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Examining The Delivery Methods Of Current Content And Curriculum For Recruit Police Officers

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EXAMINING THE DELIVERY METHODS OF CURRENT CONTENT AND CURRICULUM
FOR RECRUIT POLICE OFFICERS

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EXAMINING THE DELIVERY METHODS OF CURRENT CONTENT AND CURRICULUM

FOR RECRUIT POLICE OFFICERS

Abstract

This qualitative-interpretive, phenomenological analysis study describes the lived experiences of

police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy

instructors and field training officers. The focus was not on content material, but rather the

delivery methods of the curriculum, in an attempt to provide training programs that improve

transference of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness. This research study

showed that a lack of knowledge and understanding of andragogy for police academy instructors

and field training officers is creating a limited learning environment for recruit police officers.

Without the knowledge and ability to use better forms of instruction, police academy instructors

and field training officers have leaned heavily on PowerPoint-based lectures and using recruit

police officers' failures as the primary mode of instruction after the fact. There is, however, a

clear desire from the participants of this study to improve their skills as educators, create more

opportunities for practice, and further develop mentorship possibilities. This research also makes

it clear that the participants desire an opportunity to practice the skills they are learning, that

there are important mentorship and leadership opportunities for police academy instructors and

field training officers, and that completing a higher education degree program prior to attending

the police academy may help foster learning and graduation from the police academy.

Keywords: Police recruit officer training, Police field training, Police academy, Field training

officer, Police academy instructor, Andragogy, Adult learning

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Fight the fight. Keep the faith. Finish the race.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Poor decisions made by police officers carry with them the potential to cause serious harm and have created a major crisis of legitimacy with calls for fundamental change and reform for law enforcement agencies today (Hine et al., 2019; Langer, 2021; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020; Thompson & Payne, 2019). In the past several years, there have been extended media coverage and nationwide discussion and protest on police use of force issues. The decisions and actions of police officers have come into question and feelings of distrust between law enforcement and the local communities they are sworn to protect have grown (Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020). During the summer of 2020 citizens across the United States and the world took to the streets to demand equality, protest law enforcement, and call for police reform. These protests have started discussions in communities across the country about the roles and responsibilities of police today (Stoughton et al., 2020). Currently, sixty-three percent of Americans believe that in the criminal justice system minorities do not receive equal treatment to whites (Langer, 2021). Citizens across the United States of America have concluded that policing needs to be changed (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020). Society is demanding law enforcement equalize years of racial injustice in a law enforcement system that is failing to provide equal protection of rights to all citizens under the law (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).

Change and reform in policing is a difficult, slow-moving process that is often met with controversy and stigma (Kumar, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Schafer & Varano, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020). The civil unrest and protests of 2020 are a loud and direct call for change from citizens and politicians across America and may be the tipping point to drive

change in law enforcement (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020; Thompson & Payne, 2019). Currently, forty-two percent of Americans believe that President Biden is doing "too little" to try and reform policing in the United States (Langer, 2021). Furthermore, just 44% of Americans are confident that the police are properly trained to avoid using excessive force (Langer, 2021). Due to the hyperlocalization of policing in the United States, there are more than 18,000 police agencies across the country (Stoughton et al., 2020) with no federal standard for training (Martin, 2016). Reform, training, and funding generally target a single agency at a time resulting in a failure to change policing as a whole (Stoughton et al., 2020).One potential change and reform lies in the way in which new recruit police officers are trained as they prepare for their careers, specifically regarding ways to link the academic learning of higher education, the police academy, and the field training programs to provide effective training to recruit police officers during their first year of service (White & Heslop, 2012).While the need for change in training practices is immediate and pervasive, the process will take time and require continued research and development (Bartkowiak-Theron, 2019).

There appears to be a disconnect between police academy instruction and field training programs (Blumberg et al., 2019). Police academy instructors are not maximizing their instruction to prepare recruit police officers to transfer their learning into their field training program, leaving too much to field training officers (Blumberg et al., 2019; Shipton, 2020). The transference of police academy learning to field training is an essential part of the recruit police officer training process (Bergman, 2017). To be truly effective, police academy training should align with field training programs (Hundersmarck, 2009; White & Heslop, 2012). Finding the best practices to improve the education of recruit police officers, and also improve upon and link the police academy instruction and field training programs throughout the first year of service,

appears to be an understudied academic area. There are many studies conducted on each individually; however, the idea of linking the police academy and field training directly with each other for study presents a gap in literature (Hundersmarck, 2009). This study helps to close the current gap in research.

Statement of the Problem

Many law enforcement agencies in the United States are failing to provide a training program to recruit police officers during their first year of service that adequately prepares them to meet the current expectations of society (Blumberg et al., 2019; Martin, 2016). Recruit police officer training is hindered by the complacency of law enforcement agencies. Often training, policy, and procedures are implemented in the field of law enforcement, especially at the local level, without the benefit of research or wide reaching experiences (Stoughton et al., 2020). The literature identifies a failure to link prior life and educational experiences with learning experiences in the police academy, as well as the field training process with those academy learning experiences (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg et al., 2019; Dulin et al., 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009). There is a gap in the current literature in offering an explanation for this lack of transference or understanding of its implications on recruit police officers job preparedness.

Addressing possible content and curriculum changes is not a part of this research. Instead the focus was on better understanding the delivery of the current content and curriculum to recruit police officers. Police officers are generally not given an opportunity to reflect on their training and experiences to identify what they truly need from their training to increase learning outcomes and improve job preparedness. Understanding how law enforcement officers interpret and develop a sense of their experiences is a significantly under researched area within adult learning (McComas, 2019).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers. This study was conducted to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their first year of service. The focus was not on content material, but rather the delivery methods of the curriculum, in an attempt to provide training programs that improve transference of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness. By exploring the lived experiences of police officers in New York through interview sessions, this research seeks to provide an opportunity for reflection and feedback to provide for better content delivery that transfers learning experiences to prepare new recruit police officers for service to their communities. Self-reflection is crucial to improving policing skills (Fildes et al., 2019). By exploring experiences with the phenomenon of recruit police officer training this study seeks to understand ways to better develop training programs to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness.

Police officers play many crucial societal roles that seek to ensure social order and governance, and these roles are ever changing and adapting. For example, police officers are crime preventers, crime solvers, law enforcers, peacekeepers, social workers, marriage counselors, parent/disciplinarians, crowd-control managers, criminal investigators, group facilitators, mental health counselors, and/or knowledge workers (Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). Society is rapidly evolving and demanding accountability, organizational reforms, increased community engagement, authentic community policing, leadership education, better training programs, and the

implementation of new technology and crime fighting techniques (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer &Varano, 2017; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).

To fulfill their societal role, police officers need to change and adapt with the times, and training practices must shift to meet modern needs (Blumberg et al., 2019; Martin, 2016). For example, in New York State (NYS) instructors at the police academy and field training officers must meet minimum qualifications, which include being a certified police officer and attending a two week Instructor Development Course, but they are not teachers (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). Typical paramilitary formatting insulates police academies from the field of education and recruit police officer training neglects the basic principles of adult learning (Blumberg et al., 2019; Shipton, 2020). Paramilitary refers to an organization of, relating to, being, or characteristic of a force formed on a military pattern especially as a potential auxiliary military force (Paramilitary, n.d.). Recruit police officers are adult learners and should be educated as such, with an emphasis on transference of learning (Blumberg et al., 2019; Dulin et al., 2019). The delivery of the recruit police officer training program must be improved to become more effective by increasing transference of learning, learning outcomes, and improving job preparedness. By exploring the recent experiences of police training officers and recruit police officers this study hopes to drive these changes.

Research Questions

The following questions were evaluated qualitatively in sample set number one, which included currently employed local law enforcement officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to four years.

- Q1: How do recent graduate recruit police officers apply their life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to their day-to-day work? Hereby referred to as Q1.

- Q2: How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q2.

The following question will also be evaluated qualitatively, in addition to Q1 and Q2, in sample set number two which includes police training officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in NYS during the past five to seven years while also currently serving as police academy instructors and/or field training officers:

- Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q3.

Conceptual Framework

Recruit police officer training has been a strong interest of this researcher. This researcher has a background as an educator working for two years as a high school teacher in New York, earning a master's degree in Educational Technology, and bachelor's degree in Social Studies Education. This background has fostered an understanding of pedagogy and created a natural attraction to the training and educational aspects of law enforcement for this researcher. While attending the police academy, this researcher immediately noticed significant deficiencies in the education and training process for recruit police officers. Police academy instructors appeared to lack an understanding of pedagogy, failing to understand how to teach the content with which they were so experienced. While going through the police academy and field training program this researcher noted that training was heavily instructor centered. A student

centered approach, or constructivism, was not being used by police academy instructors and field training officers. It appeared to this researcher at the time that the field of law enforcement could learn from the field of education to apply best practices and ways to improve, streamline, and better standardize the training that recruit police officers receive to maximize learning outcomes and improve transference of learning to increase job preparedness.

It became evident to this researcher that there is a need to raise awareness of these deficiencies to better understand and improve the education and training of recruit police officers. The field of education has come far in finding ways to better educate students, especially adult learners, and these strategies have not yet been adequately applied by police instructors (Shipton, 2020). This researcher has since become a police academy instructor and field training officer and has seen and experienced firsthand the importance of recruit police officer training during the first year of service in preparing officers to be safe, professional, and effective. As a police academy instructor and field training officer this researcher has relied almost exclusively on the education, training, and experience that were gained from a previous career as a high school teacher. Having a more educated recruit police officer at the completion of the police academy is a step in the right direction for improved policing (Chappell, 2008). It is hypothesized that if better teachers make better students in the field of education, then better teachers may help make better police officers in the field of law enforcement.

Recruit police officers enter the police academy as adults to learn the basics about becoming a police officer (Dulin et al., 2019). In New York State there is not a minimum age to attend the police academy, but all attendees must have at least a high school diploma or GED (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). Adult learners are partners in the learning experience and are generally mature, motivated, voluntary, and equal participants in a

learning relationship with a facilitator (Cox, 2015; Page &Margolis, 2017).Adult learners must

participate in their own learning experiences, and have experiential learning activities that are

relevant to their current jobs (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Papa, 2011).During the field training

process, a recruit police officer and more experienced field training officer are paired together.

They are in a position to work together as peers and partners. It is important to recognize and

grow that partnership beyond police work and into the education of the recruit officer as well. By

establishing a collaborative peer learning environment, the adult learner will benefit from the

experience (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017). Following a constructivist approach to

andragogy, the partnership is able to build on the experience of the field training program to

develop learning (Cox, 2015). In order to improve transference of learning for improved learning

outcomes and increased job preparedness, police academy instructors and field training officers

can apply adult learning principles to help provide a learning experience that involves the recruit

police officers that is learner centered (Hundersmarck, 2009; Shipton, 2020).

There is a gap in the current literature offering an opportunity for recruit police officers to

provide feedback to develop further understanding of the training process. Feedback is critically

important to developing effective training (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). The need for

effective police leaders may be more important now than ever before and leadership is valued by

police agencies (Can et al., 2016; Kumar, 2019). By looking through the lens of transformative

leadership theory, this study's focus is on developing the delivery of the recruit police officer

training program administered during the first year of service to drive change in the field.

Transformative leaders have the opportunity to inspire, influence, direct and teach followers

(Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2016; Hicks, 2018).This transformative leadership style helps to transfer

learning and application directly into the field for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand,

2019). Recruit police officers need transformational leaders to show them the way early in their careers by providing training and mentorship (Caro, 2011; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014). Field training officers and academy instructors can be transformative, build their esteem within the department, and establish referent power allowing them to be able to inspire and develop their subordinates (Bass, 2008). This transformative leadership approach to teaching recruit police officers leads to increased capabilities, application of learning, and decision-making in professional and personal lives for recruit police officers throughout their careers (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).

Assumptions

A major assumption made is that society, in general, desires change to law enforcement based on the worldwide protests of 2020 as people took to the streets across the world to protest and call for change and reform (Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Based on these protests there appears to be an immediate need to drive change in policing. A second assumption is that in New York State, the basic course for police curriculum is provided by the state to local police academies and that the police academies are generally similar in content and structure as they must adhere to the minimal standards established by the Municipal Police Training Council (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). This includes the mandatory 160-hour minimum field training period required by New York State for all new police officers (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). A third assumption is that an immediate overhaul of content and curriculum would be difficult to implement in New York State based on state laws that mandates minimum requirements for the Basic Course for Police Officers (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). A fourth assumption is that a change in delivery of the content will lead to improved learning outcomes.

A fifth assumption is that the participants are all adults who will generally benefit from receiving instruction that is consistent with andragogy. Adult learning principles state that adult learners need to relate content of learning to the real world (Cox, 2015). Adult learners are self directed, they have prior life and work experiences, they learn when they are ready, and they are life-centered (Cox, 2015). That adult learner respond to external motivators is widely accepted as an effective means of educating adult learners (Cox, 2015).A sixth assumption is that these learning principles would be transferable to recruit police officer training. This study's methodology is a qualitative interpretive phenomenological analysis. The phenomenon to be explored here is recruit police officer training. A seventh assumption is that police officers understand and remember their training and are familiar with basic current relevant topics and issues regarding the phenomenon. Finally, this research assumes that the participants in this study were truthful and thoughtful with the experiences they shared and their interpretations of those experiences. The answers and feedback provided by these participants were assumed to be true and given without fear of repercussions.

Limitations

This study had several limitations that may impact the effectiveness of the work. There is a concern for researcher bias because the researcher is so involved in the field and the research process. To address this, bracketing was applied and a research journal was kept. This study made use of a limited sample size in a single county in New York State using only local level police officers with between two and seven years of service. These officers were split into two sample sets. Sample set one consisted of recent graduate recruit police officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to four years. Police training officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training

programs in New York State during the past four to seven years and have served as active police academy instructors and/or field training officers comprised the second sample set. There were no federal or state law enforcement officers included in this study. There were also no law enforcement officers from any other counties, states, or countries involved in the sampling. This was done intentionally in an effort to maintain a more consistent experience with a single law enforcement academy. The focus of this study was on the reflections of the lived experiences of the participants. These reflections, and the way they were expressed to the researcher, were very subjective in nature as they were the interpretation of the individual police officers' own experiences. Due to the aforementioned current social events and the climate toward police there is a concern of participant bias. Understanding and interpreting the phenomenon of recruit police officer training is also subjective.

Scope

In New York State anyone seeking permanent employment as a police officer must complete the Basic Course for Police Officers within their first year of service (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).While rare, in New York State an officer may work without attending the police academy or completing field training for up to one year (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).During the basic course, recruit police officers attend the police academy and participate in a field training program in which they are instructed on dozens of topics. The content and curriculum is wide ranging and developed in an attempt to prepare recruit police officers for their various roles. Attempting to assess all of these various training content areas would be an exhaustive process. This study instead focuses on the delivery methods of the current content and curriculum.

This study is focused on local law enforcement in a small urban city in New York State.15 police officers were invited to participate in this study. Each of the officers interviewed had between two and seven years of service as a police officer in New York State after completing the New York State basic course for police academy. Two separate sample sets of police officers were established and interviewed as a part of this study. The first sample set consisted of police officers with two to four years of service—young police officers early in their careers that had very recently gone through the recruit police officer training program in New York State. The interview questions of this sample set, Q1 and Q2, focused on the training that these officers recently received in the police academy and field training. The second sample set consisted of slightly more experienced police officers who were also trained and certified field training or police academy instructors with four to seven years of service. This sample set also personally went through the recruit police officer training program in the recent past. However, they also have gone through extra training to become trained and certified field training officers or police academy instructors in New York State as well. As such this second sample set was asked to reflect not only on their own experiences with their own personal recruit police officer training, Q1 and Q2, but also their experiences becoming trainers and training other recruit police officers, Q3.

Rationale and Significance

Police officers are faced daily with new and ever changing situations. There is a high degree of autonomy for police officers to develop the essential ability to make decisions (Kumar, 2019).The basic training of recruit police officers occurs primarily during the first year of service and this is the bulk of the training that officers will receive in their entire career (Kumar, 2019; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).This period of time is instrumental in their development because there

is generally not a required professional development program for police officers as they continue on in their careers (Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).Recruit police officers would benefit from a better connected and more complete and inclusive training program that works to educate recruit police officers as adult learners through transformative leadership using best practices developed in the field of education (Shipton, 2020).Developing safer, more effective police officers is needed in order for police departments and community relations to improve and for citizen confidence in policing to grow (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Keeping this goal in mind, the training of recruit police officers must be updated and improved in order to drive change and adapt with changing times (Kumar, 2019).

There is potential to drive change and create major developments in the field of law enforcement and recruit police officer training by learning from the field of education by better preparing instructors to teach and convey content in a more learner centered approach (Shipton, 2020).Recruit police officer training in the police academy and while on field training is an educational process (Shipton, 2020).This is a time when an adult learner must learn about a wide variety of topics while beginning work in a new job. Taking advantage of this time and truly educating these adult learners can provide long term benefits to police departments and communities alike. Many in law enforcement do not currently understand nor possess the appropriate training or education in the field of education (Shipton, 2020).By effectively linking these two fields and incorporating the best educational practices into the recruit police officer training process, law enforcement has an opportunity to experience positive change. Police officers appear to be receptive to change and open to new ideas (Baylis & Matczak, 2019).However; it will be the administration that is responsible for implementing changes.

Definition of Terms

Adult learner. A mature, motivated, voluntary and equal participant in a learning relationship with a facilitator (Rachal, 2002, in Cox, 2015).Adult learners are partners in the learning experience (Page & Margolis, 2017).

Andragogy. Adult learning principles that are based on Knowles's (1984) theory in a "constructivist approach to learning that involves facilitating adults to draw on their experience and so create new learning based on previous understanding" (Cox, 2015,p.29)."The learner is perceived to be a mature, motivated, voluntary, and equal participant in a learning relationship with a facilitator whose role is to aid the learner in the achievement of his or her primarily self-determined learning objectives" (Cox, 2015,p. 27).

Constructivism ". . . replaces the traditional coverage of large amounts of information with the intention of developing real and internalized student understanding of important conceptualized knowledge...seeks to create meaning...students move away from helping each other to simply remember content and toward the creation of their own" (Vermette & Foote, 2001).

Field training. A program operated by individual agencies providing recruit police officers a chance to use and apply the skills they learned in the police academy to real life scenarios while working with and under the supervision of a more experienced field training officer (Caro, 2011).Recruit police officers learn police skills, develop and become more familiar with police roles, and are socialized into the police culture (Hoel, 2019) in real world settings similar to an apprenticeship (Dulin et al., 2019).

Field training officer. An experienced police officer who introduces recruit police officers to the nature of police work and helps them develop an identity (Hoel, 2019).Field

training officers are training supervisors and work as intervention agents to provide new officers with a chance to apply the skills they learned in the academy (Dulin et al., 2019) while providing feedback and creating a basis of judgment for assessment (Bergman, 2017).

Paramilitary organization. Of, relating to, being, or characteristic of a force formed on a military pattern especially as a potential auxiliary military force (Paramilitary, n.d.).

Pedagogy. The function or work of a teacher; teaching. The art or science of teaching; education; instructional methods (Pedagogy, n.d.).

Policing. "The act of enforcing laws, preventing and solving crime, maintaining order, and promoting security and safety through the use of legitimate authority" (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014, p. 15).

Police academy. Training here is the first step in preparing law enforcement officers for their future work and is designed to prepare recruit police officers to be prepared for the initial duties, assignments, and challenges they will face in the community (Kumar, 2019; Nevers, 2019).The academy intends to produce well-prepared and qualified recruit police officers for work at their agencies (Caro, 2011) and is the primary educational institution for police training and education (Baylis & Matczak, 2019).

Police Reform. For the purposes of this study police reform will focus only on recruit police officer training. While it is clear that police reform must address several areas, for this study the focus remains narrow and on recruit police officer training only.

Police training. The process of imparting the necessary skills, knowledge, values, and socialization into the police culture of new police officers (Kumar, 2019).A complex process encompassing many disciplines to develop the hard and soft skills needed to be a police officer

(Dulin et al., 2019)."Training promotes achieving the organization's mission and increases worker efficiency" (Shahar & Hazzan, 2020, p. 1).

Recruit police officer. An individual training to become a police officer while in the police academy or completing a field training program.

Recruit police officer training. The education and training that is provided to new officers in the police academy and departmental field training programs "responsible for preparing new hires for this [policing] difficult career" (Blumberg et al., 2019, p. 2).A law enforcement agency is responsible for providing the systematic and methodological training and development to new officers (Caro, 2011).

Transference of learning. Refers to a recruit police officer's ability to apply what they have learned in one phase of their education and training to the next (Bergman, 2017; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Dulin et al., 2019).

Transformative leadership theory. Transformational leadership offers followers a chance to learn, develop, succeed, and eventually prosper as leaders themselves. By being a transformational leader one is encouraging followers to work for the good of the group and strive to their full potential (Bass, 2008).

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers, so as to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs and to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness. The value of appropriate training cannot be overstated (Gallos, 2006; Kotter,

2012).By taking the necessary time and investment in training academy instructors and field training officers, police departments will reap the benefits of having better trained recruit police officers.

For a successful change in the training practices of recruit police officers, police academy instructors and field training officers should work more like teachers to "educate the professional"(White & Heslop, 2012, p. 345).Recruit police officers are adult learners and appropriate andragogy strategies should be utilized during the training process. This entails participating in their own learning experiences, and have experiential learning activities that are relevant to their current work(Knowles, 1990, as cited in Papa, 2011).To help meet these needs, field training officers would benefit from improved understanding of andragogy, making use of educational technologies, and teaching recruit police officers like adult learners (Shipton, 2020).To develop an understanding of the current state of recruit police officer training, a thorough review of the literature must be completed. This chapter laid out the topic of study. The next, chapter 2, reviews the current literature. Chapter 3 details the research plan. Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the study, and chapter 5 provides a summary and lays out a possible way forward.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

In the field of law enforcement, the recruit police officer training process includes two primary phases: the police academy and police field training, in which police recruit officers are trained in preparation for their future career (Blumberg et al., 2019; New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). The following literature review seeks to build an understanding of the current research on police recruit officer training, with a focus on delivery of content to maximizing learning outcomes by improving transferences of learning and job preparedness. The review begins by discussing transference of learning and various training programs then moves to better understand the role of higher education, police academy instructors, and field training officers in the training of recruit police officers. Finally, relevant adult learning principles, andragogy, and leadership application for police academy instructors and field training officers are examined with an eye toward improved learning outcomes.

The Study Topic

The topic of this study is to better understand the phenomenon of recruit police officer training, transference of learning, and improving job preparedness by understanding the lived experiences of police officers and their experiences with training content delivery methods. Far too often, proven methods of teaching and educating adult learners through a learner centered approach are not applied by the police academy instructors and field training officers during the training process (Hundersmarck, 2009; Shipton, 2020).There also appears to be a disconnect between the police academy training and field training programs, which can and needs to improve with direct collaboration between the two (Blumberg et al., 2019).Developing the best practices to shift the education of recruit police officers from a paramilitary structure to that of

adult learning while also improving on and linking the police academy education and field training programs appears to be an understudied academic area (Blumberg et al., 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).This study aims to help fill this gap in the literature by attempting to better understand the lived experiences of police officers and their recruit police officer training.

The Context

The training and education of recruit police officers has a high degree of variability. Different federal, state, and local entities have different minimum requirements for new hires as well as very different academy and field training processes (Blumberg et al., 2019; Caro, 2011) This disparity often leaves each individual agency to create and maintain field training programs on their own.

The training of recruit police officers occurs primarily during the first year of service and is the bulk of the training that officers receive in their entire career; this period of time is instrumental in the development of police officers (Dulin et al., 2019).Generally in law enforcement there is a failure to link prior life and educational experiences with learning experiences in the academy, and the field training process with those academy learning experiences (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg et al., 2019; Dulin et al. 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009). This appears to be in large part because of the lack of standardization of training and no formalized police studies course curriculum in higher education. Keeping this goal in mind, the training of recruit police officers shows room for improvement so as to drive change by developing safer, more effective police officers for improved community relations.

The Significance

A police officer's job is difficult and complex (Blumberg et al., 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).Training

recruit police officers as they prepare for a career in law enforcement offers many challenges as this multifaceted job requires officers to be well versed in various skills, including physical, cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal to perform their duties (Blumberg et al., 2019).Police officers serve multiple roles, and they must adapt to nearly any situation. Every day, police officers are placed in situations that require them to communicate with people to help solve problems, provide safety, and enforce laws. For example, police officers are crime preventers, crime solvers, law enforcers, peacekeepers, social workers, marriage counselors, parent/disciplinarians, crowd-control managers, criminal investigators, group facilitators, mental health counselors, and knowledge workers (Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). To develop these skills and fill these roles, recruit police officers must receive the proper and appropriate training in each area. Society is rapidly evolving and demanding accountability, organizational reforms, increased community engagement, authentic community policing, leadership education, better training programs, and the implementation of new technology and crime fighting techniques (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Shafer & Varano, 2017).As such there is a need to maximize learning outcomes by improving transferences of learning and job preparedness.

The Organization

There are several important areas, training practices, policies, and procedures for recruit police officers in New York State. These can vary tremendously, not only across the state, but from county to county and between local municipalities (Blumberg et al., 2019).Across the United States, the hyperlocalization of police agencies has led to the development of thousands of different training programs (Stoughton et al., 2020).In New York State, minimum

requirements are set and the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services encourages local agencies to expand upon those minimal training requirements (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).The field of law enforcement is a highly structured and closed field that generally does not allow for much outside access for research and review (Can et al., 2016; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).Because of this there is a limited amount of research that explores law enforcement topics from the perspective of police officers in the field.

