agency able to describe the social problems (e.g., dispersed families, poverty, unsafe housing, etc.) of diverse cultural groups in your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

5. Is your agency able to describe the quality of life disparities among culturally diverse groups in your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

6. Is your agency able to describe the languages and dialect used by the following diverse groups in your service area?

Designated Cultural Groups	Not at All	Barely	Fairly Well	Very Well	Is there supporting policy?
					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

For the culturally diverse groups in your service area does your agency know:

7. The social beliefs, customs, and values? ☐Not at All ☐Barely ☐Fairly Well ☐Very Well

8. The natural networks of support? ☐Not at All ☐Barely ☐Fairly Well ☐Very Well

For the culturally diverse groups in your service area can your agency identify:

9. Socially acceptable behavior and practices? ☐Not at All ☐Barely ☐Fairly Well ☐Very Well

10. The way policing is perceived? ☐Not at All ☐Barely ☐Fairly Well ☐Very Well

For questions 7–10

Is there policy to support staff to acquire knowledge about cultural beliefs and practices of diverse groups?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐ I do not know

COMMENTS:

Organizational Philosophy

The ***Organizational Philosophy*** subscale consists of ten items. It involves organizational commitment to the provision of culturally and linguistically competent services and the extent to which it is legitimized in policy. It probes the incorporation of cultural competence into the organization's mission statement, structures, practice models, collaboration with community members, and advocacy. Responses range from "*not at all or none*" to "*very often or many*" to "*yes or no*". The existence of supporting policy can range from "*no policy*" to "*formal policy*".

11. Does your agency have a mission statement that incorporates cultural and/or linguistic competence in service delivery?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. Does your agency support a practice model that incorporates culture in the delivery of services?

- ☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

Is there supporting policy?

- ☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

13. Does your agency consider cultural and linguistic differences in developing quality improvement processes?

- ☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

Is there supporting policy?

- ☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

14. Does your agency advocate for culturally diverse community members regarding quality of life issues (e.g., employment, housing, education, etc.) in your service area?

- ☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

Is there supporting policy?

- ☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

15. Does your agency systematically review procedures to insure they are relevant to delivery of culturally competent services?

- ☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

• program planning?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• service delivery?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• evaluation of services?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• quality improvement?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• hiring practices?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• performance appraisal?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often
• community satisfaction?	☐ Not at All	☐ Sometimes	☐ Fairly Often	☐ Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

--

The ***Personal Involvement in Diverse Communities*** subscale consists of six items. It concerns the degree to which organizations and their staff demonstrate reciprocity within diverse and ethnic communities. It addresses the extent to which an organization and its staff participate in social and recreational events and purchase goods and services within the communities they serve. Responses range from “not at all” to “very often”. The existence of supporting policy can range from “no policy” to “formal policy”.

21. Participate in community cultural events as a police agency representative?

22. Work with cultural groups or organizations while on duty?

23. Participate in cultural organizations and events outside of work hours?

24. Participate in cultural awareness seminars and training?

25. Participate in community cultural education activities or programs?

For questions 21–25

☐ **No policy** ☐ **Informal policy** ☐ **Developing policy** ☐ **Formal policy** ☐ **I do not know**

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

--

The ***Resources and Linkages*** subscale consists of four items. It concerns the ability of an organization and its staff to effectively utilize both formalized and natural networks of support within culturally diverse communities to develop an integrated community-based problem solving and partnerships. The focus is organizational policy that promotes and maintains such linkages through structures and resources. Responses range from “not at all” to “very often”. The existence of supporting policy can range from “no policy” to “formal policy”.

- ☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

- ☐
- Not at All
- ☐
- Sometimes
- ☐
- Fairly Often
- ☐
- Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

- ☐
- Not at All
- ☐
- Sometimes
- ☐
- Fairly Often
- ☐
- Very Often

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

- ☐
- Not at All
- ☐
- Sometimes
- ☐
- Fairly Often
- ☐
- Very Often

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

--

Human Resources

The **Human Resources** subscale consists of eight items. It involves an organization's ability to sustain a diverse workforce that is culturally and linguistically competent. It probes policy that supports workforce demographics, in-service training/professional development and related resource allocation. Responses range from "not at all" to "very often". The existence of supporting policy can range from "no policy" to "formal policy".