Conceptual Framework

Personal Interest

Recruit police officer training has been a strong interest of this researcher. This researcher has a background as an educator working for two years as a high school teacher in New York, earning bachelor's degrees in Social Studies Education, and a master's degree in Educational Technology. This background has fostered an understanding of pedagogy and andragogy and created a natural attraction to the training and educational aspects of law enforcement. While at the police academy, this researcher, based on personal training and experience, immediately noticed deficiencies in the education and training process for recruit police officers at the police academy. Police academy instructors appeared to this researcher to be lacking in andragogy, failing to understand how to teach the content with which they are so experienced. This continued to be a common theme throughout the police academy and field training process. After being educated and working as a teacher this researcher understood that the field of education has come so far in finding ways to better educate students, especially adult learners. The field of law enforcement could benefit greatly from understanding and applying these principles, especially a learner centered approach (Hundersmarck, 2009; Shipton, 2020).At the end of the recruit police officer training process this researcher was not given an opportunity

to provide feedback. This study provides that opportunity to its participants. It became evident to this researcher that there is a need to raise awareness in law enforcement about the current deficiencies so as to better understand and improve the education and training of recruit police officers. If police academy instructors and field training officers become better teachers, then recruit police officers are likely to learn efficiently, thereby becoming proficient police officers.

This researcher has since become a police academy instructor and field training officer and seen and experienced firsthand the importance of this area in preparing officers to be safe, professional, and effective. This researcher is currently employed as a police officer in New York State with a small city department serving many roles within the police department including: patrol officer, field training officer, police academy instructor, physical training instructor, Gang Resistance Education and Training instructor, school resource officer, crisis intervention team member, and a member of the executive board of the Police Benevolent Association. As a police academy instructor and field training officer this researcher has relied heavily on the training and experiences developed as a high school teacher. Training recruit police officers and teaching high school students are remarkably similar tasks. While working as a police academy instructor and field training officer this researcher has made every attempt to use the andragogy that was developed in a previous career as an educator to teach recruit police officers and prepare them for their job as police officers. The recruit police officers seem to respond extremely well to this style. Each recruit police officer learns in a different way, and finding the best strategies to teach them and provide them with appropriate instruction should be one of the most important goals of police academy instructors and field training officers.

Topical Research

Providing recruit police officers with effective training is essential to developing successful police officers (Blumberg, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009).Law enforcement officers are generally not teachers and educators; therefore, there is often a failure to properly educate police recruits in the most effective and efficient ways possible For example, White and Heslop (2012) found major inconsistencies in police recruits' training from postsecondary education to the police academy and then to field training. They further found that field training should follow the appropriate theory and practice in professional education. The police academy instructors and field training officers should work as teachers to "educate the professional" (White & Heslop, 2012, p. 345).Field training officers should see themselves as both teacher and coach to help link previously learned material with real world scenarios to best complete the field training process (White & Heslop, 2012).

As law enforcement navigates the call for reform and improvement, the need for effective police leaders may be more important now than ever before (Can et al., 2016).Leadership is a valued quality for police agencies (Kumar, 2019).By looking through the lens of transformative leadership theory, this study focuses on providing the necessary and proper education of recruit police officers during their first year of service to drive change in the field. Transformative leaders have the opportunity to inspire, influence, direct, and teach followers (Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2016; Hicks, 2018).This transformative leadership style helps to transfer learning and application directly into the field for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).To foster development, recruit police officers need transformational leaders to show them the way early in their careers (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).Field training officers and academy instructors can be transformative, build esteem within the department, and establish referent

power. In that case, these field training officers and academy instructors would inspire and encourage the recruit police officers to be proactive and effective in their work independent of direct instruction and supervision. Davies & Heysmand (2019) found through case study and analysis that a transformative leadership approach to teaching recruit police officers leads to increased capabilities, application of learning, and decision-making in professional and personal lives for recruit police officers throughout their careers.

The value and importance of appropriate training cannot be overstated (Gallos, 2006; Kotter, 2012).Investing in training is investing in change (Bolman & Deal, 2006).Training and support must work to increase positive outcomes and create a sense of comfort with the changes in content delivery for police academy instructors and field training officers (Bolman & Deal, 2006).The mentorship relationship between field training officers and recruit police officers offers an opportunity to develop and drive change in the criminal justice field through new officers. Developing high quality and respectful relationships between teachers and students is essential to learning and requires special attention to be paid to the learner (Mowat, 2010).Recruit police officers would benefit from a better connected and more complete training program that transforms them into job ready police officers (Caro, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

In today's police forces, effective leadership is more important than ever to prepare officers for their daily roles and responsibilities and to protect their psychological well-being (Can et al., 2017).By looking through the lens of transformative leadership theory, this study seeks to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs, and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs to

improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness.

Law enforcement agencies are generally para-military structures that create an inherent hierarchy and leadership system that follows the top down rank and file structure (Blumberg et al., 2019; Can et al., 2016; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).And thus, current research regarding leadership in law enforcement focuses primarily on supervision and not training (Can et al., 2016; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).It appears that the research on leadership focusing on police supervision may be a result of this paramilitary structure and a lack of understanding or appreciation for the potential influence of transformational leadership during recruit police officer training. In law enforcement a leaders' role and responsibilities tend to vary depending on their level in the police hierarchy and primary responsibilities, the variability of agencies (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).Leadership has been shown to play a critical role in the dynamic environment that is law enforcement and it is the responsibility of more than just high ranking supervisors to provide leadership in law enforcement (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).By understanding and fostering this leadership not just from the very top, but from field training officers and police academy instructors, more immediate and transformative education and feedback can be provided to recruit police officers early in their careers.

Transference of Learning

The modern workplace calls for workers who are able to apply and transfer their knowledge to new situations and different circumstances (Epstein, 2019).This can be developed when early training is not focused on specialization, but rather on conceptual, transferable knowledge; an increased breadth of training leads to a breadth of transfer (Epstein, 2019).In the field of law enforcement, education and training play an important role during the recruit police

officer training process, and is key to developing police professionalization and modernization (Thompson & Payne, 2019).Proper training as a recruit police officer is essential to developing into a successful police officer (Blumberg, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009).Training of a new recruit police officer begins with the police academy and continues with a field training program. As the primary educational institution for police training and education, the police academy provides an opportunity for recruit police officers to learn, in controlled settings, primarily in the classroom and under close watch of academy instructors (Baylis &Matczak, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009; Kumar, 2019; Nevers, 2019).Field training is the period of time when new recruit police officers work with a more experienced police field training officer to learn police skills, develop and become more familiar with police roles, and are socialized into the police culture (Hoel, 2019) in real world settings similar to an apprenticeship (Dulin et al., 2019).Finding ways to continually improve upon training is essential to the safety of police officers and the community members with whom they interact (Rajakaruna et al., 2017). By providing recruit police officers with more contexts in which to learn they are able to create more connections to later transfer and apply that knowledge to new situations (Epstein, 2019).

An important aspect of learning and development for recruit police officers is transference. Transference refers to a recruit police officer's ability to apply what they have learned in one phase of their education and training to the next (Bergman, 2017; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Dulin et al., 2019). The learning of a recruit police officer is not always a simple linear process and it occurs across multiple stages including to varying degrees higher education, the police academy, field training, and in-service training (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009).Recruit police officers benefit if they are able to transfer their

learning from higher education to the police academy by being more prepared for the academic rigor associated with classroom learning (White & Heslop, 2012).

The transference of police academy learning to field training is an essential part of the recruit police officer training process (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019; Caro, 2011).Police academies are not succeeding in teaching recruits enough of what they need to later draw on in the field (Caro, 2011).To be truly effective, police academy training should align with field training programs to develop a system that transfers theory into practice (Blumberg, 2019; Caro, 2011;Hundersmarck, 2009; White & Heslop, 2012).Police academies should be teaching recruit police officers what they will need to be successful as police officers (Blumberg, 2019; Rossler & Suttmoeller, 2018).Applying police academy training to practical implementation in the field is an essential part of the training processes for police recruit officers and departments alike (Dulin et al., 2019).Field training officers' behavior and their intent to help foster this transference of police academy learning to the field show a positive relationship (Dulin et al., 2019).Much of the current research focuses on specific stages of police recruit officer training such as the police academy or field training and not on the ability to transfer the learning from one stage to the next (Hundersmarck, 2009).

Bäck et al. (2017) compared police recruits in Sweden and Catalonia to understand their perceptions of competence, reflexivity, and the education and training of recruit police officers. Bäck et al. (2017) reviewed factors that lead to successful completion of police training and the impact of the training on their future jobs. This was done by using a quantitative survey review comparing how perceptions of competence dimensions change from the beginning to the end of the training program. Back et al. (2017) found that police training is focusing on problem-based and analytical learning and that reflexivity has shown to be important. Reflexivity refers to the

ability to self-reflect and continue to learn and improve (Bäck et al., 2017).Reflexivity was found to be important because of the rapid changes and development of society and technology and the way they impact policing (Bäck et al., 2017).Bäck et al. (2017) further concluded that the focus on developing these skills is more important than actual content because it gives recruit police officers the skills needed to adapt in the field. Understanding the perception of recruit police officers concerning their education and training and its influence on their preparation and application to future roles is an important aspect, which is consistent with adult learning principles. There are limitations to this study. This study is specific to a particular geographic area and there is the potential of survey bias as police recruit officers were responsible for self-reporting their own knowledge.

Role of Higher Education in Recruit Police Officer Training

The role of education in recruit police officer training and performance has been widely studied, including studies by Bäck et al. (2017), Bartkowiak-Theron (2019), Chappell (2008), Hundersmarck (2009), Nevers (2019), Thompson and Payne (2019), and White and Heslop (2012). They have offered varying findings. They have concluded that higher education's minimal requirements for job placement vary across the field of law enforcement; however, recruits can benefit from completing some college. Recruit police officers who have attended college tend to be older, more experienced, and have gone through a higher learning process that prepares them for the academic demands of the police academy.

In New York State, and across the United States in the field of law enforcement, there are no standardized minimal higher education requirements and some police agencies do not require any higher education as a prerequisite (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).Law enforcement is very different in this aspect as compared to similar fields such as

nursing and teaching that require more standardized higher education training before entry into

the field (White & Heslop, 2012).There are currently no agreed upon formats for higher

education partnerships with law enforcement, and the field of police studies is still very much a

young and underdeveloped field (White & Heslop, 2012).Bäck et al. (2017) concluded education

does have a significant impact, but more research is needed on the topic. Other recent research

seems to favor the conclusion that recruit police officers with a bachelor's degree tend to

perform better than those without when completing reports, tests, assessments, and other

academic tasks at the police academy (Chappell, 2008; Nevers, 2019; Hundersmarck

2009;Thompson & Payne, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).The role of higher education is an area

that needs further study and development to draw more concrete conclusions (Bäck et al., 2017;

Nevers, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).

White and Heslop (2012) used a qualitative case study and interviews to explore the role

of higher education and the training of police recruit officers. The field of police studies in

higher education is lacking and it is viewed as an accessory and not an essential aspect of

professional training for officers (White & Heslop, 2012) .There is any consistent approach for

lecturers to teach students about becoming police officers. The idea of a more standardized and

developed professional police education via the field of police studies is underdeveloped and

lacking identity (White & Heslop, 2012).Police departments have proved to be difficult for

researchers to access (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).This is likely, at least in part, because

of the closeness of officers, complexity of roles, and skepticism of police leaders and police

unions to allow potentially critical research. Failing to allow proper research in the field appears

to slow change and contribute to the lack of cooperation between academic programming and

recruit police officer training. Bartkowiak-Theron (2019) states that negative attitudes exist about

the role of higher education for police officers. This appears to be leading to the resistance of higher education students to engage in meaningful police studies program. In turn, this creates missed learning opportunities and a lack of exposure to other potential recruit police officers while attending college from which many other professions benefit (White & Heslop, 2012).These views create unnecessary barriers between academics and police management that hinder the ability for a curriculum to be designed jointly that could improve learning and transference (Bartkowiak-Theron, 2019).Further developing ways to promote transference by linking the academic learning of higher education, the police academy and field training can help improve the training and performance of recruit police officers (Blumberg, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).

Those undergoing the Curriculum Maintenance System (CMS) training during the police academy, as reviewed by Chappell (2008), were found to have higher average academy scores as associated with their level of education. Chappell (2008) further found that higher education was an emerging significant quality in policing, in which it is believed that more educated officers score better on assessments, are better problem solvers and communicators, and more likely to make better decisions. This study focused primarily on recruit police officer performance and response to two varying community policing training programs during the police academy. There are several individual factors that were not evaluated as part of the study that could have played a role in the success of recruit police officers. However, Chappell (2008) found that exposure to academia prior to the police academy appears to better prepare recruit police officers for interactions with the community.

Nevers (2019) studied recruit police officers at police academies in Florida to better understand what led to successful graduation from the police academy. This study was

completed with sampling, data analysis, and review of written statements from recruits. Nevers (2019) found that 41.9% of the recruit police officers in the study had a bachelor's degree or higher; of those recruits 83.4% graduated from the police academy (p. 348).This was an increase over the group when studied as a whole, which graduated at a 73.1% rate (Nevers, 2019, p. 348).These findings showed that those with bachelor's degrees or higher have an increased likelihood of police academy graduation and progression into field training. At the very least a recruit's education level accurately predicts classroom performances and thus may influence learning and performance on classroom testing (Nevers, 2019).This supports the findings of several other studies in which higher education seems to have a positive effect (Chappell, 2008; Hundersmarck, 2009; Thompson & Payne, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).By understanding that recruit police officers arrive at the police academy with varying levels of educational experience and capabilities, academy curriculum design and delivery can be improved.

Furthermore, Nevers (2019) found that law enforcement agencies hire and sponsor recruit police officers with a bachelor's degree or higher more often than not. Nevers (2019) concluded that the clearest factor in recruit police officer graduation rates from the police academy was, in fact, being hired by a police agency during the police academy. Of all those in the study, hired recruits graduated at a 90.2% rate (p. 348).Police agencies are paying not only for the training but also the salary of hired recruit police officers. Seeing those recruit police officers succeed will save agencies money. There is a clear incentive for both the recruit police officer and the hiring agency to have sponsored recruit police officers graduate. If agencies prefer to hire those with a bachelor's degree, then having that degree and being a sponsored recruit may indicate the preference for a better educated recruit officer who is able to transfer his or her learning.

Providing extra compensation to officers based on level of education or providing opportunities such as tuition reimbursement may be topics worthy of future study as well.

Role of Police Academy in Recruit Police Officer Training

Formalized recruit police officer training begins with basic training at the police academy. Police academies are operated across the United States and fall under different governing organizations (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).The Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) 2013 Census of Law Enforcement Training Academies (CLETA) provided a data set on the overview of police academies in the United States (Reaves & Trotter, 2017). This information was collected by a self-reporting survey of police training academies between 2011 and 2013. The data collected from this survey was then analyzed by the researchers in an attempt to establish a better understanding of nationwide trends for police academies and the training that they are providing to their recruit police officers (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).The survey responses were completed by the individual academies and then reviewed by the researchers. Self-reporting can inherently lead to errors and omissions as well as a lack of consistency in the evaluation and expression of specific training practices and policies (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).This leads to potential difficulty in establishing the accuracy of the information, as there is no mandatory reporting or fact checking of the survey responses (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).Police academies are also constantly changing and adapting the topics and style of training (Reaves & Trotter, 2017). This makes it difficult to establish up-to-date, detailed, and accurate information on its overall effectiveness nationally.

The data collected in the CLETA indicates that there were 664 police academies training an average of 45,000 police recruits each year nationwide (Reaves & Trotter, 2017). The training methods, content, curriculum, instructors, and length of training all show variability in length

and style (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).Police academy curriculum is developed based on state-level agencies in 93% of police academies, and that curriculum is subject to statewide legislative mandates at 56% of police academies (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).These variations are due in large part because there are no federal guidelines for recruit police officer training in the United States, leading to a lack of standardization and sharing of best practices (Stoughton et al., 2020).

In New York State, all police officers must complete the basic course for police officer within their first year of service (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).This is generally referred to as the "police academy."There are two ways in which recruit police officers can complete the police academy (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). First is the full-time academy option that operates on a 40-hour per week schedule, and the second is a part time academy that operates on a 20-hour per week schedule. The full-time academy is designed primarily for sworn police officers who have been hired as full-time employees at a local law enforcement agency (Police Academy, nd).The part time academy is designed primarily to offer an option for potential recruit police officers who are not yet hired by a law enforcement agency and geared toward candidates who are working elsewhere or attending school while completing the police academy (Police Academy, nd).These recruit police officers are pre-employment recruits and are working or attending school while paying their own way through the police academy. Before the requirements for the basic course for police officers can be met, each recruit police officer must complete a minimum of 160 hours of on-the-job training with a certified field training officer (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).This field training generally comes at the end of the police academy in the weeks leading up to graduation.

Police academy training shows variance in the type and amount of training provided to the recruit officers. Rossler and Suttmoeller (2018) studied the differences between traditional police academies and those geared toward training natural resource officers and conservation agents. The researchers closely reviewed the results of the BJS 2013 CLETA and expected to find significant differences in academy types. However, the study did conclude that significant differences in the academies were not found. This was surprising to Rossler and Suttmoeller (2018) as they assumed that academies preparing specialized officers like natural resource officers should undergo unique training. Their findings suggest that there are several small differences in the training practices at these academies, like use of marine and ATV patrol methods, but not major differences, suggesting that is left to the field training officer and field training program (Rossler& Suttmoeller, 2018).Most of the differences focused on expected work and equipment training on alternate patrol methods, such as all-terrain vehicles, marine patrols, and the focus of varying types of laws most closely associated with the primary roles of the officers (Rossler & Suttmoeller, 2018).This places extra importance on the individualization and tailoring of field training programs to meet the needs of recruit police officers.

Whereas there seems to be variability in academy training practices and curriculum, there also seems to be a level of apprehension to deviate from the norm (Chappell, 2008; Reaves & Trotter, 2017; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).There are overarching past practices and themes, such as a focus on defensive tactics, firearms training, vehicle operations, and constitutional law, which are instructed in the police academy and that seem to prevent or at the very least slow the change desired by some new curriculum programs (Chappell, 2008; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer & Varano, 2017).These themes seem to remain consistent across the United States. This could be because of comfort, complacency, or a lack of continuing evaluation and

development of curriculum and no federal standards. The lack of major differences was attributed at least in part to the role of Field Training Officers (FTO) in teaching recruits in the field about the specific specializations of officers and departments (Rossler & Suttmoeller, 2018).This appears to be an indication in the role of police academies to provide a general instructional and training program that prepares the recruit police officer to learn the more specific functions of the department while in the field.

Police Subculture

Police academies provide not only formalized training but also begin the indoctrination into the police subculture and see to the attrition of less qualified recruits (Blumberg et al., 2019; Westley, 1970).Recruit police officers that fail out of the academy would likely be unable to, for a variety of reasons on a case by case basis, complete field training and become effective police officers. By being around other recruit police officers, academy instructors and active duty police officers, the recruit police officers seem to naturally be able to develop an understanding of what it takes to be a police officer (Blumberg et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019; Westley, 1970).During field training, recruit police officers are further socialized into becoming police officers (Blumberg et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019; Westley, 1970).

In the workplace, especially a paramilitary organization like a police department, one must be mindful of strict interaction protocols (Burgoon et al., 2000). Because of the paramilitary hierarchy; one cannot just say nor do whatever they want to whomever they want. There is a chain of command that must be followed and ranking members of the department must be treated with respect.

Predicting Recruit Police Officer Performance in the Field

Based on Police Academy Performance

An important task of the basic police academy is to determine which recruits have the potential to succeed in the field of law enforcement and identify those who are not likely to meet the standard and prevent them from entering the field training process (Caro, 201; Meier et al., 2018; Westley, 1970).This is determined by a recruit police officer's ability to complete the police academy. It is reasonable to expect that performance in the police academy ought to have some indication of performance in the field (Meier et al., 2018). About one in seven recruits who begin a police academy will not graduate and therefore will not continue to field training (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).Identifying ways to better evaluate and predict field performance from academy performance can help police academies and field training programs work to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness. For example, Caro (2011) closely reviewed the Louisiana State Police academy and the performance of recruit police officers during field training compared to their performance on assessments during the academy. Caro (2011) found that police academy training practices had a limited impact on the performance of recruit police officers during their field training as they were not adequately prepared to transfer their academy learning of theory into practical application in the field. Due to the relatively low prediction factor, Caro (2011) argued for a better curriculum that more closely aligns with what will be evaluated in the field. Caro (2011) further found that the police academy should be doing a better job of training and preparing recruit officers for their field training experience and future in law enforcement by providing them a police academy experience that prepares recruit police officers to transfer and

apply their learning into practical application in the field (Caro, 2011).There appears to be a strong need to more closely align the goals of the police academy and field training. This researcher hypothesizes that if this is done then there may be increased learning and transference.

In addition, Meier et al. (2015) compared the peer evaluations of recruit police officers at the Los Angeles Police Department (L.A.P.D.) academy with their attrition rates one year later. This study reviewed information from the L.A.P.D. police academy in which police recruits evaluated their peers twice during the academy to predict future field performance. The study looked at the attrition rate of recruit officers after 16 weeks and before one year in the field. These peer evaluations showed to be effective ways of predicting attrition. The results of the study showed probation attrition was significantly correlated with negative peer evaluations during the academy (Meier et al., 2018).Meier et al. (2015) concluded that police academies could improve by fostering a more team-based culture during the academy and providing recruit police officers with an opportunity to provide peer evaluations and feedback.

Furthermore, Bäck et al. (2017) found that other factors like gender, age, and body mass index (BMI) played a role in successful completion of the police academy. This is likely due to the physical aspects of the police academy (Bäck et al., 2017).Police recruits go through physical training and defensive tactics training that require officers to be active during the academy (Bäck et al., 2017).There is very little research on these factors as they relate to recruit police officer success and training and this may be a topic for future study.

Peer to Peer Training

Working with and learning from peers is critical for recruit police officers to feel safe and comfortable in their learning environment (Bolman & Deal, 2006).Peer learning allows employees to learn from each other and from their own on-the-job experiences (Bolman & Deal,

2006).Developing positive relationships with peers can help lead to positive learning and behavior outcomes in learning settings (Mowat, 2010).The peer reviews discussed by Meier et al. (2015) may also be able to help foster a team culture during the police academy. In law enforcement working as a team is considered to be an essential characteristic (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).Academy instructors and police field training officers can facilitate this team culture by acting as a coaches who prioritize teamwork and culture to help recruits learn as a team rather than just teaching and training them as individuals (Cox, 2015; Davies & Heysmand, 2019).By taking a coaching approach peer recruits build trust and collaboration (Page & Margolis, 2017).A lack of trust in the employee/manager relationship can lead to a loss in productivity (Stewart et al., 2018).Recruit police officers work closely with each other throughout the police academy and developing this team atmosphere shows to be beneficial to the overall learning of recruit police officers and the successful completion of the police academy, as well as an important characteristic to transfer into the policing field (Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Meier et al., 2018).

Scenario Based Training

Police academies are increasingly trying to provide real-world training to police recruits. Scenario based training is one element of the police academy training curriculum, and one that appears to be growing in favor (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).Nearly all academies were using at least one type of reality-based scenario training, which gives recruit police officers an opportunity to work through potential scenarios they may face (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).This type of training allows officers to work through realistic scenarios by making use of role play and training simulators. Adult learners benefit from experiential learning that allows them to reinforce their classroom instruction (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017; Wahlgren, 2016). Scenario-based

training is an area of recruit police officer training that does align with adult learning principles, which will be discussed later at greater length, and it is showing benefits as recruit police officers are getting hands-on learning opportunities that are relevant and relatable to the field (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).

For example, Werth (2011) examined the standards and training of Idaho peace officers as they underwent problem-based learning exercises. The program was developed in an effort to more closely align police academy training with current and relevant real world scenarios. This study reviewed the implementation of the program that uncovers many successes and some potential issues with the program and others like it. The review was conducted by observation, survey, and interviews. Werth (2011) explained the problem-based learning exercise and the reasoning for implementation. The study showed a strong understanding for the need for an updated training program at police academies to meet the current needs (Werth, 2011).The program was met with widespread success and approval of recruit police officers and instructors alike.

In addition, Rajakaruna et al. (2017) researched to understand the skills and abilities required for use of force situations along with ways to improve training for these encounters. They conducted a study using qualitative data developed from focus group interviews after use of force training situations, and determined use of force training could be improved by using scenario based training and role playing (Rajakaruna et al., 2007).Rajakaruna et al. (2017) found the scope of training must be widened to reach all necessary areas. This could be done by allocating more time and more appropriate training sessions. This would allow students to try new things and learn while they improve their skills so as to build confidence and proficiency. The researchers also called for making training less about assessment and more about practicing

the necessary skills to alleviate pressure and increase teaching (Rajakaruna et al., 2007).Ensuring

that there is ample time for officers to practice in no assessment situations is an interesting

finding that warrants further exploration, especially in regard to financial considerations.

Furthermore, Scenario-based training was also found to be successfully used in Australia.

Hine et al. (2019) used verbal protocol analysis and assessment of debriefs to review recruit

police officers in Queensland, Australia. These recruit police officers were nearing the end of

their training, and their performance on scenario-based exercises was evaluated. The researchers

looked to identify factors regarding recruit officer decision-making. The researchers discovered

that establishing clear decision making factors helps officers address situations appropriately

(Hine et al., 2019).Training exercises that incorporate stressful scenario-based training with high-

threat factors will prepare recruit police officers for the potentially dangerous situations they will

face while working (Hine et al., 2019).The research shows the need for regular scenario-based

training to allow officers to practice and experience various situations and outcomes as a learning

opportunity (Hine et al., 2019).Studies like this are essential in the design of new training

policies that will help prepare recruit police officers for the situations they may face on the job

(Hine et al., 2019; O'Hare & Beer, 2018) and are consistent with adult learning theory (Cox,

2015; Page & Margolis, 2017; Wahlgren, 2016).Hine et al. (2019) concluded that being able to

practice on a regular basis is a need for officers and that these training exercises have the

opportunity to better prepare officers for interactions with the public.