31. Is your department representative of culturally diverse groups in your service area?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

32. Is your department culturally represented in classified or non-sworn, sworn, and leadership positions?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

Is there policy that supports recruitment of diverse classified staff, sworn officers, and leadership positions?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

33. Does your agency have incentives for the improvement of cultural competence throughout the organization?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

34. Does your agency have procedures to achieve the goal of a culturally competent workforce that includes staff recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion?

- staff recruitment ☐Yes ☐No
- hiring ☐Yes ☐No
- retention ☐Yes ☐No
- promotion ☐Yes ☐No

Is there policy that supports achieving a culturally competent workforce?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

35. Are there resources to support regularly scheduled professional development and in-service training for all staff at all levels of the agency?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

36. Are in-service training activities on cultural competence (values, practices, principles, and procedures) conducted for staff at all levels of the agency?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

37. Are in-service training activities on linguistically competent service delivery conducted for staff at all levels of the agency?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

Is there policy that supports professional development and in-service training for all staff?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

38. Does your agency have incentives for the improvement of linguistic competence throughout the organization?

☐None ☐Some ☐Quite a Few ☐Many

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

Community Practice

The *Community Practice* subscale consists of four items. It concerns the ability of an organization and its staff to adapt approaches to law enforcement service delivery based on cultural, and linguistic differences. It focuses on assessment/community needs, the provision of interpretation/translation services and use of community-based resources to sustain a diverse workforce that is culturally and linguistically competent. Responses range from “*never to regularly*”. The existence of supporting policy can range from “*no policy*” to “*formal policy*”.

39. Does your agency use any type of needs assessment and training for culturally diverse groups in your service area?

☐Never ☐Seldom ☐Sometimes ☐Regularly

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

40. Does your agency use any advanced officer education and training adapted for culturally diverse groups in your service area?

☐Never ☐Seldom ☐Sometimes ☐Regularly

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

41. Does your agency connect community members with culturally appropriate networks to improve law enforcement service provision in your service area?

☐Never ☐Seldom ☐Sometimes ☐Regularly

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

42. Does your agency differentiate between racial and cultural identity when serving diverse communities?

☐Never ☐Seldom ☐Sometimes ☐Regularly

Is there supporting policy?

☐No policy ☐Informal policy ☐Developing policy ☐Formal policy ☐I do not know

Engagement of Diverse Communities

The *Engagement of Diverse Communities* subscale consists of three items. It involves the nature and scope of activities conducted by an agency and its staff to engage diverse communities in building relationships and reducing crime. Responses range from “never to regularly”. The existence of supporting policy can range from “no policy” to “formal policy”.

43. Does your agency conduct activities tailored to engage culturally diverse communities?

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

Is there supporting policy?

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

44. Do agency brochures, social service referrals, and other media reflect cultural groups in your service area?

☐ Not at All ☐ Sometimes ☐ Fairly Often ☐ Very Often

Is there supporting policy?

☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know

45. Does your agency reach out to and engage the following individuals, groups, or entities to support law enforcement related needs of culturally diverse groups in your service area?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly	Is there policy that support engaging diverse sectors of the community?
A. Places of Worship (e.g., temples, churches, mosques, kivas) and clergy, ministerial alliances, or indigenous religious or spiritual leaders?					☐ No policy ☐ Informal policy ☐ Developing policy ☐ Formal policy ☐ I do not know
B. Ethnic Publishers, radio, cable, or television stations or personalities, or other ethnic media sources?					
C. Human Service Agencies?					
D. Local Business Owners such as barbers, cosmetologists, sports clubs, restaurateurs, casinos, salons, and other ethnic businesses?					
E. Social Organizations (e.g., civic/neighborhood associations, sororities, fraternities, ethnic associations)?					

Please list any additional policies supporting cultural and linguistic competence not identified by this instrument.

--

COMMENTS:

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Appendix D- Interview Protocol

Interview Materials and Protocols

The following steps describe the proposed sequence the researcher will follow in conducting semistructured participant officer interviews.

First, participant officers who implied a willingness to be interviewed during the survey phase will be selected randomly. The selected officers will be sent an email inviting them to interview. These officers will already have provided consent during the quantitative phase of the research study.

The initial email will include an acknowledgement of their consent to interview and the purpose of the study. The researcher will provide the participant officers with three options for virtual interview. A Zoom link will be sent to the officers preferred email address upon confirmation of the time and date selected for the interview. The interview is expected to be less than 20 minutes in duration.