Stress Inoculation Training

Stress inoculation training expands on scenario based training and provides recruit police

officers with an opportunity to be placed in stressful situations that will test their situational

awareness and ability to act. The field of law enforcement requires officers to act in complex and

highly stressful environments. The research shows that recruit police officers should be trained for these situations (O'Hare & Beer, 2018; Werth, 2011).About 70% of police academies provide some type of training to their recruits that incorporate both stress and monsters approaches (Reaves & Trotter, 2017).Placing recruit police officers in controlled yet stressful situations allows the opportunity for them to both learn and be evaluated in circumstances that mimic their future duties while maintaining safety and control of the situation.

O'Hare and Beer (2018) studied the value of stress inoculation training for raising situational awareness in officers. Their study used a mixed methods approach including performance evaluation as well as survey and interview responses to evaluate the best training protocols to increase officer awareness and decision-making skills (O'Hare & Beer, 2018).Adding stress to scenario based training has value and shows the relationship between stress inoculation, psycho-physiological state management, and cognitive ability toward overall situational awareness (O'Hare & Beer, 2018).They found that there is value in stress inoculation training programs to raise situational awareness and other key factors that are important for police officers and that the situation awareness skills (SAS) program improves training and learning for recruit police officers by improving trainees' abilities and accelerates their learning(O'Hare & Beer, 2018).

Quality Interaction Program

Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) studied recruit police officers in Chicago to describe and evaluate a new police recruit training model, the Quality Interaction Program (QIP).This program was developed to shift recruit training toward principles more closely aligned with adult education and focus on police-public encounters and community policing (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). The researchers recognized the current issues facing policing that were

described previously, and attempted to develop a way to address them with training in police academies and during field training. The QIP was created with the intent of shifting the focus to recruits and concentrating on learner centered rather than teacher centered experiences during their training to develop a new police culture focused on key values and principles regarding community interactions (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).Proper implementation of the program required a clear shift in style and curriculum development to educate the recruit officers like adult learners. Key principles of adult learning were implemented in the training program, including more hands-on learning approaches such as case studies, scenarios, role-playing, and simulations with a focus on pedagogy (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) sought to increase the probability of learning and retention by providing students increased opportunities to read, hear, see, discuss, solve, and experience the curriculum of the QIP. Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) found mixed results after using a randomized control trial, observation, and review of self-reporting questionnaires. Officers who took part in the study showed improvement in increasing learning, respectful and reassuring behaviors, decision making regarding conflict resolution with youths, and acting with empathy, but saw little variation in areas like procedural justice and communication skills (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).

There is a strong sense that the program was at odds with the paramilitary structures and officer safety focused approaches that are indoctrinated into police cultures (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer & Varano, 2017).This type of training program is new and it is backed by the research examined by Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017).The limited success of the program in this study should not turn the field away from the program. It will be a slow process in which the ideas of this program can be fully implemented. There are many conflicting ideas

and the instructor styles are at odds, which will go against some of these ideas and cause the lack

of success. Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) noted that there is an identity crisis at police

academies that at times want to incorporate innovative learning strategies but also want to

maintain the paramilitary structure and focus on developing discipline and toughness. As

previously discussed, change in law enforcement tends to be slow and difficult (Can et al., 2016;

Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Shafer & Varano, 2017.

Storytelling

A favorite pastime of police officers is to share and compare stories of their experiences.

Rantatalo and Karp (2018) found the value in storytelling for the training of recruit police

officers. Work-based experiences and stories of real situations can be valuable tools to improve

the learning of students in workplace and police academy settings (Rantatalo & Karp,

2018).Adult learners can learn through active experimentation and reflection of their

experiences. When stories are shared with recruit police officers they are able to learn tactics,

socialization, and develop sense making (Page & Margolis, 2017).Finding ways to incorporate

these stories with andragogy can lead to developing scenarios for discussion and analysis that

help recruit police officers make sense of their training. Storytelling and narrative sense making

are ways that educators and trainers can improve learning for recruits and students. Field training

officers can share their experiences with recruit officers to help teach them while in the field

(Rantatalo & Karp, 2018).This can also serve as a way to help socialize recruit police officers

who believe ongoing communication is important (Hoel, 2019).

Community Policing and Procedural Justice Training

Law enforcement must reevaluate the training practices for their recruit police officers so

as to improve police relationships with the communities they serve and increase the safety of

officers and the community members alike (Kumar, 2019; Rajakaruna et al., 2017; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).Community policing across the United States continues to be a central component of basic law enforcement training at police academies (Chappell, 2008; Reaves &Trotter, 2017).Developing this training to foster positive relationships and focus on improved communication skills and techniques can lead to positive and successful interactions with the community as recruit police officers are trained to be more empathetic (Chappell, 2008).Community policing can take on several different meanings and goals depending on the department and community most commonly seeking to build relationships and open communication (Fielding, 2005).Some departments nationwide have made a shift to develop a style more like the military in an attempt to safely protect officers, citizens, and to be prepared for potential terrorist attacks (Blumberg et al., 2019; Boettke et al., 2016; Can et al., 2016; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Taub, 2020).This shift toward a more military style police force has resulted in increased tension between communities and their police forces, in many instances making the police look like threatening warriors prepared to use force against, rather than protect, their communities (Boettke et al., 2016; Taub, 2020).Because of the feel and look of both officers and their equipment, communities may sometimes feel threatened, as if they are living in a police state and not a free country (Boettke et al., 2016).

A police officer's perceptions and training in community policing and procedural justice can influence their decisions. Fildes et al. (2019) sought to track and review officers' procedural justice self-assessments and how they change throughout and when they complete training (Fildes et al., 2019).This study was completed by quantitative data analysis of self reporting surveys of recruit offices in Queensland, Australia. The information in these surveys may be skewed by personal bias because the self reported data comes on a topic on which respondents

may wish to project a more favorable view of them. The researchers found that in order to develop procedurally just officers, recruit training should be improved, especially in the training of interpersonal skills with the public (Blumberg et al., 2019; Fildes et al., 2019).It is essential for training and development to occur early in the recruit police officers training, especially the first year, when officer attitudes to the public are likely to change (Fildes et al., 2019).It must be the responsibility of police academies and field training programs that are responsible for the training of recruit police officers during their first year of service to take on this change effort.

Different communities will require different types of police work. By understanding the community and collecting data, departments will be able to better combat the individual issues of each community (Malik et al., 2014).Training recruit police officers to be aware of community policing strategies early on in their training and career is important. The change that is sought is best implemented in the first year of training (Fildes et al., 2019).Preparing officers for future success appears to be largely based on their ability to communicate with the community they police; therefore, recruit police officer training should focus on improving interpersonal skills during the first years of service to see the greatest impact (Fildes et al., 2019).

Communication is one of the most important aspects of a police officer's daily work, as they must communicate with other officers, their chain of command at the department, and people on the street with whom they come into contact (Stojkovic et al., 2015).During these exchanges it is extremely important that the correct messages are being sent and received by all parties involved (Stojkovic et al., 2015).Both verbal and nonverbal communication is important in sending and receiving proper messages and can offer a wealth of information (Burgoon et al., 2000).It is essential to be able to quickly connect and communicate with people of all races, ethnicities, age levels, and socioeconomic backgrounds. If police officers are to successfully

solicit help from the public, share important time sensitive information, and connect with the community, they must be able to communicate with them (Williams et al., 2018).

In addition, Wheatcroft et al. (2014) found that police officers do a great deal of interviewing, and time constraints are often a major factor during those interviews as officers often face a sense of urgency while handling calls for service. They further found that extended training early in an officer's career can lead to more lasting success and comfort as an interviewer (Wheatcroft et al., 2014).To develop good information from an interview good questions must be asked (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).Teaching good interviewing skills to recruit police officers can greatly benefit them as police officers in many different areas of police work (Wheatcroft et al., 2014).This is consistent with the need to develop communication with members of the community as part of community policing initiatives.

Furthermore, Rosenbaum and Lawrence (2017) identify community encounters and interactions, both voluntary and involuntary, as the heart of a police officer's work. Police work is characteristic of many roles that are largely played out in the community during these interactions with the citizens, such as law enforcer, social worker, marriage counselor, parent/disciplinarian, crowd-control manager, criminal investigator, and group facilitator (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).All of these roles require communication and community interaction. Learning and developing conversational and interview strategies can help to build rapport and relationships with community members (Wheatcroft et al., 2014).

Moreover, Cunha and Gonçalves (2017) examined police officers in Portugal and their attitudes toward offenders to see if there is a relationship with arrests and implications for training. The goal was to investigate the officer's attitudes toward offenders and the impact of biases on decision making. This study made use of quantitative data taken from self-reporting

surveys. Cunha and Gonçalves (2017) found that police training has the ability to greatly impact officer attitudes and should include practical issues. Cunha and Gonçalves (2017) call for an increased awareness of and need for bias training that includes practical issues with the ability to change false beliefs and prejudice. Cunha and Gonçalves (2017) argue this is needed so that police officers are prepared to act in a satisfactory and appropriate manner when interacting with the community. Police training can be a driving force for change in officer attitudes, especially early on in their careers (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2017).Police officers receive very little training after the first year of their career, and thus it is important to capitalize on the training opportunities that occur during the first year of service.

Role of Field Training in Recruit Police Officer Training

Police field training programs are established by individual police agencies in an effort to formalize and standardize the field training process for their new officers. Field training programs offer critical training and socialization to recruit officers while they are paired with a field training officer. The development of field training programs is essential to the future success of recruit officers, even after they complete the field training program (Dulin et al., 2019).The field training of recruit police officers usually occurs as part of the police academy. A field training program is operated by individual agencies providing recruit police officers a chance to use and apply the skills they learned in the police academy to real life scenarios while working with and under the supervision of a more experienced field training officer (Caro, 2011).Recruit police officers learn police skills, develop and become more familiar with police roles, and are socialized into the police culture (Hoel, 2019) in real world settings similar to an apprenticeship (Dulin et al., 2019).

Kumar (2019) evaluated the differences in perceptions between recruit police officers and senior officers along with the importance of training. The researcher found that generally police training, if done correctly, is working because it continues to cycle new information into training programs, although it is difficult to develop major change and reform since that is generally brought on by crisis (Kumar, 2019).Kumar (2019) shows the importance of police field training to drive change in the police. Police training must continue to adapt and adjust with the times.

Hoel (2019) studied police recruits in Norway using interviews to evaluate their field training experience. The study shows that organizational socialization occurs during field training and that recruits find hands-on experiences, and on-going feedback regarding job performance beneficial (Hoel, 2019).Recruit police officers had a positive view of their experience and field training officers; they wanted "to be put in front" while training rather than observing (Hoel, 2019, p. 7).Recruit police officers view their field training officer as a mentor. The mentorship relationship between field training officers and recruit police officers offers an opportunity to monitor learning, provide feedback, and observe development throughout the process (Caro, 2011).This type of environment can foster a peer learning relationship (Bolman & Deal, 2006).

Hoel (2019) found that much of the field training process is not articulated or taught to the field training officers, but rather is left to the field training officers to figure out as they go. The field training program is effective at organizational socialization; however, there is a need for relevant educational programs to help improve field training curriculum. This theme is a common gap in the current literature (Blumberg et al., 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).

There is also some change in the perception of recruit police officers' views of competencies as they progress through police academy training and their field training programs.

This is due in large part to a maturation process, the relationship between education and training programs, and on-the-job demands (Bäck et al., 2017).During their first year of training, recruit police officers experience large shifts in their attitude, but after that first year of service there is likely to be little change to their attitudes (Fildes et al., 2019).It is important to target change and teach appropriate behaviors during field training that will last throughout their careers (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2017; Fildes et al., 2019; Wheatcroft et al.,2014).This is the time when officers will most effectively develop the approaches that will allow them to be procedurally just (Fildes et al., 2019).What officers are taught during their first year by their field training officers will stay with them long into their careers, so it is important that field training officers are aware of this and are truly teaching the recruit police officers with whom they work (Fildes et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019).This is a highly valuable and influential time in a police officer's career. Understanding this allows for police academies and field training programs to create the changes they desire and develop their officers appropriately.

Spatial Orientation

A difficult task for recruit police officers to learn and become comfortable with is their spatial orientation, visualization, and memorizing street and building locations of their jurisdiction. This is an important part of the recruit police officer training process. It is essential for police officers to know where they are, where they are going, and how to get there. Technological innovations are transforming the work place at every turn (Collins & Halverson, 2009).Law enforcement is no different. The training of recruit police officers can benefit from using educational technologies. By using Google Earth, recruit offices are becoming more familiar with technology. Google Earth is an interactive computer software program that is available free on the internet. This technology is beneficial for recruit police officers to develop a

sense of place, use learner-created data, motivate students to explore, and understand the regional

geography of an area studied (Doering & Veletsianos, 2008). It is especially useful for increasing

spatial information and orientation (Xiang & Liu, 2017).Using virtual software programs like

Google Earth can help recruit police officers better visualize space and data while thinking

critically about maps (Lund & Macklin, 2007).Students are able to actually see geographic areas

with an interactive platform rather than viewing a simple map. Google Earth works toward

learner centered experiential learning that is relevant to their work in specific jurisdictions. This

type of program encourages students to become involved in their spatial learning (Xiang& Liu,

2017).By using new interactive technologies such as Google Earth, a field training officer is able

to allow recruit police officers to take control of their learning and decide what is most valuable

to them (Collins & Halverson, 2009).Officers can focus on the areas that they most need to work

on. It has tremendous potential as an educational technology for police officers.

For many learners, of all types, actually being able to see and interact with the software

program is an essential learning component. Google Earth improves engagement levels and

encourages participation of learners by showing them in a very visual way what they are learning

(Patterson, 2007). Many new recruit officers are of a younger generation that has grown up using

computer software programs to learn and are comfortable with technology. Adult learning theory

prioritizes building on a learner's prior knowledge (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017). By

creating a focus on the use of Google Earth to help recruit police officers improve visualization

and spatial orientation skills, the officers will have the opportunity to work with technology in a

way they otherwise would not. Developing this familiarity with technology and the jurisdiction

allows for multiple positive outcomes, such as learning street locations and the fastest routes to

locations.

Role of Police Academy Instructors and Field Training Officers in

Recruit Police Officer Training

A field training officer is responsible for supervising and teaching recruit police officers directly in the field (Hoel, 2019).A field training officer partners with a recruit police officer closely while they do the actual police work, provide support, and also complete the assessment of the recruit officer (Bergman, 2017).One of the most influential factors in recruit police officers' training experience during their first year of service is their field training officer. Field training officers have the ability to leave a lasting impact on the recruit police officers with whom they spend so much time working closely during the field training period. A field training officer is able to help a recruit police officer with their education, with reflexivity, and also with sense making. A field training officer will impact a recruit police officer's personal and professional life for years to come (Dulin et al., 2019).Therefore, selection and training of field training officers is an essential part of any successful field training program.

Job Design Theory

Field training officers are responsible for teaching recruit police officers—practically, about becoming police officers (Hoel, 2019).Determining the value of pedagogy and teaching skills for field training officers is an area of research that needs improvement (Hoel, 2019).Field training officers are teachers of adult learners. However, field training officers need to be properly trained and taught how to teach the adult learners with whom they are workings that change can actually occur (Shafer & Varano, 2017).There is a gap in the literature that assesses the training of field training officers (Dulin et al., 2019).Field training officers are expected to teach and lead, but are not properly trained in pedagogy (Bergman, 2017).Police departments that take job design seriously are able to express goals and expectations and have clearly defined

roles and guidelines for their officers that allow them to be most successful (Oldham & Fried, 2016).Field training officers found it beneficial to take the time to discuss the different roles with recruit police officers (Bergman, 2017).This sense of focus allows officers to focus on doing their job rather than spending time and effort doing someone else's job (Oldham & Fried, 2016).By understanding the scope of each job and working to craft specific functions and duties that best align with the people doing those tasks, police departments can work toward getting the most out of their officers (Oldham & Fried, 2016).

Bergman (2017) interviewed several Field Training Officers (FTO) in Sweden to discuss their roles and responsibilities. These in-depth interviews sought to determine how Field Training Officers perceived their task. The researchers examined the role of the FTO as a teacher and educator and the use of pedagogy during field training. This expands on the idea of the FTO as a teacher and educator and not merely a guide. The FTOs lacked proper training and preparation for their role as a teacher (Bergman, 2017). The FTOs were not formally trained in this role, but they did manage to create some of their own education models. Most FTOs resorted to reflection pedagogy and process-orientated learning (Bergman, 2017).By using reflection, they are able to have recruit officers review and reflect on their experiences and discuss what went well and what could be done differently. This is in line with the storytelling discussed previously as officers can recount stories for further reflection and analysis (Rantatalo & Karp, 2018).There is also practical application of this practice during the down time that officers share during their shift. The FTOs did show a desire to change and improve educating police recruits, police culture, and work as mentors and teachers (Bergman, 2017). This study relied on interviews with a small sample size that may not be representative of FTOs on a larger scale. These findings, however, are interesting and warrant further exploration.

Law enforcement is an ever evolving field as so many factors play a role. Organizations would benefit from continuing to take factors such as technology, community, employees, current issues, etc., into account to adjust and adapt roles as needed (Oldham & Fried, 2016). Developing this understanding of goals and expectations would allow officers to do their best work (Oldham & Fried, 2016).

Driving Change

In a world of constant change and desire to improve, there is a strong need for communication, data, feedback, and a willingness to address the issues (Kotter, 2012).Kotter (2012) discusses the value that crises can have in developing a sense of urgency and how that urgency can then work toward reducing complacency and driving change. There is a need to develop a more sustainable and successful training program for police recruits (Kumar, 2019; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Schafer &Varano, 2017).The value and importance of appropriate training cannot be overstated (Gallos, 2006; Kotter, 2012).Investing in training is investing in change (Bolman & Deal, 2006). Training and support must work to increase positive outcomes and create a sense of comfort with the changes (Bolman & Deal, 2006).By taking the time necessary and investing in people, police departments will reap the benefits. By reforming recruit police officer training, governments are showing they are serious about changing the negative aspects of cop culture by fostering professional values and best practices (Bergman, 2017).The current events around the United States previously discussed make this a very difficult and troubling time for law enforcement (Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).The need and opportunity for reform and improved recruit police officer training practices is real. Necessary reforms are likely to take place in the months and years to come, and effective training should be at the forefront of those reforms.

Transformative Leadership

Police officers serve many roles, and because of this, police leadership must also be ready to serve many roles (Blumberg et al., 2019; Can et al., 2016; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).The transformative leadership style has shown to be effective in law enforcement, and police officers tend to respond best to this style because of the high level of discretion and autonomy associated with police work (Can et al., 2017; Fildes et al., 2019).In a job that entails so much autonomy for officers as they face so many different scenarios every day, it is challenging to lead and supervise daily tasks directly. Fildes et al. (2019) recognized that police officers have a high degree of discretion in their day-to-day work. Being a transformative leader allows a field training officer to help recruit police officers develop autonomy by preparing them to make their own decisions (Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2017).Supporting recruit police officers' learning through transformation by providing workplace interventions and education leads to increased interactions, learning, and autonomy of workers (Wilhelmson et al., 2015).

A true desire to learn, teach, coach, prepare, challenge, and inspire those around them sets a transformative leader apart (Hicks, 2018).True transformative leadership requires the leader to also be a teacher; a leader who can teach and prepare the next generation of leaders in the field (Liou & Hermanns, 2017; White & Heslop, 2012).Transformational leaders offer followers a chance to learn, develop, succeed, and eventually prosper as leaders themselves (Bass, 2008).By being a transformational leader, one is encouraging followers to work for the group's good and strive to reach their full potential (Bass, 2008).Police recruit officers need transformational leaders to show them the way early in their careers to create enthusiasm and foster development (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).This transformative leadership approach to teaching recruit police officers leads to increased capabilities, application of learning, and

decision-making in professional and personal lives for recruit police officers (Davies &

Heysmand, 2019).

When selecting police administrators, police academy instructors, and field training

officers, choosing those who want to teach, develop, and coach recruit police officers through

transformational leadership would be ideal (Can et al., 2016).To drive change it is important to

choose from officers who possess the appropriate leadership qualities and mindset.

Understanding and fostering this leadership from the very top levels of administration down to

field training officers and police academy instructors is important (Can et al., 2016; Pearson-

Goff & Herrington, 2014).Police academy instructors and field training officers are among the

first in law enforcement to have an opportunity to provide immediate and transformative

educational opportunities and feedback to recruit police officers early in their careers (Bergman,

2017; Fildes et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019).They can help drive change and transform recruit police

officer training. Extending transformational leadership theory and its principles to the officers

responsible for the training and educating of recruit police officers may create a focus on driving

change and preparing the next generation of officers.

Educating Adult Learners

Application of proven methods of teaching and educating adult learners are far too often

not applied by the police academy instructors and field training officers during this process

(Shipton, 2020).During the field training process a recruit police officer and field training officer

work together as peers and partners (Bergman, 2017).It is important to recognize and grow that

partnership beyond police work and into the education of the recruit officer as well. Adult

learners are partners in their learning experience (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017).By

establishing a collaborative learning environment the adult learner will benefit most from the

experience (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017).Following a constructivist approach to andragogy, the partnership is able to build on the experience of the field training program to develop the learning (Cox, 2015).For a successful change in police recruits' training practices, it will be important to empower people (Kotter, 2012).The academy instructors, field training officers, and recruit police officers alike will need to be empowered to drive the necessary changes.

Recruit police officers are adult learners whose past life experiences impact their development as police officers (Blumberg et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019).Recruit police officers should be treated as adult learners throughout the training process. When educating adult learners, emphasis must be placed on the role of experience in learning. The adult learner must participate in their learning and be provided with real-life learning activities relevant to their work (Cox, 2015; Papa, 2011).Recruit police officers must be trusted to take a role in their learning, serve as partners in learning, draw on life experiences, and be trusted to be wise, capable, and intelligent (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017).Providing this opportunity is essential for recruit police officers. To better provide this learning environment, field training officers can benefit from an improved understanding of transformative leadership, the use of educational technologies, pedagogy/andragogy, and how to teach recruit police officers as adult learners (Can et al., 2016; Fildes et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).

Whenever educating any learner it is important to remember Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which states that learners and employees have needs that must be met so as to reach their fullest potential (Stewart et al., 2018).These needs start at the bottom of Maslow's pyramid and work their way up, beginning with physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and

self actualization (Stewart et al., 2018). Stewart et al. (2018) describe how each of these levels of

needs can be met in a workplace such as law enforcement:

> Physiological needs are satisfied by the wage given to the employee. Safety needs
>
> involve job security and defined responsibilities, or structure. Love needs can be satisfied
>
> by a positive work culture that lets employees establish rapport with one another. Esteem
>
> needs can be satisfied by a positive management relation with employees that makes
>
> them feel trusted and capable in their jobs. Self-actualization needs are harder to satisfy
>
> and involve management actively engaging motivated employees with work that meets
>
> their potential (p. 68).

By understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs police academy instructors and field training

officers would be able to help their recruit police officers reach their greatest potential.

There is very little recent research and understanding of how the best practices of adult

education can be applied to police academies and field training for recruit police officers. The

studies that have been discussed take a look at pieces of the puzzle, but there seems to be a clear

gap in the research that fits the goals of this study. It was important to draw from the research

and personal experiences to focus on this gap.

Conclusion

Whereas the current events in the United States previously discussed make this a very

difficult and troubling time for law enforcement, the need and opportunity for reform and

improved recruit police officer training practices has never been more important (Stoughton et

al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Necessary reforms are likely to take place in the months and years to

come, and training should be at the forefront of those reforms. Kotter (2012) discusses the value

that crises can have in developing a sense of urgency. A sense of urgency can then work toward

reducing complacency and driving change to develop the necessary cooperation for change; a sense of urgency and shared vision is required (Gallos, 2006; Kotter, 2012).

This literature review has shown the value of recruit police officer training and also exposed gaps in the literature. The literature review discussed the key issue of transference of learning, the roles of the police academy, field training programs, police academy instructors, and field training officers in the recruit police officer training process. Teaching recruit police officers as adult learners through transformative leadership to develop their abilities and increase learning outcomes and job preparedness was discussed as a key to driving change. It appears that recruit police officers would benefit from a better connected and more complete training program that works to educate recruit police officers as adult learners through transformative leadership using best practices developed in the field of education. Transformative leaders have the opportunity to inspire, influence, direct, and teach followers (Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2016; Hicks, 2018).This transformative leadership style helps to transfer learning and application directly into the field for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).The need for effective police leaders may be more important now than ever before (Can et al., 2016).

The purpose of this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs, and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers. This was done to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness. Identifying and understanding what worked and what did not work for police officers during their training may prove beneficial in driving change moving forward.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

After the events of the summer of 2020 it has become clear that citizens across the United States have concluded that policing needs to be changed (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Society is demanding law enforcement equalize years of racial injustice in a law enforcement system that is failing to provide equal protection of rights to all citizens under the law (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Many law enforcement agencies in the United States are failing to provide a training program to recruit police officers during their first year of service that adequately prepares them to meet the current expectations of society (Blumberg et al., 2019; Martin, 2016).Often training, policies, and procedures are implemented in the field of law enforcement, especially at the local level, without the benefit of research or wide reaching experiences (Stoughton et al., 2020).This complacency of local law enforcement agencies often hinders the training of recruit police officers (Stoughton et al., 2020).The literature identifies a failure to link prior life and educational experiences with learning experiences in the police academy, as well as the field training process with those academy learning experiences (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019; Dulin et al. 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009). There is a gap in the current literature to offer an explanation for this lack of transference or understanding of its implications on recruit police officers job preparedness. There is also a gap in the current literature developing feedback and data about the experiences of police officers regarding their recruit police officer training. In a world of constant change and desire to improve there is a strong need for data and feedback. As Kotter (2012) explains.

> Cultures in the twenty-first century will have to value candid discussions far more than
> they do today. . . . The combination of valid data from a number of external sources,

broad communication of that information inside an organization and a willingness to deal

honestly with the feedback will go a long way toward squashing complacency (p. 171).

Currently, recruit police officers complete their training and go on to work as police officers with

very little opportunity for reflection or feedback (Meier et al., 2016). It appears based on the gap

in the literature and this researcher's personal experience that police officers are generally not

given an opportunity to reflect on their training and experiences to identify what they truly need

from their training to increase learning outcomes and improve job preparedness. This may be due

in part to the paramilitary structure of law enforcement and the generally closed-off nature in

preventing academic study as previously discussed.

There appears to be a disconnect between police academy instruction and field training

programs. This leads to a lack of transference. The transference of police academy learning to

field training is an essential part of the recruit training process (Bergman, 2017).To be truly

effective, police academy training should align with field training programs (Hundersmarck,

2009; White & Heslop, 2012).Application of proven methods of teaching and educating adult

learners are far too often not applied by the instructors and field training officers during this

process. Finding the best practices to improve the education of recruit officers and also improve

upon and link the police academy instruction and field training programs appears to be an

understudied academic area.

Understanding how law enforcement officers interpret and develop a sense of their

experiences is a significantly under-researched area in adult learning (McComas, 2019).The

police officers involved in this research study were provided an opportunity to both reflect and

offer feedback about their training. The participants were encouraged to reflect, think, and give

meaningful feedback about the issues they faced and the potential remedies for poor

performance, which is a preferable option to create mindfulness and influence employee success (Burgoon et al., 2000).When given the opportunity to provide feedback in a study completed by Meier et al. (2016), recruit police officers were found to provide reliable feedback and predictions. The police officers involved in this research study were provided an opportunity to both reflect and offer feedback about their training. The development of this data will be helpful in driving change to the way that recruit police officers are trained during their first year of service. This study aimed to begin to address this gap in the literature and develop and implement change in the ways in which recruit officers are trained and the types of training programs they go through during their police academy and field training programs. The research is qualitative with the goal of providing an opportunity to better understand the research problem and lead to improved transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness. Identifying and understanding what worked and what did not work for recruit police officers during their training may prove beneficial in driving change moving forward. It is hypothesized that if more effective teachers make better students in the field of education, then better police field training officers and instructors may help make better police officers in the field of law enforcement.

Police officers play many crucial societal roles that seek to ensure social order and governance and these roles are ever changing and adapting. Society is rapidly evolving and demanding accountability, organizational reforms, increased community engagement, authentic community policing, leadership education, better training programs, and the implementation of new technology and crime fighting techniques (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer & Varano, 2017; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).To fulfill their societal role, police officers need to change and adapt with the times, and their training practices must shift to meet modern needs (Blumberg et al., 2019).Recruit police officers are adult learners and should be educated as such, with an emphasis on transference of learning (Dulin et al., 2019). The delivery of the recruit police officer training program must be reformed and improved to become more effective by increasing transference of learning, learning outcomes, and improving job preparedness. For the purposes of this study, police reform will focus only on recruit police officer training. While it is clear that police reform must address several areas, for this study the focus will remain narrow and on recruit police officer training only.

Research Questions

The following questions were evaluated qualitatively and were designed for currently employed local law enforcement officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to four years (Sample set #1)

- Q1: How do recent graduate recruit police officers apply their life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to their day-to-day work? Hereby referred to as Q1.

- Q2: How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q2.

In addition to Q1 and Q2, the following question was also evaluated qualitatively and was designed for police training officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in NYS during the past five to seven years while also currently serving as police academy instructors or field training officers: (Sample set #2, also including Q1 and Q2)

- Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q3.

Research Design

To answer the research questions this research study required a deep dive into the social understanding of the human lived experience and a qualitative research design. The research design chosen for this study must work to provide meaningful data and information to help answer the research questions. In any social science field importance should be placed on understanding the human experience. Social phenomena are often extremely complex issues to research and understand (Pole, 2007).Qualitative researchers are interested in more than just numbers. Where quantitative researchers use numbers for data sets, qualitative researchers seek to use words for data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).They are focused primarily on understanding how individuals make meaning of their life experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).They seek to understand how people interpret their experiences, and develop meaning and explanation for those experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with developing the meaning of things by providing detailed, descriptive accounts of the study

topic (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). For all of these reasons using qualitative interpretive phenomenological analysis provided the best opportunity to learn from the experiences of current police officers to drive change in the training of future recruit police officers.

<div align="center">**Site Information and Design**</div>

The research was conducted in a county located in New York State. This county provides a mix of urban and rural communities. There is not a major metropolitan area; however, there are three small cities with populations between 20,000 and 60,000, and several small towns and villages. Generally, this county provides police officer training to its police officers through a single, shared local law enforcement academy that is operated jointly by the law enforcement agencies of the county in conjunction with a local university's criminal justice and external programs departments. The law enforcement academy provides training for local law enforcement officers across the region who then continue with their field training program at their respective departments. There are no state police or federal law enforcement officers trained at this particular police academy, which is common for local law enforcement academies in New York State.

In New York State, all police officers must complete the basic course for police officers within their first year of service (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). This basic course for police officers is generally referred to as the "police academy."There are two ways in which recruit police officers can complete the police academy (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016). First is the full-time academy option that operates on a 40-hour per week schedule, and the second is a part time academy that operates on a 20-hour per week schedule. The full-time academy is designed primarily for sworn police officers who have been hired as full-time employees at a local law enforcement agency (Police Academy,

nd).The part time academy is designed primarily to offer an option for potential recruit police officers who are not yet hired by a law enforcement agency and geared toward candidates that are working elsewhere or attending school while completing the police academy (Police Academy, nd).These recruit police officers are pre-employment recruits and are working or attending school while paying their own way through the police academy. Before the requirements for the basic course for police officers can be met each recruit police officer must complete a minimum of 160 hours of on-the-job training with a certified field training officer (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).

Sampling Method

Developing a true understanding of the lived experiences of the participants required a limited sample size. With interpretative phenomenological analysis large sample sizes are uncommon as the researcher intends to focus on the quality rather than quantity of the study and subject responses (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).To develop a manageable sample size and data set the scope of this study was narrowed to a review of recruit police officer training in New York State and specifically a single county in New York State. This provided a glimpse into a more manageable sample size. This study sought to include about 10–15 participants in the research and ended up with 9 participants who completed the study. In New York State, the basic course for police and the field training officer course curriculum are developed and governed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) of New York State. This makes the review of one specific county and its local law enforcement academy transferable to the rest of New York State, and possibly beyond.

There are eight separate law enforcement agencies in the county of study. These include one county Sheriff's Office, three City Police Departments and four Town or Village Police

Departments. These law enforcement agencies work closely together and share many services, including the training of recruit police officers. All participants of this study were police officers at a small urban city police department in this county. In order to further narrow the available police officers down to a more manageable sample size, and also a more relevant one, it was determined only police officers who have graduated from the local law enforcement academy would be considered. Furthermore, the participants are currently serving as police officers who have completed their recruit police officer training and have completed their probationary period. The sample was again narrowed, this time to police officers with between two and seven years of service to best address current trends. This keeps the sample to those who have most recently gone through the current training provided to recruit police officers in the aforementioned county of study.

This study focused on 9 participants who are local law enforcement officers in a single small urban city in New York State. Two separate sample sets of police officers were established and interviewed as a part of this study. Each of the officers interviewed had between two and seven years of service as a police officer in New York State after completing the New York State basic course for police academy. The first sample set consisted of police officers with two to four years of service. This sample set consisted of police officers early in their careers that have very recently gone through the recruit police officer training program in New York State. The research questions for this sample set, Q1 and Q2, focused on the training that these officers recently received in the police academy and field training. The second sample set consisted of slightly more experienced police officers who were also trained and certified field training or police academy instructors with four to seven years of service. This sample set had also personally gone through the recruit police officer training program in the recent past, and

received additional training to become certified field training officers or police academy instructors in New York State. As such, this second sample set was asked to reflect not only on their own experiences with their own personal recruit police officer training, Q1 and Q2, but also their experiences becoming trainers and training other recruit police officers, Q3.The participants were asked predetermined questions as part of a semi structured interview (Appendix C).

To limit any concerns or potential punishments and increase the comfort level of participants to provide truthful feedback no police supervisors or police academy directors were asked to participate. The researcher selected a sample that was composed entirely of police officers who do not have any supervision responsibilities over each other. All participants were the rank of police officer, the same level in police hierarchy, and therefore would face no type of potential backlash or discrimination based on their participation or responses. These participants have been and will continue to be kept confidential.

The participants of this study were specifically recruited and selected from officers that meet the predetermined criteria. Potential participants were asked directly by the researcher about their interest in participating in the study. These potential participants received Appendix A, "Letter of Participation."This letter began to explain the research study and gauge potential interested participants. It took about one week to send out the "Letter of Participation" and responses were solicited within two weeks. If potential participants were willing to move forward with the study they were asked to respond to the researcher via email and attach the "Participant Information" sheet they received as part of the "Letter of Participation" (Appendix A).This form would contain demographic and other basic information from the participants. After the researcher received this from potential participants they were then sent Appendix B, "Consent for Participation in Research" via email. If willing to participate in the study the

"Participation Consent Form" (Appendix B) was then to be completed by the participant and sent to the researcher via email or hard copy. A statement regarding participant anonymity was on the consent form. All participants were required to complete the "Participation Consent Form" (Appendix B) to move forward with the research.

Once the "Consent for Participation in Research" form was completed and returned to the researcher a Zoom interview was scheduled. Participants were contacted by the researcher and scheduling for the interview took place via email. It was anticipated that this process would take about two weeks and the interviews were scheduled within the next two weeks. For nearly all participants this timeline held true. Every effort to accommodate the needs of potential participants was made. All participation was completely voluntary and participants had the option to not answer any questions or stop the interview at any time.

The researcher has worked and will continue to work to keep all participants anonymous. Completed "Participant Information" and "Consent for Participation in Research" were scanned and stored electronically on a password protected USB drive. All hard copies have been destroyed. The researcher will not refer to any specific personal identifying information in the notes or findings. Participants are referred to by a letter, e.g., "Officer A," and police departments will be referred to as simply "department."Participation was not a condition of employment for the police officers and they received no benefit or compensation from the police department for their participation.

Demographics

The participants in this study were residents of New York. They were all between the ages of 25 and 35 years old and employed as police officers in the aforementioned county. Each has completed a minimum of 60 college credit hours. As stated previously in the literature review,

there are varying prerequisites for employment as a police officer. In the particular agency of study all officers must have successfully completed at least 60 college credit hours prior to their hire date. Previous levels of higher education have been shown to play a role in the successful training of recruit police officers.

Instrumentation and Data Collection Procedures

This qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis study made use of semi structured interviews that lasted approximately 30 minutes. The questions focused on three separate areas. The first area of questioning focused on the police academy and field training experiences that the officers had themselves, and their personal history with the phenomenon. The second focused on how that experience with the police academy and field training has influenced their ability to perform as police officers at the present time. The final focused on the future of the phenomenon, and how the training process can be improved for future recruit police officers. This allowed for specific discussion topics to help provide the necessary descriptive data as well as an opportunity for participants to focus on a particular portion of their experience.

Interviewing is a very common way to collect data in qualitative studies and it is important that the questions asked are appropriate and consistent to establish data for evaluation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).A major key to developing good data from interviews is to ask good questions, and developing interview skills and asking good questions takes practice (Merriam& Tisdell, 2015).The questions used to guide the discussion were developed after in-depth review of the literature, the researcher's own experiences with the subject matter as well as private one-on-one conversations with recruit police officers, police academy instructors, and field training officers in the area. This helped determine appropriate probing questions to allow for discussion on the topics relevant to answering the research questions. Probing questions can be the most

important type of question when seeking to learn more from an interviewee (Healey-Etten & Sharp, 2010).

Experienced police officers learn how to interview from their training, experiences, and trial and error. Wheatcroft et al. (2014) found that police officers routinely complete many interviews, and time constraints are often a major factor in those interviews. A strength of this research design is the researcher's experiences in law enforcement and interviewing people. Both the researcher and participants are experienced communicators and interviewers. Sending and receiving proper messages through both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication can offer a wealth of information (Burgoon et al., 2000). Understanding what is not said during these interview sessions is also an important piece of the analysis (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016). During the interview process the researcher took notes that were later transcribed into Microsoft Word where they were saved securely on a password protected USB.A police officer on any call anywhere in the world must interview people. Often in a short amount of time the officer must develop an understanding of a very complex and confusing situation almost exclusively by observing and interviewing. This again is where the researcher's experience in the field can be very beneficial in understanding these messages during coding.

The researcher and participants had varying degrees of familiarity and professional experience with the researcher. It is beneficial in a qualitative study for the researcher to spend a considerable amount of time in the field and be comfortable in the natural setting with participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The researcher was also comfortable in the interview setting and able to understand and develop the content and decipher any "cop talk," referring to slang, acronyms, or codes that are commonly used in police culture. When coding the interviews this was important to develop understanding.

Data Analysis

All interview sessions were completed using Zoom video conference and recorded through Zoom. Participants were not required to have their cameras on for the interview, but the interview was recorded. The recordings were then transcribed using Zoom. The transcripts were checked over by the researcher to adjust any errors in the automatic transcribing of the audio only. The researcher took brief notes during some of the interviews that helped with later grouping and coding of information. These notes were completed and saved in Microsoft Word. This was explained to potential participants in Appendix B "Consent for Participation in Research." Each participant was reminded of the information on their consent form and reminded the interview was required and asked for a verbal consent prior to the beginning of the interview.

The transcripts were then saved digitally in Microsoft Word on a password protected USB drive. Those transcripts were then coded in Microsoft Word, using the highlighter and comment features by the researcher, to develop common themes in the responses. These themes were then grouped for further analysis to develop answers to the research questions and suggestions moving forward. Coding refers to designating various aspects of the data so it becomes more accessible to the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Coding is essential for a qualitative research study. By coding and identifying key themes and analyzing key issues the researcher can better answer the research questions. Coding helps the researcher assign value and focus on the social phenomena that cannot be explained numerically (Basit, 2003).Coding and analysis are essential pieces of this qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis. Basit (2003) describes the two by saying:

> Coding and analysis are not synonymous, though coding is a crucial aspect of analysis.
>
> Qualitative data analysis is not a discrete procedure carried out at the final stages of

research. It is, indeed, an all-encompassing activity that continues throughout the life of

the project (p. 145). . . . Coding has a crucial role in the analyses of such data to organize

and make sense of them (p.152).

Anonymity for all participants was important throughout and any references to specific locations

or people were censored appropriately. Participants were assigned a letter; "Officer A" for

example, and police departments were referred to as simply "department."Information in the

transcripts was coded as relevant to specific research questions and labeled with the appropriate

sample set and research question number. For example SS1Q1 would refer to sample set 1

research question 1.The transcripts were then further coded to address trends and recurring topics

as they relate to answer each of the specific research questions.

In order to properly analyze the data after it was coded the researcher made use of

Moustaka's interpretative phenomenological analysis. This is a common methodological

framework for qualitative study (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).The focus of the analysis was on

developing, interpreting, and understanding the themes from the personal accounts from the

responses (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).The main goals of Moustaka's interpretative

phenomenological analysis methodology is to "investigate how individuals make sense of their

experiences. . . identifying the essential components of phenomena or experiences . . . understand

what it is like to stand in the shoes of the subject" (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; p. 362).

Limitations of the Research Design

It is the goal of this, and most, qualitative studies to produce findings that are trustworthy,

credible, reliable, and transferable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Qualitative research requires the

research be done in an ethical manner to achieve these goals (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).The

aforementioned research methodology lays out a plan in which there is clear rigor applied

throughout the study. This rigor is essential to producing trustworthy findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).To promote credibility, reliability, and transferability throughout the research process the study made use of the following strategies as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2015): member checks/respondent validation, researcher's position or reflexivity, and rich, thick descriptions. All three of these strategies allow the researcher to stay focused throughout on providing a valid, credible, and transferable study.

As described previously, police officers are experienced with the interview process (Wheatcroft et al., 2014).Because of this experience it was possible that some participants may not be forthcoming with information in their answers. This could have led to short responses that do not offer enough valuable information to be analyzed. This did not prove to be a major issue but at times it was important to ask follow-up and probing questions.

While the qualitative design presented here seeks to provide honest and reliable research that is transferable across the world of law enforcement there are some limitations and weaknesses. This study focused on local law enforcement in a specific county in New York. There is no federal or state police law enforcement officers included in this study. There are also no law enforcement officers from any other counties, states, or countries involved in the sampling. It is possible that those other law enforcement agencies have varied training programs that may lead to different results. Determining what is an effective, efficient, and well trained police officer is also a very subjective matter. Drawing conclusions based solely on the information at hand is important, but this could mean there are other variables that are left unaccounted for.

The Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979) was closely reviewed in preparation of this research

design. The researcher weighted the scope of risks and benefits and the potential risks were mitigated and were minimal. There was no risk of physical harm to participants based solely on their participation in this study. Furthermore, participation was completely voluntary, no personal identifying information was referred to in the study, and specific information regarding participants was not shared with others. All participants were given an opportunity to ask any questions prior to giving their consent. Participant contributions were beneficial as they helped to craft findings that seek to improve the training of future police officers.

Member Checking Procedures

Establishing member checking procedures helped guide the data collection process. Member checks refer to the practice of the researcher sharing their findings with the participants to develop a better understanding of their plausibility (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).This was done by making summative statements and soliciting feedback during the interview sessions. The researcher member checked by making use of short and very direct summative statements to ensure there was a mutual understanding and that the data collected was an accurate representation of the participants' thoughts. This was completed with a short follow up email of less than 500 words to participants, in which the researcher made note of some key concepts and ideas that were discussed and attached the transcript of the interview. This email was sent to participants within two weeks of the interview. Participants were given the opportunity to clarify any information and were asked to respond to the email within two weeks. If necessary participants could request a follow up interview and/or make necessary adjustments to the transcript of their interview. No participants responded to these emails.

Credibility

In order for the research to be seen as having internal validity or credibility the research methodology specifically develops the data in a way that can be trusted by the reader. Qualitative research describes people, people are the primary instrument of the research, and people are collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and sharing the data and findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).This must be understood throughout the research process. To promote credibility the researcher made use of the aforementioned member checks/respondent validation. The researcher's position or reflexivity refers to constant reflection and awareness of personal thoughts, opinions, and biases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).It is essential that the researcher does not influence the collection, analysis, or presentation of the data. Completing a research journal helped reflect on these issues. Developing valid probing questions and allowing the participants to lead the direction of the discussion was an essential aspect of this reflexivity.

Reliability

Qualitative research must also seek to be viewed as having reliability and consistency. Reliability refers to the idea that the research methodology can be followed and similar findings would be reached (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Because qualitative research relies so heavily on people it is difficult to replicate research as the human dynamics are always changing (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Because of this the description of the research must be well detailed and presented in a such manner that the reader understands the experience of the participants as well as the findings of the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).To show the reader the extent to which rigor is applied to the study and its reliability, a rich descriptive explanation of the methodology and results must be provided to the reader. Authoring rich, thick descriptions means the researcher provides enough description to ensure a reader is able to fully understand the context of the social setting, the research process, and conclusions, and to determine whether or not the

findings may be reliable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).This allows the reader an opportunity to understand and believe in the process, the data, and the conclusions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Developing a detailed explanation of the findings that are consistent with the research process and data is the best way for a qualitative research methodology to show it is consistent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).The writing and presentation of the research was an integral aspect of this project.

Transferability

External validity or transferability means being able to apply findings from one study to other situations. For this research study, as with most qualitative research, developing external validity or transferability can be a difficult task when dealing with the social sciences and people in unique social settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Replicating this study and its findings exactly would be impossible. Never again will the same people come together under the same circumstances at the same time to discuss these issues. However, to increase the transferability of this research project, rich, thick description of the process and findings were used (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Developing and explaining the sample participant pool, the development of the interview questions, and the coding and analysis was an essential aspect to provide future researchers with enough information to replicate this study.

Ethical Issues

Any time that interviews are used there are inherent weaknesses and limitations. While every attempt was made to ensure a safe and private environment for the participants, it is a concern that some police officers may not feel comfortable being critical of the current training practices due in part to the paramilitary structure of police hierarchy and chain of command. To help create comfort it was important to explain and establish the absolute voluntariness and

anonymity of the participants. In accordance with *The Belmont Report,* participants were completely free of coercion, undue influence, or pressure to participate or say anything in particular, and all participation was completely voluntary (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). The participants were and will continue to be kept confidential and be unaware of who the other participants are. By doing this, information sharing and/or influence between participants could be minimized and also increase confidentiality. Working to create comfort and openness, it was decided to include only police officers in the study and no police supervisors. In doing so the participants were shown beneficence as stipulated by *The Belmont Report,* as participants remained anonymous and free from participating with supervisors, minimizing possible harm (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).Each interview session also began with a brief discussion reminding participants the importance of confidentiality of the information and participants.

An honest reporting of the data is essential to avoid ethical issues and produce valid results. The researcher should not overlook data that does not fit with his or her own opinions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).It was essential to remain aware of these potential issues at every stage of the process. Preparing appropriate questions and keeping with the semi structured interview process during the interview sessions were important ways to ensure that the researcher did not influence the data unknowingly. Awareness of these issues and a constant focus on reflexivity as discussed previously helped avoid these ethical dilemmas.

Another important ethical consideration for this research model is the researcher's relationship with the participants who were interviewed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).The field of law enforcement is often difficult to access for researchers as many police officers are hesitant to

become involved in research (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).Developing a willing and active

sample of police officers with no prior relationship with the researcher would prove difficult and

likely not produce rich, descriptive results. All participants had a prior professional relationship

with the researcher, which provided familiarity and helped to develop a willing sample set that

trusted the researcher. Special consideration was taken to make sure the researcher's prior

relationship did not influence the interviews and keeping to the interview questions to develop

consistency and not lead responses was important.

Ensuring a safe, open discussion and the privacy of participants was essential to avoid

ethical issues (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).No participants were asked to share names of specific

police academy instructors or field training officers when recounting their experiences.

Participation in this study was not anticipated to create any ethical issues related to job

performance of participants. The researcher has no direct supervisory responsibilities over any of

the participants. All participants were included in accordance with their own free will and were

not subject to their employment or any type of mandate issued to them. The utmost respect was

shown to the participants. At any time participants were able to skip questions or stop the

interview. Any confusion or questions participants may have had were answered as quickly and

clearly as possible.

Researcher Bias

A concern for the researcher from the onset was to make sure that there was not any

implied bias from the researcher. The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection

and analysis and thus exposed the data to potential biases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).Both

interview questions (Appendix C), and responses were monitored for potential implicit bias

and/or influence to responses. To mitigate this risk the researcher vetted the questions to be used

in the semi structured interview sessions to ensure they were open ended and not leading. The questions were also vetted by the dissertation committee as well as a local retired police administrator who would not participate in the interview process or research. The researcher also kept a digital journal throughout the process to review and think about any potential influence on the findings. This journal is saved as a Microsoft Word document on a password protected USB drive. This helped to facilitate follow-up questioning as the interviews progressed as well as with the coding process.

Data Security

The researcher must keep the data from this study safe and secure. All hard copy documents were converted to digital copies and the hard copies were then destroyed by a paper shredder within one week of the digital conversion. To protect the identity of the participants the interview transcripts were not included in this dissertation. Because the participants came from a single department it would be easy for other participants or members of that department to use the information in the transcripts to match the interview participant with the officer's identity. There is no mention of the site location or any of the interviewees by name. The location is referred to simply as the "department" and participants were assigned a letter, e.g., "Officer A."The interview transcripts and coded documents are all digital files, any hard copy documents have been scanned into digital format with the hard copy then being destroyed. All digital documents and recordings were password protected and stored on a USB drive as either a PDF or Microsoft Word file. These digital documents and recordings were accessible only to the researcher on a password protected USB drive that is locked in a personal safe and will be deleted two years after the study is completed.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs, and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their training programs and to improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness. By exploring the lived experiences of police officers in New York State through interview sessions, this study sought to provide an opportunity for reflection and feedback to provide for better content delivery that transfers learning experiences to prepare new recruit police officers for service to their communities. Self-reflection is crucial to improving policing skills (Fildes et al., 2019). Identifying and understanding what worked and what did not work for police officers during their training may prove beneficial in driving change moving forward.

This chapter laid out the research methodology as a qualitative-interpretative phenomenological analysis and provided rationale for this choice. It also discussed potential limitations, ethical issues, and concerns as well as ways to mitigate those issues. The site design, sampling methods, and data analysis process were all explained in detail. The next chapter discusses the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

Research Findings

A police officer's job is difficult and complex (Blumberg et al., 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).Training recruit police officers, as they prepare for a career in law enforcement, offers many challenges as this multifaceted job requires officers to be well versed in various skills—including physical, cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal—to perform their duties (Blumberg et al., 2019).Police officers serve multiple roles, and they must adapt to nearly any situation. Every day, police officers are placed in situations that require them to communicate with people to help solve problems, provide safety, and enforce laws. For example, police officers are crime preventers, crime solvers, law enforcers, peacekeepers, social workers, marriage counselors, parent/disciplinarians, crowd-control managers, criminal investigators, group facilitators, mental health counselors, and/or knowledge workers (Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). To develop these skills and fill the aforementioned roles, recruit police officers must receive the proper and appropriate training in each area. Society is rapidly evolving and demanding accountability, organizational reforms, increased community engagement, authentic community policing, leadership education, better training programs, and the implementation of new technology and crime fighting techniques (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Shafer & Varano, 2017).As such there is a need to maximize learning outcomes by improving transferences of learning and job preparedness.