Each interview will be audio and video recorded. At the beginning of each interview the participant officer will be advised of the purpose for recording and that the study is voluntary.

Script Guiding the Interview Process

Welcome! Thank you for taking the time with me today. My name is Neil Lingle. I am a retired law enforcement officer and doctoral student at Kansas State University. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study, which examines police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance.

The interview should take less than 20 minutes and there are no foreseeable risks to you. The results of my research will be published in a dissertation, but your identity and employing agency will remain confidential.

With your consent, I would like to record the interview and take notes. The recording and notes will be used for transcription purposes only. Once the transcription is completed, the recording and notes will be deleted. Should you decide against being recorded, I will work from my notes only. If you do agree to a recorded interview, but changed your mind at any point, I will stop the recording. In addition, if you don't wish to continue, you can stop the interview at any time.

Following the interview, transcription of the recordings will take place as soon as possible. Once transcription is completed, the interview will be erased. Upon completion of my study, the transcriptions and other study data will be stored for up to 5 years after the study is over in accordance with KSU institutional requirements. The measures described above will also be taken to protect confidentiality of this study data. Information contained in the study could be used for future research studies or distributed to another academic investigator for future research without additional informed consent. By participating in the interview, you will receive a \$50.00 Amazon gift card, sent to your preferred email address.

Do you have any questions about anything we have gone over thus far? May we continue with the interview?

1. What is your perception of cultural competence?
2. How does cultural competence relate to your police academy education and training experience?
3. How has police academy education and training influenced your performance in the field?
4. What cultural competency learned in the police academy have you applied most often in the field?
5. How often do you apply cultural competencies learned in the police academy in field situations?
6. In your experience, what is the most essential cultural competency learned in the police academy? Please explain.
7. How might police academies embed cultural competencies into police academy education and training to benefit new officer field performance?
8. Based on your experience, what specific cultural competencies are critical to be embedded in police academy education and training?
9. What curriculum additions or modifications could strengthen cultural competency content in police academy education and training?
10. How is cultural competency situated in your agency?
11. How is cultural competency training delivered to police leadership in your agency?
12. How often is cultural competence training renewed in its delivery to police leadership in your agency? What is taken into consideration in renewing this training?

Debrief

Thank you for participation in this study which could help inform police academy cultural competence education and training nationwide.

All of the information gathered in the interview is confidential. There will be no way of identifying your responses in the data archive. The intention of the researcher is to look at all participant officer responses but identify emerging patterns when the data are aggregated together.

Should you have any questions pertaining to the study, please contact me at xxxxx@xxx.xxx or by cell at (XXX-XXX-XXXX).

Appendix E - Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent

Project Title: An examination of police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance

Project Approval Date: 08/21/2023

Project Expiration Date: 08/20/2026

Length of Study: 20 Minutes

Principal Investigator: Dr. Terry Calaway

Co-Investigators: Dr. Margaretta B. Mathis

Contact Details for Problem Questions: Dr. Terry Calaway – xxxxxx@xxx.xxx – (XXX) XXX-XXXX/Dr. Margaretta B. Mathis – xxxxxx@xxx.xxx – (XXX) XXX-XXXX

IRB Chair Contact Information: Lisa Rubin, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (XXX) XXX-XXXX /Brad Woods, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506 (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Project Sponsor: Kansas State University

Purpose of the Research: The research study is examining cultural competence education and training on new police officer field performance. The research could inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing.

Procedures or Methods to be Used: The study will use a survey and interview questions to learn about police academy cultural competence education and training from the experiences of new police officers. Participants are expected to be truthful in all responses. Participants will be audio or videotaped. All participants will be eligible to receive one of four \$25.00 gift cards.

Risks or Discomforts Anticipated: There are no known foreseeable risks or discomforts from participation in the study.

Benefits Anticipated: The study could inform knowledge, practice, and policy in professional policing nationwide.

Extent of Confidentiality: Participation in the study is voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time without fear of penalty or negative consequences. Should you decide to withdraw, all responses will be deleted. There will be no individually identifiable information, remarks, comments, or other identification of you as an individual participant.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix F - Institutional Review Board Documentation



TO: Terry Calaway
Educational Leadership

Proposal Number IRB-11746

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 08/21/2023

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "An examination of police academy cultural competence education and training on new police officer performance."

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: 08/21/2023

EXPIRATION DATE: 08/20/2026

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 Lisa Rubin on 08/21/2023 11:02 AM ET