The purpose of this study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with police academy instructors and field

training officers. This study was conducted to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their first year of service. The focus of this study was not on content material, but rather the delivery methods of the curriculum to provide training programs that improve transference of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness. Participants were asked a series of open-ended questions about recruit police officer training (Appendix C) so as to develop data to address the research questions.

Overall, this research study found that a lack of knowledge and understanding of andragogy for police academy instructors and field training officers is creating a limited learning environment for recruit police officers. Without the knowledge and ability to use better forms of instruction, police academy instructors and field training officers have leaned heavily on PowerPoint based lectures and using recruit police officers' failures as the primary mode of instruction after the fact. There is, however, a clear desire from the participants to improve their skills as educators, create more opportunities for practice, and further develop mentorship possibilities between recruit police officers and their police academy instructors and field training officers.

This chapter offers a detailed presentation and explanation of the study and the results beginning with an overview of the participants in the study to discuss the pertinent information and qualifications for participation. Limitations of the participants and research questions are also discussed. In addition, this chapter provides an analysis of the information collected, including interview and coding methods and practices. Furthermore, a thorough synopsis of data will be correlated to the research purpose and problem statements for evaluation.

Research Questions Investigated

Understanding how law enforcement officers interpret and develop a sense of their experiences is a significantly under-researched area within adult learning (McComas, 2019).To address this purpose the researcher developed three primary research questions. The following qualitative research questions were designed for currently employed local law enforcement officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to four years (sample set number one)

- Q1: How do recent graduate recruit police officers apply their life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to their day-to-day work? Hereby referred to as Q1.

- Q2: How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q2.

The following question was also evaluated qualitatively, in addition to Q1 and Q2, and was designed specifically for police training officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to seven years while also currently serving as police academy instructors and/or field training officers: (Sample set number two, also including Q1 and Q2)

- Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers? Hereby referred to as Q3.

These research questions were developed after an extensive literature review and after discussions with others in the law enforcement community familiar with the topic. In order to best address these questions a series of open ended interview questions and an interview

procedure were developed. Those questions are found in Appendix C. On July 29, 2021, the University of New England Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects reviewed the materials submitted in connection with this research project and determined that the proposed research was exempt from IRB review and oversight as defined by 45 CFR 46.104(d) (2).The information collected from these semi structured interview questions became the source of data that is presented as research findings and used to answer the research questions. Some of the interview questions yielded data that was informative toward more than one of the research questions. Table 1 helps to explain which semi structured interview questions correspond with each of the research questions.

Table 1

Research Questions and Data Sources

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DATA SOURCES	
Research Question	**Interview Questions**
Q1: How do recent graduate recruit police officers apply their life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to their day-to-day work?	6, 7, 10, 11, 13
Q2: How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers?	3, 4-11, 14
Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers?	6, 15-18

The conceptual framework of this study uses transformative leadership to look at the education and training of police recruit officers. By looking through the lens of transformative leadership theory, the focus of this research was on developing the delivery of the recruit police officer training at the police academy and field training during the first year of service to drive change in the field. Transformative leaders have the opportunity to inspire, influence, direct, and teach followers (Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2016; Hicks, 2018).This transformative leadership style helps to transfer learning and application directly into the field for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).Table 2 helps to explain which semi structured interview questions correspond with the conceptual framework.

Table 2

Conceptual Framework and Data Sources

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND DATA SOURCES	
Conceptual Framework	**Interview Questions**
Transformative Leadership, as described in Chapter 1	5, 9, 12

Hypothesis

This researcher has a background as an educator working for two years as a high school teacher in New York and earning a bachelor's degree in Social Studies Education and a master's degree in Educational Technology. This background has fostered an understanding of pedagogy and andragogy and created a natural attraction to the training and educational aspects of law enforcement. In 2012 this researcher was hired as a police officer in New York State and began the police recruit officer training program, first at the police academy and then a departmental field training program. It became evident to this researcher that there was a need to raise

awareness in the law enforcement community about the need to better understand and improve the education and training of recruit police officers, who are adult learners. The field of education has come so far in finding ways to better educate students, especially adult learners, and these strategies have not yet been adequately applied to police instructors (Shipton, 2020).This researcher has since become a police academy instructor and field training officer and has seen and experienced firsthand the importance of recruit police officer training during the first year of service in preparing officers to be safe, professional, and effective. The skills and techniques developed, understood, and implemented by this researcher as a police academy instructor and field training officer were learned, almost exclusively, through education degree programs and experience in the classroom as a high school teacher.

By understanding the value and importance of a sound pedagogical approach to instruction, a teacher can proficiently educate their students. This research hypothesized that if better teachers make better students in the field of education, then better police academy instructors and field training officers may help make better police officers in the field of law enforcement. For this to be possible law enforcement must first understand what they are in fact missing. At the onset of this study, the researcher believed providing the opportunity for police officers to reflect on their training would yield information that would help better understand what is and what is not working when it comes to the content delivery of police recruit officer training. In conclusion, having a more educated recruit police officer at the completion of the police academy is a step in the right direction for improved policing (Chappell, 2008).

Data Collection Summary

To address the research questions, the researcher conducted a series of semi structured interviews with the participants during August and September of 2021.The participants of this

study were specifically recruited and selected from officers who met the predetermined criteria.

Potential participants were asked directly by the researcher about their interest in participating in

the study. These potential participants received a "Letter of Participation" (Appendix A).This

letter began to explain the research study and gauge potential interested participants. If willing to

participate in the study, the participants received a "Participation Consent Form" (Appendix B).

The "Participant Consent Form" was then required to be completed and submitted so as to move

forward with the research. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes each and followed a

series of predetermined questions that were developed in order to address the research questions.

These research questions are attached as Appendix C, questions 1–14 were used for sample set

number one and questions 1–18 were used for sample set number 2.This researcher attempted to

keep the interview on script to allow for consistency across interviews and to help avoid any

leading questions. The questions focused on three separate areas. The first area of questioning

focused on the police academy and field training experiences that the officers had themselves,

and their personal history with the phenomenon. The second focused on how that experience

with the police academy and field training has influenced their ability to perform as police

officers at the present time. The final focused on the future of the phenomenon, and how the

training process can be improved for future recruit police officers. These questions allowed for

specific discussion topics to help provide the necessary descriptive data as well as an opportunity

for participants to focus on a particular portion of their experience and provide an opportunity for

reflection and feedback.

    After these interviews were completed a transcript of the interview was developed from

Zoom. Each transcript was copied into a Microsoft Word file where they were edited as needed

by the researcher for clarification. Participants received an email with the Microsoft Word file of

their transcripts attached for their review and they were given two weeks to check for clarity and

meaning of their responses as well as provide any feedback to the researcher they wished. No

participants requested any changes to be made or any information be added to or taken away

from their original responses.

Participant Information

As illustrated in Figure 1: Number of Participants, initial requests for participation in this

study were sent out to 15 potential participants who were specifically recruited and selected from

officers that met the predetermined criteria. Of those invited, 12 potential participants responded

that they would participate in the interview process. Later, two potential participants failed to

schedule their interviews and one withdrew because they became ill with COVID-19 and they

were unable to complete the interview in the predetermined time frame. As a result there were

nine participants to complete the study.

Figure 1

Number of Participants

Number of Participants
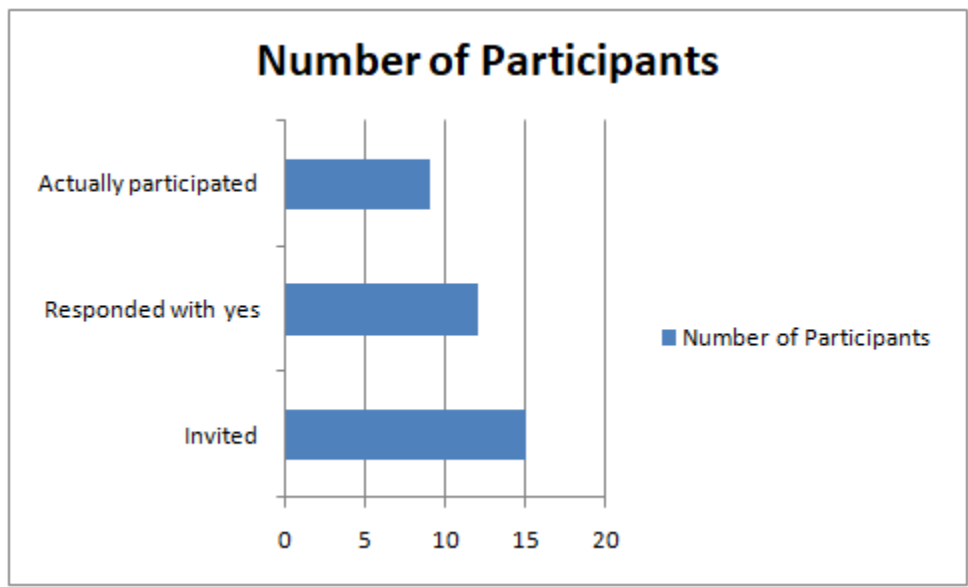
The participants in this study were all residents of the same county in New York State where they live and are employed with the rank of police officers. All participants of this study were police officers at a small urban city police department in the same county in New York State and they all graduated from that county's local law enforcement academy. All of the participants identified as white/non-Hispanic.

Of the nine participants there was one female and eightmales. As illustrated in Figure 2: Age of Participants, participants were all between the ages of 25 and 35 years old, with the average age being 29.3 years old.

Figure 2

Age of Participants
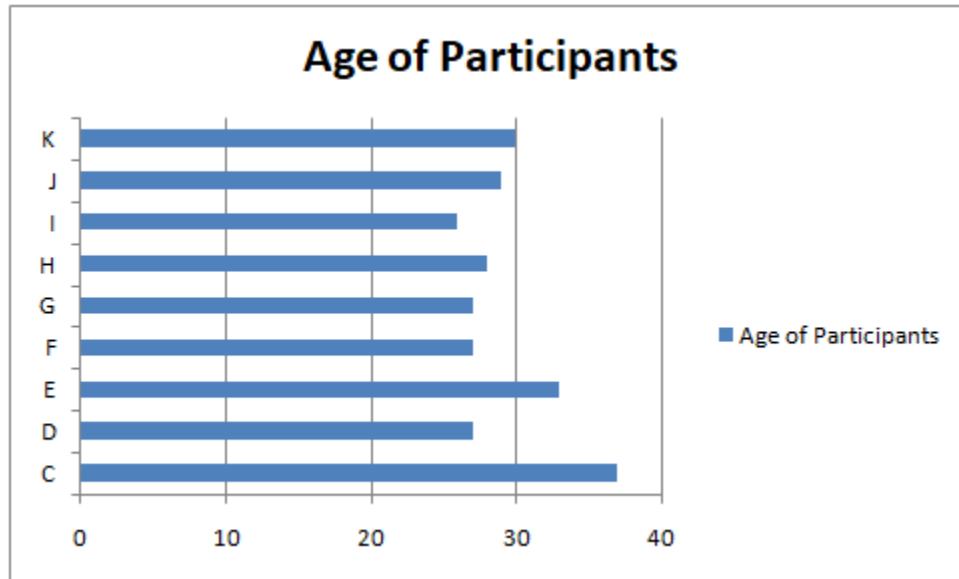
As shown in Figure 3: Number of Years of Police Service in New York State, participants had between two and a half and six years of service as police officers in New York State with an average of 3.8 years of police service in New York State.

Figure 3

Number of Years of Police Service in New York State
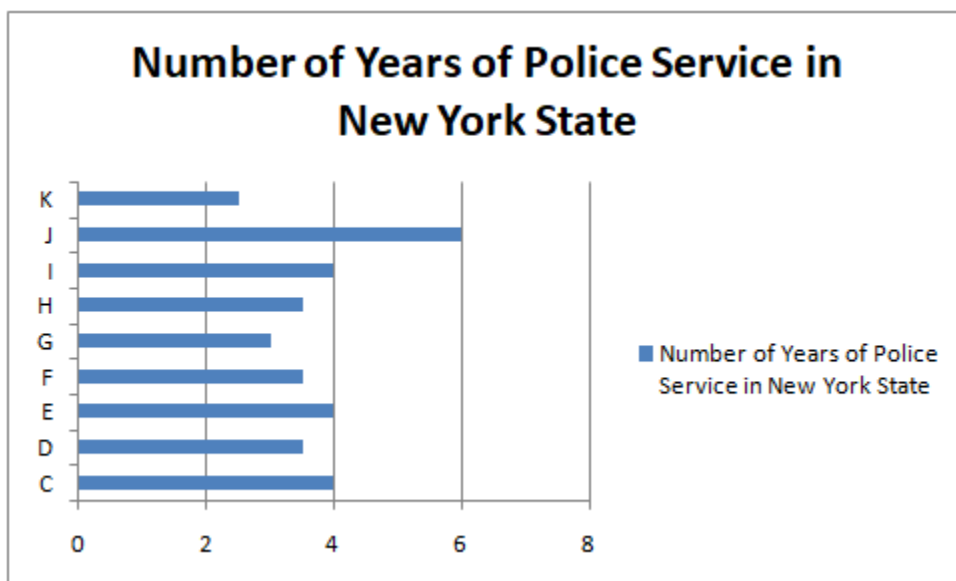
In New York State there are no standardized minimal higher education requirements and some police agencies do not require any higher education as a prerequisite (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).This is consistent across the United States. Each of the participants of this study completed a minimum of 60 college credit hours, which is the minimum requirement to take the Civil Service test for employment as a police officer in the department of this study. As shown in Figure 4: Level of Education, four participants have earned an associate's degree, five participants earned a bachelor's degree with one participant having some additional graduate school course work completed.

Figure 4

Level of Education
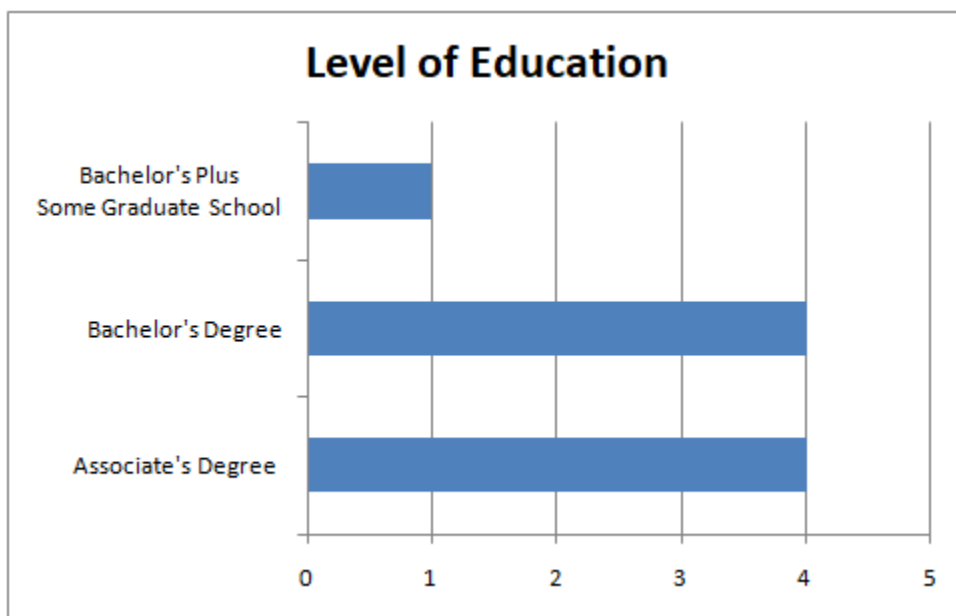
All of the participants fell within the predetermined criteria laid out at the onset of the study and represented an appropriate cross section of the broader population that was available from the department for this research study. Therefore, the participants of this study provided for an adequate sample set to collect useful data from. There are some limiting factors with this participant group that future researchers may wish to address. These will be addressed in Chapter 5.

<div align="center">

Analysis Method

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After the transcripts of each interview were established they were then coded. To properly analyze data, the researcher made use of Moustaka's interpretative phenomenological analysis. This is a common methodological framework for qualitative study (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).The focus of the analysis was on developing, interpreting, and understanding the themes from the personal accounts from the responses (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).The main goals of Moustaka's interpretative phenomenological analysis methodology is to "investigate

how individuals make sense of their experiences . . . identifying the essential components of phenomena or experiences . . . understand what it is like to stand in the shoes of the subject" (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 362).These interviews were a direct reflection and recounting of the officers' lived experiences, and as such were highly individualized and subjective.

Each transcript was individually coded in Microsoft Word to search for common themes, issues and responses. Coding was also done to identify areas and topics that the participants felt were both positive and negative from their experiences with the recruit police officer training programs. After each transcript was coded on its own, a separate single document was created that grouped in one place the most relevant portions of participant responses to each individual interview question. The single document with the most relevant portions of interview responses to each question was then coded as it related to each of the specific research questions to develop an answer to each of them. This aided the researcher in coding to compile common themes, responses, and important information from the various interviews into one place for each of the interview questions.

To protect the identity of the participants the interview transcripts are not included in this dissertation. Because the participants came from a single department it would be easy for other participants or members of that department to use the information in the transcripts to match the interview participant with the Officer's identity. There is no mention of the site location or any of the interviewees by name. The location is referred to simply as the "department" and participants were assigned a letter, e.g., "Officer A."The interview transcripts and coded documents are all digital files, any hard copy documents have been scanned into digital format with the hard copy then being destroyed. All digital documents and recordings are password protected and stored on a USB drive. Scanned documents are saved as a PDF and transcripts, notes, and other documents

are saved as Microsoft Word files. These digital documents and recordings are accessible only to the researcher on a password protected USB drive that is locked in a personal safe and will be deleted two years after the study is completed.

The recurring themes that developed during the coding process are used as the presentation of results subheadings: A) Failure to recognize training as an educational process, B) Limited instructor/Field Training Officer experience with andragogy, C) Reliance on learning through debriefing and failure, D) Death by PowerPoint, E) Desire for more practice, F) Potential for mentorship, G) Leadership, H) Role of higher education, and I) What is working.

Presentation of Results

The participants of this study were able to reflect on and share their own personal and lived experiences with the recruit police officer training experience. Applying police academy training to practical implementation in the field is an essential part of the training processes for police recruit officers and departments alike (Dulin et al., 2019).Self-reflection is crucial to improving policing skills (Fildes et al., 2019).This resulted in a large amount of data that included a wide range of responses and opinions. This was to be expected when dealing with a very personal and subjective matter. Through the coding process there were several key themes that continued to show themselves. Each of these themes is discussed next at further length.

Failure to Recognize Training as an Educational Process

Throughout the interview process there was a great deal of conversation about relationships with police academy instructors and field training officers while discussing the recruit police officer training programs. During all of these interviews the words "teacher," "student," and "education" were never used by any of the participants when referring to this relationship. Consistently participants failed to describe or liken the recruit police officer training

experience to an educational process with any focus on intentional learning of new information. The participants of sample set number two that are current police academy instructors and field training officers do not see themselves as educators. There was no direct mention of their role as an educator or the process they undertook to lesson plan or prepare for the next instructional opportunity.

When asked to describe their relationships with police academy instructors, interview question number five, and field training officers, interview question number nine, six of the nine participants used the word "professional" and none of the participants used the word teacher or any synonym for teacher. In fact, Officer C went so far as to say, "The relationship is limited to just instructor/recruit and not a traditional teacher/student which would afford a larger ability for the student to question the material."This "professional" or "formal" relationship was often attributed to the paramilitary structure and style of the police academy and the department. Officer D described that the biggest difference between college and the police academy "is the paramilitary style and behavioral expectations."While the data show that the professional relationship contributes to a respect of instructor and field training officers, it does not appear to build on or support the idea of an educational process that includes a teacher/student relationship. Developing high-quality and respectful relationships between teachers and students is essential to learning and requires special attention to be paid to the learner (Mowat, 2010).By failing to recognize and build on this teacher/student relationship the education of the recruit police officers cannot reach its full potential.

Participants were asked in interview question number three "Would you please describe your learning experiences at the police academy, specifically the delivery methods of instruction?"None of the participants here described the classroom setting as a learning

environment. There was no description of any activities consistent with a constructivist approach to education, leading Officer K to say that "I prefer a more involved learning structure and hands on training."The most common theme developed here was the use of PowerPoint lecture, which is discussed at length later in the Death by PowerPoint subheading. The classroom setting of instruction was even described by Officer I to be "exhausting . . . sitting in a classroom for four to eight hours straight."Four of the officers described some of their most enjoyable academy learning experiences to be out of the classroom during physical fitness and defensive tactics training. These two topics are not instructed in the classroom and were described as a more hands-on environment. Officer D stated, "The delivery method of the majority of topics was similar, with the exception of physical fitness training and defensive tactics, as they were more practical in nature." Officer C stated:

> The academy predominantly uses PowerPoint style classroom instruction in every category except in defensive tactics and physical fitness training. Defensive tactics are hands-on instruction with a demonstration of the technique that is to be practiced by the recruit. Physical fitness instruction is very similarly shown, described then performed by the recruit.

While at the police academy, the participants of this study valued their time out of the classroom, where they were able to be more a part of their learning and instruction. These times outside of the classroom generally lead to an ability to participate in the learning process and be actively engaged, unlike the majority of the classroom lecture based learning.

Participants were asked in interview question number eight "Would you please describe your learning experiences during field training, specifically the delivery methods of instruction from your field training officers?"The participants described learning through discussions with

their field training officers. Officer G described "informal discussions in the patrol car" as the primary mode of instruction. Officers D, F, H, and J described a progressive approach from their field training officers to first demonstrate to them what was expected on various call types and slowly allow them to begin to take a more active role on calls. This then allowed for the field training officers to engage in discussions after the fact to help learn from the scenario, primarily from failures which is discussed further later in this chapter.

What is perhaps most informative from the data developed from interview questions number three and eight is what is not included. The police academy and field training period is very clearly a learning experience for new recruit police officers, but it is not seen that way by the participants of this study. None of the responses to question number eight made mention of teaching to describe the experience. There was also no mention of any type of intentional, preplanned instruction from field training officers. None of the participants recounted any type of lessons, activities, constructivist approaches, or resources that were provided to them to learn from. There was also no mention of instructional objectives, lesson plans, or any concentrated learning protocol. It is difficult to find any evidence of a constructivist approach to learning that can be so beneficial when, as described by Vermette & Foote (2001) a constructivist approach

> replaces the traditional coverage of large amounts of information with the intention of developing real and internalized student understanding of important conceptualized knowledge . . . seeks to create meaning . . . students move away from helping each other to simply remember content and toward the creation of their own (p. 33).

A failure to foster this relationship also leads to a lack of development of a transformative leadership approach to training. This transformative leadership approach to teaching recruit police officers leads to increased capabilities, application of learning, and decision-making in

professional and personal lives for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand,

2019).Transformative leadership is discussed further in the transformative leadership

subheading. It is possible and likely that at times these things were a part of the police academy,

but it is significant that they were not developed and stressed as part of a broader learning

environment. This research study focused on participants who went through one specific county

law enforcement academy in New York State, which is one of the limitations of this study that

will be discussed further. It is possible that other academies may focus on these ideas more than

the one that is studied.

Limited Instructor/Field Training Officer Experience with Andragogy

For the purposes of this work andragogy can be defined as the adult learning principles

that are based on Knowles's (1984) theory in a "constructivists approach to learning that

involves facilitating adults to draw on their experience and so create new learning based on

previous understanding" (Cox, 2015,p.29)."The learner is perceived to be a mature, motivated,

voluntary, and equal participant in a learning relationship with a facilitator whose role is to aid

the learner in the achievement of his or her primarily self-determined learning objectives" (Cox,

2015, p. 27).This definition was made available to the participants of the research study during

their interviews to help refresh their memory of the term and ensure that the term itself was

understood.

The findings of this research make it clear that there is not an emphasis on the recruit

police officer training process being a learning process. The police academy instructors and field

training officers are not developing the learning process for the recruit police officers. By not

further developing and understanding the teacher/student relationship there appears to be no

emphasis on the learning experience as a whole. It was not described by any of the participants,

and it would seem to be highly unlikely that there was a sense that police academy instructors and field training officers deliberately chose to create a less than ideal learning environment. There is simply a lack of understanding of andragogy.

Much in line with the previously discussed theme of failure to recognize recruit police officer training as an educational process, the participants of sample set number two have not adequately been taught how to be teachers. Having completed the field training officer certification (required to be a field training officer) and/or instructor development course (required to be a police academy instructor), eight of the nine participants of this research study fell into sample set number two and they showed very little to no understanding of andragogy. When asked interview question number 12, "What is your knowledge of educating adult learners?" and interview question number 13, "What is your knowledge of pedagogy or andragogy?"there was very little understanding of the terms or ideas and almost no confidence from the participants in their responses. When answering interview question number 13 none of the participants were able to provide an accurate description of either term and five of the eight participants of sample set number two did not even attempt to answer the question knowing that they did not know what the term meant. Officer J said, "None."Officer C said, "I do not have any in depth knowledge of the two terms."Officer H, I, and K all described the terms incorrectly without ever getting to the basic ideas or definition of either term. These are the officers that have been tasked with the bulk of the responsibility for training recruit police officers at the department and they are not familiar with the most basic terms and ideas of educating adult learners. With a lack of understanding of what andragogy and adult learning principles are it is clear there is a lack of implementation of those best practices. By failing to make use of the

established best practices of adult learning the recruit police officers are not being placed in an ideal situation to learn and prosper.

A lack of understanding of the term andragogy does not necessarily show a causal effect with being a bad police academy instructor or field training officer; this research does not attempt to draw that conclusion. It is, however, a cause for concern that those officers receiving extra training and being trusted with the police recruit officer training of new officers are not being sufficiently exposed to those terms and instructed on what the best practices are to educate the new recruit police officers. To try to understand if the issue was a failure to understand the term andragogy or if there was a failure to understand the broader scope of adult learning principles, participants in sample set two were asked interview question number 14, "What do you rely on when trying to teach recruit police officers?"The responses to this question were perhaps more concerning and informative. Not a single one of the participants made any mention of any basic educational terms or principles. None of the officers talked about topics or ideas like lesson planning, learning objectives, educating, teaching, or providing learning resources or study materials to recruit police officers. The lack of clearly developed lesson plans, instructional objectives, and resources that are designed to engage students and foster learning leads to a failure in consistency and structure according to three of the participants. There was no mention of building relationships and fostering an engaging learning environment where adult learners were motivated and in which these were a part of their learning. None of the participants shared that they had any formalized training or education as teachers. When asked interview question number10, "Where do you feel field training was most lacking and in need of improvement?" Officer K stated, "Field training lacked structure and a schedule. Officer C echoed the sentiment, saying, "Field training programs are lacking in an overall consistency."

There is a clear sense of respect and appreciation for the on-the-job experience of police academy instructors and field training officers. This experience could be even more beneficial if paired with instructor development and implementation of andragogy. When asked what was most in need of changing at the police academy, Officer C stated:

> The academy is most lacking in the delivery of instruction. On average the instructors need further instruction on how to deliver the material. Instructors are generally knowledgeable in the topic, but they fail in the delivery of the material . . . instructors did not appear to have a clear lesson plan.

This sentiment appears to be consistent with the other participants who made mention of the positives of learning from those in the field that have real world experiences to share with them, but also failed to ever make any type of connection to seeing these instructors as educators. Officer F stated, "Learning from actual police officers who have experienced the topics they were teaching gave me a better understanding of what I would encounter in the job." What the participants found to be the best characteristic of the police academy instructors and field training officers was their experience in the field, not anything to do with their ability to teach.

To become a certified field training officer or police academy instructor in New York State a police officer must complete a specific training program. These training programs include some brief instruction on lesson planning, adult learning principles, and other topics. The field training officer certification program is a one week training that requires officers to create one lesson plan and deliver one full 40 minute lesson (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).In order to become a certified general topics instructor at the police academy officers must complete a two week training program and complete one lesson plan, deliver one full40 minute lesson, one 10 minute lesson and one five minute lesson (New York State Division

of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).After these training sessions are completed there are no further professional development or training requirements to maintain certification or further develop skills. In contrast, to become a certified high school teacher in New York State a candidate must complete a qualifying bachelor's degree program from an accredited college and receive an institutional recommendation, pass a student teaching experience that lasts a minimum of 70 school days, pass three New York State certification written tests, complete the Dignity for All Students Act workshop, and complete a fingerprint background clearance check (New York State Education Department, n.d.).After initial certification is received teachers in New York State must also complete a mentorship program, professional development training, and earn a Master's degree (New York State Education Department, n.d.).This is a stark contrast in requirements and it should come as no surprise that for field training officers and police academy instructors there is a lack of development in the necessary skills to be effective educators.

The participants of sample set number two were asked research question number three as interview question number 18, "How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers?"All of the responses here show recognition of the need and desire to learn more to improve as educators to better the learning process for the recruit police officers. Officer H and Officer G believe that to start this process there must be more instruction on developing police officers as teachers at the field training officer training. Officer H stated:

> While the idea of andragogy is touched upon in the course for becoming a field training officer I believe it would be beneficial for instructors and field training officers to be given regular refreshers and updates on the principles of learning.

Officer G stated:

Incorporating these concepts into the FTO School more so than they already are and having periodic instructor training to refresh instructors and FTOs on these concepts and refine teaching techniques would be the best way to be able to do this.

As previously discussed, the field training officer training program gives officers only one week to learn how to be a teacher and develop the necessary skills to teach and assess their future recruit police officers. This does not seem to be sufficient for the development of new field training officers. Officer J believes that it is important for the individual field training officers and police academy instructors to take ownership and continue their development and training, stating:

I believe the only way to improve instructors and field training officers is to constantly grow in adapting strategies in how to reach cadets with their own personal understanding of what is being taught.

Recruit police officers are adult learners and should be educated as such, with an emphasis on transference of learning (Dulin et al., 2019).The need to learn and develop understanding of adult learning principles and the necessary andragogy is important to the participants of this study. The results of this study cannot be attributed to the participants not knowing or being unfamiliar with the terms used in the interview questions. Participants were asked about both andragogy and adult learning principles specifically and a definition of andragogy was made available to the participants to help refresh their memory of the broader idea and topic if they were potentially confused by the term itself.

Reliance on Learning Through Debriefing and Failure

Field training is the period of time when new recruit police officers work with a more experienced police field training officer to learn police skills, develop and become more familiar

with police roles, and are socialized into the police culture (Hoel, 2019) in real world settings similar to an apprenticeship (Dulin et al., 2019).

With the clear absence of any development of andragogy, field training officers are forced to develop their own techniques to help prepare recruit police officers for solo patrol. To do this, the field training officers in sample set number two most commonly stated that they relied on debriefings and correcting failures to teach recruit police officers. The participants describe these practices as informal, not planned or thought out beforehand, and often underdeveloped.

When asked interview question number 17, "What do you rely on when trying to teach recruit police officers?" Five of the eight participants of sample set number two mentioned some type of discussion with the recruit police officer to talk through learning experiences after a shared experience. The participants described how they would talk through various events and activities with the recruit police officers to discuss what went well and what should be improved. Officer I stated, "Just asking them simple questions like 'what did you learn today?'" Officer C stated that by "discussing calls for service after they are handled, and having the recruit officer lead the discussion, I can get an understanding of where his deficiencies are."Officer G also said that having discussions with recruit police officers to help share suggestions and ideas about handling future potential scenarios was beneficial. Officer J stated that as a field training officer, "I rely on the art of failure. Understanding that if something isn't right it needs to be fixed and having them work out their own failures and how to learn from them."This is consistent with the experiences that the participants had with their own field training officers when they were recruit police officers. Five of the participants made direct mention of their field training officers allowing them to "fail" or "make mistakes" in order to learn from them after the fact. Officer E

stated "My first FTO and many others were the kind of guys who would let you mess up, correct your mistakes, and then teach me how to do it the right way."Thus the learning is occurring after something is done wrong or less than ideally. This is much like a school teacher waiting to teach a student until after they have taken a test and scored poorly on or failed the test.

There is some value in this approach and using this technique in teaching police recruit officers. However, relying almost exclusively on learning after the fact is troublesome. While the participants share a sense that there is plenty to learn from mistakes, it may be beneficial for recruit police officers to begin to learn before those mistakes are made. This is especially true in a profession like law enforcement that carries with it such high stakes as potential mistakes can be the difference between life and death. Poor decisions made by police officers carry with them the potential to cause serious harm and have created a major crisis of legitimacy with calls for fundamental change and reform for law enforcement agencies today (Hine et al., 2019; Langer, 2021; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020; Thompson & Payne, 2019).When the health, safety, and freedoms of police officers and the public are at stake it is a dangerous strategy to wait and see how a recruit police officer does to then teach them about what they have done wrong.

The data from this research regarding a reliance on learning through debriefing and failure is consistent with analysis presented in Chapter 2.In a study conducted by Bergman (2017), the field training officers lacked proper training and preparation for their role as a teacher(Bergman, 2017).Field training officers were not formally trained in this role, but they did manage to create some of their own education models like reflection pedagogy and process-orientated learning to train recruit police officers (Bergman, 2017).Bergman (2017) refers to reflection pedagogy and process-orientated learning to describe the practice of field training

officers talking through scenarios with their recruit police officers after they have been completed. By using reflection, field training officers are able to have recruit officers review and reflect on their experiences and discuss what went well and what could be done differently. This is in line with the storytelling discussed previously as officers can recount stories for further reflection and analysis and share their experiences with recruit officers to help teach them while in the field (Rantatalo & Karp, 2018).In fact, Officer E described the value in telling stories by saying, "I think that sometimes stories from an instructor in an academy help the recruit know that what they are teaching is actually valid; you will have a better delivery."In short there is a major emphasis on attempting to correct poor performance after it has occurred as a primary mode of instruction.

Death by PowerPoint

With the clear absence of any development of andragogy police academy instructors lessons rely heavily on the content and not the delivery of it. This seems to manifest itself over and over again in this study with participants discussing the most consistent form of instruction being lecture driven by PowerPoint slideshows. Despite the title of this section and any possible stigma associated with the expression, this research does not show that PowerPoint is always bad for learning. PowerPoint can be a powerful audio-visual tool to help foster learning and improve classroom engagement. Once an instructor develops some basic skills and understanding of PowerPoint they can easily create slideshows that can supplement instruction in an interactive and fun way for students to learn (Coleman et al., 2021).PowerPoint is best used when it supplements and not supplants teacher-led instruction (Coleman et al., 2021).However, the results of this study do not speak to PowerPoint being used in this way.

Based on the descriptions provided by the participants in this study, it appears that many police academy instructors are lacking in appropriate knowledge and training of andragogy and teaching skills. These police academy instructors are using PowerPoint slideshows as a crutch to get through lecture based lessons. In this study six of the nine participants had negative remarks about the way that PowerPoint slideshows were being used to deliver instruction with five of the nine participants using the phrase "death by PowerPoint."Officers C, D, E, and G all describe an overreliance on PowerPoint by instructors that takes away from the learning experience. Officer K goes so far as to say, "I would say most of the classes were death by PowerPoint . . . [instructors] would stand in front of the classroom and read off a PowerPoint presentation."Officer G and C echo the reliance on PowerPoint slideshows from instructors. Officer G said, "The usual way the instructors taught us was through a PowerPoint lecture" while Officer C stated, "The academy predominantly uses PowerPoint style classroom instruction in every category except in defensive tactics and physical fitness training."Officer E felt some instructors were better with content delivery, but many reverted to PowerPoint, saying, "I think that certain instructors did well with delivering the information needed and others did death by PowerPoint."These PowerPoint slideshows are being used as the primary mode of classroom instruction and are being passed between instructors. One of the values in PowerPoint slide shows is that they allow instructors to create free slideshow presentations that can be used over and over again to help deliver instruction to students (Coleman et al., 2021).This seems to contribute to the recurring trend of reliance on PowerPoint slideshows.

Throughout the interviews, participants continually referred to "lecture" as a negative learning experience preferring learning experiences that were "real world," "hands on," and "practical."Officer G stated, "I think that when it comes to adult learning, having discussions

rather than giving a lecture resulted in being able to learn and recollect the information being taught."This would be consistent with the constructivist approach to collective learning discussed by Vermette and Foote (2001).Officer K stated, "Most of the instruction was a lecture with an instructor at the front of the classroom and recruits sitting at a desk taking notes."Some of the participants did talk about positive learning experiences in college that were not lecture based. Regardless of where learning took place for the participants of this study they preferred to not be lectured. Officer G summed it up best by stating:

> I think that when it comes to adult learning, having discussions rather than giving a lecture results in being able to learn and recollect the information being taught. When the discussion was meaningful and I was involved in it, I felt that I took more away from that lesson than those that I just sat and listened to a PowerPoint lecture.

This is consistent with the research on adult learning that was discussed in Chapter 2.Adult learners must participate in their own learning experiences, and have experiential learning activities that are relevant to them (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Papa, 2011).There was no mention or talk of learning in small groups, project based learning, role plays, peer to peer instruction, or basic constructivist learning approaches consistent with adult learning principles.

Desire for More Practice

Participants of this study expressed a desire to be able to practice the skills that are necessary for their careers while in the police academy and field training. By providing recruit police officers with more contexts in which to learn, they are able to create more connections to later transfer and apply that knowledge to new situations (Epstein, 2019).This practice can come in many different forms, including role play, scenario and reality based training, and hands on training for topics like firearms, physical training, and defensive tactics. A wider scope of

training can lead to a wider scope of transference (Epstein, 2019).A common sentiment was that there is only so much that can be learned and understood through lecture and classroom learning. Classroom instruction is a beneficial first step, but participants suggest that being provided an opportunity to actually practice and develop the skills is necessary. By practicing the new skills, police officers have an opportunity to observe each other, try out new things, learn from mistakes, and become more comfortable with the material and tasks. This can, perhaps, best be summarized by Officer D's recount of driving while intoxicated (D.W.I.) field sobriety testing training in the police academy saying:

> I personally feel as though D.W.I. training prepared recruits on a higher level. I say this because during that training period, recruits were able to utilize friends and other citizens by allowing them to consume alcohol and we recruits were allowed to administer field sobriety testing (that was first taught in the classroom); I felt as though the practicality of that training was the most beneficial and most realistic part of our training.

Thus D.W.I. instruction began with classroom based lecture, preceded to role play with other classmates, and culminated in the opportunity to practice field sobriety tests on actual intoxicated subjects in a controlled environment. This gives recruit police officers perhaps the most realistic training of any topic in the police academy and the most complete educational experience. Other officers expressed similar sentiments with the desire to have an opportunity to practically implement some of the information that they first learned during classroom instruction. Officers expressed a desire for more role play, scenario-based training, and reality based training, Officer K stated:

> Then I believe there should be a block of scenarios after the lecture part with role players. This would aid recruits in developing communication skills, which would highly help

them before going to field training. I believe recruits learn from hands-on training, rather

than death by PowerPoint.

Officer D echoed Officer K by saying, "The police academy focuses far too heavily on the

academic aspects rather than the day-to-day interactions with a vast majority of people."While

the classroom instruction time is important to learning, as discussed earlier it primarily revolves

around lecture and PowerPoint slideshows and does not provide police recruit officers an

opportunity to interact with their learning. This does not give recruit police officers the time to

actually apply and test their learning, nor does it give police academy instructors an adequate

opportunity to assess recruit police officer learning. The use of role playing does appear to have

made a positive impact on recruits' decision making (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).By not

providing an opportunity for practice and implementation of the classroom training police

academy instructors are missing a valuable opportunity to check for understanding and develop

higher level learning.

Officers of this study expressed a desire to be able to practice skills they are likely to

need in a controlled environment. This research's findings are consistent with the findings of

Epstein (2019) and Rajakaruna et al. (2017) that the scope of training must be widened to allow

officers an opportunity to try new things and learn while they improve their skills so as to build

confidence and proficiency. The researchers also called for making training less about

assessment and more about practicing the necessary skills to alleviate pressure and increase

teaching (Rajakaruna et al., 2007).Scenario based training is one element of the police academy

training curriculum that appears to be growing in favor because of its ability to provide recruit

police officers with an opportunity to apply their learning (Hine et al., 2019; Reaves & Trotter,

2017).

Mentorship

Police academy instructors—but field training officers especially—have an opportunity to become mentors for the recruit police officers with whom they work. The mentorship relationship between field training officers and recruit police officers offers an opportunity to monitor learning, and provide feedback and development throughout the process (Caro, 2011).This type of environment can foster a peer learning relationship (Bolman & Deal, 2006).Consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, police officers are adult learners and they are in fact "people [who] want to be respected as equals, be taken seriously, and be rewarded for their efforts" (Stewart et al., 2018,p. 73).A mentorship relationship may help facilitate the meeting of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

This positive mentorship relationship appears to develop organically in some cases during field training. When asked to describe their relationships with their field training officers, not a single participant described the relationships on the whole as poor. Only one officer, Officer E, shared a negative experience with one of the field training officers. Officer G stated, "I was their partner on patrol," while Officer D stated, "I had an excellent and very open relationship with my FTO."Nearly all of the participants used words like "respectful," "open," and "comfortable" to describe their relationship. Officers C, E, F, H, I, and K all described having open lines of communications in which they felt comfortable to ask questions and work through various situations with their field training officers. Based on the data collected in this research these open lines of communication appear to be directly related to the reliance of instructors and field training officers to use debriefing, learning through failure, and storytelling to help facilitate learning in place of more direct instructional strategies. Those strategies rely on communication and help foster discussion. Officer E summed this up best by saying:

I think that sometimes stories from an instructor in an academy help the recruit know that what they are teaching is actually valid; you will have a better delivery. I also think that by officers sharing different stories and also watching other officers on calls will help recruit officers.

Each of the officers who mentioned open lines of communication found this to be extremely beneficial to their learning and whereas they did not use the word "mentor" to describe this relationship they appear to be describing exactly that. Officer E sums up the possibilities of a very positive relationship with both police academy instructors and field training officers saying:

I maintain contact with my first FTO and talk to him daily or weekly about work, family, and just people we both deal with. I don't talk to some of my FTO ever and if I don't work with them now, and I see them out in public I would avoid them. Some people had me doing cartwheels during FTO and others were just crusty old veterans that didn't care about the job, my safety, or their safety. I always reach out to the ones that I trusted when training and never gave me a hard time when I had questions. Most of the ones I talk to have the same relationship with all the people they have trained.

Stressful work environments, like law enforcement, can hinder employee decision making and performance (Stewart et al., 2018).By finding ways to decrease this stress and increase employee happiness job performance can increase (Stewart et al., 2018).By developing open lines of communication and taking an interest in the recruit police officers' success a field training officer can help foster an environment that reduces stress and increases happiness. The participants of this study were appreciative of the field training officers and police academy instructors who took interest in them and worked to help them early in their careers.

The findings of this research confirm that of previous research as well. Caro (2011) found that the mentorship relationship between field training officers and recruit police officers offers an opportunity to monitor learning and provide feedback and development throughout the process. This type of environment can foster a peer learning relationship (Bolman & Deal, 2006).Bergman (2017) found that field training officers did show a desire to work as mentors and teachers. Adult learners are partners in the learning experience and are generally mature, motivated, voluntary, and equal participants in a learning relationship with a facilitator (Cox, 2015; Page & Margolis, 2017).The results of this research support the benefits of providing a mentorship opportunity for new recruit police officers and mentorship's potential to aid in the learning process.

Transformative Leadership

Based on this research, much in line with mentorship, there are also strong leadership opportunities available to police academy instructors and field training officers. Police academy instructors and field training officers are among the first in law enforcement to have an opportunity to provide immediate and transformative educational opportunities and feedback to recruit police officers early in their careers (Bergman, 2017; Fildes et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019).In the paramilitary structure of law enforcement those supervisors holding rank are generally looked at to provide leadership for the department. Although some police academy instructors and field training officers may hold rank as police supervisors, when they are working as instructors and field training officers, they are not performing their traditional supervisory responsibilities. For example, a road patrol lieutenant may teach a general topics class at the police academy. While teaching this class the lieutenant does not have the same supervisory responsibility over the recruit police officers that they would on a road patrol shift.

Interview question number 12 asked participants, "Do you see police academy instructors and field training officers as leaders?"Participants of this study stated overwhelmingly, eight of nine, that they believed their police academy instructors and field training officers were in fact leaders. Participants discussed repeatedly about watching and learning from their field training officers who modeled appropriate responses and behavior. Officer F stated, "I thought demonstrating how they [field training officers] handled calls the first few weeks was a good transition."Officer H described "watching [their FTO] . . . while it was their job to ensure my successful completion of field training" while Officer K referred to "observing" when discussing learning from their field training officers. Officer E stated, "I was always respectful and would listen to my FTO."There appears to be an inherent respect and leader/follower relationship that develops especially during the field training process. It is during this phase of the recruit police officer training process that the recruit officers are being developed and prepared to become police officers.

The theme of a police academy instructor and field training officer serving as a transformative leader that develops and prepares recruit police officers for their future careers inconsistent with the previous research conducted that was discussed at length in Chapter 2 by Davies & Heysmand (2019), Can et al. (2017) and Fildes et al. (2019).Transformative leadership helps to transfer learning and application directly into the field for recruit police officers (Davies & Heysmand, 2019).Recruit police officers need transformational leaders to show them the way early in their careers by providing training and mentorship (Caro, 2011; Hoel, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).This research suggests that the opportunity to foster a transformative leadership mindset exists and there is value in its ability to help teach and prepare recruit police officers for their careers.

Role of Higher Education

All participants of this study have earned at least an associate's degree and did in fact matriculate through the police academy and pass their field training program. It is not practical based on the data collected in this research study to prove some type of causal effect of previous levels of higher education on that matriculation. However, this research does suggest that having completed a college degree program did expose the participants to other learning experiences as adult learners to prepare for and compare with the experiences they had in the police academy and during field training. By completing a degree program the participants showed they are capable of learning and matriculating through an educational process that was described by many to be similar at least in part with the police academy.

Participants of this study were asked interview question number four, "How would you compare the instruction you received at the police academy with previous academic learning experiences in college and high school?"Officer C stated, "The delivery of the material in the academy was very similar to other in person academic institutions that I have attended."Officer J stated, "Academically high school and college provided an experience that offered knowledge to many different subjects." These previous similar experiences appear to have prepared Officers C and J for the instruction that they received during the police academy. Officer C made a powerful observation saying, "On average the instructors in the academy are generally less prepared and subpar in delivering the material as compared to those in the academic world."This could be because instructors lack the training, education, and experience as educators that many college professors have. Officer F was the only participant who described their learning experience in the police academy as "better" than their college learning experience, stating the academy was "more practical and they held you to a high standard. I felt the instruction at the academy was

more directly related to the job."Other recent research seems to favor the conclusion that recruit police officers with a bachelor's degree tend to perform better than those without when completing reports, tests, assessments, and other academic tasks at the police academy (Chappell, 2008; Hundersmarck 2009; Nevers, 2019; Thompson & Payne, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).Completing a higher education degree program also lends itself to providing the recruit police officer with more education and background knowledge of topics they may be able to use in law enforcement to work through various situations as they present themselves, which is discussed at further length in Chapter 5.

What Is Working?

Despite much of the data provided by participants implying negative thoughts and feelings about the instruction they received, the majority of participants believe that overall the process did prepare them to advance after each phase of training. For the purposes of this study "prepared" will refer to the participants overall confidence in their ability to perform their duties without requiring extra or remedial instruction and or help. Participants were asked in interview question number seven, "Discuss your thoughts and feelings on the extent to which you feel the police academy adequately prepared you for field training."Of the nine participants six felt that the police academy prepared them for field training and three felt that it did not. The officers that felt the police academy prepared them for field training focused on the foundation level learning they received that helped give them the basics they would need to have a chance at success in the field. Officer F stated, "The police academy gave me a solid foundation of skills which I was able to build on during field training." Officer C echoed this stating:

The academy prepares the recruit with the basic knowledge to understand what is happening in the field. The academy needs to stress to the recruits that the material they

are presented is not to be forgotten after taking a test, but needs to be retained for the future.

The officers who felt that the police academy did not adequately prepare them focused on the overemphasis of classroom learning without enough opportunity to practice and apply their learning before field training. Officer J stated:

I don't believe the police academy adequately prepared me for the reality of the day-to-day operation with handling the public . . . the hands-on day-to-day experience in the life of a police officer with the public was lacking.

Officer H stated:

The academy can only teach so much in practical and classroom learning environments and replication of real situations with the public can only go so far as it is a controlled situation and the reality is it is not controlled and is unpredictable.

Further developing practice opportunities as discussed previously may help address the issues raised by Officers J and H.

Participants were asked in interview question number 11, "Discuss your thoughts and feelings on the extent to which you feel field training prepared you for work as an independent police officer."Of the nine participants six felt that they were prepared after field training to work on their own, two felt they were prepared only for the paperwork demands of the job, and one stated they were not prepared at all. Officer I did not feel prepared, but conceded that they never thought they would be truly prepared because "it is impossible to observe and learn from every call type . . . the learning process continued and I encountered calls . . . I never experienced while training." Despite some previously discussed shortcomings, many of the participants reflected

they felt that the training process worked for them in the sense that it helped to prepare them for the next step of the process.

Overwhelmingly, the participants seem to value the ability to learn from current police officers who are in the field and have experience with the topic. Despite the many shortcomings as teachers, the participants of this study seemed to place a strong emphasis on learning from others in the field. Officer F summarized this best by saying that what he thought was best about the police academy was "learning from actual police officers who have experienced the topics they were teaching gave me a better understanding of what I would encounter in the job."Officer Appreciated how some "instructors would make it [instruction] their own and bring in past experiences, making it easier for recruits to understand and grasp the information."This is consistent with the findings of Kumar (2019) that generally police training if done correctly is working because it continues to cycle new information into training programs through active police officers.

There appears to be an understanding among the participants that the police recruit training process is not necessarily a linear one in which everything will be provided to them. Officer I compared his police recruit training to peeling layers of an onion, saying the police academy is the "outermost layer of the onion in terms of basic training and general topics . . . when you transition to field training you start peeling the onion to get to the core . . . and the real learning occurs when you are on solo patrol." Officer E describes a desire to learn and take ownership for their own training by saying, "I can say that every FTO I had taught me something different whether it was right or wrong, but it definitely helped prepare me for patrol on my own."This mindset of taking ownership of the learning process and learning from everything that is presented can help make the most of any experience regardless of potential shortcomings.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the findings from this qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis with the intention to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers in order to provide an opportunity for reflection and feedback to provide for better content delivery that transfers learning experiences to prepare new recruit police officers for service to their communities. By exploring the lived experiences of police officers in a specific city police department in New York State through interview sessions, the research provided an opportunity for reflection to the participants. McComas (2019) found that developing an understanding of how law enforcement officers interpret and develop a sense of their experiences is significantly under-researched. This study provided an opportunity to do just that. The participants of this study were overwhelmingly eager to provide feedback and share their opinions about their experiences with recruit police officer training.

Based on the feedback from the participants of this data it is clear that the police academy and field training are not viewed as an educational experience and they are not providing recruit police officers with a learning environment consistent with the best practices of adult learning. Typical paramilitary formatting insulates police academies from the field of education and recruit police officer training neglects the basic principles of adult learning (Blumberg et al., 2019; Shipton, 2020).Recruit police officers are adult learners and should be educated as such, with an emphasis on transference of learning (Blumberg et al., 2019; Dulin et al., 2019). To help meet the evolving needs of society, field training officers would benefit from improved understanding of andragogy, use of educational technologies, and teaching recruit police officers as adult learners (Shipton, 2020).This research study has found that a lack of knowledge and

understanding of andragogy for police academy instructors and field training officers is creating a limited learning environment for recruit police officers. Without the knowledge and ability to use better forms of instruction police academy instructors and field training officers have leaned heavily on PowerPoint based lectures and using recruit police officers failures as the primary mode of instruction after the fact. There is, however, a clear desire from the participants of sample set number two to improve their skills as educators, create more opportunities for practice, and further develop mentorship possibilities.

These research findings also make it clear that the participants desire an opportunity to practice the skills they are learning, that there are important mentorship and leadership opportunities for police academy instructors and field training officers, and that completing a higher education degree program prior to attending the police academy may help foster learning and graduation from the police academy. The findings of this research are consistent with the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2.The participants provided insightful and thoughtful feedback, which along with the literature review was used to craft the next chapter of this work.

CHAPTER 5

Implications and Recommendations

The training and education of recruit police officers has a high degree of variability. Different federal, state, and local entities have different minimum requirements for new hires as well as very different academy and field training processes (Blumberg et al., 2019; Caro, 2011; Stoughton et al., 2020). This disparity often leaves each individual agency to create and maintain field training programs on their own. The training of recruit police officers occurs primarily during the first year of service and is the bulk of the training that officers receive in their entire career; this period of time is instrumental in the development of police officers (Dulin et al., 2019).Generally, in law enforcement there is a failure to link prior life and educational experiences with learning experiences in the academy, and the field training process with those academy learning experiences (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg et al., 2019; Dulin et al. 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009). This appears to be in large part because of the lack of standardization of training and no formalized police studies course curriculum in higher education. Keeping this goal in mind, the training of recruit police officers shows room for improvement in order to drive change by developing safer, more effective, police officers for improved community relations.

Many law enforcement agencies in the United States are failing to provide a training program to recruit police officers during their first year of service that adequately prepares them to meet the current expectations of society (Blumberg et al., 2019; Martin, 2016).Recruit police officer training is hindered by the complacency of law enforcement agencies; often training, policy and procedures are implemented in the field of law enforcement, especially at the local level, without the benefit of research or wide reaching experiences (Stoughton et al., 2020).The literature identifies a failure to link prior life and educational experiences with learning

experiences in the police academy, as well as the field training process with those academy learning experiences (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019; Dulin et al. 2019; Epstein, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009). There is a gap in the current literature to offer an explanation for this lack of transference or understanding of its implications on recruit police officers job preparedness.

The purpose of this study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs, and their educational relationships with police academy instructors and field training officers. The focus of this study was not on content material, but rather the instructional delivery methods of the curriculum to provide training programs that improve transference of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness. This study was conducted to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their first year of service. By exploring the lived experiences of police officers in New York State through interview sessions, this research sought to provide an opportunity for reflection and feedback for better content delivery that transfers learning experiences to prepare new recruit police officers for service to their communities. Police officers are generally not given an opportunity to reflect on their training and experiences to identify what they truly need from their training to increase learning outcomes and improve job preparedness (Meier et al., 2018).Understanding how law enforcement officers interpret and develop a sense of their experiences is a significantly under-researched area within adult learning (McComas, 2019).

As described in greater length in Chapter 3, participants of this study were specifically recruited because they fit predetermined criteria. They were then split into two sample sets. The first, sample set number one, included currently employed local law enforcement officers who have experienced the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past two to four years. Sample set number two included police training officers who have experienced

the recruit police officer training programs in New York State during the past five to seven years while also currently serving as police academy instructors and/or field training officers. As such this second sample set was asked to reflect not only on their own experiences with their personal recruit police officer training, but also their experiences as field training officers or police academy instructors training other recruit police officers.

This research study showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of andragogy by police academy instructors and field training officers is creating a limited learning environment for recruit police officers. Without the knowledge and ability to use better forms of instruction, police academy instructors and field training officers have leaned heavily on PowerPoint based lectures and on using recruit police officers' failures as the primary mode of instruction after the fact. There is, however, a clear desire from the participants of sample set number two to improve their skills as educators, create more opportunities for practice, and further develop mentorship possibilities. This research also makes it clear that the participants desire an opportunity to practice the skills they are learning, that there are important mentorship and leadership opportunities for police academy instructors and field training officers, and that completing a higher education degree program prior to attending the police academy may help foster learning and graduation from the police academy. The findings of this research are consistent with the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2.

This chapter provides an interpretation of findings in an attempt to answer the research questions, discuss the implications of this research study, and provide recommendations for action. These include: A) Focus on educating, B) Mentorship and transformative leadership, C) Train the trainer, D) Further development of curriculum and standards, and E) Develop a feedback loop and also provide recommendations for further study. These recommendations

include: A) expanded demographics, B) change study location, C) develop a quantitative study, and D) track police academy instructor and/or field training officer performance before and after improved training.

Interpretation of Findings

Q1: How do recent graduate recruit police officers apply their life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to their day-to-day work? The responses of participants to interview questions 6, 7, 10, 11, and 13 helped to develop an understanding of Q1.All nine participants of this research study were directly asked interview question number 13, "How do you apply your life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to your day-to-day work?"Overwhelmingly, the responses from the participants here indicate that operating as a police officer on a day-to-day basis requires officers to pull from nearly every facet of their life, learning, and experiences to get the job done. By providing recruit police officers with more contexts in which to learn they are able to create more connections to later transfer and apply that knowledge to new situations (Epstein, 2019).By providing a wider scope of training and experiences during training learners will become better at applying that training to new situations they have not experienced in the future (Epstein, 2019).Understanding this can help police academy instructors and field training officers develop learning methods for the recruit police officers that increases transference to their roles as police officers.

All nine participants of the study at some point mentioned using previous experiences to help them work through each unique situation. Officer E stated, "I think that I always apply my life experiences with calls. I have worked in so many different fields and started my career at an older age."Nearly everything in an officer's life up to any particular moment in time could be

called on to help the officer. As Officer E stated, "I have experienced different things in life that have helped me relate to certain calls."Officer F stated:

> All of my life experiences, education, and training play a big role in my day-to-day work. The different things I have learned during my experiences allow me to handle the different type of calls and different types of people I may encounter.

Officer G echoed these sentiments stating:

> I apply these things in day-to-day work when I interact with citizens or come up with solutions to complex problems that I would encounter on calls. The academy and FTO training helped with a lot of the technical and procedural tasks, but when it came to interacting with people in stressful scenarios, I felt that life experience played a bigger role.

Officer J stated:

> I apply it as a learning aspect. I'm always learning inside and outside the realm of being a police officer. When teaching a cadet you reeducate yourself causing better retention for the future. You're always learning and educating yourself whether it's from life experiences or from other people then applying to my day-to-day life.

The fact is many of the societal roles for police officers require them to work directly with people (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Shafer & Varano, 2017).Developing ways to interact and communicate with citizens to help them is an essential aspect of police work and being able to draw from a broad spectrum of experiences seems to help the participants of this study.

It is important for police academy instructors and field training officers to understand and foster this development and reliance on past experiences to help new recruit police officers.

Recruit police officers should be learning the basics in the police academy, but developing links to their previous education and life experiences can clearly be very beneficial to their development. Further developing ways to promote transference by linking the academic learning of higher education, the police academy, and field training can help improve the training and performance of recruit police officers (Blumberg, 2019; White & Heslop, 2012).Officer I said, "Combining your life experiences and education is what I believe molds a recruit officer."This research shows that the academic learning of the police academy is important in the development of new recruit police officers and must be treated as such (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019;Caro, 2011).The police academy provides foundational level knowledge in the field of law enforcement as Officer C describes:

> The academy prepares the recruit with the basic knowledge to understand what is happening in the field. The academy needs to stress to the recruits that the material they are presented is not to be forgotten after taking a test, but needs to be retained for the future.

However, it must be clear to the recruit police officers that they will not learn everything that they will need to succeed during the recruit police officer training programs. There are certain limitations to classroom learning that job and life experience along with college learning can help to fill in. Officer G described this saying:

> For the most part I feel I was given a good amount of information and a good understanding of policing from the academy. This knowledge I believe made me ready to learn how to apply what I learned in the academy to the real world and learn from my FTOs the practical application of the doctrine.

Officer H agreed with this, saying, "The academy can only teach so much in practical and classroom learning environments and replication of real situations with the public can only go so far as it is a controlled situation and the reality is it is not controlled and is unpredictable."The learning of a recruit police officer cannot stop with graduation from the police academy and must continue into the field training program and beyond. Aligning police academy learning with field training programs and developing the transference of police academy learning to field training is an essential part of the recruit training process (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg, 2019; Caro, 2011; Hundersmarck, 2009; White & Heslop, 2012).

Participants of this study were asked interview question number 11, "Discuss your thoughts and feelings on the extent to which you feel field training prepared you for work as an independent police officer."The participants described positive experiences in which they were able to learn to help prepare themselves for their role as a police officer. However, they also clearly recognize the limitations and variations of field training programs. The fact is police field training is not a controllable or predictable training environment. Officers must learn from the experiences they have and there is no way to guarantee anything during this process (Dulin et al., 2019; Kumar, 2019).Officer I believe when it comes to field training:

> The biggest part of field training is learning from your mistakes. Answering calls for service while on field training is what I believe gets you prepared for solo patrol. However, it is impossible to observe and learn from every type of call that typically translates to police work. I felt once off field training, the learning process continued and I encountered calls that made me feel uncomfortable since I never experienced them while training.

This self awareness to recognize that not every situation was covered and that learning must continue on a day-to-day basis is essential. Officer H recognized feeling comfortable enough to experience these new situations with the base knowledge developed in field training, saying:

> Field training did adequately prepare me for work as an independent officer. While I did still have questions post field training the program did prepare me for a vast majority of the situations that I had to handle. As with the academy there are only so many situations that you can go through in the field training experience and at some point every officer will come across a scenario not previously encountered. It is the problem solving skills and knowledge of laws instilled in field training that will be looked back on in order to navigate through unfamiliar situation.

Officer H's description of the "problem solving skills and knowledge" being at the root of an officer's ability to work through new situations is an important component that is being used by recruit police officers; it can and should be developed. This is the type of transference of knowledge that can be essential in the field of law enforcement (Bergman, 2017; Blumberg et al., 2019; Caro, 2011; Dulin et al., 2019; Epstein, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009; White & Heslop, 2012).

Q2: How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers? The responses of participants to interview questions 3, 4–11, and 14 helped to develop an understanding of research Q2.The findings of this research discussed at length in Chapter 4 show a clear desire of the participants to be a part of the learning experience and not to sit through lecture based lessons. This is consistent with the research presented in Chapter 2 as well by Cox (2015); Knowles (1990); Page

& Margolis (2017); Vermette & Foote (2001) and Wahlgren (2016).The data collected in this research shows that by placing an emphasis on recruit police officer training as an educational process, further development of police academy instructor knowledge and ability with andragogy, moving away from the death by PowerPoint lecture approach, providing for more opportunity to practice learned skills, and providing mentorship opportunities the delivery of recruit police officer training can be improved to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers.

All nine participants were directly asked interview question 14, "How can police academy instructors and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers?"The responses to this question indicate that participants value the opportunity to practice and implement what they are learning in the classroom in a practical way. As Officer F says, it "allows officers an opportunity to use the skills they are learning sooner and see how they will apply to the job."Officer K sums this up by stating:

> I believe the academy can improve by adding more hands-on training. I think having a
> block of classroom instruction should be first and learning the terms, laws, and how to
> handle certain situations. Then I believe there should be a block of scenarios after the
> lecture part with role players. This would aid recruits in developing communication
> skills, which would highly help them before going to field training. I believe recruits
> learn from hands-on training, rather than death by PowerPoint.

Officer D would like to see more of a focus on the type of interactions that occur most often, "I feel as though academy instructors need more emphasis on day-to-day interactions with the public."This is essential to help fit the ever changing demands of society discussed in the

literature review (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Langer, 2021; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer & Varano, 2017; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020;Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).This point was also made by Officer J who stated:

> I believe the world of policing changes year to year. Just in the 6 years of me being a police officer laws and community policing have changed as well as the technology brought in to help police officers. How we as police academy instructors and field training officers can improve is being kept up to date on the ever changing laws and rules that need to be followed in order to create the best learning experience for cadets.

In order for police academy instructors and field training officers to stay current with the changing times Officer C believes that:

> Academy instructors and FTOs can also improve instruction by taking some of their own time and reading materials on instruction delivery and also taking classes that their agency may not pay for. This can pay dividends in not only their own careers, but those that they are charged with instructing.

Again here a telling lack of understanding of knowledge and andragogy exists based on what is not said. As discussed in Chapter 4 police academy instructors and field training officers lack the necessary education, training, and experience with andragogy and educating adult learners. They fail to recognize many of the changes that could easily be implemented and understood by an educator to help improve student learning outcomes. The closest any of the officers came to something along the lines of a more sound approach to andragogy was Officer I who mentioned the need to set goals and motivate learners. Officer I stated there is a need to develop a learning approach but:

> You do not necessarily need a checklist of objectives that must be completed in a certain time frame, but at least have certain goals that can be attainable. In my mind I feel proper communication, trust, transparency, and a motivated learner is what will create great next generation recruits.

Even with this assessment Officer I fails to develop a sound approach, saying that objectives, which are often an essential aspect of lesson and unit planning for educators, are not necessary. To improve transference of learning for improved learning outcomes and increased job preparedness, police academy instructors and field training officers can apply adult learning principles to help provide a learning experience that involves the recruit police officers that is learner centered (Hundersmarck, 2009; Shipton, 2020).

Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers? The responses of participants to interview questions 6 and 15–18 helped to develop an understanding of research Q3.Based on the data collected, the simple answer to this question is "more?"There needs to be more emphasis on the educational process and aspects of recruit police officer training, more emphasis on andragogy, and more opportunities for police academy instructors and field training officers to learn and practice as educators, more training, more development, more opportunity. It warrants a reminder here that the police academy instructors and field training officers are police officers first and foremost and are almost always extremely limited as educators; simply put, they just are not professional educators. Field training officers need to be properly trained and taught how to teach the adult learners they are working with for change to occur (Shafer & Varano, 2017).

The eight participants of sample set number two were asked directly, "How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers?" There is a strong sense from the participants of sample set number two, who are police academy instructors and field training officers and who have gone through the New York State required training to serve those roles, that the training they received simply was not enough to understand how to be a teacher. More emphasis and time must be allocated to training the trainer; this will be discussed at length later. Officer H stated:

> While the idea of andragogy is touched upon in the course for becoming a field training officer I believe it would be beneficial for instructors and field training officers to be given regular refreshers and updates on the principles of learning.

Officer G stated:

> Incorporating these concepts into the FTO School more so than they already are and having periodic instructor training to refresh instructors and FTOs on these concepts and refine teaching techniques would be the best way to be able to do this.

As previously discussed, the field training officer training program gives officers only one week to learn how to be a teacher and develop the necessary skills to teach and assess their future recruit police officers. This does not seem to be sufficient for the development of new field training officers. Field training officers would benefit from improved understanding of andragogy, use of educational technologies, and teaching recruit police officers as adult learners (Shipton, 2020).Officer J believes that it is important for the individual field training officers and police academy instructors to take ownership and continue their development and training stating:

I believe the only way to improve instructors and field training officers is to constantly

grow in adapting strategies in how to reach cadets with their own personal understanding

of what is being taught.

Officer E stated, "I think that if the Instructor Development Course (required to become a police

academy instructor) was offered more, you would get a better influx of educators."

The participants also expressed a firm belief that they should share in the responsibility

for their own continuing education and improvement. Officer I expressed a belief that field

training officers must be open to criticism and show a willingness to adapt to help the recruit

police officers they are training. Officer J stated, "I believe the only way to improve instructors

and field training officers is to constantly grow in adapting strategies in how to reach cadets with

their own personal understanding of what is being taught."Officer C stated, "If instructors take

the time to better themselves, then that will better the experience and learning ability of the

recruit officers."

While it may not be feasible to have every police academy instructor and field training

officer as qualified as a high school teacher in New York State, the discrepancies between the

two are alarming. If these particular police officers are going to be serving in such an important

educational role they should be provided with the skills and training necessary to succeed. Field

training officers need to be properly trained and taught how to teach the adult learners they are

working with in order for change to occur (Shafer & Varano, 2017).Continuing education and

professional development are commonly implemented in the world of business and education to

help improve the performance of employees and the employer (Stewart et al., 2018).Determining

the value of pedagogy and teaching skills for field training officers is an area of research that

needs improvement (Hoel, 2019).Putting programs in place to help police academy instructors

and field training officers improve their delivery of instruction can help to improve recruit police officer training.

Implications

Citizens across the United States of America have concluded that policing needs to be reformed (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Society is demanding law enforcement equalize years of racial injustice in a law enforcement system that is failing to provide equal protection of rights to all citizens under the law (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Police officers play many crucial societal roles that seek to ensure social order and governance, and these roles are ever changing and adapting. For example, police officers are crime preventers, crime solvers, law enforcers, peacekeepers, social workers, marriage counselors, parent/disciplinarians, crowd-control managers, criminal investigators, group facilitators, mental health counselors, and/or knowledge workers (Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). Society is rapidly evolving and demanding accountability, organizational reforms, increased community engagement, authentic community policing, leadership education, better training programs, and the implementation of new technology and crime fighting techniques (Chappell, 2008; Davies & Heysmand, 2019; Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Shafer &Varano, 2017; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).To fulfill their societal role, police officers need to change and adapt with the times, and training practices must shift to meet modern needs (Blumberg et al., 2019; Martin, 2016).

Change and reform in policing is a difficult, slow-moving process that is often met with controversy and stigma (Kumar, 2019; Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014; Schafer & Varano, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020).The civil unrest and protests of 2020 were loud and direct calls for

reform from citizens and politicians across America and may be the tipping point to drive the change in law enforcement (Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020; Thompson & Payne, 2019).Currently, forty-two percent of Americans believe that President Biden is doing "too little" to try and reform policing in the United States (Langer, 2021).Furthermore, just 44% of Americans are confident that the police are properly trained to avoid using excessive force (Langer, 2021).Due to the hyperlocalization of policing in the United States, there are more than 18,000 police agencies across the country (Stoughton et al., 2020) with no federal standard for training (Martin, 2016).Reform, training, and funding generally target a single agency at a time resulting in a failure to change policing as a whole (Stoughton et al., 2020).One potential change and reform lies in the way in which new recruit police officers are trained as they prepare for their careers, specifically, regarding ways to link the academic learning of higher education, the police academy, and the field training programs to provide effective training to recruit police officers during their first year of service (White & Heslop, 2012).While the need for reform in training practices is immediate and pervasive, the process will take time and require continued research and development (Bartkowiak-Theron, 2019).

There appears to be a disconnect between police academy instruction and field training programs (Blumberg et al., 2019).Police academy instructors are not maximizing their instruction to prepare recruit police officers to transfer their learning into their field training program, leaving too much to field training officers (Blumberg et al., 2019; Shipton, 2020). The transference of police academy learning to field training is an essential part of the recruit police officer training process (Bergman, 2017).To be truly effective, police academy training should align with field training programs (Hundersmarck, 2009; White & Heslop, 2012).

By understanding the value and importance of a sound pedagogical approach to instruction, a teacher can proficiently educate their students. This research hypothesized that if better teachers make better students in the field of education, then better police academy instructors and field training officers may help make better police officers in the field of law enforcement. For this to be possible law enforcement must first understand what they are in fact missing. At the onset of this study, the researcher believed providing the opportunity for police officers to reflect on their training would yield information that would help better understand what is and what is not working when it comes to the content delivery of police recruit officer training. Having a more educated recruit police officer at the completion of the police academy is a step in the right direction for improved policing (Chappell, 2008).

The participants of this study were all in favor of making changes to improve recruit police officer training. However, the participants expressed that due to the paramilitary structure and hierarchy of police departments it is difficult for police academy instructors and field training officers to implement wide scale change. As much as officers may want to make these changes it is ultimately up to the higher ranking administrative leaders of a department to implement policy changes on a wider scale. By reforming recruit police officer training, governments are showing they are serious about changing the negative aspects of police culture by fostering professional values and best practices (Bergman, 2017).The current events in the United States previously discussed make this a very difficult and troubling time for law enforcement (Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).The need and opportunity for reform and improved recruit police officer training practices is real. Necessary reforms are likely to take place in the months and years to come, and effective training should be at the forefront of those reforms. As Kotter (2012) explains:

Cultures in the twenty-first century will have to value candid discussions far more than

they do today. . . . The combination of valid data from a number of external sources,

broad communication of that information inside an organization and a willingness to deal

honestly with the feedback will go a long way toward squashing complacency. (p. 171)

This research study hopes to add to the valid data and help spark communication inside law

enforcement agencies in an attempt to seek feedback from the stakeholders to help drive change

and foster reform in the field.

The police academy and field training are designed to prepare recruit police officers for

their careers in law enforcement. Law enforcement agencies attempt to provide a complete

training process for their recruit police officers. However, in a dynamic profession like law

enforcement it would be impossible to account for every possible situation a police officer will

be faced with. Because of this, it would be impossible to completely train and prepare every

recruit police officer to handle every situation. As Officer H stated:

The academy can only teach so much in practical and classroom learning environments

and replication of real situations with the public can only go so far as it is a controlled

situation and the reality is it is not controlled and is unpredictable.

It is important to understand and recognize this. Rather than attempting to do the impossible,

police academy instructors and field training officers should be leading toward positive learning

outcomes that enable recruit police officers to learn and think for them to develop the autonomy

needed to be effective police officers.

Recommendations for Action

In a world of constant change and desire to improve, there is a strong need for

communication, data, and feedback and a willingness to address the issues (Kotter, 2012).There

is a need to develop a more sustainable and successful training program for police recruits

(Kumar, 2019; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Schafer &Varano, 2017).The value and

importance of appropriate training cannot be overstated (Gallos, 2006; Kotter, 2012).Investing in

training is investing in change (Bolman & Deal, 2006).Training and support must work to

increase positive outcomes and create a sense of comfort with the changes (Bolman & Deal,

2006).By taking the time necessary and investing in people, police departments will reap the

benefits. Based on the data collected in this research study and the extensive literature review

several recommendations for action have been developed that can be implemented at local

county law enforcement academies as well as local police departments. Several of these

recommendations are relatively simple suggestions that can easily be implemented to help drive

change.

Focus on Educating

As the primary educational institution for police training and education, the police academy

provides an opportunity for recruit police officers to learn, in controlled settings, primarily in the

classroom and under close watch of academy instructors and is the primary educational

institution for police training and education (Baylis & Matczak, 2019; Hundersmarck, 2009;

Kumar, 2019; Nevers, 2019). Police academies should be teaching recruit police officers what

they will need to be successful as police officers (Blumberg, 2019; Rossler & Suttmoeller, 2018).

Perhaps the simplest and easiest way to improve the education of recruit police officers is

to begin to look at the process as an educational one. As discussed in Chapter 4, during all of the

interviews the words "teacher," "student," and "education" were never used by any of the

participants when referring to the relationship between recruit police officers and their police

academy instructors or field training officers. Consistently, participants failed to describe or liken

the recruit police officer training experience to an educational process with any focus on intentional learning of new information. Police administrators have the opportunity to use their authority in the paramilitary structure of law enforcement to direct and focus an educational mindset to the recruit police officer training. It is important to target change and teach appropriate behaviors during field training that will last throughout their careers (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2017; Fildes et al., 2019; Wheatcroft et al.,2014).A field training officer will impact a recruit police officer's personal and professional life for years to come (Dulin et al., 2019).

By developing a focus on truly educating recruit police officers like the adult learners they are, there is potential for major improvements to the process. Recruit police officers can shift their focus to being student officers that have the primary responsibility of learning. Police academy instructors and field training officers can focus on being police teachers that are focusing on teaching the new officers. Once there is a focus on the educational aspects of the process all those involved can then work on development. Police teachers can receive more training on implementing best practices of andragogy, adult learning principles, attending to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, using educational technologies, making use of project based learning, small group work, class discussions, student presentations, and other constructivist approaches to education. Ideally, the police academy should be reflective of the best practices in an educational classroom.

Mentorship and Transformative Leadership

A field training officer partners with a recruit police officer closely while they do the actual police work, provide support and also complete the assessment of the recruit officer (Bergman, 2017).This partnership means field training officers and recruit police officers are within just a few feet of each other for almost the entirety of a shift doing nearly everything together. This

closeness lends itself to a mentorship relationship developing organically. A mentorship relationship has the potential to create a safe learning space that is focused on a trusting and mutually beneficial relationship between the recruit police officer and the field training officer. A lack of trust in an employee/manager relationship like this one can lead to a loss in productivity (Stewart et al., 2018).

Stressful work environments, such as law enforcement, can hinder employee decision making and performance (Stewart et al., 2018).By finding ways to decrease this stress and increase employee happiness, job performance can increase (Stewart et al., 2018).By assigning a new recruit police officer with their field training officer and mentor before they start the police academy there is a great potential to build a relationship from the beginning that aims to improve learning and decrease stress. A new recruit police officer is often tasked with entering a largely closed off and tightly knit workplace in the field of law enforcement alone with many questions and concerns. Police academies not only provide formalized training; they also begin the indoctrination into the police subculture and see to the attrition of less qualified recruits (Blumberg et al., 2019; Westley, 1970).By being around other recruit police officers, academy instructors and active duty police officers, the recruit police officers seem to naturally be able to develop an understanding of what it takes to be a police officer (Blumberg et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019; Westley, 1970).During field training, recruit police officers are further socialized into police officers (Blumberg et al., 2019; Hoel, 2019; Westley, 1970).This entire process can be aided when a police recruit officer has one specific mentor from day one that they can go to with questions, concerns, and look to for guidance and support. New things as simple as how to get into the department, what flashlight to buy, where to get uniforms, what equipment and gear is needed for the first day of patrol and many others become primary stressors for recruit police

officers that take away from their ability to focus on learning. These can all be simply addressed by a mentor to help lessen the stress on a recruit police officer and begin to foster the relationship and a safe learning environment between the two that can be so important later during the educational experience.

Consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, police officers are adult learners and they are in fact "people [who] want to be respected as equals, be taken seriously, and be rewarded for their efforts" (Stewart et al., 2018, p. 73).A mentorship relationship allows for this to occur. By recognizing this potential for impact and developing mentorship opportunities, recruit police officers can be exposed to a more complete educational process that develops their learning in practical ways.

Whenever educating any learner it is important to remember Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which states that learners, and employees, have needs that must be met in order to reach their fullest potential (Stewart et al., 2018).These needs start at the bottom of Maslow's pyramid and work their way up, beginning with physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self actualization (Stewart et al., 2018).Stewart et al. (2018) describe how each of these levels of needs can be met in a workplace such as law enforcement:

Physiological needs are satisfied by the wage given to the employee. Safety needs involve job security and defined responsibilities, or structure. Love needs can be satisfied by a positive work culture that lets employees establish rapport with one another. Esteem needs can be satisfied by a positive management relation with employees that makes them feel trusted and capable in their jobs. Self-actualization needs are harder to satisfy and involve management actively engaging motivated employees with work that meets their potential (p. 68).

By understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs, police academy instructors and field training officers will be able to help the recruit police officers they work with reach their potential.

Police departments can develop their field training officers into mentors by training them on transformative leadership as well. Being a transformative leader allows a field training officer to help recruit police officers develop autonomy by preparing them to make their own decisions (Bass, 2008; Can et al., 2017).Supporting recruit police officers' learning through transformation by providing workplace interventions and education leads to increased interactions, learning, and autonomy of workers (Wilhelmson et al., 2015).A true desire to learn, teach, coach, prepare, challenge, and inspire those around them sets a transformative leader apart (Hicks, 2018).True transformative leadership requires the leader to also be a teacher, a leader who can teach and prepare the next generation of leaders in the field (Liou & Hermanns, 2017; White & Heslop, 2012).Transformational leaders offer followers a chance to learn, develop, succeed, and eventually prosper as leaders themselves (Bass, 2008).By being a transformational leader, one is encouraging followers to work for the group's good and strive to reach their full potential (Bass, 2008).Police recruit officers need transformational leaders to show them the way early in their careers to create enthusiasm and foster development (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).A field training officer that understands his or her role as a transformative leader in a mentorship relationship can be a powerful tool for improving recruit police officer training, contributing to the success of the department and driving change in the field of law enforcement. This is a relationship that is likely to continue long after the recruit police officer training. The participants of this study clearly showed that the relationship with their field training officers was important to them and a major factor in their acclimation to the field and learning.

Train the Trainer

This researcher has a background as an educator working for two years as a high school teacher in New York and earning a bachelor's degree in Social Studies Education, and a master's degree in Educational Technology. This background has fostered an understanding of pedagogy and andragogy. This researcher has since become a police academy instructor and field training officer and has seen and experienced firsthand the importance of recruit police officer training during the first year of service in preparing officers to be safe, professional, and effective. The skills and techniques developed, understood and implemented by this researcher as a police academy instructor and field training officer were learned, almost exclusively, through education degree programs and experience in the classroom as a high school teacher. It has become a focal point of this researcher's style and techniques as a police academy instructor and field training officer to be an educator first and foremost.

The field of education has come so far in finding ways to better educate students, especially adult learners, and these strategies have not yet been adequately applied to police instructors (Shipton, 2020).By understanding the value and importance of a sound pedagogical approach to instruction, teachers can proficiently educate their students. Field training officers need to be properly trained and taught how to teach the adult learners they are working with for change to occur (Shafer & Varano, 2017).Providing all police academy instructors and field training officers with an appropriate amount of education and training on topics related to instruction, andragogy, and adult learning and then time to practice those skills in controlled environments can allow for improved education of new recruit police officers in the future. As discussed in Chapter 4, in order to become a certified field training officer or police academy instructor in New York State a police officer must complete a specific training program. These

training programs include some brief instruction on lesson planning, adult learning principles, and other topics. The field training officer certification program is a one week training that requires officers to create one lesson plan and deliver one full 40 minute lesson (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).To become a certified general topics instructor at the police academy officers must complete a two week training program and complete one lesson plan, deliver one full40 lesson, one 10 minute lesson and one five minute lesson (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).These training programs are simply not long enough or comprehensive enough to develop sound skills and comfort with implementing strategies that fit best practices of andragogy.

Police academy instructors and field training officers that are viewed as and trained as educators have an opportunity to develop an understanding of key best practices to improve education. Once topics like best practices of andragogy, adult learning principles, attending to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, using educational technologies, making use of project based learning, small group work, class discussions, student presentations, and other constructivist approaches to education are understood they may be implemented. To do this, police academy instructors and field training officers need to be exposed to a training program that prepares them to be educators that is far more comprehensive than the one they currently go through in New York State. By developing and improving these trainings, offering supplemental training materials, and providing for continuing education law enforcement can better train those who will be training new officers.

Further Development of Curriculum and Standards

With the lack of understanding of andragogy and adult learning principles discussed in Chapter 4, providing police academy instructors and field training officers with instructional design

materials to help them could lead to an improvement. New lesson plans, visual aids, documents, instructional objectives, instructor and student resources, activities, role play scenarios, group work, and more could all be developed and given to police academy instructors and field training officers to be implemented. These materials can and should be developed by those with a sound knowledge and understanding of andragogy and educating adult learners, making use of current technologies and trends.

One way to do this would be to create a panel of experts that have specific knowledge of both instructional design in education and law enforcement. College professors, local high school teachers, current police officers who have proved to be effective police academy instructors and field training officers as well as current police administrators should be included to create and develop these materials. By creating a panel of experts to develop instructional design, lesson plans and learning materials that can be used by all police academy instructors and field training officers, police academies and police departments can improve continuity of education and implementation of best practices of andragogy. This could be done at the local level with individual police academies or at the state level for all of the police academies in New York State, by creating more detailed curriculum, lesson and unit plans to be delivered by the instructors. The same is true for field training programs. Each department can work to develop a more detailed and comprehensive field training program that includes instructional objectives, specific lessons, key topics and ideas, and provides learning resources for both recruit police officers and the field training officers. These instructional design materials would be created in a way that allows for an ease of implementation for the police academy instructors and field training officers that are working with recruit police officers on a daily basis.

Develop a Feedback Loop

This study provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences as recruit

police officers and as police academy instructors and/or field training officers. For many of the

participants this was the first time anyone solicited any information about their experiences in a

formal way. During this process the participants were able to provide valuable data and feedback

that can be used to help drive change moving forward for many in law enforcement. This

experience also gave the participants the chance to think about their work and how they can

improve moving forward. Self-reflection is crucial to improving policing skills (Fildes et al.,

2019).

By providing police officers with this opportunity to reflect on their experiences they can

provide meaningful feedback to help other officers, other departments, and themselves. When

morale begins to suffer it is often because people are not simply machines; they are aware of

perceived injustices and issues around them (Stewart et al., 2018).Seeking information and

feedback about these potential issues early on can help to cultivate a trusting environment and

one that learns from its mistakes and improves. Recruit police officers can be a valuable source

of information. Officer I stated "FTOs need to be fluid in understanding what works best for the

recruit to learn. In a positive learning environment, FTOs must also be open to criticism from a

recruit to see what works best for them."This feedback from recruit police officers can help lead

to further change and development.

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services requires a daily observation

report (DOR) to be completed by the field training officer evaluating the recruit officer each day

of their training by making use of a Likert scale for 28 performance areas and behavioral

dimensions (New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2016).Police academies and

police departments should implement a similar observation report to evaluate how police academy instructors and field training officers are performing. These reports should be anonymous surveys, evaluations and feedback opportunities to help foster development of police academy instructors, field training officers, and also the administration of the training programs. These can and should be completed by recruit police officers as they matriculate through their first year of training. Feedback opportunities should also be provided to the police academy instructors and field training officers when they complete the training programs to become certified for those roles. By better understanding what is needed from these training programs future trainers can help meet the changing needs.

Recommendations for Further Study

There is no question that this topic requires and merits further study. By continuing further study new, relevant, and helpful data could be produced to improve recruit police officer training. The following recommendations are made for further study.

Expanded Demographics

The participants of this study were very similar to each other, and there was a lack of diversity in the available participant pool. The participants were overwhelmingly college educated, white males. How much the results of this study were impacted by the personal background of the participants is unclear. Future research should determine if these results would remain consistent with a participant group that included more female officers, more officers of color, and officers who do not have a college education. The lifelong learning experiences of these groups as well as the recruit police officer training experiences is likely to be different from that of the participants of this study. Each of these factors may have an impact on the recruit police officer training experience and relationships with police academy instructors and field training officers.

By drawing from a larger, more diverse population future research could collect data from the expanded demographic pool to address these potential differences.

This research was unable to adequately address these groups based on the pool of available participants. Further study should attempt to understand how these differences impact matriculation rates and effectiveness of recruit police officer training. These research results may also then be beneficial toward recruiting a more diverse pool of police applicants for departments moving forward. A more diverse workforce that is reflective of the community it is policing has an opportunity to develop cultural connections, build trusting relationships, and recruit future employees.

Age was also a limiting factor in the participant pool of this study that may play a role in police officers perceptions. The participants of this study were all between the ages of 25 and 35 years old. With the findings of this research study showing that life experiences were so valuable to police officers 'day-to-day work, developing an understanding of how officers in different age brackets view the concepts addressed in this study would be beneficial. Younger officers have fewer life experiences to draw on to help them get the job done. Future study could address if the age of an officer impacts their abilities as a police officer, police academy instructor and field training officer.

Change Study Location

This study was limited to a single department and one county police academy in New York State. In New York State, the basic course for police, and the field training officer course curriculum is developed and governed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) of New York State. This makes the review of one specific county and its local law enforcement academy transferable to the rest of New York State, and possibly beyond. However, different

police academies will have different police academy instructors and may vary in the way they administer training. After the police academy each individual department's field training program will also vary. These variances are likely to have implications on the recruit police officer training process. The extent of these variances and their impact is unknown. By studying other counties and/or other department's future research can attempt to understand if training differences are correlating to more positive or negative learning outcomes. Future researchers could use the same or very similar methodology of this study to develop a sense of how other departments and police academies are addressing recruit police officer training.

Develop a Quantitative Study

The scope of this study was limited in size and location to a participant pool that was available to this researcher and able to complete the interview process. Quantitative research seeks to "describe a research problem through a description of trends . . . collecting numeric data with preset questions and responses . . . analyzing trends, comparing groups, or relating variables using statistical analysis" (Creswell, 2016, p. 13).By developing a quantitative survey questionnaire that makes use of a Likert scale there would be an opportunity to collect and analyze data from a much larger population that is more expansive and diverse. A quantitative study would allow for a larger sample set to evaluate if the themes developed in this study would remain consistent. This larger population has the ability to show trends and compare different demographic groups that were addressed previously. This expanded participant pool of such a study could reach across New York State and beyond. There is value in being able to develop large amounts of data to see common trends across New York State and the United States of America, with the hyperlocalization there is a high degree of variability for police training (Stoughton et al., 2020).

By collecting and evaluating quantitative data future researchers could potentially develop a further understanding of the recurring themes of this research study and/or develop new themes. Future researchers could use this research study to help create the survey questions. Future researchers could use the findings of this study to test the results by developing a survey instrument that addresses the key findings. A quantitative study that makes use of a newly developed survey instrument asking questions about police officers experiences with their recruit police officer training can help bring hard data to police administrators and community leaders to help foster change and implement new practices toward reform.

Track Police Academy Instructor and/or Field Training Officer Performance

Before and After Improved Training

Perhaps the most difficult, but potentially the most beneficial future research study would be to develop a study in which police academy instructors and field training officers could be studied before and after they went through an extended training program that provided them with a more thorough training on becoming an educator. Researchers could develop a rating system similar to the New York State Daily Observation Report that was discussed earlier to grade police academy instructors and field training officers as educators. Once a baseline evaluation score is developed researchers would then provide participants with a new and improved training program for police academy instructors and field training officers. This more comprehensive training program would better educate the participants on the skills and knowledge necessary to implement the sound andragogy and adult learning principles that have been discussed at length previously. Then researchers would rate the performance of those police academy instructors and field training officers after the new training to determine if they have become improved educators. A study like this could potentially show the value in a "train the trainer" type course

and the need to further develop police academy instructors and field training officers as educators. This type of study can help bring hard data to police administrators and community leaders to help foster change and implement new practices toward reform.

Conclusion

Police officers are faced daily with new and ever changing situations. There is a high degree of autonomy for police officers and developing the ability to make decisions is essential (Kumar, 2019).The basic training of recruit police officers occurs primarily during the first year of service and this is the bulk of the training that officers will receive in their entire career (Kumar, 2019; Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).This period of time is instrumental in their development because there is generally not a required professional development program for police officers as they continue on in their careers (Shahar & Hazzan, 2020).Recruit police officers would benefit from a more complete and inclusive training program that works to educate recruit police officers as adult learners through transformative leadership using best practices developed in the field of education (Shipton, 2020).Developing safer, more effective police officers is needed for police departments and community relations to improve and citizen confidence in policing to grow (Langer, 2021; Stoughton et al., 2020; Taub, 2020).Keeping this goal in mind, the training of recruit police officers must be updated and improved to drive change and adapt with changing times (Kumar, 2019).

Being a police officer is a difficult job. Developing reform and driving change, regardless of what direction those reforms and changes go in, should begin with training and further development of recruit police officers, building from the ground up to make better and more effective police officers and police departments. Better teachers can help to make better students, and better police academy instructors and field training officers can help to make better police

officers. Policing is a unique job and one that is highly variable. Recruit police officers will need to rely on their learning and experiences to get the job done. By fostering better learning experiences and providing an opportunity to develop and practice their skills along the way, recruit police officers can be more prepared for the job and enter the workforce with a broader knowledge base to draw on. It is clear from this study that the police academy instructors and field training officers want to help new recruit police officers and simply do not even realize how poorly trained and prepared they are to be educators. The participants of this study, and likely many police academy instructors and field training offices across the country do not even know what they do not know when it comes to teaching. It is a testament to their willingness to succeed that they continue to put themselves out there and develop their own ways in an attempt to help prepare recruit police officers for their careers.

This chapter reviewed the findings from the qualitative-interpretative, phenomenological analysis. The intention of this study was to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs, and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers. By exploring the lived experiences of police officers in New York State through the interview sessions, the research provided an opportunity for reflection to the participants. The participants were overwhelmingly eager to share their experiences and opinions. They provided insightful and thoughtful feedback, which, along with the literature review, has been the basis for this work.

Recurring themes from this research study included: A)Failure to recognize training as an educational process, B) Limited instructor/Field Training Officer experience with andragogy, C)Reliance on learning through debriefing and failure, D) Death by PowerPoint, E) Desire for more practice, F) Potential for mentorship, G) Leadership, H) Role of higher education, and I)

What is working. Recommendations for action included A) Focus on educating, B) Mentorship and transformative leadership, C) Train the trainer, D) Further development of curriculum and standards; E) Develop a feedback loop. Recommendations for further study include A) expanded demographics, B) Change study location, C) Develop a quantitative study, D) Track police academy instructor and/or field training officer performance before and after improved training.

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APPENDIX A

Letter of Participation

Daniel Barrancota
5623 Angela Dr.
Lockport, NY 14094

August 1, 2021

Dear Officer:

As a graduate student in the doctorate of educational leadership program at the University of
New England I am conducting a research study designed to explore recruit police officer
training. You have been identified as a potential participant in this research study.
This summer I will be conducting interviews with several local police officers. The purpose of
this study will be to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and
their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers. This study
will be conducted to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers
during their first year of service. The focus is not on content material, but rather the delivery
methods of the curriculum, in an attempt to provide training programs that improve transference
of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness. I will be asking participants a series
of open-ended questions about recruit police officer training and it is estimated that the total time
to complete participation in this study will be less than one hour.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to do so, your participation will
be completely confidential and there will be no mention of your name or the department you
work for. Your contributions will help to craft findings that will seek to improve the training of
future police officers. I will be happy to describe this study to you further and answer any and all
questions you may have about this study. If you are interested in participating please notify me at
your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your continued service to the community, please stay safe and be well.

Respectfully,

Daniel D. Barrancotta

UNE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name		Age	
County of Residence		Gender	
Race		Email address	

Did you attend the Niagara County Law Enforcement Academy?	
Number of years of police service in New York	
What is your current rank?	
Are you a field training officer?	
Are you a police academy instructor?	
What is your highest level of education?	

APPENDIX B

Consent for Participation in Research

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Examining the Delivery Methods of Current Content and Curriculum for Recruit Police Officers

Principal Investigator(s): Daniel Barrancotta

Introduction:
Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study. Please read this form. You may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to give you information about this research study, and if you choose to participate, document that choice. You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this research study being done?
The purpose of this study will be to describe the lived experiences of police officers, their training programs and their educational relationships with academy instructors and field training officers. This study will be conducted to develop an understanding of the future needs of recruit police officers during their first year of service. The focus is not on content material, but rather the delivery methods of the curriculum, in an attempt to provide training programs that improve transference of knowledge for increased learning and job preparedness.

Who will be in this study?
This summer Daniel Barrancotta will be conducting interviews with 10-15 local police officers.

What will I be asked to do?
Participants will be asked a series of open-ended questions about recruit police officer training and it is estimated that the total time to complete participation in this study will be less than one hour. All interview sessions will be completed using Zoom video conference and recorded through Zoom. Participants will not be required to have their cameras on for the interview, but the interview must be recorded. The recordings will then be transcribed using Zoom. The transcripts will be checked over by the researcher to adjust any errors in the automatic transcribing of the audio only. The researcher will also be taking notes during the interview.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?
There are no anticipated risks for participants in this study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?
Your contributions will help to craft findings that will seek to improve the training of future police officers.

What will it cost me?
There will be no cost to you.

How will my privacy be protected?
There is a risk of loss of privacy. However, several steps will be taken to ensure your anonymity and will de-identify the data collected. No participant names or any other identifying information will appear in any published reports of the research. There will be no police supervisors taking part in this study, your department will not be notified of your participation and none of your responses will be attributed directly to you and shared with anyone.

How will my data be kept confidential?
The research material will be kept in a secure location, and only the researcher will have access to the data. At the conclusion of the study, all recordings of interviews will be deleted and any other identifying information from the transcripts will be removed.

What are my rights as a research participant?
- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University.
- Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with Daniel Barrancotta.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate there is no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason.
  - If you choose to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You will be informed of any significant findings developed during the course of the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.
- If you sustain an injury while participating in this study, your participation may be ended.

What other options do I have?
You may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?
- The researcher conducting this study is Daniel Barrancotta.
  - For more information regarding this study, please contact Daniel Barrancotta at dbarrancotta@une.edu or 716-471-2326.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Lori Sanchez, lsanchez4@une.edu.
  ·If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call Mary Bachman DeSilva, Sc.D., Chair of the UNE Institutional Review Board at (207) 221-4567 or irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?
You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and do so voluntarily.

_____   _____

Participant's signature or   Date
Legally authorized representative

Printed name

Researcher's Statement
The participant named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

_____   _____

Researcher's signature   Date

Printed name

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions are intended to provide structure and continuity to each interview. Follow up

and clarifications will be asked as needed.

Questions for both sample set 1 and 2:

1. Before we begin I would ask you again please for verbal confirmation that I have your

   permission to record this interview, transcribe your responses and use our conversation as

   data to help complete a study exploring recruit police officer training and that any

   information you provide will be truthful to the best of your knowledge?

2. Do you have any questions for me after reviewing the participation and consent forms?

3. Would you please describe your learning experiences at the police academy, specifically

   the delivery methods of instruction?

4. How would you compare the instruction you received at the police academy with

   previous academic learning experiences in college and high school?

5. Would you please describe your relationships with police academy instructors?

6. Where do you feel the police academy was most lacking and in need of improvement?

7. Would you please discuss your thoughts and feelings on the extent to which you feel the

   police academy adequately prepared you for field training?

8. Would you please describe your learning experiences during field training, specifically

   the delivery methods of instruction from your field training officers?

9. Would you please describe your relationships with your field training officers?

10. Where do you feel field training was most lacking and in need of improvement?

11. Discuss your thoughts and feelings on the extent to which you feel field training prepared you for work as an independent police officer.

12. Do you see police academy instructors and field training officers as leaders?

13. Q1- How do you apply your life experiences, education, and recruit police officer training to your day-to-day work?

14. Q2: How can police academy instructions and field training officers improve the delivery of instruction to increase transference of learning to improve learning outcomes and job preparedness for the next generation of recruit police officers?

Questions for sample set 2 only:

15. What is your knowledge of educating adult learners?

16. What is your knowledge of pedagogy/andragogy?

17. What do you rely on when trying to teach recruit police officers?

18. Q3: How can police academy instructors and field training officers learn more about andragogy to improve their delivery of content instruction to recruit police officers?

APPENDIX D

Thank You Participant Letter

Daniel Barrancota
5623 Angela Dr.
Lockport, NY 14094

September 1, 2021

Participant

Dear:

Thank you very much for your recent participation in the study exploring recruit police officer training. Your participation will help to craft findings that will seek to improve the training of future police officers.

I have shared with you a brief anonymous story entitled "When the lord was creating police officers."Police work is truly a noble profession and I thank you for your continued service to the community, please stay safe and am well.

Respectfully,

Daniel D. Barrancotta

When the Lord Was Creating Police Officers

When the Lord was creating police officers, he was into his sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared and said, "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one."

And the Lord asked, "Have you read the specs on this order? A police officer has to be able to run five miles through alleys in the dark, scale walls, enter homes the health inspector wouldn't touch, and not wrinkle his uniform. He has to be able to sit in an undercover car all day on a stakeout, cover a homicide scene that night, canvass the neighborhood for witnesses, and testify in court the next day. He has to be in top physical condition at all times, running on black coffee and half-eaten meals. And he has to have six pairs of hands."

The angel shook her head slowly and said, "Six pairs of hands ... no way."

"It's not the hands that are causing me problems," said the Lord, "it's the three pairs of eyes an officer has to have.""That's on the standard model?" asked the angel.

The Lord nodded. "One pair that sees through a bulge in a pocket before he asks, 'May I see what's in there, sir?' (When he already knows and wishes he'd taken that accounting job.) Another pair here in the side of his head for his partners' safety. And another pair of eyes in front that can look reassuringly at a bleeding victim and say, 'You'll be alright ma'am,' when he knows it isn't so."

"Lord," said the angel, touching his sleeve, "rest and work on this tomorrow."

"I can't," said the Lord, "I already have a model that can talk a 250-pound drunk into a patrol car without incident and feed a family of five on a civil service paycheck."

The angel circled the model of the peace officer very slowly, "Can it think?" she asked.

"You bet," said the Lord. "It can tell you the elements of a hundred crimes; recite Miranda warnings in its sleep; detain, investigate, search and arrest a gang member on the street in less time than it takes five learned judges to debate the legality of the stop...and still it keeps its sense of humor. This officer also has phenomenal personal control. He can deal with crime scenes painted in hell, coax a confession from a child abuser, comfort a murder victim's family, and then read in the daily paper how law enforcement isn't sensitive to the rights of criminal suspects."

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek of the peace officer. "There's a leak," she pronounced. "I told you that you were trying to put too much into this model."

"That's not a leak," said the Lord, "it's a tear."

"What's the tear for?" asked the angel.

"It's for bottled-up emotions, for fallen comrades, for commitment to that funny piece of cloth called the American flag, for justice."

"You're a genius," said the angel. The Lord looked somber. "I didn't put it there," he said.

APPENDIX E

Research Site Permission

Daniel Barrancotta
5623 Angela Dr.
Lockport, NY 14094
dbarrancotta@une.edu

May 5, 2021

Chief Steven Abbott
Lockport Police Department
1 Locks Pl.
Lockport, NY 14094

Research Proposal
University of New England Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

This proposal serves as the request to conduct research in the Lockport Police Department per Administrative Regulation 6162.8.

Dear Chief Abbott,

As a graduate student in the doctorate of educational leadership program at the University of New England I am conducting a research study designed to explore the delivery of recruit police officer training. My proposed study seeks to understand the lived experiences of police officers that have gone through recruit police officer training in New York State.

I am seeking your permission to interview approximately ten LPD officers, with between two and seven years of service, about their experiences with the recruit police officer training program in New York State. These interviews will take place approximately between June 1, 2021 and September 31, 2021.

All participants will be asked to sign an informed consent to participate. All participants will be informed of the purpose of the research and I will be responsible to obtain consent from each participant. Participants will be informed that their participation is completely voluntary. Participants can choose to answer only the questions with which they feel comfortable and can discontinue participation at any time. Some of the data may be used for future research purposes consistent with the original purpose stated in the consent document. The final data will be stored for a period of not longer than two years after which it will be destroyed.

No names or any other identifying information of individuals or LPD will appear in any published reports of the research. The research material will be kept in a secure location, and only I will have access to the data. At the conclusion of the study, all recordings of interviews will be deleted and any other identifying information from the transcripts will be removed. I will do all I can to reduce the risk of loss of privacy.

This letter is also to certify that information obtained from the research will not include the names, employment or personal information of any interviewees, and there will be absolutely no mention of the Lockport Police Department in this study. I emphasize that this study is not about the Lockport Police Department or any of its training policies, procedures or practices and in no way will be drawing any conclusions or making any recommendations about or to the Lockport

Police Department. There will be no record or mention of the Lockport Police Department or its officers as a site of the research.

If this is acceptable please sign below and return to me at your earliest convenience. I have attached a copy for your records.

Respectfully,

Daniel D. Barrancotta

I hereby grant permission to Daniel Barrancotta to interview police officers at the Lockport Police Department as part of his research study described above.

Chief Steven Abbott, LPD

5/7/2021
Date